

# Carlops Parish Church

[www.carlopschurch.org](http://www.carlopschurch.org)



## NEWSLETTER

Volume 15, Number 7 July 2021

In-church services remain suspended owing to Coronavirus  
Contact [sessionclerk@carlopschurch.org](mailto:sessionclerk@carlopschurch.org) for a link to Carlops' Zoom services

### Zoom Services, July 2021

27 June 10am	Mrs Mary McElroy
4 July 10am	Rev Nancy Norman
11 July 10am	Dr Patsy Campbell
18 July 10am	Prof Murray Campbell
25 July 10am	Rev Nancy Norman
1 August 10am	Colin Herd

## Thoughts from the Locum

To the newly formed parish the river will lend its name.

From its source to its confluence with the sea, the Tweed follows its winding way, sometimes as if it had all the time in the world to reach its destination, sometimes with greater haste, bubbling and splashing over its stony bed, rushing round the curve and sweep of the valley floor. To see the water burnished silver by full moonlight is to see it at its highest visibility. The water was there first, centuries before us, shaping the valley – and still shaping it – to its liking, slowly wearing away the land to the contours we recognise. And life continues to follow the water's course – if not within earshot of its voice then subconsciously aware of the nearness of its life-giving force, the road matching its meanderings at a respectful distance.

The Tweed is a wise and patient teacher. It reminds us that the shortest distance between two points may be a straight line but rarely is that line the most intriguing or most fruitful way (does nature, in fact, have straight lines?). Consequently, the value of a journey lies as much in the journey itself – in all the stoppings and startings, windings and turnings and turnings aside – as in the destination. And it reminds us that, when the destination is reached, the water, having been joined by countless tributaries along the way, is far stronger than when it first set out.

*Mark! How all things swerve from their known course, or vanish like a dream,* William Wordsworth observed. The river's meandering, re-shaping the banks and devising new and wider, deeper channels; the good sailor learning to make headway by tacking in zigzags; the pebble that is smoothed and washed at the water's edge suddenly finding itself moved for miles; the person who appears to do something entirely out of character who might be acting in character for the first time: just so does the freedom of the Spirit of God draw things aside from their accustomed way, which might make all the difference.

Rarely are our paths and destinations and decisions clear and straightforward, whether we are acting individually or collectively. We see through a glass darkly, not yet face to face. And the vision we have been given is peripheral as well as straight ahead, and there is much more, I suspect, that is off the beaten track that not only is worthy of our attention, but crucial to our nourishment. Had Moses not turned aside in the desert he would have missed the miracle of the lit bush.

For life's abundance and complexity, then, let us give thanks. For meanderings and zigzags, for unexpected sights and insights in surprising places and people, for everything that calls forth the best in us and in others, for things on the periphery and for whatever prompts us to stop and turn aside to discover them, let us give thanks. And to God who holds all this astonishing diversity, including us, in balance, whose immutable love is the fountain of life and the source of our being, let us give thanks.

Nancy Norman *Midsummer Day 2021*

## Carlops Church technology upgrade

The upgrade of Carlops Church's audiovisual and information technology mentioned in recent issues is almost complete. Some background explanation, and thanks for support received ...

Zoom-based worship, talks, business meetings and other events have been one of the success stories of life under coronavirus restrictions. Zoom was first adopted as an enforced response to being unable to meet in the church, but it quickly became apparent that Zoom events have a character and value of their own, attracting and supporting people who might be unable or reluctant to visit the physical church. Reviewing Zoom services and other events, the Kirk Session and the services group agreed that we need to maintain these technologically delivered options even after we return to meeting in the church itself.

The project provides new cameras, computing, and other audiovisual items, plus enhanced wi-fi in the church. These upgrade the former equipment, now over twelve years old and with more limited capabilities. The project will enable us to record services and other events and deliver them to people over the internet, live and/or on demand. As this issue goes to press, the necessary equipment has been purchased and installed. It may be operational by the time you read this.

The Orcome Trust awarded us a grant of £6,105 to fund the project; the money will pay for the new equipment and may also fund training of some of our supporters in its use, so that we are not dependent upon one person being present at an event to make things work! We thank the Orcome Trust for its generosity and its continuing support for our church.

Marty Lee, of Maui Ltd, led the installation of enhanced wi-fi and ethernet in the church; Marty has undertaken this work on a *pro bono* basis and we thank him for his generous support.

## Vacancy update

The process of appointing a new minister is closely defined by the Church of Scotland and much of it is properly subject to rules of confidentiality. Some information can be made public however, and that has been placed on the website; visit [www.carlopschurch.org](http://www.carlopschurch.org) and select the new main heading imaginatively entitled *Vacancy*.

The six Kirk Sessions have approved the Parish (Linkage) Profile, which describes the character and work of our churches to prospective applicants. The profile can be accessed via the *Vacancy* page on our website.

The linkage congregations have appointed their representatives to the Nominating Committee, which will consider applicants for the post of our minister and propose a candidate to the congregations. The members of the Committee are ...

*Broughton:* Lynne Smith, Peter Worthington  
*Carlops:* Murray Campbell, Julie Gamble

*Kirkurd & Newlands:* Jim Brown, Jean Howat  
*Skirling:* Andrew Fraser, Neil Robinson  
*Tweedsmuir:* Rob Orr, James Welch  
*West Linton St Andrew's:* Mark McDavid, Kevin Scott, Mary Turnbull

When it met on 25 June 2021, the Nominating Committee appointed its office bearers from amongst its own number ...

*Convenor*      Kevin Scott  
*Vice-convenor* Jean Howat  
*Clerk*           Neil Robinson

## **Services group**

The Services Group met via Zoom on 21 June 2021, joined on this occasion by colleagues from Broughton, Skirling and Tweedsmuir.

The meeting heard reports about current worship activity and future expectations in each church; these exhibited substantial similarity of experience and outlook. Future collaboration was discussed, and the group agreed that the priority is for people in all congregations to get to know each other “properly”. The group will meet again in September.

## **The Column Agnes Anderson**

The Newsletter doesn't often carry obituaries, but the passing of Agnes Anderson demands attention. Agnes died peacefully in hospital on 19 June 2021 after a short illness. She served Carlops Church as an elder for some fifty years and was a supporter for many more. And she was a friend who cared for all of us.

Agnes sat in the back row of the church near the door, the seat chosen because it was nearest the site of the pew that she and her late husband used to occupy. She held court there, as people came by to talk, exchange news and good cheer. A multiple great-grandmother herself, she enjoyed dandling babies on her knee when they came to church; the babies liked it too! When coronavirus interrupted in-church services, Agnes Zoomed regularly, always with a cheerful wave for everyone. She said she could hear better on Zoom than in the church! She attended Kirk Session meetings well into her tenth decade and was invariably cogent and forward-looking. She rang the church bell (and its rope needs a stiff pull to produce a decent sound!) until she was over 90, finally passing the responsibility to the next generation – but keeping an eye on the youngsters lest they needed guidance!

Everyone has their own Agnes stories; here are two ...

We acquired some large-print hymnaries some years ago and I offered Agnes one when she arrived at church (she would then have been about 93). She looked at it, then at me: “No

thank you, I don't need that. Just give me one of the ordinary books please." Lesson learnt!

A fellow elder feared Agnes, at her age, might be resistant to change and so oppose some changes involved in the refurbishment project. Not a bit. Looking at drawings of the dramatic, new internal porch, with its wealth of glass and large swing door, Agnes affirmed that she was "... all for a design that means you don't have to up-end a coffin to get it into the kirk"!

Rennie McElroy

### **The next Column?**

I re-issue what is now a familiar invitation. Will all readers please consider what they might contribute that could form future *Column* material? The desk drawer is empty; so is the box where the editor keeps his imagination!

Rennie McElroy *Editor*

### **Forthcoming events**

None currently scheduled

### **Material for next issue**

To [info@carlopschurch.org](mailto:info@carlopschurch.org) by Monday 9 July 2021

**End**