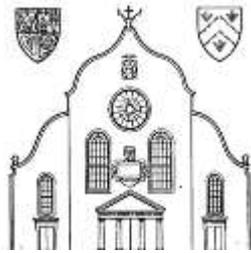


CANONGATE KIRK
THE KIRK OF HOLYROODHOUSE
& EDINBURGH CASTLE
www.canongatekirk.org.uk
Newsletter September 2021



MINISTER'S LETTER

As each passing day brings more grim news from Afghanistan, my mind turns more frequently to the brass cross - carefully crafted out of empty ammunition shells - that stands on the table in our War Memorial Chapel. The simple cross was made in Helmand Province and received and dedicated during a poignant service in Canongate Kirk over six years ago to mark the official end of British military operations out there.

I never served in Afghanistan myself but many of my friends did, and I can't help thinking of them at this time, and the risks they took and the soldiers they lost. And the families of those who were killed, on whose minds the chaos unfolding on our television screens must weigh especially heavily. Was it worth it? What was the point? These are the questions they must inevitably find themselves asking.

When soldiers risk their lives in battle, my sense is that they don't just do it for Queen and country, but for their friends, to protect and defend their brothers in arms whenever and wherever they understand them to be at risk. And many of our soldiers who died in Helmand Province over those bitter years of fighting were doing exactly that, protecting and defending their friends, instinctively and without thought for their own safety. It's precisely what their friends would have done for them if things had been different.

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

It's a thought that might just bring some small comfort to many of those families whose deep wounds of loss and sadness have been so cruelly reopened in recent days. We hold them today in our thoughts and prayers. Our brass cross forged in the heat and dust of Helmand stands as a permanent memorial to those they have loved and lost. In Edinburgh's military church we will always remember those who grow not old as we that are left grow old.

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

PARISH REGISTER

Baptism

1st August

Clementine Rhu Kelly

28th August

Sophie Isabel Stuart Turnbull

“Then he took them in his arms and blessed them.”

Funerals

2nd August

Alma Allan

Forthland Lodge

2nd August

Anne Millar

Queen’s Bay Lodge

16th August

Bruce Dingwall

Balgersho, Perthshire

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

OPEN KIRK

We have now trialled Open Kirk under the current restrictions and found it to be relatively straightforward. Visitors are required to leave their name and telephone number for track and trace purposes, wear face coverings, maintain a safe distance and follow a strict one-way system round the church. Like so much else these days, it isn’t what it used to be, but it’s better than nothing. If you’d like to help, please get in touch with the office, or sign up on the board in the foyer.

SUNDAY SERVICES AND PARKING

Edinburgh City Council has now introduced on-street parking charges from 12.30pm to 6.30pm every Sunday. With this in mind the Kirk Session has agreed that we shall continue to hold one service at 10.30am with the addition of a monthly evening service when the Council reintroduces its Open Streets programme, when it can be particularly difficult for some of our members to access the Kirk in the morning. Looking ahead we shall keep open the option of an additional earlier service, as previously, though it would have to start considerably earlier than the previous 10am Family Service slot. Comments – especially from those who used to attend the 10am service – would be welcome!

PASTORAL VISITS

As with hymn signing in church, pastoral visits to people’s homes – though not yet nursing homes or hospitals – can now be gradually reintroduced. Both our ministers have had both their jobs and are happy to visit by arrangement. If you would like a visit or know someone who would, please get in touch with the office. The Kirk Session has agreed to resume Open Kirk on a trial and strictly limited basis on Sunday afternoons in due course. If you would like to help, please get in touch with the office.

ECO TEAM UPDATE

On Sunday 5th September there will be a special Nations Climate Sunday service at Glasgow Cathedral in anticipation of COP26. The event will be broadcast live starting at 3pm with music and inspirational videos with the actual service starting at 4pm. Register to join at <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/nations-climate-sunday-service-churches-prepare-for-cop-26-tickets-165258230817>

There is still time to get involved with an initiative called Stiches for Survival <https://stichesforsurvival.earth/> that is looking for volunteers to knit small blankets (60cm x 100cm) before 30th September. The blanket will be connected to make a giant scarf approx. 1.5 miles long and will be wrapped around a building in Glasgow during COP26.

CHRISTIAN AID SALE

There will be a sale of pictures and Scottish books at St Andrew's and St George's West Church, 13 George Street, Edinburgh from Thursday 14th to Saturday 16th October, 10am – 3pm. Currently the organisers are requesting donations of pictures (not books) so if you have any you could spare, please contact the convenor Mary Davidson on T: 0131 556 2168 or 07714 186 754 to arrange for collection or delivery. Over the past ten years, sales at St Andrew's and St George's West Church have raised over a million pounds for Christian Aid – please consider donating once again.

Minister	The Revd Neil Gardner	nng22@btinternet.com	0131 556 3515
Assistant Minister	Douglas Reid	Douglas.Reid@churchofscotland.org.uk	07960251971
Kirk Secretary	Imogen Gibson (office)	canongatekirk@btinternet.com	0131 556 3515

Usual Office Opening Hours: Mon, Wed 9am – 1pm, Fri 8am – 12 noon.

Website: www.canongatekirk.org.uk  @CanongateKirk  @canongate.kirk
Scottish Charity SC 015251