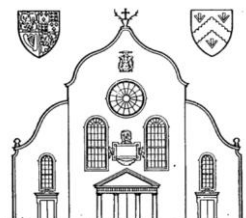


**CANONGATE KIRK
THE KIRK OF HOLYROODHOUSE
& EDINBURGH CASTLE**

www.canongatekirk.org.uk

Newsletter

May 2026



MINISTER'S LETTER

How lovely is thy dwelling place. There really was no other psalm to sing on our first Sunday back in Canongate Kirk after sixteen weeks of exile in the Harry Younger Hall! I toyed with Psalm 122, "I was glad when they said unto me, let us go to the house of the Lord". It's one of the great so-called psalms of ascent, traditionally sung by pilgrims as they went up to worship at festival times in the temple of Jerusalem, and often featured in royal weddings and coronation services in more recent times. And that would have worked too. But in the end Psalm 84 won through, "How lovely is thy dwelling place, O Lord of hosts to me". Because it conveys a sense of pleasure not just at the physical appearance of the sanctuary, but at finding ourselves within its ancient walls once again. And it even acknowledges – in its gentle reference to the sparrow and the swallow - the generations of those who have come and gone within those same walls.

*Even thine own altars, where she safe
Her young ones forth may bring,
O thou almighty Lord of hosts,
who art my God and King.*

That thought has a particularly personal resonance for me at the moment as my family prepares to take our leave of the house in Dunbar that has been our familiar home since 1959. The place where we grew up and from where we spread our wings and flew. There will soon come a point when we can't go back and it truly feels like the end of an era. But not so with Canongate Kirk where we are just entering into the next chapter in the long history of our lovely dwelling-place. If you haven't yet seen it in its redecorated splendour for yourself, come soon.

*Blest are they in thy house who dwell,
They ever give thee praise.
And blest are they whose strength thou art,
In whose heart are thy ways.*

Neil Gardner

PARISH REGISTER

WEDDING

25th April

Olivia Sutton & Charles Tuckwell

“Those whom God has joined together, let not man divide.”

FUNERALS

16th April

Bill Thomson

Belgrave Crescent

27th April

Lady Joanna Young

Muirfield Care Home, Gullane

“Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.”

PARISH GROUPING

United Evening Services

It was good to be back in Canongate Kirk in time for our monthly evening service on 26th April. Our friends from St Giles' were particularly struck by our refreshed interior as the evening sunshine flooded the sanctuary. Our next shared service will be at 7pm on Sunday 31st May. All welcome.

MUSIC AND MORE AT ST GILES'

On Saturday 23rd May from 2pm – 7.30pm the music department of St Giles along with the Cathedral Music Trust are holding an afternoon of uplifting music, behind the scenes insights, guided tours and the world premiere of composer Paul Mealor's composition 'Let us Sing.' For tickets and more information about this special gathering please visit <https://www.cathedralmusictrust.org.uk/events/edinburgh-gathering-2/>

YEHUDI MENUHIN SCHOOL CONCERT

On Friday 1st May at 6.30pm join us for our annual treat from some incredibly talented young musicians from Surrey performing music by Mendelssohn, Bach, Schubert, Ravel and Moszkowski. Not to be missed! All proceeds to Kirk funds. Tickets £15/£7.50 on the door or from <https://www.musicinblairatholl.org.uk/tickets/> or Eventbrite.

FREE CONCERT

On Saturday 30th May at 7.30pm here at Canongate Kirk, Open Orchestra will be performing the overture to the opera Der Freischütz by Carl Maria von Weber, as well as Vasily Kalinnikov's Symphony No.1. Admission is free with a retiring collection.

CRAFT CLUB

This month's meeting of the Craft Club will be on Monday 11th May from 6.30pm – 8pm in the Harry Younger Hall. New members are most welcome - the group is open to crafters and non-crafters, skilled and non-skilled alike.

OPEN KIRK

The Royal Mile is filling up with tourists again and we are looking for volunteers for Open Kirk, to welcome visitors and show off our beautiful, newly decorated church on Saturdays and Sundays from May to September. Hours: 10.30 - 1.00pm and 1.00pm - 5.00pm. Open Kirk is a valuable source of revenue for the church and if you would like to take a turn please sign up on the board in the foyer or contact Lesley Wallace on lesley.wallace@blueyonder.co.uk

CHRISTIAN AID BOOK SALE

The annual book sale will take place at Edinburgh New Town Church (formerly St Andrew's & St George's West) in George Street, starting on Saturday May 9th and then continuing from Monday 11th to Friday 15th May. Books, toys, stamps, music and more can be dropped off from 9am to 8pm on May 4th – May 7th. For more information visit <https://www.edinburghnewtownchurch.org.uk/work/christian-aid-sale/>

AN UPDATED HISTORY OF CANONGATE KIRK

It's exactly 70 years since Ronnie Selby Wright first published *The Kirk and the Canongate* in 1956. He described it as 'a short history from 1128 to the present day.' Obviously, time has moved on in these three score years and ten and much could now be added to our story. Mark Peel, a member of our congregation and author, has kindly agreed to work on an updated history in anticipation of the 900th anniversary of the parish in 2028. As part of that process, he is keen to meet with other members of the congregation to gather snippets of information and insight – if you can help with this please have a word with him or email him on mcpel@gmail.com

STAMPS

We have found a company who will recycle used stamps with the money coming directly to the Kirk so please continue to bring any used stamps along to church and put them in the box at the back of the church. We would just ask that you trim the stamps leaving a margin of about a quarter of an inch (0.6cms) around them. We have received £57 for the first sack of stamps - not a huge amount but every little helps. The second sack is almost ready to go. They also recycle other items – have a look at the poster for details.

MARATHON WEEKEND

The Edinburgh Marathon is taking place on Sunday 24th May and the usual parking restrictions and road closures apply. The Canongate will be closed to vehicles until 12 noon on Sunday 24th May with parking restrictions until 12.30. Please allow extra time to get to church but don't be deterred. For detailed information visit <https://bit.ly/4tGDNIN>

PALACE EXHIBITION

The current exhibition at the King's Gallery, Holyroodhouse is *The Edwardians – Age of Elegance*, exploring the opulence and glamour of the Edwardian age through the lives and tastes of two of Britain's most fashionable royal couples – King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra, and King George V and Queen Mary – from their family lives and personal collecting to their glittering social circles and spectacular royal events. Open daily until 6th December 2026. For more information visit <https://bit.ly/4bJ9pHp>

SUNDAY OFFERINGS

Now that we are being charged to deposit cash into the bank, we encourage all members of the congregation who do not currently give via bank transfer to consider using our convenient contactless giving machine, Payaz. This will also enable us to claim Gift Aid where applicable. Full details are only required the first time you use the machine, making future donations quick and simple. Alternatively, you can continue to use the white envelopes, which enable us to claim Gift Aid and increase the value of your donation at no extra cost to you. Thank you for your continued generosity and support.

TRUSSELL TRUST

We continue to collect donations for Edinburgh foodbanks supported by Trussell Trust. Non-perishable foodstuffs and toiletries can be brought any Sunday and left in the basket in the foyer.

Minister:	The Revd Neil Gardner	nng22@btinternet.com	0131 556 3515
-----------	-----------------------	--	---------------

Kirk Secretary:	Imogen Gibson (office)	canongatekirk@btinternet.com	0131 556 3515
-----------------	------------------------	--	---------------

Office Opening Hours: Mon, Wed, Fri 9am – 1pm, Thursday 9am – 12 noon. Closed Tues.

<https://www.canongatekirk.org.uk/>



[_canongatekirk](#)



[@canongate.kirk](#)

Scottish Charity SC 015251
