



CARLOPS CHURCH

In the community, for the community

Newsletter

Volume 18, Number 7; July 2024

Services, July 2024

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

:
30 June 10am: Rev Dr Tony Foley
7 July 10am: Fiona Burnett
14 July 10am: Isobel Hunter
21 July 10am: Peter Worthington
28 July 10am: Patsy Campbell

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



Finding Prophets among the Paperbacks

If you want something to read this summer do yourself a favour and read Lionel Shriver's latest novel *Mania*. Shriver sets her story in an alternative 21st century. The main character, Pearson Converse, is wrestling with the 'latest' major political dogma of her time. And in doing so, she's in danger of losing her best friend; ends up having tense arguments with her husband; is summoned to the dean's office at the University where she teaches; and receives a threatening visit from Child Protection Services. The plot of the story is focused on the last crusade for social justice which isn't racism, or gender equity but "*cognitive discrimination*."

The Mental Parity (MP) movement inspired by the best-selling *The Calumny of IQ: Why Discrimination Against "Dumb People" is the Last Great Civil Rights Fight*, has begun its blitzkrieg through educational institutions. It's no longer permissible to speak about, or even to acknowledge, differences of intelligence. "Smart," "stupid," "dumb," and all similar evaluative terms are placed on the MP Index of forbidden words. The Child Protection Services visit Pearson's home because her youngest child, Lucy, reports to a teacher that her mother uses these insulting words at home.

Smart books and smart movies are censored, because they assume cognitive disparities and make some people feel inferior. Dumb movies—*Dumb and Dumber*, for instance—are preceded by a "warning about offensive representations of cognitive inferiority." *The Simpsons* gets cancelled because of the double transgression of portraying an idiot (Homer) and a genius (Lisa).

In a society where intelligence gets flattened, everything else does too. No one can admit there's such a thing as "being good at." Pearson's daughter Zanzibar is too good an actor to be cast in school plays, and the orchestra director stops her when she plays a stunning Bach melody on her flute. Pearson's tree-surgeon husband, Wade, tries to keep his head down, hoping MP will never touch him, until he's forced to hire an incompetent employee and keep him on the payroll for fear of a cognitive discrimination lawsuit, a decision that leads to disaster. With the American food system and auto industry staffed with dumb people who aren't allowed to be trained, American food becomes toxic and American cars explode on the highway.

Sudoku, crosswords, and all other puzzle games are quietly dropped from newspapers because of how they make the '*cognitively different*' feel inadequate. Pearson's teaching is hamstrung because telling students something they don't know already comes with the forbidden implication that they were ignorant before they learned it. Schools have given up on testing and grading.

Mania is a great piece of satire that pokes fun at contemporary not unlike our own society and of where that society might be headed. It all makes for an interesting and compelling read. In one remarkable passage Shriver lets her characters reflect on the energies of radicalism:

'Radical movements keep ratcheting up their demands because nothing enervates a cause more than success. Crusaders resent having their purpose stolen out from under them by the fulfilment of their quest; reaching the promised land leaves seekers bereft. There's little to do in a utopian oasis but sip coconut water. So, the journey must never be completed. The goal must remain out of reach. To preserve the perfect impossibility of getting there, the desired end point becomes ever more extreme.'

Shriver's humorous tale makes a serious point, like all good authors she may prove to be less of a satirist and more of a prophet.

Peace,

Tony

News



Meteorological Miscellanea

In the last report (18th May) I wrote "...the dry weather continues - just 1.10 inches (28mm) so far." Well, that was about to change!

On the 22nd 1.12 inches doubled the month's total. On the 23rd 2.24 inches doubled the month's total again! The latter was the 4th wettest day on record. Taken as two consecutive days they were the 2nd wettest on record. Travel was tricky on the 23rd. The Edinburgh City By-pass was flooded stranding some motorists for hours with resultant traffic jams. There was extensive flooding on the A702 particularly around Flotterstone and Silverburn with drainage off the Pentland Hills.

More rain by the 26th took us to the 2nd wettest May. A thunderstorm on the 28th took us to the wettest. We weren't done yet - more thunderstorms were reported in Edinburgh on the 29th. We finished on 6.80 inches (173mm) - 5.00 inches more than last May.

Often, it seems, a change of month brings a change of weather. June began splendidly with 15 hours of sunshine on the 1st and a maximum temperature of 71F (21.7C). Two more dry days followed before an Arctic airstream set in and changed everything. Temperatures plummeted, as only temperatures can do, with a strong northerly wind giving high 'windchill'. There were reports and webcam captures of snow "up north". The morning of the 13th saw a Carlops temperature of 38F (3.3C). This was the lowest June temperature for 9 years and the 2nd lowest in 23 years.

The cold and windy conditions prevailed until a 'southwesterly' on the 17th triggered a hailstorm in the late afternoon, followed by thunder and lightning. 0.30 inches fell in 20 minutes. By the end of the evening 0.97 inches (24.6mm) had fallen.

The Summer Solstice this year came at 9.50pm on the 20th. We enjoyed a fine evening with colourful cloud. Once the sun had set a full moon rose from the Moorfoot Hills. Aye, the nights are drawing in!

By 24th June the average temperature has been colder than that of May. The 21.7C on the 1st remains the only day to see 20C+ so far. Tune in next month to find out how June ends!

Peter Woolverton, Pyethall.

Murray Campbell, BEM

Without making him squirm too much, we would like to extend warm congratulations to Murray, our Session Clerk, who was awarded a BEM in the King's Birthday Honours "For services to the Carlops Church and to the community in Tweeddale and Edinburgh". We think Murray's ongoing energy, insight, leadership and willing participation mean this award is well deserved.

Murray says -

"I was very surprised and grateful to hear a few weeks ago that I had been recommended for this award. In service to the community Patsy and I have always worked as a team, so I think that she shares the honour, as do all the members and supporters whose dedication has kept Carlops Church flourishing."

The question is, where will these achievements end? Session Clerk, Professor, FRSE, FInstP and BEM – surely sainthood is the next logical step!?

Tree Planting at Spittal – public meeting

In line with current thinking on land management, the Kennedy family are planning to submit an application for tree planting on the "back" of the hill above and behind Spittal. The proposal covers the ground immediately to the north and east of the North Esk Reservoir i.e. on the Cock Rig and the west facing slopes of Spittal Hill.

The area proposed extends to approx. 130 hectares (320 acres), comprising of a broad mix of tree species, and linking the current mosaic of shelterbelts currently occupying the valley.

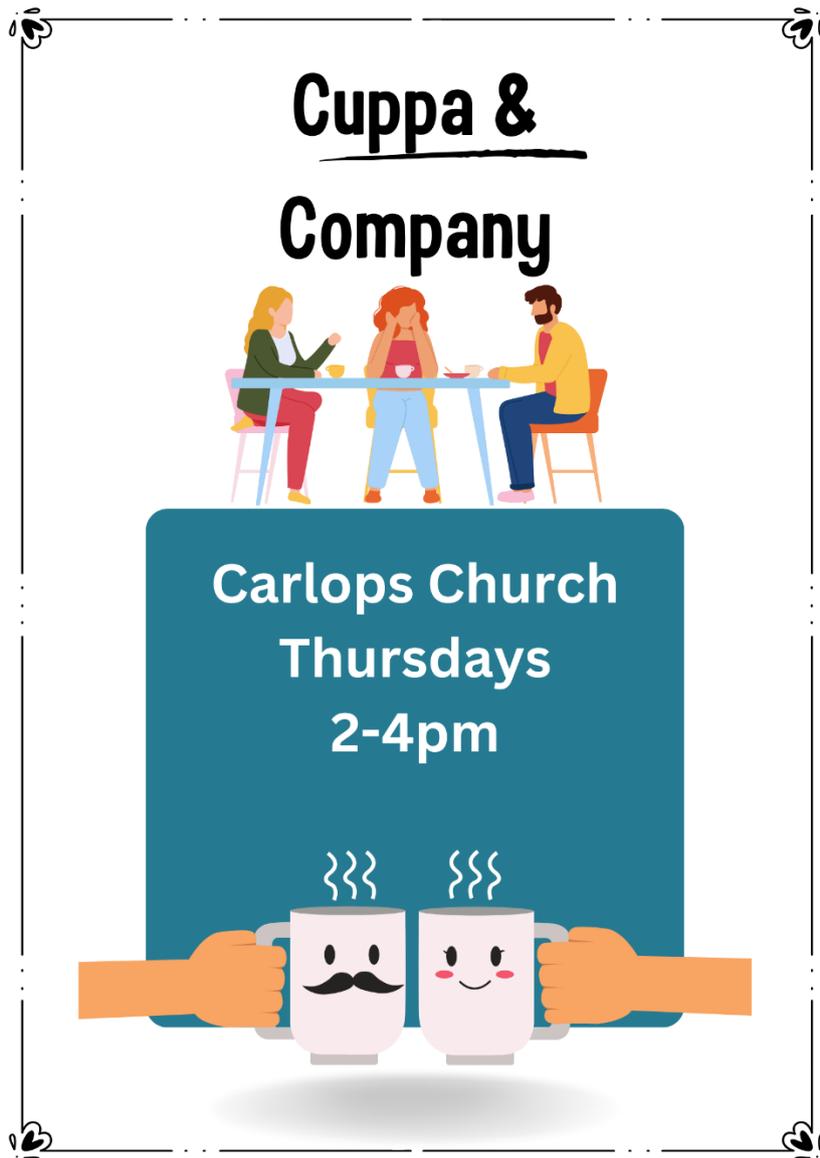
The woodland has been carefully designed to meet with current thinking on "best practice." The mixed conifer element of the scheme, i.e. that proportion which will help to provide for our timber needs in the future, extends to no more than 50% of the total area, while a significant 35% will be stocked with a range of broadleaved species, providing ecological diversity. The remaining 15% will comprise of open ground, offering valuable woodland edge, combined with a mosaic of footpaths for access to and through the woodland.

It is planned to hold a public meeting in Carlops Village Hall to which you are invited. This is proposed for Friday 19th July at 7pm*. There will be a brief presentation of the scheme, followed by an open discussion, during which your views are sought.

Tea, coffee and other refreshments will be served

Gavin Marshall

*this is the preferred date and time for the meeting but it is not yet fully confirmed. If you plan to attend and wish to check timing please contact Gavin on 07967 342022



Cuppa and Company – help over the summer

Help will be required to run our weekly Cuppa and Company on Thursdays over the summer as regular helpers go on holiday at various times.

Helping could involve

- baking
- getting the tables ready
- serving and chatting
- helping to clear up

If you think you can help, please let us know!

Carlops Community Garden – Summertime!

Carlops Community Garden has started up again after a long winter. A group of us meet every Wednesday 6.30 – 8.00, always finishing with tea and cake. The shelter has been well-used and appreciated. We have planted cauliflowers, potatoes, leeks, chard, courgettes and salad crops – hoping that the planters will repeat their magic of last summer when we won prizes at the Rural Product Show!

A football pitch has appeared in the field for younger members of the community, and we have now made the decision to demolish the first play equipment (23 years old) – we still have the more recent one and have recycled the slide on a nearby slope.

Anna Woolverton

Christian Aid - Total raised

Mary Levison reports with delight that £1,100 was raised for Christian Aid through the various events held at Carlops Church. She is incredibly grateful to those who gave generously both of their time and money – thanks everyone!

The car boot sale and teas in Skirling also brought in a wonderful £1,330!

If you need help

Our linkage of 6 churches has some help available for anyone in need.

Food bank

The minister's benevolent fund offers emergency assistance throughout our linkage areas. If you require assistance, please contact us by email. All emails will be dealt with in the strictest of confidence. People may need other kinds of support and we are also ready to help with that or direct you to others who can

emergencyfoodbank@standrews-westlinton.org

Pastoral Group

We are a small group of people who are there to offer a listening ear in confidence. We are not professional counsellors but rather sympathetic listeners.

If you know anyone who might appreciate a visit, please do contact our minister tfoley@churchofscotland.org or our pastoral group lead Jean Howat howatjean@gmail.com

The Column

Prayer

Prayer comes from the word “precare”, to request. I believe that Christian prayer is better defined by “the practice of the presence of God”.

The Church of England prescribes Morning and Evening prayer for its priests. As a daily routine, prayer becomes easier with a regular format. This is important because our daily habits shape our character, which conditions our responses. We mostly act first and rationalise afterwards.

We each find our own pattern. I use the traditional opening worship, give thanks for the new day, and say the beautiful Psalm 100. I have a Bible reading with commentary, a Celtic Collect, and my own version of the Lord’s prayer.

“All-embracing love, we bless you within and without and all around us. May we work for fairness and harmony in this world. May our daily bread satisfy our human needs. When we stray from your way, may we remember you and turn around, and love our neighbour as ourselves. May we not be tested, but kept safe from harm. Amen.”

With a blessing the whole is book-ended by the end of Paul’s hymn to love:

“And now remain faith, hope and love, these three, but the greatest of these is love.”

I find prayer helps me to recall each morning, what I want my life to be about.

Michael Hell

Diary notes



Forthcoming events

Coffee drop-in, Saturday 29 June 2024, 10.30am-12noon

Gaelic Psalm Singing, Tuesday 2 July 2024, 7.30–9.30pm

Cuppa and company, Thursday 4 July 2024, 2-4pm

Gaelic Psalm Singing, Tuesday 9 July 2024, 7.30–9.30pm

Cuppa and company, Thursday 11 July 2024, 2-4pm

Gaelic Psalm Singing, Tuesday 16 July 2024, 7.30–9.30pm

Cuppa and company, Thursday 18 July 2024, 2-4pm

Gaelic Psalm Singing, Tuesday 23 July 2024, 7.30–9.30pm

Cuppa and company, Thursday 25 July 2024, 2-4pm

Coffee drop-in, Saturday 27 July 2024, 10.30am-12noon

Gaelic Psalm Singing, Tuesday 30 July 2024, 7.30–9.30pm

Cuppa and company, Thursday 1 August 2024, 2-4pm

Gaelic Psalm Singing, Tuesday 6 August 2024, 7.30–9.30pm

Cuppa and company, Thursday 8 August 2024, 2-4pm

Gaelic Psalm Singing, Tuesday 13 August 2024, 7.30–9.30pm

Cuppa and company, Thursday 15 August 2024, 2-4pm

Gaelic Psalm Singing, Tuesday 20 August 2024, 7.30–9.30pm

Cuppa and company, Thursday 22 August 2024, 2-4pm

Gaelic Psalm Singing, Tuesday 27 August 2024, 7.30–9.30pm

Cuppa and company, Thursday 29 August 2024, 2-4pm

Coffee drop-in, Saturday 31 August 2024, 10.30am-12noon

Contacts

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Church bookings: Sheena Livingstone

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Material for next issue

To Julie Gamble by Monday 23 July