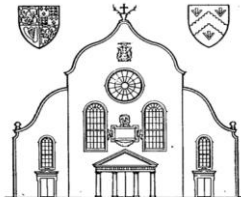


**CANONGATE KIRK
THE KIRK OF HOLYROODHOUSE
& EDINBURGH CASTLE**
www.canongatekirk.org.uk

Newsletter

July 2026



MINISTER'S LETTER

I've never blessed a lion before, but that's what I was asked to do on Wednesday 1st July in Princes Street Gardens! Not a real lion, I hasten to add, but an impressive statue commissioned by The Royal Regiment of Scotland to mark the twentieth anniversary of its formation, and unveiled by His Majesty The King, Colonel in Chief. The statue was created by local sculptor Kenny Hunter – cast in bronze, it depicts a young lion reclining on a plinth but engaged and alert as it looks into the far distance. A perfect symbol for a relatively young Regiment, always on the lookout for trouble on the horizon. A lion already features in the cap badge of the Regiment and has long been a symbol of the Army in Scotland, as demonstrated on the back of the Castle pew in Canongate Kirk. We are the Regimental Kirk for the Royal Regiment of Scotland, which is why I was asked to write a prayer for the unveiling ceremony:

“Almighty God, as we give thanks for the twentieth anniversary of The Royal Regiment of Scotland, so now we ask your blessing on this statue, that it may be an enduring symbol of courage and protectiveness, of loyalty and pride, of all that the Regiment represents now and for years to come....”

All six sets of Regimental Colours were on parade along with around 350 soldiers, a stirring sight and sound as they marched behind the Pipes and Drums through the gardens to take up their position by the statue directly beneath the unshakeable rock of Edinburgh Castle. I'm glad to report that most of our Regimental Colours and Standards are now back up on the walls of Canongate Kirk, with just two pairs to be returned to their rather tricky positions in the nave in due course. And the paintings which usually hang on the east and west walls are due back from the Conservation Studio within the next few days. We're nearly there, and should be able to incorporate an element of thanksgiving for the redecoration of the Kirk into a service in August. More details to follow.

Back on the lion theme, the Gospel writers each have a symbol, and St Mark is traditionally represented by a lion. It's thought to refer to his opening lines about John the Baptist fulfilling the prophecy of Isaiah, “the voice of one crying out in the wilderness.” May the world hear that voice in the wilderness of today, both now and for years to come...

Neville Gardner

PARISH REGISTER

WEDDINGS

13th June

Anna Whitley & Frederick Melvin

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

RENEWAL OF VOWS

8th June

Kevin & Jennifer Gossett

(South Carolina USA)

FUNERALS

10th June

Andrew Croy

Letham Park Care Home

3rd July

Harold Nicolson

Lochrin Place

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

PARISH GROUPING

United Evening Services

Please note there will be no evening service on 26th July as our organist Simon Leach will be giving the ‘St Giles at 6’ concert that evening. Members of the congregation are encouraged to attend his organ recital in the Cathedral. Our next United Evening Service will be in Canongate Kirk on Sunday 30th August at 7pm.

CRAFT CLUB

This month’s meeting of the Craft Club will be on Monday 13th July 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 packed with tourists again and our student interns are now welcoming visitors to the Kirk Monday to Friday. However, we are looking for volunteers for Open Kirk on Saturdays and Sunday afternoons. 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

CANONGATE KIRKYARD SUMMER TOURS

By popular demand, local historian Eric Drake is our guide again this summer to explore some of the fascinating stories of people buried in the Canongate Kirkyard. The tours start at noon and last about an hour. Free but donations welcome! Dates and themes are:

Sunday 26th July *Soldiers of the King*. Men who fought for King and country: but not always the same King and country.

Sunday 30th August *Theatrical Types*. Actors, professional musicians and other people associated with the stage.

CONCERT

Monday 6th July

2.30pm

Seattle Children's Chorus

FREE

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 mcgpeel@gmail.com

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>

STAMPS AND FOOD

Please continue to bring any used stamps along to church and put them in the box at the back of the church. And don't forget the basket for food bank donations in the foyer.

SUNDAY OFFERINGS

The Kirk Session has agreed with the Finance Committee's recommendation that we should no longer take up an offering as part of the service. This is for the good reason that most people support the church financially in other more direct ways, for which we are very grateful. From now on there will be a plate in the foyer beside the contactless machine where cash donations may still be placed before or after the service. An offering bag will still be brought forward during the service as we sing 'Praise God from whom all blessings flow.'

CHANGE TO OFFICE HOURS

Please note new office hours below.

Minister: The Revd Neil Gardner

nng22@btinternet.com

0131 556 3515

Office: Imogen Gibson

canongatekirk@btinternet.com

0131 556 3515

Office Opening Hours:

Monday	CLOSED
Tuesday	9am – 1pm
Wednesday	9am – 1pm
Thursday	9am – 12 noon
Friday	9am – 1pm

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



[canongatekirk](#)



[@canongate.kirk](#)

Scottish Charity SC 015251

Sunday 9th August – 3pm £15/10

EDINBURGH WIND SERENADES

Joyous, colourful music by Erskine and Elgar. Supporting UK-Med medical aid in Ukraine.

Friday 14th August – 7.30pm £12/10

TUTTI ORCHESTRA

Featuring music from all around the world, from the waltzes of Europe to the serene harmonies of East Asia.

Saturday 15th August – 12 noon £10

DAVID HAMILTON

David Hamilton returns with a programme of Bach's organ works on the magnificent Frobenius organ.

Saturday 15th August – 5pm FREE

HITHERTONS VOCAL ENSEMBLE

Rich harmonies, soulful melodies, a cappella joy! A 60-minute eclectic musical journey.

Saturday 16th August – 6pm £13/11

ALASTAIR SAVAGE AND FRIENDS

A Fringe favourite, Alastair returns with Scots fiddle old and new and a stellar cast of Scotland's finest musicians.

Monday 17th August – 1.15pm £12

EDINBURGH SACRED ARTS FESTIVAL YOUNG COMPOSERS' COMPETITION

The Sacred Arts Festival Singers perform the winning compositions

Monday 17th August – 7.30pm £15/12

BACH ENSEMBLE OF EDINBURGH

An all Bach programme featuring soprano Angela Hicks and trumpeter Aaron Akugbo.

Wednesday 19th August – 1.15pm FREE

EDINBURGH SACRED ARTS FESTIVAL YOUNG POETS' COMPETITION

Winning entries from the 2026 competition read along with poetry by Robert Crawford and Christine De Luca.

Thursday 20th August – 2pm £15/12

THE MOON IS DISTANT FROM THE SEA

An afternoon of song and poetry readings inspired by Emily Dickinson. Supporting Canongate Kirk.

Thursday 20th August – 7.30pm £15/12

BACH ENSEMBLE OF EDINBURGH

Returning with concertos by JS Bach, CPE Bach, Handel and Vivaldi.

Friday 21st August – 7pm £11/9

FLUTE AND HARPSICHORD CONCERTO

Baroque music with Canongate Kirk's organist Simon Leach and flautist Hannah Foster.

Saturday 22nd August – 3pm FREE

GREAT YORKSHIRE CHORUS

Pop and rock favourites with a superb choral twist by this outstanding dynamic choir.

Tuesday 25th August – 9pm £15/12

CALTON CONSORT

From the monumental Slavonic intensity of Schnittke to meditative stillness of Galina Grigorjeva – an hour of reflection and sonic depth.

Saturday 29th August – 2pm FREE

STRAY NOTES

A community choir from Harrogate singing an eclectic mix of music including choral, pop, rock, show tunes.

Tickets and information for all shows available at <https://www.edfringe.com/tickets> and on the door.