



EDINBURGH  
FESTIVAL OF THE  
SACRED ARTS

10–16 August 2025

[edinburghsacredartsfestival.org](http://edinburghsacredartsfestival.org)

Edinburgh  
**fringe**



## How to Book

Book your tickets via  
Edinburgh Festival Fringe:  
[edfringe.com](http://edfringe.com)

or via Eventbrite:  
[eventbrite.com](http://eventbrite.com)

Tickets for many events will also  
be available on the door.

## Our Supporters

The Edinburgh Sacred Arts Foundation is a registered Scottish Charity (SC051554). It relies on grants and donations to cover the cost of organization and publicity, to fund prizes for its competitions, and to ensure that ticket prices for its events can be kept as low as possible. Donations for specific events and exhibitions, as well as general costs, are welcome.

To discuss a donation please contact us at  
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Many donations are eligible for gift aid,  
which can greatly increase their value.

The Edinburgh Sacred Arts Foundation  
gratefully acknowledges generous financial  
support for the 2025 Edinburgh Festival of the  
Sacred Arts from:

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**The Church Hymnary Trust**  
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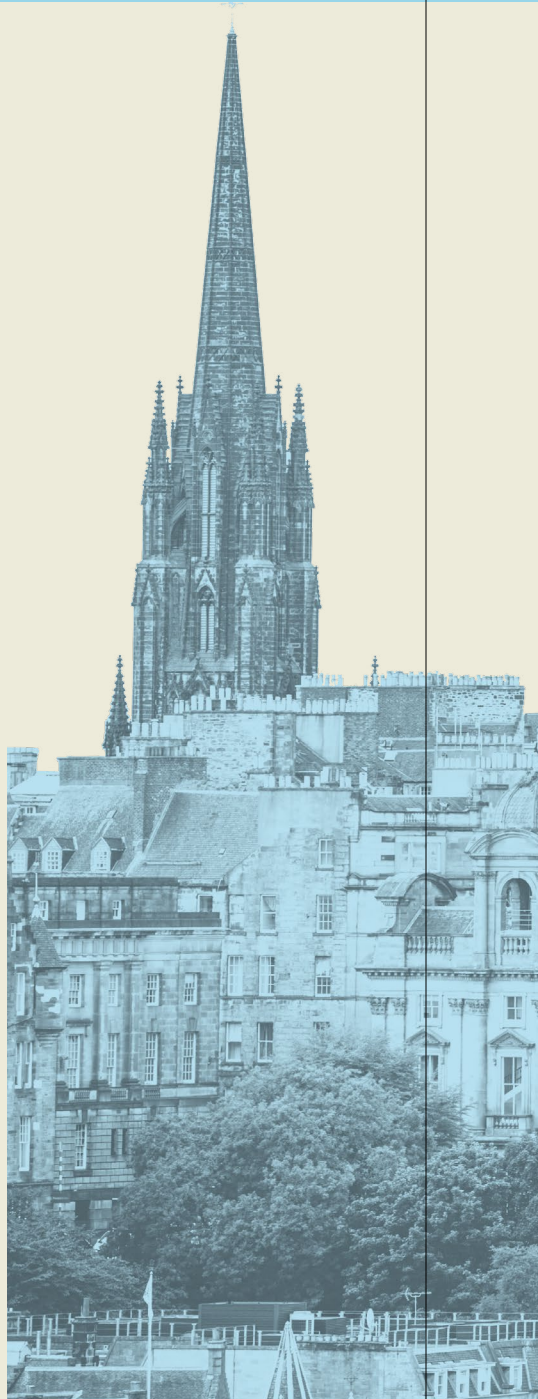
## Welcome

The **Edinburgh Festival of the Sacred Arts** takes place each year in the middle week of the Edinburgh Fringe. Now in its 7th year, the Festival is an initiative of the Edinburgh Sacred Arts Foundation which exists to support, encourage and stimulate artistic activity that draws on the rich Christian inheritance in the arts.

The Christian religion has stimulated an enormous wealth of music, painting, poetry, drama, sculpture and architecture, as well as tapestry, embroidery and floral art. Using many of Edinburgh's most beautiful churches as venues, this annual Festival aims to offer residents and visitors an unusual programme of recitals, exhibitions, tours, screenings and performances. They all draw on this great inheritance, and at the same time enable the sacred arts to make a significant contribution to the cultural life of Edinburgh during its summer festivals.

In recent years, the Foundation has also sponsored competitions for young people living, studying or working in Scotland, who compose sacred music and write religious verse. These competitions have attracted widespread interest, and the Festival gives finalists an opportunity to present their winning work to an international audience.

More information about the Foundation and highlights from previous festivals can be found on our website:  
[edinburghsacredartsfestival.org](http://edinburghsacredartsfestival.org)







## **FESTIVAL OPENING SERVICE** with guest preacher **Dr Rowan Williams**

**Sunday 10 August, 10.30am** • Free admission  
**St John's Episcopal Church, Princes Street, EH2 4BJ**

The stunning interior of William Burn's landmark church on Princes Street provides the context for a Sung Eucharist to mark the start of the 2025 Festival. The outstanding Choir of St John's singing Vierne's *Messe Solennelle* under its director Giles Wagstaff, will be joined by guest preacher Dr Rowan Williams, former Archbishop of Canterbury. All welcome. Free admission; retiring collection.



## **The Dark Well from Which to Draw** with poets **Grahame Davies** and **Rowan Williams**, composer **Paul Mealor**, and reader **Lois McFarland**

**Sunday 10 August, 3–4.15pm** • £18 (under 18s £12)  
**St John's Episcopal Church, Princes Street, EH2 4BJ**

Organised in conjunction with the Scottish Network for Religion and Literature, this exploration of Welsh religious poetry marks 25 years since the death of R. S. Thomas. Grahame Davies and Rowan Williams, joined by composer Paul Mealor, celebrate Thomas's poetic achievement with a fresh presentation of the Welsh tradition in religious poetry, along with music performed by the Sacred Arts Festival Singers under director Calum Robertson.



## **War, Peace and Reconciliation** **Durufié Requiem and other choral works** with the **Robin Chapel Choir**, dir. **Paul Gudgin**

**Sunday 10 August, 7.30pm** • £15 (under 18s £10)  
**St Vincent's Chapel, St Vincent Street, EH3 6SW**

Edinburgh's Robin Chapel situated in Craigmillar is a memorial to Lt Robin Tudsbury of the Royal Horse Guards. Robin was killed in action in the final months of World War II, and in this recital the acclaimed Robin Chapel Choir marks the 80th anniversary of his death with a selection of choral works from the aftermath of the war. The recital includes Durufé's exquisite *Requiem*, composed in 1947.

## **Young Composer's Competition Recital**

**Monday 11 August, 1.15pm** • £12 (under 18s free)  
**Canongate Kirk, The Royal Mile, EH8 8BN**

The Sacred Arts Festival Singers, under their director Calum Robertson, perform the winning compositions in the 2025 Sacred Music Young Composers Competition. During the event the competition's Principal Adjudicator, Paul Mealor LVO, one of the world's most 'performed' living composers, will comment on the winning compositions. The programme will also include some of his own pieces. *Sponsored by the Edinburgh Society of Organists and the Royal College of Organists; prizes generously funded by Geoff & Mary Ball.*



## **Time in Music is Much** **Contemporary Sacred Song, with** **Sam Madden, tenor and Will Sims, piano**

**Monday 11 August, 7.30pm** • £16 (under 18s £10)  
**St Vincent's Chapel, St Vincent Street, EH3 6SW**

Sam Madden is an international tenor from Dunedin, New Zealand, currently Lay Clerk at Ely Cathedral. Will Sims is the Director of Chapel Music at Robinson College, University of Cambridge and an accomplished collaborative pianist, singer, and composer. Following their Sacred Arts Festival debut in 2024, Sam and Will make a welcome return with a recital of sacred song by contemporary composers.



## **Art Songs and Lieder on Sacred Themes** **Emma Morwood, soprano and** **Ingrid Sawers, piano**

**Tuesday 12 August, 1.15pm** • £12 (under 18s £5)  
**Old Saint Paul's Episcopal Church, Jeffrey St, EH1 1DH**

Emma Morwood's recent concert highlights include *Messiah* at the Usher Hall with Edinburgh Royal Choral Union, and soloist/presenter for the Royal Scottish National Orchestra Viennese Gala tour. Pianist Ingrid Sawers teaches at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, and has performed at venues throughout the UK, Europe and in Canada. The programme will include music by Schubert, Strauss, Rachmaninov, Howells and Samuel Barber.





### Exploring Sacred Space: The Magdalen Reformation Chapel

**Tuesday 12 August, 3–4pm • £10**  
41 Cowgate, EH1 1JR

Opened in 1542 as a Catholic Chapel for the fashionable area of Edinburgh's Cowgate, the Scottish Reformation of 1560 turned the Magdalen Chapel into the birthplace of Scottish Presbyterianism. Expert guides will relate the story of this fascinating building, which contains the oldest stained glass in Scotland. PLUS an opportunity to hear live Scottish metrical psalm singing. Organised in conjunction with The Scottish Reformation Society. Group limited to 25 people. *Advance booking only via eventbrite.com.*



### Faith in the Footlights: The Spiritual Resonances of Musical Theatre with author Ian Bradley and Schola Cantorum, dir. Michael Ferguson

**Tuesday 12 August, 7.30pm • £18 (under 18s £12)**  
St Mary's Metropolitan Cathedral, EH1 3JR

This groundbreaking event is an engagement between the renowned Schola Cantorum of St Mary's Catholic Cathedral and Ian Bradley, author of *You've Got to Have a Dream: The Message of the Musical*. Together they uncover intriguing theological implications in musical theatre, including *The Sound of Music*, *South Pacific*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Phantom of the Opera* and *Les Misérables*.



### Young Religious Poets Competition Final with Christine De Luca & Robert Crawford

**Wednesday 13 August, 1.15pm • £12 (under 18s free)**  
Canongate Kirk, The Royal Mile, EH8 8BN

The winning entries of the Scotland-wide 'Young Religious Poets Competition' will be announced and read along with poems by two established poets. Christine De Luca held the position of Edinburgh's Makar (poet laureate) from 2014–17. Robert Crawford has published eight collections of poetry and been shortlisted for the T S Eliot Prize. *In conjunction with the Scottish Poetry Library and sponsored by The Christian Arts Trust.*



### The Scottish Metrical Psalter: Celebrating 375 Years

**Wednesday 13 August, 7.30pm • £18 (under 18s £10)**  
Church of the Sacred Heart, Lauriston St, EH3 9DJ

The Scottish Metrical Psalter was first published in Edinburgh in 1650. This celebration of the Psalter's enduring contribution to sacred music throughout the world is introduced by Revd David Fergusson, Dean of the Chapel Royal in Scotland.

Jonathan Love, Zoe Watkins and Alexander McNamee, winners from last year's Young Composers Competition, join Edinburgh composer Chris Hutchings with new musical settings of words from the Psalter, performed by the Sacred Arts Festival Singers under the direction of Calum Robertson. The event includes an arrangement of 'The Lord's my Shepherd' by John Kitchen MBE, Edinburgh City Organist, and a chance to hear psalms in Gaelic. *With thanks to Canonmills Church for financial support in commissioning Chris Hutchings' composition.*



### Exploring Sacred Space: The Magdalen Reformation Chapel

**Thursday 14 August, 3–4pm • £10**  
41 Cowgate, EH1 1JR

*Details as Tue 12 August above.*  
*Advance booking only via edfringe.com.*



### La Serenissima: Vivaldi In Venice Howe Street Ensemble, dir. Les Shankland

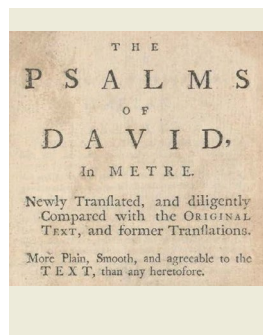
**Thursday 14 August, 7.30pm • £16 (under 18s £10)**  
Canongate Kirk, The Royal Mile, EH8 8BN

Antonio Vivaldi (1678–1741) was employed as Maestro di Capella at the Ospedale Della Pietà, situated in La Serenissima – the great mercantile city of Venice.

Edinburgh's atmospheric Canongate Kirk provides the Howe Street Ensemble with the perfect context for performing works from Vivaldi's collection of instrumental, operatic, and church music. The recital includes the *Gloria* in D major and *Lauda Jerusalem*, along with the Vesper Psalm *Beatus Vir*.







### The Split-Leaf Psalter

**Friday 15 August, 3–4pm • £10 (under 18s free)**  
**St Vincent's Chapel, St Vincent Street EH3 6SW**

Continuing the celebration of the Scottish Metrical Psalter, this event uses narration and enactment, interviews, audience participation, a book display, and 'the bairns' from the Sang Schule to reveal the complex making of the 'Scottish Psalter' through the centuries. *Presented in conjunction with the Church Service Society and with generous financial support from the Church Hymnary Trust.*



### So Great A Cloud Of Witnesses: Music and Poetry Celebrating The Saints and Martyrs

**Friday 15 August, 8pm • £16 (under 18s £10)**  
**Old Saint Paul's Episcopal Church, Jeffrey St, EH1 1DH**

The Bible memorably says, 'We are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses'. This phrase provides the inspiration for the acclaimed choir of Old Saint Paul's, under its director Dr John Kitchen MBE, to perform a selection of anthems and hymns inspired by the lives and deaths of the great witnesses to Christian faith. Drawn from works composed and written over two millennia, the music will be interspersed by poetry reflecting the same theme.



### Charlie Chaplin's *The Pilgrim*

**with an introduction by Richard Kendall**

**Saturday 16 August, 12 noon • £10**  
**St Vincent's Undercroft, St Vincent Street, EH3 6SW**

In this brilliant, but little known silent film from 1923, Charlie Chaplin plays an escaped convict who steals a minister's clothes to replace his prison uniform. This disguise leads him into a series of misadventures when he has to keep playing the part of a parson, including conducting a wedding and improvising a sermon. The screening of this unique film will be introduced by Richard Kendall, who specialises in the history of silent film.

**BOOK YOUR TICKETS: [edfringe.com](http://edfringe.com) / [eventbrite.com](http://eventbrite.com)**

### FESTIVAL CLOSING SERVICE

**Saturday 16 August, 4pm • Free admission**  
**St Michael and All Saints, Brougham St, EH3 9JH**

St Michael and All Saints at Tollcross was built in 1867 by R R Anderson, Edinburgh's most famous architect. To close the 2025 Festival, the Choir of St Michael's, under director Sandy Chenery, sings C V Stanford's celebrated setting of Choral Evensong. The service, led by the Rector Fr Oliver Brewer-Lennon, includes Villetto's *Hymne à la Vierge*, and an address by the Most Reverend Leo Cushley, Archbishop and Metropolitan of St Andrews & Edinburgh. All welcome.



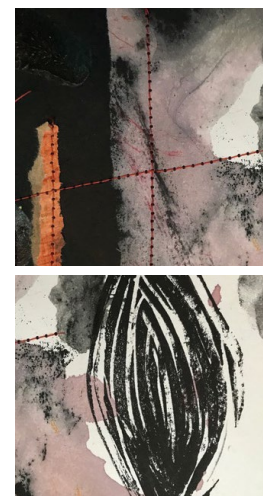
### Exhibition • Seeds of Hope with Carol Marples

**Mon 11 – Fri 15 August • Exhibition free • Workshops £20**  
**St Vincent's Undercroft, St Vincent Street, EH3 6SW**

For over thirty years, Carol Marples of the Soul Marks Trust has been engaged with art as a means of spiritual exploration and discovery. She is widely known for leading workshops that use art to enable participants to find a deeper spiritual dimension in working with matter, form and colour. This five-day exhibition includes 3 morning workshops guiding participants in making and reflecting, bringing art and prayer together on the exhibition's theme.

**Exhibition:** Mon 10am–5pm; Tue/Wed/Thu 12 noon–5pm; Fri 10am–5pm. Free (donations welcome)

**Participatory Workshops:** Tue/Wed/Thu 10am–12 noon; £20 in advance only from Fringe Box Office (max. 15)



### Exhibition • Discovering the Fabric of Faith

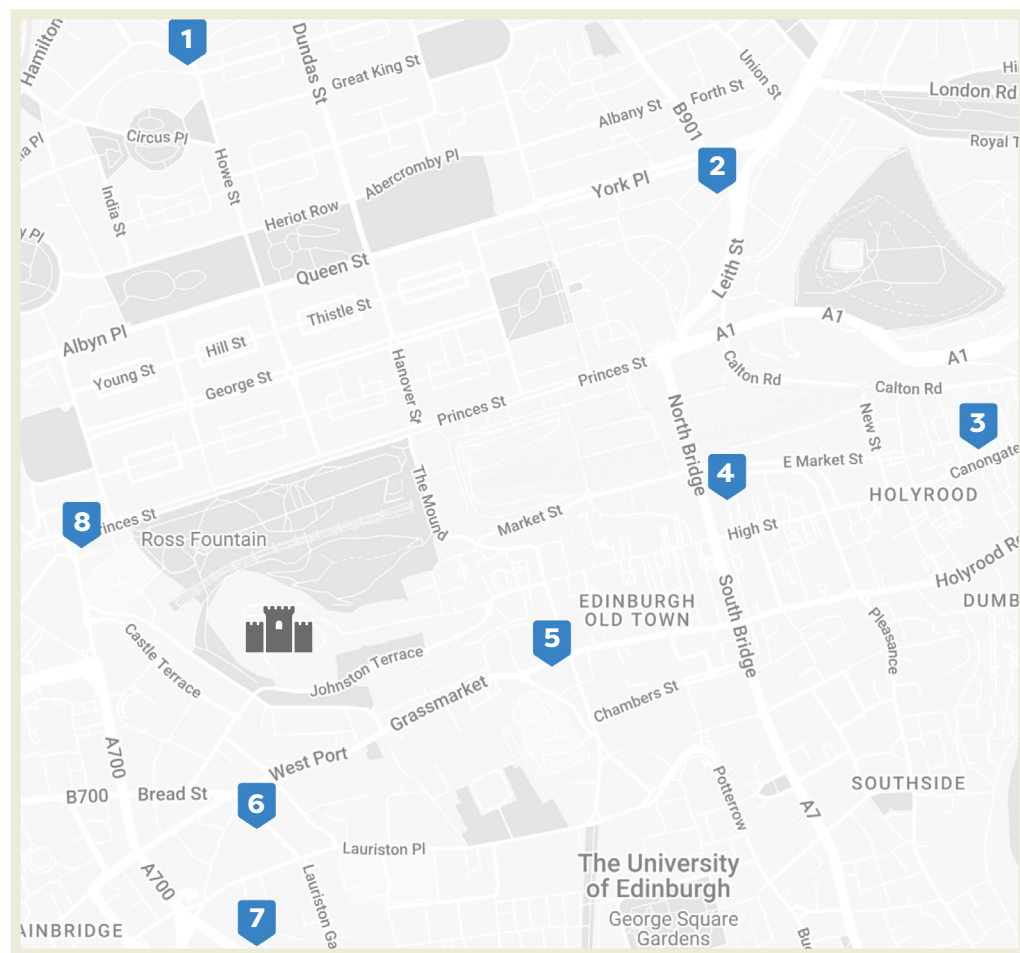
**Tue 12 – Wed 13 August, 10am–4pm • Free**  
**Old Saint Paul's Episcopal Church, Jeffrey St, EH1 1DH**

Over many years, the 'Jacobite' church of Old Saint Paul's has accumulated an exceptionally rich collection of church vestments, hangings and linens. This two-day exhibition is an opportunity to see the many ways in which superb cloth, intricate embroidery and exquisite needlework can bring a distinctive artistic dimension to Christian worship.

Expert guides will be on hand to explain the symbolism skilfully embodied in fabric, and the religious ceremonies in which these magnificent items are regularly used.



## Festival Venues



- 1 **St Vincent's Chapel & Undercroft**  
St Vincent St, Edinburgh EH3 6SW
- 2 **St Mary's Metropolitan Cathedral**  
61 York Pl, Edinburgh EH1 3JR
- 3 **Canongate Kirk**  
153 Canongate, Edinburgh EH8 8BN
- 4 **Old Saint Paul's Episcopal Church**  
63 Jeffrey St, Edinburgh EH1 1DH
- 5 **Magdalen Reformation Chapel**  
41 Cowgate, Edinburgh EH1 1JR
- 6 **Church of the Sacred Heart**  
26 Lauriston St, Edinburgh EH3 9DJ
- 7 **St Michael & All Saints**  
28 Brougham St, Edinburgh EH3 9JH
- 8 **St John's Episcopal Church**  
Princes St (West End), EH2 4BJ

## At a Glance

### EVENTS

<b>SUN 10 AUG</b>	10.30am	St John's, Princes St	<b>Festival Opening Service</b>
	3pm	St John's, Princes St	<b>The Dark Well from Which to Draw</b>
	7.30pm	St Vincent's Chapel	<b>War, Peace and Reconciliation</b>
<b>MON 11 AUG</b>	1.15pm	Canongate Kirk	<b>Composer's Competition Recital</b>
	7.30pm	St Vincent's Chapel	<b>Time in Music is Much</b>
<b>TUE 12 AUG</b>	1.15pm	Old St Paul's, Jeffrey St	<b>Art Songs and Lieder</b>
	3pm	Magdalen Chapel	<b>Exploring Sacred Space (tour)</b>
	7.30pm	St Mary's, Broughton St	<b>Faith in the Footlights</b>
<b>WED 13 AUG</b>	1.15pm	Canongate Kirk	<b>Young Poets Competition Final</b>
	7.30pm	Church of Sacred Heart	<b>The Scottish Metrical Psalter</b>
<b>THU 14 AUG</b>	3pm	Magdalen Chapel	<b>Exploring Sacred Space (tour)</b>
	7.30pm	Canongate Kirk	<b>La Serenissima: Vivaldi In Venice</b>
<b>FRI 15 AUG</b>	3pm	St Vincent's Chapel	<b>The Split-Leaf Psalter</b>
	8pm	Old St Paul's, Jeffrey St	<b>So Great a Cloud of Witnesses</b>
<b>SAT 16 AUG</b>	12 noon	St Vincent's Undercroft	<b>Charlie Chaplin's The Pilgrim</b>
	4pm	St Michael & All Saints	<b>Festival Closing Service</b>

### EXHIBITIONS

<b>11-15 AUG</b>	St Vincent's Undercroft	<b>Seeds of Hope with Carol Marples (exhibition &amp; workshops)</b>
<b>12-13 AUG</b>	Old St Paul's, Jeffrey St	<b>Discovering the Fabric of Faith</b>



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## Contact Us

Enquiries about the Sacred Arts Festival, comments and suggestions and offers of assistance in a voluntary capacity are welcome.

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