



CARLOPS CHURCH

In the community, for the community

Newsletter

Volume 16, Number 1; January 2022

Services, January 2022

Services held in church and available via Zoom
Request link from sessionclerk@carlopschurch.org

2 January 10am : Rev Dr Tony Foley
9 January 10am : Kevin Scott
16 January 10am : Dr Patsy Campbell
23 January 10am : Rev Dr Tony Foley
30 January 10am : Steven Whalley
6 February 10am : Mrs Mary McElroy

Join us, in the church, or in other activities

We promise you a warm welcome

www.carlopschurch.org

Our Minister



How to be a more beautiful person in 2022

The New Year is now upon us, and it brings with it our collective annual desire to 'begin again'. A universal desire symbolised by the proverbial clean sheet ready to be filled with our annual 'New Year resolutions'. I won't bore you with a collection of the kind of things people include in their New Year resolutions list; instead, I leave you with a poem of aspiration, the aspiration to be a more beautiful person in 2022.

Time-tested beauty tips

(after Sam Levenson)

*For attractive lips, speak only words of kindness
For lovely eyes, seek out the good in people
For a slim figure, share your food with the hungry
For beautiful hair, let a child run their fingers through it once a day
For poise, walk in the knowledge that with God you are never alone
For beautiful hands, always remember
 you have been given two;
 one for helping yourself
 and the other for helping others
For an appealing complexion, nurture a kind heart
Never forget that people, even more than things,
need to be continually restored, renewed, redeemed
 and redeemed and redeemed
So don't be too quick to throw them away.*

Your most beautiful days are still ahead of you. May you have many of them in 2022.

Peace,

Tony Foley

News



From Carlops, the church in the village

Happy New Year

Happy new year. May 2022 treat you well and bring happiness, good health and satisfaction to you and yours. Welcome to this first issue of a new-look *Newsletter*; the how and why of the redesign are explained in this month's *Column*.

Carlops Church appeals for your help

Carlops Church needs more help if it is to go on making the community contribution which is central to our approach to being a parish church, and which is expected of us. We need more helpers and organisers: people who will step up from attending events, to helping to run them; and from helping to run them, to planning and organising them. We also need a new leader of the cultural and social events team, to work with Julie Gamble and Sophie Pilgrim.

Can **you** help? **Will** you help? This plea is addressed to everyone, and we ask everyone to consider it seriously. You don't need to be a signed-up church member; indeed, we'd prefer some who are not. It's not rocket science; everyone can try. You needn't copy how things are done now; new approaches are welcome. Haven't done this before? Not sure if you're up to it? Talk to us; we'll discuss options and help you get started.

No doubt you can think of people who do this work already, but please, think again: most of them have other responsibilities around Carlops Church and/or have done a long stint already. Factor people's age into your thinking too. The situation is grave and ultimately, untenable. If new people don't come forward, what we do as Carlops Church will have to change for the longer term, probably not for the better.

If you are willing to try, please talk to any of the undersigned. We hope we may look forward to hearing from you; Carlops Church depends upon it.

Murray Campbell, Mary McElroy and Rennie McElroy

Record collection for "Not Shoebox"

December's collection in support of Women's Aid, East and Midlothian, the post-covid descendant of our well-established shoebox appeal, started slowly but gathered momentum as the deadline neared.

Eventually, it reached a record £655, which sum I transferred to the charity in early December. This was a splendid effort, demonstrating Carlops' customary generosity. I append an excerpt from the letter of acknowledgement that I received from Yvonne Irvine, administrator at Women's Aid.

"Dear all our friends at Carlops Church

"Thank you so much for your cash donation with which helped us to purchase vouchers to give to mums giving them the opportunity to purchase toys especially for their own children. I cannot express enough the difference that this has made to the women, children and young people we support. This year, in total, we were able to give presents to 91 women and 148 children, which is amazing. So again, on behalf of Women's aid East and Midlothian, thank you so much.

"Have a lovely safe Christmas and a lovely New Year. Yvonne Irvine"

Grateful thanks to all who contributed.

Mary McElroy Treasurer

A successful, blended Carlops model

Well, no strict legally enforceable restrictions this Christmas and New Year, but a few precautionary and voluntary ones took their place for many people, swinging the balance of in-person versus zoom back towards the latter, certainly insofar as participation at Carol and other services are concerned.

On the bright side, the once new-and-strange, blended events are working well in Carlops: the still-new technology has bedded in satisfactorily; a small and dedicated team has worked hard to develop and maintain techniques and standards; and people are able to worship, and to meet and greet, in whatever mode works best for them at any given time. So let us thank all who made the quite considerable technical step forward possible. The Orcome Trust financed the project, gifting new technology to update and extend the capacity of what Carlops Church already possessed. And operationally, a dedicated team of our friends worked hard and tackled a considerable learning curve to ensure that things work satisfactorily for the rest of us every Sunday. Thank you all.

New charitable outlet for knitted items

East- and Midlothian Women's Aid have confirmed that they will welcome the range of knitted (and other craft-) goods that Carlops people can produce as part of their charitable support and recycling efforts.

This news may well fill the gap created by the demise of The Raven Trust, for which organisation Carlops put forth much creating and collecting effort. It is timely, because some of the Carlops knitting habit had restarted as people contributed to the COP26 project to knit-crochet-sew a two-kilometre-long banner to welcome delegates to Glasgow. Carlops provided almost ten metres of knitted banner, later repurposed into blankets,

Items which Women's Aid would welcome include scarves, blankets, bobble hats, and similar goods; most of these, in a range of sizes. If you had started knitting again, and/or of you would like to do so, contact Mary McElroy, who will be able to provide more detailed information about products, desired sizes, and outline patterns. Mary is happy to act as local collection and onward delivery agent for your handwork.

Midwives in Malawi: update

Two Malawian students sponsored by churches in our Presbytery (Geoffrey Matthias and Limbikani) have completed their studies and are qualified midwives. Presbytery is seeking funding to enable other students to train at the Malawi College of Health Sciences, Zomba. Our partners in Zomba Presbytery will facilitate the project and provide additional support to the midwives.

Geoffroy Matthias writes ...

"Last month was the best for my midwifery experience. I met a mother who said that I was the one admitting, monitoring and conducting delivery for her first child, Princess. 'Meet the first person to see you in this world!', said the mother to her child. Princess was born on 11th March 2018. This was the first voluntary work placement you sponsored me at Machinga District Hospital before I joined Malaria Alert Centre. Princess' grandmother visited me with her and said I am invited to the [child's] birthday party."

And from Limbikani ...

Limbikani is the second Presbytery-funded midwife to qualify. At present the Malawian government has no funds to employ him. (Joined-up aid needed Ed), so he is volunteering in a maternity unit. He is in regular contact with Scotland. Extracts from his latest report ...

"Based on the statistics in maternity register, this is how we have performed at this facility: admissions 126; deliveries 60; referrals 57: born before arrival (at the clinic) 6; maternal deaths 0; neonatal deaths 0; ante-natal clinics 9.

"This month we had a lot of women who did not deliver their babies at this facility as compared to other months. This has been like this because of a number of reasons such as: pre-term labour, short or young primigravida, premature rupture of membranes, prolonged first stage of labour ... they were referred for further management at Zomba Central Hospital.

"On COVID-19 disease the situation has really improved as compared to the way it was some months ago and we hope that things will go back to normal should it continue being like this.

"With regards to the Nurses' Council Exams, the results are not yet out and ... there are no rumours as to when they will be out. This has taken long but I am still patiently waiting ...

"The issue of College Graduation ceremony stands still, no[t] any updates as to whether we will have it or not since the dates are not yet set. Had it been I have my Diploma and licence, I would have gone in PVT clinic and work there ... we are waiting to be deployed for these clinics want people with papers and licence and there are other people who did their school some two years ago but up to now they have not been deployed.

“About my life and the family as well, I am very pleased to inform you that I am good here in Malawi together with my family and happily doing my volunteering work at the facility. I am living a life with a lot of hiccups for I have nothing to rely on, prices of items have gone up almost by 30% and I have nothing to support the family with. Early this month I was given a piece of work by a certain nurse who gave me 6,000 kwacha [about £275) for a two days cover at OPD and since then no one has thought of offering me something like locum so that I can have something for the family after doing the work.

“Despite all these things there is God who is there for us all and I sincerely have hope that this current situation will improve soon for we are going through difficult times of having no necessities in our day in day out living. God will provide the way out.

“Wishing you all the best. Stay safe and blessed.

“Regards, Limbikani”

The Column



New medium, new look, same purpose

Welcome to this first issue of the digital-only *Newsletter*. I wrote last October that I would withdraw the paper-focussed, print-and-fold format from January 2022 unless a majority of readers requested its retention. I have received only one such request, but several expressions of support for my proposal. From this issue, the *Newsletter* will be born digital, only digital, though I will continue to post a very few printed copies to readers who lack access to a computer.

I had to stop circulating a hard-copy *Newsletter* in March 2020, when the first lockdown began. All issues since then have been distributed by email. I of all people, a librarian in my wage-slave days, respect a document in the hand; you hold it, so you read it. I used to worry that, with an electronic product, people would mark it *to be read*, then never get back to it. But observation and informal enquiries since 2020 have revealed no indication that information has failed to reach people.

The digital model offers several advantages: reduced cost of production and distribution; options to use photographs and colour (formerly precluded by cost, and technical limitations of photocopying); and those readers who have spent an evening folding Christmas cards for Carlops Eco Group might care to ponder tri-folding issues of the *Newsletter* twelve times a year!

The move to a digital-only product prompted a modest redesign of typeface and layout. With some hesitation, I have chosen a sans-serif typeface, but am traditionalist enough to select one designed by a classical typographer, Eric Gill. I have chosen green rather than church maroon for the colour of title page and headlines; Carlops is an eco-congregation after all! And I have exchanged the narrow columns of the former trifold for a full-width page; this will make page-setting easier and enables me to use a larger type size; 12 point replaces the former 10 point, and occasional 9 point. *Vive la différence!*

The *Newsletter* will continue to report upon all and any Church activities, business and policies: what has happened; what is planned; what is being discussed. It will cover what happens in the church on Sunday, and what the church is doing throughout the community and with the community from Monday to Saturday. It will offer column space to readers who wish to comment upon Carlops Church and Carlops life, or express a view, or make a proposal. And occasionally, the *Newsletter* may provoke – I hope constructively!

I hope the new format and design appeal. I hope the content continues to inform, to interest and occasionally, to provoke. Tell me what you think. Better still, write for the *Newsletter* yourself. I look forward to hearing from you. Happy reading!

Rennie McElroy *Editor*

Diary notes



Forthcoming events

Cross-linkage eco-discussion: what can **we** do about climate change, post COP26? A half-day meeting, with guest speaker and discussion groups from across West Tweeddale linkage. In Carlops Church. This will be a face-to-face event in Carlops Church. All will be welcome; entry will be free.

As this goes to press, date and time are undetermined; they will be influenced by pandemic issues, as well as speakers' diaries. Watch this space.

Contacts

Minister: Rev Dr Tony Foley

Telephone 07793 294 000

Email TFoley@churchofscotland.org.uk

Christian Aid: Mary Levison

Telephone 01968 674 566

Email marylevison@btinternet.com

Cultural and social events:

Position vacant; expressions of interest invited: contact Murray Campbell or Rennie McElroy

Eco Group: Anna Woolverton

Telephone 01968 660 382

Email annapye@btinternet.com

Flowers: Hilary Watt

Telephone 01899 221 100

Email hilarywatt91f@btinternet.com

Newsletter and website: Rennie McElroy

Telephone 01968 661 042

Email rennie.mcelroy@btinternet.com

Session Clerk and Organist: Murray Campbell

Telephone 01968 660 530

Email d.m.campbell@ed.ac.uk

Sunday School: Julie Gamble

Telephone 07980 258 381

Email julieggamble@yahoo.co.uk

Treasurer: Mary McElroy

Telephone 01968 661 042

Email maryhmcelroy@outlook.com

Material for next issue

To Rennie McElroy by Monday 24 January 2022

End