

Carlops Parish Church

www.carlopschurch.org



NEWSLETTER

Volume 15, Number 3 March 2021

In-church services remain suspended owing to Coronavirus
Contact sessionclerk@carlopschurch.org for a link to Carlops' Zoom services

Zoom Services, March 2021

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| 28 February 10am | Rev Nancy Norman |
| 7 March 10am | Rev Chris Levison |
| 14 March 10am | Rev Nancy Norman |
| 21 March 10am | Kevin Scott <i>Followed by an informal congregational meeting</i> |
| 28 March 10am | Colin Herd <i>Palm Sunday</i> |

Thoughts from the Locum ...

Heralding a new era, the inauguration of the 46th President of the United States was watched with a mixture of thoughts and feelings. As anxious for the well-being of my native country as I am conscious of its shortcomings, I listened to the youth poet laureate Amanda Gorman's poem *The hill we climb*, delivered in the movements of her hands and the pacing of her words:

For while we have our eyes on the future
history has its eyes on us.
This is the era of just redemption.
We feared at its inception,
we did not feel prepared to be the heirs
of such a terrifying hour
but within it we found the power
to author a new chapter
to offer hope and laughter to ourselves.
So while once we asked,
how could we possibly prevail over catastrophe?
now we assert
how could catastrophe possibly prevail over us?
We will not march back to what was
but move to what shall be ...

When day comes we step out of the shade,
afame and unafraid.
The new dawn blooms as we free it.
For there is always light,
if only we're brave enough to see it
if only we're brave enough to be it

There is always light, and we cannot do without it.

The motto of the Royal Astronomical Society is *Quicquid nitet notandum – Whatever shines is bound to be recorded*. It refers, of course, to the infinitesimal stars and suns of space to whose mystery humankind has been drawn since the dawn of the world. Could we not adopt its wisdom – and that of Amanda Gorman's poem – as a watchword for ourselves and our times, as we observe and contemplate and chart not only the movement of galaxies, but of peoples and nations and faiths – knowing that it is not just *whatever* shines, but *whoever* shines, that we so desperately need and so willingly record.

Astonishingly and comfortingly these lights are everywhere around us – as myriad as the stars on a clear night. *You are light for all the world*, Jesus declared, leaving no one out. May we give thanks, then, for every gift of light – for every sign of an open and generous spirit, for every place where there is beauty even alongside ugliness, wherever tendrils of hope weave their way through the darkness of the world's suffering, shedding light where there is greatest need, wherever humanity and freedom are affirmed, and wherever our symbols of love are

brought to life not only in soaring vision but in present reality.

Whatever and whoever shines is bound to be recorded. Let us go forth then, and shine. All of us.

Nancy Norman

From the Kirk Session via Zoom, Monday 22 February 2021

Recorded supporters

Several people have asked to be added to the Communion Roll or the list of Adherents. Session welcomed new members and approved the revised Communion Roll and list of Adherents.

Property

Gill Gold reported. Since March 2020, the church has been used only occasionally, for a number of services in Advent, and other events, but it has been inspected regularly and measures are in place to ensure it remains in sound condition. The property register was approved. Mary McElroy confirmed that no further costs are anticipated regarding the patio-garden beyond routine upkeep; the Eco Group has agreed to assist with this. As the patio-garden is a joint project, we liaise with Hall representatives.

Annual report and finance, 2020

Session approved the 2020 annual report and accounts, and an outline budget for 2021. Mary McElroy reported a tiny surplus (£78!) on current operations, despite the loss of income from open plate at Sunday services and events like soup lunches. A deficit has been avoided because several members responded to this by making compensatory donations. Session thanked those who did so and noted that similar action is likely to be desirable in 2021. The manse has been let since October 2020; rental income is shared by the three linkage churches, helping to defray further the loss of “normal” income.

Progress towards proposed extended linkage

A formal statement about the proposed extended linkage of Carlops, Kirkurd & Newlands and St Andrew’s, and the three churches of Upper Tweeddale has been sent to supporters, and they have been invited to vote on it. If they vote to approve the proposal, the extended linkage will be established and the six newly linked churches may move to appoint a new permanent minister. Closing date for receipt of voting papers is 25 February 2021; the result should be available shortly after that date.

That result must be ratified by Presbytery and a co-ordinating group appointed by the Church of Scotland. Presbytery will consider the matter on 2 March 2021; congregation members are

invited to attend that (Zoom) meeting, *the formal notice of which is appended to this newsletter*. All going well, the result may be ratified finally on or around 23 March 2021.

Stated Annual Meeting

An “official” meeting cannot take place this spring, as in-person meetings are still forbidden by law, and the national church has not put in place measures whereby congregations may conduct formal business at a meeting held via Zoom (though Sessions, Presbyteries and General Assembly may do!). Nevertheless, a “not the Stated Annual Meeting” will be held via Zoom after Carlops’ morning Zoom service on Sunday 21 March 2021.

Services and other activities

Session noted with satisfaction the success of services held via Zoom since March 2020 and thanked Murray Campbell, in particular, for his work in this area. Services will be Zoomed for at least the medium-term future, but Session will monitor vaccination and other exiting-virus developments, and will seek to reinstate in-church services and other activities when it is agreed to be safe to do so; in taking such decisions, it will have regard to the likely composition of our gatherings, as well as clinical and government advice and regulation.

Future discussion topics

Session agreed to schedule broad discussion on several topics to help us identify and respond to changes and opportunities as virus constraints are lifted and we work through establishment and operation of the new linkage. Such topics include: membership of Kirk Session; finance; worship rotas; reinstatement and development of outreach activities.

Christian Aid opportunity

Mike Clarke’s untimely death creates a vacancy for a Carlops member on the linkage Christian Aid committee, partnering Mary Levison. If you could help with this important work, contact Mary without obligation for information and an informal chat: tel 07990 731 858; email marylevison@btinternet.com

PRESBYTERY OF MELROSE AND PEEBLES

To Broughton, Glenholm & Kilbucho, Skirling, Tweedsmuir, Carlops, Kirkurd & Newlands, and West Linton: St Andrew’s Parish Churches

Citation to attend meeting of Presbytery on 2 March 2021 (by Zoom)

At the meeting of Presbytery on Tuesday 2 March 2021 at 7pm by ZOOM, the Presbytery Planning Implementation Committee will report on the outcome of the vote of the congregations of Broughton, Glenholm and Kilbucho, Skirling, Tweedsmuir, Carlops, Kirkurd and Newlands and West Linton: St Andrew’s on the proposed Basis of Linking of these

congregations. Should the congregations vote in favour of the Basis of Linking, Presbytery will be invited to give its approval to the Basis of Linking. Should the congregations vote against the Basis of Linking, Presbytery will decide whether to approve the Basis of Linking in any event or to implement another course of action. An appeal against the decision of Presbytery can only be raised during the Presbytery meeting, by a Kirk Session or member of the Presbytery, and only on certain procedural grounds.

The congregations are hereby cited to attend the above meeting of Presbytery for their own interest. This means that any member of one of the congregations may attend the meeting of Presbytery and may speak (but not vote) on the Presbytery's consideration of the Basis of Linking.

If you would like to attend, the ZOOM invitation link can be obtained from the Presbytery Clerk or from your Session Clerk or Interim Moderator. It would be helpful if the Session Clerk or Interim Moderator could let the Presbytery Clerk know the names of those planning to attend to ensure that the ZOOM system allows admittance to the meeting.

Rev Victoria Linford, Clerk to the Presbytery of Melrose and Peebles
19 February 2021

The Column

My Big Garden Bird Watch 2021

It is impossible to predict which birds, or how many of each kind, will be seen during the one hour slot that must be chosen by someone taking part in any of the RSPB *Big Garden Bird Watch* events. My garden, and especially the feeding stations, are usually alive with the fluttering of wings, but a few years ago I watched for my hour and saw a total of a mere five birds.

However, the RSPB are interested to receive even a completely negative result and so, disappointed though I was, five birds was the result I submitted that year. My feeders have been constantly busy during this recent (January-February 2021) spell of cold weather and so I had high hopes for this year's count. (The result required by the RSPB is the greatest number of any one species seen at the same time during the hour of one's watch – not the total number observed during that hour.)

Therefore on 30 January 2021, at 11am, I made a coffee and settled myself down at the window with paper, pencil and excited expectation. (It is not often that there is anything to become excited about these lockdown days!)

Within a minute, a male great spotted woodpecker landed on the nuts. As always, he was very alert and wary and, catching a movement from the window, darted off. During the following sixty minutes I was seldom without at least one bird in my sight. I recorded four blue tits, three coal tits, two great tits, two robins, two chaffinches, one dunnoek, two magpies, two wood pigeons and one pheasant. Amazingly, and to my delight, half an hour into my watch a thrush arrived, pecked a few seeds from the ground and flew off. I had not seen a thrush for at

least nine months. Disappointingly no nuthatch or goldfinch appeared. The hour passed quickly and I was happy with the count that I considered to be a fair representation of any hour's bird watching in my garden.

I had a moment of amusement as I submitted my results. With what astonishment – or disbelief – would the RSPB have reacted if the golden eagle, (that I watched for 10 minutes at the top of a tall beech tree on January 1st), had chosen to visit during my counting hour and been included on my list?

Nan Buchan

Forthcoming Zoom event

Gardener's Question Time (for Carlops!) Friday 19 March 2021, 7pm, via Zoom.

Sophie Pilgrim writes Join us for our very own “Gardener’s Question Time” Three marvellous gardeners will be telling us about their gardens, spilling their secrets and giving top tips. Plus we will have the Carlops Garden Quiz. No need to be a gardener, we promise fun for all ... don't miss the social highlight of March 2021!

Send email to info@carlopschurch.org for a link to the event

Material for next issue

To info@carlopschurch.org by Monday 22 March 2021 please

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