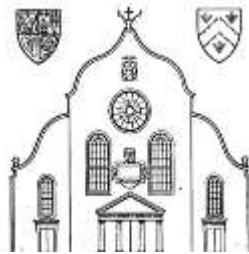


CANONGATE KIRK
THE KIRK OF HOLYROODHOUSE
& EDINBURGH CASTLE
www.canongatekirk.org.uk

October 2020 Newsletter



MINISTER'S LETTER

Canongate Kirk's Marriage Register has room for a dozen entries on every page and normally by this time of year I'd have had to turn over to start a new page. But not this year. Most of the weddings planned have been rescheduled for next year as a consequence of all the restrictions that would have prevented families and friends travelling and gathering this year. At the time of writing there are two weddings scheduled to take place in our church later this month, with far fewer guests than originally intended, and to date I've conducted two "outdoor" wedding services since the lockdown restrictions began to ease. One was on the doorstep of Canongate Kirk, and the other in the garden of the family home in Angus. And both were very personal and rather poignant. Partly because neither was subject to the sort of "distractions" that often come with a wedding these days – the technicalities of pew-ends, for instance, or the logistics of co-ordinating a bus to take guests to the reception. And partly because each ceremony was inevitably focussed on what always lies at its heart, the commitment that two people are declaring, one to the other, for as long as they both shall live.

The more recent outdoor service was necessarily 'reduced' from being attended by a very large congregation in a cathedral, to the couple's most immediate family members in the garden. But we still had the reading that so many couples choose for their ceremony, whatever its scale and wherever its location, the thirteenth chapter of St Paul's Letter to the Corinthians, his familiar words about faith, hope and love. Except this time one word stood out more even than those, because what St Paul actually wrote – in one particular translation at least - was "And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love." And love may be the greatest, but it was the word 'remain' that was strongest for me that day. After all the anxiety and uncertainty as plans were rewritten and arrangements unmade, after every Government announcement of further restrictions and obstacles in the way, after everything was turned upside down again and again; and now these three *remain*: faith, hope and love. Perhaps we all need reminded of that as autumn takes hold and the grip of the virus threatens to tighten once more, and more restrictions mean more plans are changed and more events rescheduled and nothing is as we would have it be. And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. Even though we can't have our usual Harvest Thanksgiving this month, for instance, we still have much to be thankful for. And that will never change.

PARISH REGISTER

Funeral

1st September

Marilyn Runcie

St Monans, Fife

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

DONATIONS FOR STREETWORK

Traditionally at harvest time we gather in donations of food and toiletries in support of Streetwork, the local resource centre for people struggling with homelessness and deprivation. Unfortunately, current restrictions mean we can't do that this year but the demand for Streetwork's services is sadly as high as ever. Our Kirk Session has agreed that direct financial donations should be encouraged – these can be made via the giving page on Streetwork's website <https://www.streetwork.org.uk/donate-3/> Please help if you can.

ONLINE BIBLE STUDY

The current series on the book of Exodus will conclude shortly. All material is on the website at <https://www.canongatekirk.org.uk/congregation/bible-study-2/> Led by Rev Breda Ludik, the week's study is posted on the website on Mondays with participation in group study either by email or our Zoom group. Anyone interested in participating in either format is welcome to contact Breda and he will add you to the mailing list for further instructions.

OFFERINGS

A number of members have asked for Canongate Kirk's bank details so that they can arrange standing orders or electronic transfers to continue to support the Church's work during the current crisis. If you'd like those details please e-mail canongatekirk@btinternet.com and we'll pass them on. Donations can also be given via our website.

EDINBURGH DOORS OPEN DAY 2020

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 public health emergency, there was no physical access to buildings for Doors Open Days which took place on 26th and 27th September. Instead, the Cockburn Association, which organises the event, turned it into a very successful 'Digital Doors Open Day.' You can still explore the interiors of dozens of buildings on their website at <http://www.cockburnassociation.org.uk/doorsopendays/> which includes a new 360 degree tour of Canongate Kirkyard.

CHRISTIAN AID PICTURE SALE

Although the usual sale in May was unable to go ahead, a sale of pictures will take place at St Andrew's and St George's West Church on Thursday 22nd, Friday 23rd (10am – 5pm) and Saturday 24th October (10am – 3pm). There will be a new system of display as the pews and chairs cannot be used, with a circulation route in operation, volunteers to help guide visitors, masks and hand sanitisers. Money raised from the sale will be donated to Christian Aid.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2020

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the Church of Scotland's annual General Assembly will now be held online the evening of Friday 2nd October and all day Saturday 3rd October. There will be no Lord High Commissioner, although The Queen will write to the Assembly expressing her support and encouragement. Debate will range from church finance to the Church's engagement with the pressing issues facing our nation and the global community. Everyone - wherever you are – is invited to join in and watch the livestream on the website

https://stream1.churchofscotland.org.uk/about_us/general_assembly/ or follow our updates on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/churchofscotland/> The Friday session will run from 7pm to around 9pm and the Saturday session will run from 9.15am to approximately 5pm. On Saturday there will be coffee and lunch breaks.



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