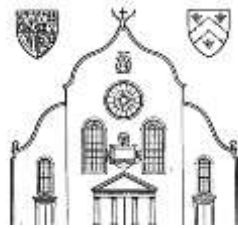


**CANONGATE KIRK
THE KIRK OF HOLYROODHOUSE
& EDINBURGH CASTLE**

www.canongatekirk.org.uk

Newsletter September 2023



MINISTER'S LETTER



Good morning*. There are always major art exhibitions in Edinburgh in August and this year has been no exception with an impressive retrospective of the work of Glaswegian artist Peter Howson, described as one of the leading figurative painters of his generation. It's entitled "When the apple ripens" and it certainly reflects the colourful fruit of his labours over several decades. In harsh and often brutal images that are characteristic of his work, Howson frequently focusses on the marginalized for his subject, victims of abuse and violence on the streets of his hometown or in the fields of Bosnia, where his experiences as official war artist had such a profound effect on him.

The exhibition also covers his eventual conversion to Christianity with a range of religious paintings that in their own way can be considered quite radical in the 21st century. In a video that complements the exhibition Howson admits that he has lost count of the number of times he has painted Jesus, often in a contemporary setting. And in his own day of course Jesus too focused on the marginalized and overlooked, those on the edge of society, those who would otherwise go unnoticed or ignored.

Many of Howson's paintings seem to be inspired by what St Paul describes in his letter to the Galatians as "the works of the flesh" – among them strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions. But by contrast the fruit of the Spirit – when the apple ripens – the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Lord help us to bear fruit in your service today, and to reach out to those on the edge, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

* This is a transcript of one of the Minister's recent contributions to the early morning Prayer for the Day series on BBC Radio 4.

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<i>Office Opening Hours: Mon, Wed 9am – 1pm, Thursday 9am – 12 noon, Fri 8am – 12 noon.</i>			
Website: www.canongatekirk.org.uk		 @CanongateKirk	 @canongate.kirk
Scottish Charity SC 015251			

PARISH REGISTER

Funeral	Memorial Service
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1 st August	25 th August	Dorothy MacLellan	Ayrshire
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“Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.”

OPEN KIRK REPORT by MADALAIN WALLACE

Over the months of July and August I had the pleasure of opening Canongate Kirk to the public every weekday. Each day has brought new visitors from all over the world each with their own questions and personal relationships with the Kirk. Quite a few times I have had visitors requesting information about a distant relative they believe is buried in the kirkyard, and I have had fascinating discussions about these relatives! For instance, descendants of the Boog family (who are buried in the kirkyard) visited in July when they were curating a file of information about their family history, the family informed me that Robert Boog (buried in the kirkyard) made medical instruments that were shipped even to New York! Additionally, some of his medical instruments can be seen in the Surgeon’s Museum here in Edinburgh. Several distant relatives of our original benefactor, Thomas Moodie, have visited the Kirk as well—Thomas Moodie’s relatives stretch all over the world, as I have spoken to relatives from New Zealand, Canada, and America. An interaction I found particularly interesting was with a woman from America who had traced her family tree back and found that she is a descendant of a Minister of Canongate—specifically, a descendant of John Warden who was the Minister of Canongate Kirk from 1755 to 1764!

Although August is the busiest month for Edinburgh as a whole, it was in July that the Kirk had the most visitors—one week in July saw around four thousand visitors! Many express their gratitude for our extensive collection of translated information sheets. Visitors have included people from all over America, Japan, China, South Korea, Central Europe, Eastern Europe, the Nordic Countries and Canada. However, the Kirk being open Monday to Friday has also allowed Edinburgh locals to visit for the first time—nearly every day a will local drop by and say, “I’ve lived here all my life and I’ve never once seen it open!”

The first week I worked in the Kirk was ‘Royal Week,’ when King Charles III received the Honours of Scotland; in this week quite a few of the visitors who were here for the ceremony dropped by the Kirk—including two Orthodox Jewish men. For them, the military connection the Kirk has was particularly intriguing, they asked questions about the War Memorial Chapel and the Military Colours around the Kirk. For them the military presence within the Kirk was of particular interest, as they told me it is something that their Synagogue would never have. Several times Catholic priests have visited the Kirk, and they often comment on the Catholic-esque structure of the Kirk and the presence of Latin around the interior. On numerous occasions American Baptists and Methodists visit the Kirk and they will often comment on the light shining into the kirk, the Kirk’s history, and its *blue-ness*, stating how different it feels to their churches back home in Florida, North Carolina, or Minnesota. Of course, the comments on the blue interior are not limited to Americans, it is one of the most commonly questions asked in Open Kirk—closely followed by “where is Adam Smith buried?” and, for a period of time, “where has Robert Fergusson’s statue gone?!”

Working in Canongate Kirk has been a wonderful way to spend my summer, I have been able to learn so much about the history of not just Canongate Kirk, but the City of Edinburgh as a whole; looking through old maps of the city and reading articles and books to be able to pass on information to our visitors. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time here, the people I have encountered, and all that I have learned!

OPEN KIRK UPDATE

The Festival and Fringe are now over but there are still lots of visitors and tourists on the Royal Mile and we would like to keep Open Kirk going for a few more weeks. Madalaine is continuing Monday to Friday in the meantime but there is still scope for volunteers from the congregation to take a turn on Saturdays. It would be particularly good to be open over Open Doors weekend on 23rd and 24th September. Please sign up in the foyer if you can help.

ROBERT FERGUSSON

The much admired statue by David Annand at our front gate has been repaired and hopefully, now the Festival is over, it won't be too long before City of Edinburgh Council puts Robert back in his usual place.

MARGARET BUCHANAN

Still on the theme of historical figures with a Canongate connection, we have been informed that a portrait painted by Sir Henry Raeburn of the wife of The Revd Walter Buchanan is currently on display in the dining room of the National Trust for Scotland's Georgian House in Charlotte Square. It's part of a special exhibition which runs until November, marking the 200th anniversary of the artist's death and featuring a number of his Edinburgh portraits, all from the NTS collection and more information can be found at <https://www.nts.org.uk/visit/places/georgian-house/highlights/raeburns-edinburgh-exhibition>

Walter Buchanan was minister here during the early decades of the nineteenth century, and overlapped with The Revd Robert Walker, more famously depicted by Raeburn as the Skating Minister! We have a large portrait of Walter on the back wall of the Kirk. His wife Margaret, who died in 1847, was a noted abolitionist in her own right.

BBC SNIPPETS

The BBC Radio 4 Prayer for the Day series mentioned on the front page can be accessed on the BBC Sounds website for a month after each broadcast, which began on 19th August and continued from 21st to 25th. Talking of the BBC, did you happen to see a recent edition of Pointless on BBC1 when in a round on royal wedding venues a photograph of Canongate Kirk was featured alongside Westminster Abbey and St George's Windsor? The host Alexander Armstrong identified us correctly, but otherwise we were a completely pointless answer. Oh well! Thankfully we featured more positively on the BBC 1 Songs of Praise programme on Sunday 27th August. The programme was marking the 300th anniversary of the death of Sir Christopher Wren, but referred to James Smith, the architect of Canongate Kirk and a contemporary of Wren's. Appropriately they used our recording of 'Let us Build a House'. Still available on BBC iPlayer.

ROYAL VISIT

We were delighted to welcome Prince Edward to our morning service on Sunday 6th August on his first visit to Canongate Kirk as Duke of Edinburgh. His Royal Highness is Royal Patron of the Edinburgh International Festival and was in town for the opening weekend of concerts and events. Our service also reflected the start of the Festival with extra musical contributions from Gina McCormack (violin).

CONCERT NEWS

Our programme of fourteen Festival concerts has come to an end and we won't be Venue 60 again until next year! Thanks are due to our volunteer stewards who welcomed both performers and audience members alike to the church and worked so hard to make each event run smoothly. September is a much quieter month with only one concert - but an important one: *Muse Ukraine – Indomitable Spirit* is a benefit concert to raise funds for British Ukrainian

Aid, a medical charity supporting on-going needs in Ukraine. With an all-Ukrainian music programme, the concert will unveil the long-lost gems of its musical and cultural heritage. Rising above the multitude of difficult historic times, past and present, this music honours the indomitable spirit of those who stand for the basis of humanity- a life in freedom and peace.

“Muse Ukraine: Indomitable Spirit” is a project of an ongoing collaboration between two artists, Ukrainian-American violinist Myroslava Khomik and Finnish-British pianist Julia Wallin, who believe that the power of music can serve as the best communicative tool in most challenging times. Organised together with The Royal Scots, the concert is on Friday 22nd September at 7.30pm. Definitely a date for your diaries. Tickets from

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/muse-ukraine-indomitable-spirit-tickets-662329434167v>

RICHMOND’S HOPE

To mark its 20th anniversary, Richmond's Hope is inviting supporters to fill a one metre stick with £1 coins to form part of a Mile of Memories installation in Holyrood Park on Sunday, 3rd September. All funds raised will go towards supporting bereaved children and families in Edinburgh and the Lothians. We have already filled two sticks at Canongate Kirk and it would be great to fill a couple more. The event will run from 1pm – 5pm and while it will be a day for remembering, it will be an enjoyable event for families and the whole community, with free music & performances, Highland dancing, face painting, fun activities & mindfulness sessions. Find out more about Richmond's Hope at www.richmondshope.org.uk

EDINBURGH RIDING OF THE MARCHES 2023

This spectacular event will once again take place this year on Sunday 10th September. It is free to watch and all are welcome to the Royal Mile. Entertainment starts at around midday and the horses will be making their way up the Royal Mile in the afternoon to muster by the Mercat Cross opposite the City Chambers. More information at <https://edinburghridingofthemarches.com/home/edinburgh-riding-of-the-marches/>

VOLUNTEER FAIR

Volunteer Edinburgh is celebrating its 25th anniversary with its annual volunteer recruitment fair on Wednesday 13th September from 10.30am - 6.30pm at St Paul’s and St George’s Church Hall, York Place. Entry is of course free and the fair will feature access to hundreds of volunteering opportunities across the city, 56 organisations looking for volunteers and a friendly café to relax in. For more information drop into their office at 222 Leith Walk, Edinburgh EH6 5EQ or email hello@volunteeredinburgh.org.uk T: 0131 225 0630.

TEA AND COFFEE VOLUNTEERS

If you can help provide our fellowship after worship, please sign up on the rota in the foyer. No previous experience necessary!

CRAFT CLUB

Our Kirk craft club meets monthly on the second Wednesday of each month, with the next regular meeting on Wednesday 13th September from 6.30 – 8pm in the Harry Younger Hall. The group is open to crafters and non-crafters alike – you can be sure of a friendly welcome! The Craft Club is organising a group trip to the Scottish Yarn Festival in Perth, Saturday 9th September. The show brings together independent yarn dyers, producers of single origin wool, inspirational tutors and lecturers, and all fibre crafters for an award nominated yarn festival. Tickets are £13. Anyone interested, please speak to Elise Ramsay or Alexis Moyer.

HARVEST THANKSGIVING

Our traditional service of Harvest Thanksgiving will take place on Sunday 15th October at 10.30am. The congregation is invited to bring along donations of non-perishable foodstuffs

and toiletries, which will be transferred afterwards to the Trussell Trust Edinburgh Foodbank network. Cash donations may also be given for our own Homeless Fund.

CHRISTMAS CARDS

You might appreciate advance notice that Canongate Kirk has commissioned a new Christmas card this year, featuring the palace pew's replica of the Honours of Scotland that were presented to HM The King in St Giles' Cathedral in July. These are in two different sizes and now available for purchase in packs of 10 @ £5, all proceeds to church funds. One or two previous cards featuring cartoons of Canongate choirboys have been reprinted and are also available for purchase.

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MARIPOSA TRUST SERVICE

Saying Goodbye services run by the Mariposa Trust provide a time and a place to acknowledge and remember babies lost prior to 24 weeks gestation – a devastating experience for parents and extended family. The Mariposa Trust is organising a special Saying Goodbye service in St Giles Cathedral on 11th September at 7pm. The service also welcomes anyone grieving for the fact they have been unable to have children. For more information on this and other Saying Goodbye services around Scotland visit www.sayinggoodbye.org

OLD ROYAL HIGH SCHOOL UPDATE

Due to escalating costs, the Old Royal High School Preservation Trust is sadly no longer able to convert the existing building overlooking Canongate Kirk into a new site for St Mary's Music School. However, the RHSPT has signed a lease with the City of Edinburgh council for the building to be used instead for a new National Centre for Music – a world-class venue for music education and public performance for the wider community. Work leading to the restoration of the school has already started. More information can be found at

<https://rhspt.org/>