

Fruit trees planted at Greyfriars in apple orchard project

Greyfriars Kirk are taking part in a new ecumenical project to create an orchard in the churchyard.

Yesterday after the usual church service they planted five fruit trees as part of Church and Community Orchards Twinning.

This began in Hungary where the Reformed Church planted more than 6,000 native Hungarian fruit trees in 165 church gardens.

Rev Dr Richard Frazer, minister of Greyfriars Kirk in Edinburgh, was very keen to take part in the initiative. He said: "The Orchard Project forms part of our vision at Greyfriars to tend and care for our immediate environment, to engage members of the Greyfriars congregation, members of the Grassmarket Community Project (GCP) and local people to work together to beautify our famous and historic Kirkyard.

"Greyfriars is celebrating its 400th anniversary in 2020 [with a range of exciting events running throughout the year](#), but the story of Greyfriars goes further back, as far as the 1400s, when a group of Franciscan Friars established an apothecary garden in what is now the Greyfriars Kirkyard.

"They grew medicinal herbs to treat the sick and tended to the needs of the poor.

"In 2010, we began to grow herbs again in the Kirkyard as one of the many therapeutic projects we undertake in the GCP.

“In the past, fruit trees were cultivated here, and there are still a couple of very ancient crab apple trees that produce fruit every year.

“Just as we make use of the herbs we grow, so also, in time, we will be making jams and chutneys with our apple harvest.

“For many years, one of our aims has been to work in partnership with others to enhance the biodiversity of the Kirkyard and to improve the experience of the hundreds of thousands of visitors who find their way to this green oasis in the heart of the Old Town of Edinburgh.

“We are delighted to be working with Eco-Congregation Scotland and overseas partners in this international project to care for our environment.”

Today marked the beginning of The Orchard Project at [@greyfriars_kirk](#) with the planting of five fruit trees [@Cambrook_PJ](#) pic.twitter.com/6jNSJ2P53k

– Edinburgh Reporter (@EdinReporter) [March 15, 2020](#)

In Edinburgh St Ninian’s Scottish Episcopal Church in Comely Bank is also taking part in the scheme which is assisted by £17,000 of funding from European Christian Environmental Network.



James Houldsworth planting the first of five fruit trees in Greyfriars churchyard with Chris the gardener, Rev Anne Ross who is visiting from Germany, Rev Urzula Glienecke, the Greyfriars Kirk probationer minister, Jenny Payton-Williams and Paul Williams who is leading the Church and Community Orchards project for The Church of Scotland. 15 March 2020 Photo: Martin P. McAdam www.martinmcadam.com