



CARLOPS CHURCH

In the community, for the community

Newsletter

Volume 16, Number 11; November 2022

Services, November 2022

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

- 30 October 10am: Kevin Scott
Harvest thanksgiving
- 6 November 10am: Rev Dr Tony Foley
- 13 November 10am: Prof Murray Campbell
Remembrance
- 20 November 10am: Sheena Livingstone
- 27 November 10am: David Henderson-Howat

Join us, in the church, or in other activities

We promise you a warm welcome

www.carlopschurch.org



Our Minister

True image or macabre distortion

Let me ask you a question: *What does your God look like?*

When I was a kid, one of my favourite things to do with my brothers was to go to the carnival and visit the hall of mirrors. We would have so much fun looking at ourselves in those mirrors. Some of the mirrors would make us look small, tiny even; others would make us look so tall, thin, or fat. My brothers and I spent a lot of time laughing as our faces and bodies took on all different and weird shapes.

The hall of mirrors was fun, but the effects of those mirrors would be horribly macabre if they persisted in everyday life. And yet, in a way, that is what often takes place when people talk about God. Sometimes when I listen to people talk about their image of God it is like being in the verbal equivalent of a hall of mirrors. The image of God gets stretched all out of proportion. The image is one of a God no one in their right mind would want to believe in.

As human beings we do almost all of our thinking in images. For some people it is like having little slideshows inside their head and each slide is a thought. The thing about images is they don't so much inform as invoke. They invoke emotion: emotions like joy, sadness, fear, love, compassion. Those emotions in turn influence our wills and our wills shape our decision making. There are certain images or pictures that are so much a part of our psychic make up that they are like the wallpaper in our living rooms; we just take them for granted. This is especially true when we talk about God. What image comes to your mind when you hear the word *God*? What emotion do you feel? Do you feel joy, peace, fear, irritation, boredom?

I recently visited with a friend of mine. After coffee we read Psalm 23 together. It is probably the best-known piece of poetry in the Bible. My friend told me it was his favourite part of the Bible, not so much because of the words, but because of the images of God it conjured up in his mind.

What does your God look like? is an important question. Why? Because how we picture God, how we image God in our minds, has a profound effect on how we relate to ourselves, to others, to life and living. If you have time this week, why not read Psalm 23 and notice what kind of images of God it stirs up in you.

Peace

Tony

News



Midweek Cuppa and company

The experimental “Midweek cuppa” on Thursday 13th October 2022 was a success and will be repeated – frequently! Around 25 people came to the church to drink tea and chat for a couple of very pleasant hours.

“Cuppa and company” will be a regular midweek feature in Carlops Church, running 2-4pm on the second Thursday of every month until Easter 2023, when it will be reviewed with a presumption of continuing thereafter. **Dates and times are in the *Diary* feature in this *Newsletter***, and on the website at www.carlopschurch.org/cultural-social-events/.

“Shoebox” 2022

Carlops Church will run a variation on the shoebox project this Christmas, in support of Scottish Women’s Aid once again. We invite everyone to take part and help to make Christmas a little bit happier for someone.

After talking to Scottish Women’s Aid representatives and Carlops Church supporters, we will donate cash, rather than a plethora of small gifts in shoeboxes. This will enable Scottish Women’s Aid to target what they know to be their principal needs. We apologise for the fact that it will also deny you an excuse to treat yourself to new shoes and thereby acquire a box!

Donations

By Sunday 4th December 2022 latest please, in any of three ways ...

BACS

Identify your gift as WA (for *Women’s Aid*, the beneficiary charity) and transfer to ...

Account name	Carlops Church
Account number	00246459
Sort code	70-09-39

Cash

Place your donation in the Shoebox collection box that will sit on one of the window sills at the back of the church from the start of November

Cheque

Payable to Carlops Church; send to Mary McElroy, Marfield View, Carlops EH26 9NJ

Thank you in advance for your participation and generosity.

Happy Birthday to whom?!

One of Carlops Church's staunchest supporters reached a "big birthday" recently and friends collaborated to mark the occasion (and possibly embarrass the subject!) with an informal presentation after morning service on 23rd October 2022. We won't reveal personal information in this public print, but we can tell readers that the recipient played *Happy Birthday* to themselves on the organ, and that two gifts were presented: one amber, one red, both wet!

'Nuff said, detectives?

Recycling update

Carlops Church has a fine record in recycling many types of items. Here is a reminder about saving some common, everyday products for re-purposing.

Plastic screw-on bottle tops (milk, mineral water, "juice", you-name-it) can be recycled via a project organised by Pat Graham of St Andrew's Church. Mary McElroy is in touch with her to support this. Collect your plastic tops and pass them to Mary, who promises to do the rest.

Mary McElroy also invites you to save used (empty!) pill blister packs and used batteries (any size); again, pass them to Mary, who promises to see them safely to the appropriate recycling home.

Drop off items for recycling in the church at any time; Mary will uplift them. Alternatively, take them to Mary at Marfield View, Kitleyknowe, Carlops EH26 9NJ.

Messy Church returns



Messy Church will be starting again this winter on the following Sundays (all sessions 4-6pm, in the New Church Hall, West Linton) ...

Sunday 13 November	Jesus the Light of the World
Sunday 11 December	Christmas
Sunday 15 January	The Good Samaritan
Sunday 19 February	Jesus the Healer
Sunday 12 March	The Feeding of the 5,000 – <i>Messy Church goes wild outside!</i>

All children from babies to P7 are most welcome to come and join in the fun! All children *must* be accompanied by an adult.

We will start with a Bible Story and then the children will do a range of craft activities, followed by a song and a prayer, and finish off with a meal together.

Please do consider joining us for an afternoon of fun activities and a family meal together.

For more information, contact Jean Howat: T 01968 660 677, E howatjean@gmail.com

Presbytery's Commemorative booklet

The Presbytery of Melrose and Peebles has produced a *Commemorative booklet* describing its member churches and the contribution of each of them to the life of its community; articles about the churches are accompanied by illustrations. The purpose of the booklet is provide a record of the membership and activities of our presbytery in its closing period. In January 2023, under the Church of Scotland's approved restructuring plans, the constituent churches and operations of Melrose and Peebles Presbytery will transfer into a new, larger *Presbytery of Lothian and Borders*.

Copies of the commemorative booklet, priced £5, can be obtained through Michael Knott, Treasurer at St Andrew's Church.

The Column



A “Swooping” of Sparrow hawks

This summer, during one of our spells of very hot weather, I was sitting with a friend under a large sunshade in the garden, when suddenly a sparrow hawk swooped past at eye level within a couple of metres of us. There was a panicky scattering of all the little birds at the feeding station and the hawk disappeared round the corner of the house so swiftly that neither of us had time to register whether or not it had made a catch. I feel that it probably did make a kill since sparrow hawks are pretty successful hunters.

My sister in Shropshire has a regular visitor which zooms past her kitchen window and snatches a bird from the feeders which hang from the pergola. It then lands on the lawn to devour its prey. From the feathers that are left she has noticed that it is most often a goldfinch that falls victim. She thinks that this is probably because goldfinches remain stationary on the feeders for a longer time than the tits and other small birds are in the habit of doing.

Many years ago, Bob and I watched a sparrow hawk take a blackbird from the top of a trellis and proceed to devour it on the grass a few metres away from our window. It pecked and tore at the carcass for more than five minutes and, when we examined the site of the massacre, the only remains were a few feathers and two legs with claws attached. There was no sign of the beak or skull!

Sparrow hawks are beautiful birds, but I prefer not to have them visiting too frequently!

The sparrow hawk *Accipiter nisus* has been a protected species since *The Wildlife and Countryside Act of 1981*. It is a small bird of prey adapted for hunting birds in confined spaces and so gardens are their ideal hunting grounds. Males and females have different colouring but they all have bright yellow or orangey eyes, long yellow legs and long talons.

Small birds are their main source of food, although sparrow hawks have been known to catch bats. Males can catch prey up to thrush size but females, being larger, can catch birds up to pigeon size.

The UK supports approximately 32,000 pairs and of these 8,000-12,000 pairs can be found in Scotland.

Nan Buchan

Diary



Forthcoming events

Drop-in coffee & Fair Trade stall Saturday 29 October 2022, 10.30am-12noon

Midweek cuppa and company Thursday 10 November 2022, 2-4pm

Soup lunch Wednesday 23 November 2022; 12noon-1.30pm

Drop-in coffee & Fair Trade stall Saturday 26 November 2022, 10.30am-12noon

Midweek cuppa and company Thursday 8 December 2022, 2-4pm

Midweek cuppa and company Thursday 12 January 2023, 2-4pm

Soup lunch Wednesday 25 January 2023 12noon-1.30pm

Drop-in coffee & Fair Trade stall Saturday 28 January 2023; 10.30am-12noon

Midweek cuppa and company Thursday 9 February 2023, 2-4pm

Soup lunch Wednesday 22 February 2023; 12noon-1.30pm

Drop-in coffee & Fair Trade stall Saturday 25 February 2023; 10.30am-12noon

Midweek cuppa and company Thursday 9 March 2023, 2-4pm

Soup lunch Wednesday 22 March 2023; 12noon-1.30pm

Drop-in coffee & Fair Trade stall Saturday 25 March 2023; 10.30am-12noon

Contacts

Minister: Rev Dr Tony Foley

Telephone 01968 660 221

Mobile 07793 294 000

Email tfoley@churchofscotland.org.uk

Church Administrator: Michelle Fraser

Telephone 01968 733 112

Email cos1560.tweed@outlook.com

Christian Aid: Mary Levison

Telephone 01968 674 566

Email marylevison@btinternet.com

Church bookings: Sheena Livingstone

Telephone 01968 661 282

Email sheena@deanfoot.onmicrosoft.com

Coffee and soup events

For information and to offer help, contact Mary McElroy or Mary Levison (both listed in this section)

Eco Group: Anna Woolverton

Telephone 01968 660 382

Email annapye@btinternet.com

Flowers: Hilary Watt

Telephone 01899 221 100

Email hilarywatt9lf@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 21 November 2022