



# CARLOPS CHURCH

In the community, for the community

## Newsletter

Volume 16, Number 4; April 2022

## Services, April 2022

Services held in church and available via Zoom  
Request link from [sessionclerk@carlopschurch.org](mailto:sessionclerk@carlopschurch.org)

3 April 10am: Colin Herd  
Palm Sunday 10 April 10am: Fiona Burnett  
Easter Day 17 April 10am: Rev Dr Tony Foley  
24 April 10am: tba

**Join us, in the church, or in other activities**

**We promise you a warm welcome**

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



# Our Minister

## Twelve reasons why I don't go to "football games" (*and/or something else?*) any more

1. Every time I went, they asked me for money.
2. The people sitting in my row didn't seem very friendly.
3. The seats were very hard.
4. The manager never came to speak to me.
5. The referees made decisions I didn't agree with.
6. I was sitting with the "plastic fans" who only came to complain about the scarfs other people were wearing!
7. Sometimes the games went into overtime, and I was late getting home.
8. They sang songs I had never heard before.
9. The games are scheduled on the only day I get to sleep in or run errands.
10. My parents took me to too many games when I was growing up.
11. I read a book on football, and I now feel that I know more than the managers and players.
12. I don't want to take my children because when they are older, I want them to be able to choose for themselves what sport they like best.

*Do any of these reasons sound vaguely familiar to you?*

Peace

Tony Foley

# News



## Happy Easter: join us and celebrate

We wish everyone a happy Easter and extend a warm invitation to join us in celebrating. See below for information about events planned in Carlops and other churches in our linkage. Everyone welcome, on every occasion, in every church!

## You are invited to a *Continental* Easter breakfast

Adapting a Carlops tradition, we will host a continental Easter breakfast of coffee and hot cross buns (and maybe cake too!) after morning service on Easter Day, Sunday 17 April 2022, starting about 11am. Please come and join us; everyone is welcome. Pre-attendance at our Easter service at 10am is also welcome, but emphatically not essential – just come and be with us.

Apologies to those hankering after the former “full Easter breakfast” in the village hall. This year, with infection rates still high, that might be a step too far, too soon. Be patient. It will come again!

## Holy Week Services

Our minister, Rev Dr Tony Foley will offer a short evening service on each day of Holy Week, Monday 11 to Good Friday 15 April. Each service will be in a different church in our linkage and will last from 7pm to about 7.30pm. Everyone is warmly invited to attend any and/or all services; it is hoped that every service may see people attending from each of the linkage churches. Carlops will host the service on Tuesday 12 April at 7pm. The full schedule ...

Monday 11 April, Broughton Church: *Peter's Story*  
Tuesday 12, Carlops Church: *The Roman Centurion and Pontius Pilate*  
Wednesday 13, Tweedsmuir Church: *Caiaphus and Judas*  
Maundy Thursday 14: Newlands Church: *Mary Magdalene & Holy Communion*  
Good Friday 15, Skirling Church: *The final nail*

## Stated Annual Meeting, 2022

This issue appears about a week later than usual; held over so that it could carry a prompt report of the Stated Annual Meeting of the congregation, held in Carlops Church on Sunday 27 March 2022 after morning service, and chaired for the first time by our minister, Rev Dr Tony Foley.

Treasurer Mary McElroy made a presentation in two contrasting parts. First, she presented the

annual report and accounts for the calendar year 2021, which are justifiably upbeat. The report records encouraging participation levels in services and at the small number of other events which we delivered despite the best efforts of coronavirus. It also notes developments which will serve Carlops Church well in future, for example, the new equipment mentioned in Murray Campbell's report below. The accounts show a small surplus of income over expenditure, though this was due principally to atypically low expenses in a year largely without ministerial costs and with few activities on which to spend money. The full text of the annual report and accounts are on our website at [www.carlopschgurch.org/reports-and-procedures/](http://www.carlopschgurch.org/reports-and-procedures/). In addition, printed and/or electronic copies are available from Mary McElroy; contact details on back page.

The second part of Mary's presentation identified some local and national issues which will exercise a negative, potentially grave impact on Carlops Church's finances, and offered the Treasurer's forecast of their impact over the next few years. Essentially, unless we increase income from donations significantly, we will experience substantial and growing deficits which may become unsustainable in even the medium term. The full text of Mary's analysis is published immediately below. Please give it your close attention.

Anna Woolverton reported on the activities of the Eco group. 2021 was necessarily a "quiet year", thanks to covid-enforced restraints, but some activities were pursued successfully: the traditional Eco service was delivered; links were established with *Sustainable West Linton*, a vibrant local action group which shares our environmental interests and concerns; and several members participated in webinars delivered by Eco-congregation Scotland. Face-to-face Eco Group events may have been in forced hibernation, but Carlops' commitment to environmental issues remains alive and well.

Murray Campbell delivered his report as Session Clerk. The most significant event of 2021 was the appointment of Tony Foley as our new, permanent minister; Murray reiterated Carlops Church's welcome to Tony and wished his ministry well. Blended services, delivered in-church and via Zoom, had been introduced successfully; participation levels are encouraging, with several of those who began to participate during early lockdowns continuing to take part regularly. Significant upgrades to the church's audiovisual and information technology equipment were installed and are operating satisfactorily; these will serve Carlops well for several years, help to "future-proof" our building, and widen the range of activities that we can offer.

As the meeting ended, Mary McElroy noted our collective debt to Murray Campbell for the efforts he has put forth to hold the church community together through a testing period. The congregation joined her in expressing warmest thanks to him.

## Treasurer's financial forecast, 2022-25

Treasurer Mary McElroy presented the following analytical forecast of Carlops Church's likely financial performance for the next few years at the Stated Annual Meeting on Sunday 27 March 2022. It analyses the impact of nation-wide market and financial trends on our church's finances, identifies additional Carlops-specific characteristics, and emphasises the need for action by all of us if severe and lasting deficits are to be avoided.

Please read. Please think. Please act.

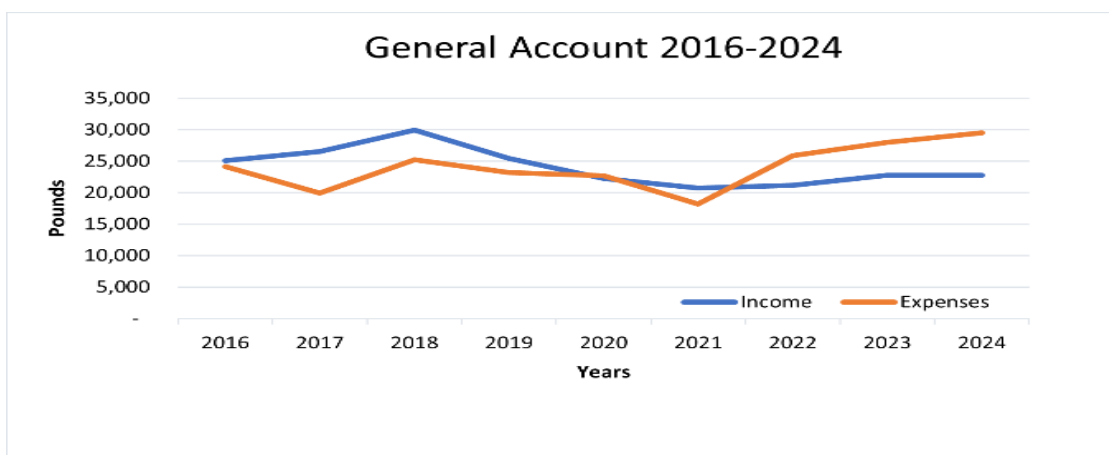
## Our agreed and established financial strategy

- **Fund** our full share of the costs of a minister and of maintaining our building
- **Generate** a surplus of income over expenditure to enable us to fulfil our church’s role in the community
- **Maintain** financial reserves sufficient to cover operating expenses for at least one year

We met these goals for many years until 2020, when the pandemic disrupted our means of generating income. In addition, costs are now being increased by significantly higher inflation, especially in energy prices. Pandemic constraints may decline soon, but inflationary influences will last much longer.

2021 accounts show a small surplus, but existing cost trends predict significant and growing deficits in 2022 and subsequent years unless we can increase income substantially.

Income / Expenses	2019	2020	2021
Standing orders	£14,000	£14,200	£14,800
Open plate donations	4,400	1,400	1,600
Other	2,400	1,500	650
Gift aid	4,700	5,200	3,700
<b>Total income</b>	<b>25,500</b>	<b>22,300</b>	<b>20,750</b>
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>23,200</b>	<b>22,700</b>	<b>18,200</b>
<b>Surplus / Deficit</b>	<b>2,300</b>	<b>-400</b>	<b>2,550</b>



## Challenges to Income / Expenses balance

- **Pandemic** Still experiencing decline of open plate donations and constraints on income generation opportunities; generally, fewer people are “present to give”. Some supporters adopted a pattern of donation which may provide a flatline income, but will not cover predicted increases in liabilities.
- **Demographics** Several supporters died in 2021; our age profile is such that that we must anticipate further losses.
- **Inflation (especially energy)** On current projections, will increase costs by over 10%
- **Ministry and mission** Ministry dues will revert to normal levels after the “financial holiday” of vacancy and interim ministry; so will manse maintenance, travel and office expenses

- **Linkage** Additional costs will arise from the need to develop the extended linkage, eg office and salary for part-time administrative support

These trends follow a sustained period when inflation was low and there was abundant opportunity to raise additional funds from cultural and social events. Inflation is now higher and still rising, attended events necessarily remain few, and our demographic profile means that the number of supporters who donate regularly is declining.

### What do these numbers mean for Carlops Church?

- In 2022, we face a deficit of some £2,000, projected to rise to £7,000 over three to four years
- To meet our essential costs, income from donations needs to rise by 35%
- These “essential costs” are the minimum required to have a minister and maintain our building

### What do these numbers mean for You?

- If you donate regularly, can you respond to our need to increase income?
- If you do not donate regularly ... .. ?

### What to do

- Talk to Mary McElroy in confidence
- Donate, preferably by standing order, to Carlops Church: Account 00246459 Sort code 70-09-39

## Coffee reinstated!

Readers will be pleased to learn that Carlops Church’s after-service coffee has been reinstated after the pandemic-forced pause. The re-inaugural occasion was Sunday 20 March; it was deemed successful, so repeated with some tweaks on 27 March, and is now hopefully a fixture once again.

Not quite the same as the former free-for-all, and for good reasons. Prudence-led conversations between Murray Campbell, Gill Gold and Mary McElroy generated a few safety-conscious practices; infection rates remain high, even if cases of serious illness do not, so it seems proper to identify and adopt sensible precautions.

The coffee is brought to church ready-made in thermos flasks. Yes, it stays hot enough! One person pours, another serves milk, thus minimising contact with utensils and ingredients. We use recyclable, disposable cups and spoons. No unwrapped biscuits yet. All these avoid people clustering in the vestry-kitchen. And on fine days, chairs set in the patio-garden enable people to enjoy coffee and conversation outdoors. Verdict? It’s good to be back!

## Car boot sale at Skirling for Christian Aid

Skirling Church is hosting a car boot sale on Sunday afternoon, 15 May 2022, in support of Christian Aid. This will see the re-boot (*Sorry! Ed*) of a popular Skirling tradition after a two-year gap forced by coronavirus. Everyone is warmly invited to come and buy in a good cause.

Cars and the contents of their boot are welcome; if you sell for Christian Aid, entrance is free; otherwise, £8. There will be a stall for baking, plants and other items; all contributions will be welcome, as will helping hands to sell. And there will be teas, ice cream and other goodies in Skirling village hall.

More information from Isobel Hunter, to whom enquiries should be directed. Contact: Isobel Hunter, Firknowe, Skirling, Biggar ML12 6HD; E [isobel@skirlinghouse.com](mailto:isobel@skirlinghouse.com); T 01899 860 274

## Ukraine: financial support

Many will already have expressed financial support for Ukraine; others will be deciding how to proceed. Readers may find helpful the Moderator's article on the Church of Scotland website [www.churchofscotland.org.uk/news-and-events/news/2022/articles/moderator-encourages-people-to-donate-to-ukraine-charity-appeal](http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/news-and-events/news/2022/articles/moderator-encourages-people-to-donate-to-ukraine-charity-appeal). There, Lord Wallace calls attention to and commends the work of the Disasters Emergency Committee [www.dec.org.uk](http://www.dec.org.uk). Contributions to DEC can be gift-aided, and we understand that HM Government will match donations made to DEC. The Church of Scotland website also publicises other ways of supporting the people of Ukraine, in addition to donating via the DEC.



# The Column

## I Ukraine I3

*Old Carlops hand Jack Kellet sent me this piece by his friend Thom M Shuman, an associate of the Iona Community who lives in Cincinnati. Paul would probably have approved. Ed*

If I talk in the rhetoric of politicians and commentators, but do not speak peace, I am a beating drum or an amplified guitar. And if I know what tomorrow will bring, and know the secrets of the universes, and if I trusted everyone, but do not seek peace, I am empty. If I sold everything I have and donated it to non-profits, and if I signed up to be an organ donor, but did not share peace with those around me, I have wasted my chance to matter.

Peace has no use-by date; peace is gentleness; peace does not want what it does not have; peace does not flex its muscles or play war games; peace does not push others out of the way. Peace does not lust after another's country, or cling to ancient grudges; it does not pout or hold its breath and kick its feet on the floor; it never plays tricks on someone else and refuses to raise false flags. Peace puts up with others' foolishness, sees the best in other people, seeks common ground with everyone, persists to the very end.

Peace never gives up. The politicians will disappear into history, the talking heads will run out of words; the wisdom of all the experts will turn to dust. For we do not know how the story ends, and our best guesses are just that, guesses. But when God's time finally comes, all the pieces of the puzzle will fit. When I was a child, I practiced duck-and-cover; I watched movies about missiles coming out of the air, I had nightmares of nuclear winters; but when I grew up, I discovered the path of peace. Now, though the mirror is fogged by the steam of heated rhetoric, I can see the faces of my siblings in humanity. In this time, I struggle to understand, but the day will come when we realize we are in this thing called life together and can only live if we care each other.

Yes, faith, hope, and love are bedrocks for our lives, but what we need to craft right now is peace.

Thom M Shuman



# Diary



## Forthcoming events

**Continental Easter breakfast** Sunday 17 April 2022, 11am at Carlops Church. All welcome

## Contacts

**Minister: Rev Dr Tony Foley**

Telephone 07793 294 000

Email [TFoley@churchofscotland.org.uk](mailto:TFoley@churchofscotland.org.uk)

**Christian Aid: Mary Levison**

Telephone 01968 674 566

Email [marylevison@btinternet.com](mailto:marylevison@btinternet.com)

**Cultural and social events:**

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

**Eco Group: Anna Woolverton**

Telephone 01968 660 382

Email [annapye@btinternet.com](mailto:annapye@btinternet.com)

**Flowers: Hilary Watt**

Telephone 01899 221 100

Email [hilarywatt91f@btinternet.com](mailto:hilarywatt91f@btinternet.com)

**Newsletter and website: Rennie McElroy**

Telephone 01968 661 042

Email [rennie.mcelroy@btinternet.com](mailto:rennie.mcelroy@btinternet.com)

**Session Clerk and Organist: Murray Campbell**

Telephone 01968 660 530

Email [d.m.campbell@ed.ac.uk](mailto:d.m.campbell@ed.ac.uk)

**Sunday School: Julie Gamble**

Telephone 07980 258 381

Email [julieggamble@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:julieggamble@yahoo.co.uk)

**Treasurer: Mary McElroy**

Telephone 01968 661 042

Email [maryhmcElroy@outlook.com](mailto:maryhmcElroy@outlook.com)

## Material for next issue

To Rennie McElroy by Monday 25 April 2022