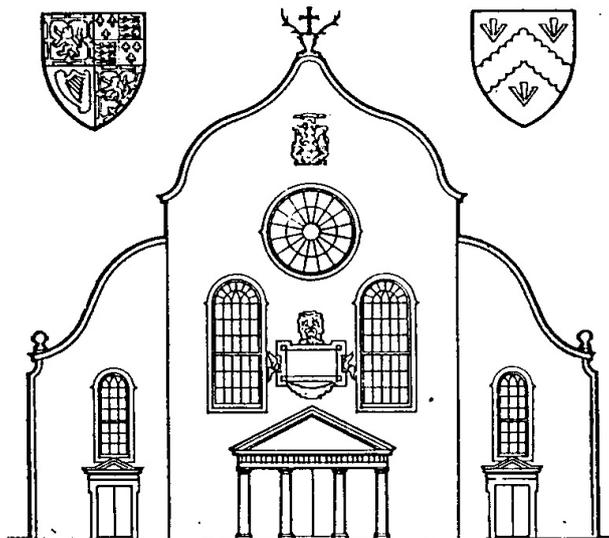


CANONGATE KIRK THE KIRK OF HOLYROODHOUSE & EDINBURGH CASTLE

Newsletter
December 2016 and January 2017



ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS SERVICES

| | | |
|---|-----------------|--|
| Sunday 4th December <i>Advent 2</i> | 10am 11-15am | Family Service Parish Worship |
| Sunday 11th <i>Advent 3</i> | 10am 11-15am | Christingle Service Parish Worship |
| Sunday 18th <i>Advent 4</i> | 10am 11-15am | Family Service, with Baptism Lessons and Carols for Christmas |
| Saturday 24th <i>Christmas Eve</i> | 11-30pm | Watchnight Service |
| Sunday 25th <i>Christmas Day</i> (Children are encouraged to bring a new gift to show the congregation) | 11am | Family Service. |

| | | |
|---|---------|------------------------------------|
| Sunday 1st January 2017 | 10am | Family Service |
| <i>New Year's Day</i> | 11-15am | Parish Worship with Holy Communion |
| Sunday 8th January | 10am | Family Service |
| <i>Epiphany 1</i> | 11.15am | Parish Worship |
| Sunday 15th January | 10am | Family Service |
| <i>Epiphany 2</i> | 11.15am | Parish Worship |
| Sunday 22nd January | 10am | Family Service |
| <i>Epiphany 3</i> | 11.15am | Parish Worship |
| Sunday 29th January | 10am | Family Service |
| <i>Epiphany 4</i> | 11.15am | Parish Worship with Holy Communion |

MINISTER'S LETTER

What does Canongate Kirk have in common with the Assembly Rooms, the Royal Lyceum Theatre, Murrayfield Stadium and the National Library of Scotland? The answer is that they are all taking part in this year's *24 Doors of Advent*, a free event that runs until Christmas Eve and allows folk a chance to look behind all sorts of doors usually closed at this time of year, across the city. Further details can be found on our website but the specific day we have been allocated is Friday 23rd December when our familiar red doors will be open to locals and tourists alike between 11am and 3pm. There's a note elsewhere about opportunities to help with stewarding Open Kirk at various times over the festive season, but you might like just to pop in sometime on 23rd December and see what's happening. This year's event is tied in to the Festival of Architecture and organised in conjunction with the Royal Incorporation of Architects Scotland and we've been asked to participate because of our distinctive architecture and design. But it's all so much in contrast to the stable in which Jesus was born. No pillars and porticoes there. As one of our carols puts it:

*Lord, you were rich beyond all splendour, yet, for love's sake, became so poor;
Leaving your throne in glad surrender, sapphire-paved courts for stable floor:
Lord, you were rich beyond all splendour, yet, for love's sake, became so poor.*

Of course our doors will also be open for all our special Christmas services listed overleaf, and you and yours will be more than welcome at any or all of them. And I hope and pray that the doors to all our hearts and homes will be open to Christ's coming once again. Happy Christmas!

PARISH REGISTER

Wedding

26th November Sarah-Kate Lawson & James Roxburgh

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

Funeral

31st October Helen Ryan, Canongate

“Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid”.

CHRISTMAS APPEAL

The Kirk Session has decided that this year our special Christmas collections should be divided between two charities **World Vision**, which supports vulnerable children in a number of troubled areas of the world and **Comas**, a locally-based charity which addresses issues of poverty and dependence on our doorstep. Retiring offerings in support of these worthwhile causes will be available after all services from 18th December through to 1st January. If you are to be away over Christmas but would still like to support our Christmas Appeal, donations may be handed in at the office.

WASHBAGS

The Kirk Session has also agreed that we will support the request from Crisis at Christmas for wash bags once again this year. Items needed are wash bags, body wash, toothbrush, toothpaste, roll-on deodorant, shampoo and conditioner. For women's wash bags we would also like to include sanitary items and, where possible, give gender specific deodorant sticks. Please do not include aerosols or shavers with blades. Wash bags should be brought to church by 18th December.

CHRISTMAS SUPPER

Canongate Kirk Christmas Supper will be held in the Harry Younger Hall on the evening of Thursday 8th December. Tickets (cost £13) are available from Ann Gibson, Dinah Croy, Etta Geekie or John Fanning. Donations for dessert and wine are appreciated.

CHRISTMAS SOUP LUNCH

Because of the Christmas Supper, the monthly soup lunch has been delayed until the following week and will take place at 12 noon on Tuesday 13th December. All welcome.

CHRISTMAS CARDS

For the next few weeks a selection of Canongate Kirk Christmas cards and other items will remain available for purchase from a table in the foyer of the Kirk. Don't forget to save your used stamps from all the cards you receive in December, and

bring them to the box, also in the foyer, from which they are sent to support the Church of Scotland's work abroad.

REV THOMAS WHITE

Around All Saints recently reference was made to Thomas White's long association with Canongate Kirk from 1886 to 1936. He was buried at the Grange Cemetery on 5th December 1936 and this year on Sunday 4th December 2016, almost eighty years to the day, a very short commemoration will be held – and flowers from Canongate laid - by his grave at 2pm. Anyone wishing to come will be more than welcome, and encouraged to meet inside the cemetery gates, on Grange Road, just before 2pm.

SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT

Once again Canongate Kirk has been allocated a number of places for the Scottish Parliament's annual Christmas Carol Service within the Parliament building on Wednesday 21st December at 6-15pm. Mulled wine/fruit juice and mince pies will be served in the main hall after the service. If you would like to attend please sign the sheet on a clipboard at the back of the Kirk, or let the office know.

ECUMENICAL SERVICES

In keeping with the spirit of ecumenical co-operation that has developed this year with our neighbours at Old St Paul's Jeffrey Street and St Patrick's Cowgate, you might like to attend some of their extra Christmas services too: Old St Paul's are having a service of Nine Lessons and Carols at 6-30pm on Sunday 18th December and an all-age Crib Service on Christmas Eve at 4-30pm. Meanwhile St Patrick's are holding a Stations of the Nativity Service at 7pm on Monday 19th December. Members of our congregation will be more than welcome to attend any of these services.

OPEN KIRK

As indicated in the Minister's letter, Canongate Kirk's date for inclusion in the 24 Doors of Advent is 23rd December. In addition, with so many visitors expected to visit Edinburgh over the festive season, we are keen to try and operate Open Kirk for short periods over the two weeks leading up to the New Year. It is envisaged that if we have sufficient hardy volunteers we would open between 10.30am and 2.30pm on 21st, 22nd, 23rd, 29th, 30th and 31st December. Anyone prepared to do two hours in either a morning or an afternoon session on any of these days should please give their name to either Ann Gibson or the Session Clerk.

ORGANIST

Richard Neville-Towle is to step down as organist at the end of the year after 15 years of loyal service. At its recent meeting the Kirk Session recorded its appreciation of Richard's support and friendship over the years and sent good wishes to him and to the family. Steps will be taken to appoint a successor to the post in January 2017 and in the meantime we are glad that Edward Dewhirst has agreed to help "hold the fort".

KIRK FLOWERS

We are very fortunate in that much of the Kirk's weekly flower arrangements are paid for through donations from members of the congregation and arranged by a small group of volunteers. Some members who donate often request a particular date to commemorate or celebrate a particular occasion and where that date has already been allocated, a suitable alternative date is agreed. We are anxious to provide all members of the congregation with as many opportunities as possible to mark special occasions by having flowers arranged on a particular weekend and to that end will provide with effect from 1 January 2017, a list in the vestibule for people to put their names in unallocated slots. Anne Baker coordinates the flower arranging volunteers and she would be delighted to advise members on how to make flower donations and to book a date. Any surplus at the end of the year from flower donations will be transferred into the Kirk's general fund unless otherwise requested by the donor.

YOUNG ADULTS GROUP

A number of young adults within the congregation have formed themselves into a group, which will meet up from time to time outwith Sunday services. They've already met for lunch one day, and are now planning visits to the National Gallery of Scotland and the Advent Market. If you – or someone you know – might like to join them, please get in touch with Alexis Moyer on moyeal03@gmail.com

BIBLE STUDY

The recent series on Ephesians came to an end last month. A new series looking at extracts from the Book of Isaiah will resume on Thursday 19th January 2017 at 11am, to be followed in due course by a Lent study group.

THE FELLOWSHIP GROUP, from Peter Sutton

The group met last week for an excellent Fish Supper and discussion around the theme of 'hope'. This warming gathering concluded the first full year of the fellowship programme. Looking back to our opening talk on Pilgrimage we have indeed journeyed well together and, walking with God, we could not have hoped for a better start to this new initiative. All six gatherings were well supported and

we have been inspired by two excellent speakers, two challenging films, and two delicious meals. This solid format has served us well but the Committee, being open to and encouraging new ideas, and in response to suggestions, will be organising an evening of songs of praise when we reconvene in March - more details to follow. Meanwhile thanks to Jane, Helen and Irené for their outstanding efforts in bringing it all together and more.

VISITOR FROM SOUTH AFRICA, from Peter Sutton

In January Canongate Kirk will be hosting Garikai Gwangwava a probationer minister from the Uniting Presbyterian Church in South Africa. Mfundisi (Minister) Garikai (aged 31) is from Harare in Zimbabwe and is getting married on 17th December. He is a recording artist and a fine jazz musician and is really looking forward to coming to Scotland for the first time although he says he will be missing his new wife! I had the privilege of spending 2 weeks with Garikai and the other UPCSA probationers when I was in Stellenbosch in August. I will be putting together a programme for his stay (14-28 January) and if anyone would like to help provide accommodation for all or part of his stay please do get in touch. I know he is going to bring so much to the life of our church and it is going to be a great start to the New Year to have Garikai with us.

LIFE & WORK

In this month's magazine: **O Come Let Us Adore Him** The Rev Dr Douglas Galbraith reflects on the history of some of the best-loved Christmas carols.

Plus: seasonal story from Kenneth Steven, reflections by Ron Ferguson and the Very Rev James Simpson, Christmas prayer; **'I Absolutely Believe in God'**

Jackie Macadam meets Boyd Tunnock, managing director of the world-famous confectionery company and Church of Scotland elder; **Helping the Vulnerable**

Thomas Baldwin reports on the major funding crisis facing Borderline, the Church-supported charity which helps homeless Scots in London; **SOLAS – 'Saving of lives at sea'**

The Rev Dr Marjory MacLean on life aboard a Royal Naval vessel rescuing migrants crossing the Mediterranean; **A Visitor's View** Richard Ellis shares his reflections on the 885 services in 200 churches he attended in the course of his work as Fulton Lecturer in Speech at New College, Edinburgh;

'You are Beautiful' In the third part of a series centring around prison life, the Very Rev Dr Andrew McLellan describes the hope from the events which led to Jesus' crucifixion;

'A Lovely and Undervalued Part of Scotland' John R Hume profiles a parish church in an area with strong Covenanting links; **Plus** news, reviews, letters, registers and crosswords – all for just £2.20. **Christmas Special Offer** - six month gift subscription for only £12, to order visit the website or call 0131 225 5722.

CONCERTS IN DECEMBER

Glasgow Chamber Choir

Saturday 3rd December 3pm

Celebrating the Bard - a celebration of the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death with settings of Shakespeare's texts by Frank Martin, Cecilia McDowall and Jaakko Mäntyjärvi, alongside music from the Elizabethan era. Tickets £10/£8 on the door or from www.glasgowchamberchoir.org.uk

Chapter House Singers and Ensemble

Friday 9th December 7.30pm

Music for Christmas featuring Respighi's *Laud to the Nativity* and excerpts from Handel's *Messiah*. Conductor: Les Shankland with Morley Whitehead (organ), Susan McNaught (soprano), Rachael Liddell (mezzo soprano) and John Marshall (tenor.)

Tickets £12 in advance from www.chapterhousesingers.com or choir members. £15 on the door (children: free admission.)

Open Orchestra

Saturday 10th December 7.30pm

Mahler First Symphony. Conductor Andrew Lees.

Free admission with a closing collection

St Andrew Camerata

Saturday 17th December 7.30pm

The Spirit of Christmas - directed by Vincent Wallace taking you on a trip around the world with music and words to entertain.

Tickets £12/£8 in advance from www.usherhall.co.uk

Ludus Baroque

Tuesday 20th December 7pm

Bach Christmas Oratorio performed by the Marian Consort and Ludus Baroque's chamber orchestra. Conductor: Richard Neville-Towle.

Tickets £22.50/£20/£10 or on the door £25 www.ludusbaroque.co.uk

SOLD OUT!

EXHIBITIONS IN EDINBURGH

The BP Portrait Award 2016 is showing at the Scottish National Portrait Gallery until March 26th 2017. Selected from 2,557 entries by artists from 80 countries around the world, the BP Portrait Award 2016 represents the best of contemporary painting. The subjects and styles range enormously and it is well worth a visit. Meanwhile, Painting Paradise – The Art of the Garden exhibition continues at Queen's Gallery, Palace of Holyroodhouse until Sunday 26th February.

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## DUTY ELDERS FOR DECEMBER, JANUARY AND FEBRUARY

### DECEMBER

|               |            |               |             |
|---------------|------------|---------------|-------------|
| Rie Stevenson | Anne Baker | Gavin Brydone | Kate Church |
| Anne Croft    | Dinah Croy | John Fanning  | Etta Geekie |

### JANUARY

|                  |                  |               |              |
|------------------|------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Stuart McFarlane | Mairead Anderson | Anne Gibson   | Roddy Gow    |
| Fiona Grant      | Jackie McFarlane | Colin Stewart | Jane Stewart |
| Robert Watson    | Rachel Wright    |               |              |

### FEBRUARY

|                   |                |               |               |
|-------------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|
| Donald Davidson   | Helen Aitken   | Alastair Bowe | Rosemary Bowe |
| Christina Coltart | Mary Craig     | Ann McCarter  | Ken Scott     |
| John Smith        | Lesley Wallace |               |               |

**Minister** The Revd Neil Gardner  
**Assistant Minister** Mr Peter Sutton  
**Kirk Secretary** Imogen Gibson (office)  
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