



CARLOPS CHURCH

In the community, for the community

Newsletter

Volume 17, Number 6; June 2023

Services, June 2023

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

28 May 10am: Rev Dr Tony Foley
Baptism

4 June 10am: Dr Patsy Campbell

11 June 10am: Sheena Livingstone

18 June 10am: Dr Peter Worthington

25 June 10am: Fiona Burnett

2 July 10am: Rev Dr Tony Foley
Communion

Join us, in the church, and in other activities

We promise you a warm welcome

www.carlopschurch.org

Carlops is one of the West Tweeddale linkage of churches

www.westtweeddale.org.uk



Our Minister

Light – and light

Rev Dr Foley's diary makes him unable to write for the linkage newsletters this month, so Colin Herd has offered this article. Readers will recall that, in addition to leading services at Carlops from time to time, Colin edits the newsletter of St Andrew's Church West Linton. Thanks Colin.

The article's title, Light – and light, is my invention.

Rennie McElroy Editor

June is the month of light, the month of the summer solstice, when millions of people in northernmost Europe stay out late to enjoy the sight of the midnight sun. To have light and glory where there is usually darkness is something we celebrate, we welcome.

Jesus said: "I am the light of the world" (*John 8:12* and *John 9:5*). He wasn't comparing himself to the summer solstice, but teaching at a Jewish occasion which celebrated light every bit as much – the Feast of Tabernacles (*John 7:14*) – a celebration, not only of God's provision of water, but also of the light of God's presence with the Israelites in the wilderness.

During the Feast of Tabernacles there was a joyful celebration. The priests would light four huge lamps in the Court of Women. The flames would reach as high as the temple walls and would provide a light that could be seen all throughout Jerusalem. Men of deep piety would dance throughout the night for the entire week of celebrating. A choir, accompanied by an orchestra of instruments, would sing psalms like Psalm 27, which declares "The Lord is my light and my salvation."

At the height of this grand celebration, the Jesus had the temerity to stand and say that *he* was the light that was foreshadowed by the light for the Israelites in the wilderness. The Jewish leaders were furious, and they tried to stone him to death. Jesus did not fight back. He simply illustrated his claim to be the light of the world by giving sight to a man born blind (*John 9:5*).

In the twenty centuries since then, the word of God, when it is proclaimed, has drawn people out of the darkness and into the light of Jesus. The word is, as the psalmist said, "a lamp to my feet and a light for my path" (*Psalms 119:105*). David said, "In your light we see light" (*Psalms 36:9*). Today, by the light of the word of God, we can see Jesus as he is: truly the light of the world.

Colin Herd

News



Church plan progress

We are working at our task of revising Carlops Church's forward plan and trying to involve a good cross-section of Carlops people so that a wide range of ideas and views are included. We have invited all known supporters of our church to make suggestions (twice!) and have talked directly to over a dozen people; we will contact more over the next few weeks. We aim to develop a draft text for the Kirk Session later this summer – hopefully in July, perhaps more realistically, August!

We're not organising formal consultation meetings this time; people dislike them and feel abashed about speaking out. Our consultation will all be direct, one-on-one (or two-on-one if we gang up on you!). There is still time to comment, and we urge you to get in touch. Please don't assume that "This invitation doesn't really extend to me". It does. *We want to know what you want your church to be doing.* Contact details ...

Julie Gamble
Rennie McElroy

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T 07980 258 381

T 01968 661 042

Julie Gamble and Rennie McElroy

Christian Aid progress

Strictly speaking, the formally designated 2023 Christian Aid week was 14-20 May, but Carlops Church will continue its activity and support throughout May.

No door-to-door collections, but Christian Aid donation envelopes are available in the church; pick one up, fill it, and return to Mary Levison. Or donate online at www.christianaid.org.uk. In addition, all donations at Carlops' May Soup lunch and Coffee drop-in on Saturday 27 May 2023 will be in aid of Christian Aid.

Help us to help good causes. Information about Christian Aid's current projects is on their website at www.christianaid.org.uk.

Newsletter copy, please

Do you find the *Newsletter* a bit thin this month? Not much in it? I feel likewise, but the editorial drawer is bare. Why not write something for me? Please.

Rennie McElroy *Editor*

The Column



A-I or D-I-Y?

Artificial intelligence (AI) is receiving close attention, not just from “the meeja”, but in serious academic, business and political circles too. This true story may instruct and amuse.

Richard ---- has serviced, trouble-shot and generally looked after our computers for nearly twenty years now. We’d be lost without him. If there’s a problem, you call Richard, he looks at the PC via remote access software, and he fixes it. 36 hours is a long problem-to-fix time; twelve hours is typical. Every six months, he carries out a “healthcheck”: makes sure all software is up-to-date and working properly; deletes redundant files; fixes bugs; removes any nasties. It’s an excellent service and makes life much smoother for the technologically challenged. (Ask me if you’d like to be put in touch with Richard. I promise I’m not on commission!!)

Two weeks ago, I received Richard’s usual email about healthchecks, inviting me to book a time when our PCs would be free for him to work on. Or I thought it was his usual email, until I read the last paragraph. “You might like to know that, as there’s so much in the news about artificial intelligence right now, I got ChatGPT (AI software) to write this message for me. Just for fun. It’s been interesting. Tell me what you think.”

I read the message again, carefully this time. It got Richard’s message across and said all I needed to know: healthcheck time coming up; earliest and latest dates for this round of healthchecks; invitation to book a time that suited me; click here to start the booking process; any issues you want to mention up-front. So far, so good. It communicated what it needed to communicate.

But it was much longer than Richard’s usual message, and about twice as long as it needed to be. And nearly all the extra verbiage consisted of politically correct filler phrases; woke, fake-concerned HR-speak; bespattered with “vital remedial and restorative work”, “valued customer”, “positive client relationships”; “very sincerely”; and so on.

I took Richard at his word and wrote to him with my impressions. I said the AI-composed message communicated ok, but it was over long, more than a little posey; above all, it oozed insincerity – utterly unlike Richard himself in character. I ended by confessing (unnecessarily, given how well Richard knows us!) that I can be a bit of a wordsmith, and lack high-end technical skills.

Richard replied next day – in his own voice. “Hi Rennie, thanks for your comments; your reaction is much like my own and what’s more (and here, his outrage takes the voice up two octaves), I had to delete an Oxford comma from the AI text before I sent it out!”

My reply was succinct: “I’m proud of you, Richard!” A few days later, the healthcheck went well.

Rennie McElroy

Diary



Forthcoming events

Coffee drop-in Saturday 27 May 2023, 10.30am-12noon

Cuppa and company Thursday 1 June 2023, 2-4pm

Cuppa and company Thursday 8 June 2023, 2-4pm

Cuppa and company Thursday 15 June 2023, 2-4pm

Cuppa and company Thursday 22 June 2023, 2-4pm

Coffee drop-in Saturday 24 June 2023, 10.30am-12noon

Cuppa and company Thursday 29 June 2023, 2-4pm

Cuppa and company Thursday 6 July 2023, 2-4pm

Cuppa and company Thursday 13 July 2023, 2-4pm

Cuppa and company Thursday 20 July 2023, 2-4pm

Cuppa and company Thursday 27 July 2023, 2-4pm

Coffee drop-in Saturday 30 July 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: Vacancy

Telephone 01968 733 112

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If there is no response from these contacts, I suggest contacting Minister or Session Clerk Ed

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 drop-in and Cuppa & company: Mary Levison and Mary McElroy

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Assistance required and always welcome; contact Mary or Mary if you can help!

Eco Group: Anna Woolverton

Telephone 01968 660 382

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Flowers: Hilary Watt

Telephone 01899 221 100

Email hilarywatt9lf@btinternet.com

Newsletter and website: Rennie McElroy

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Session Clerk and Organist: Murray Campbell

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Soup lunch: Nan Buchan

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Assistance required and always welcome; contact Nan if you can help!

Sunday School: Julie Gamble

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Treasurer: Mary McElroy

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Material for next issue

To Rennie McElroy by Monday 19 June 2023