



# CARLOPS CHURCH

In the community, for the community

## Newsletter

Volume 19, Number 11; Nov 2025

### Services, November 2025

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

:

2 Nov 10am: Patsy Campbell  
9 Nov 10am: Rev Dr Tony Foley  
16 Nov 10am: Fiona Burnett  
23 Nov 10am: Sheena Livingstone  
30 Nov 10am: Rev Dr Tony Foley  
7 Dec 10am: David Henderson-Howat

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

**We promise you a warm welcome**

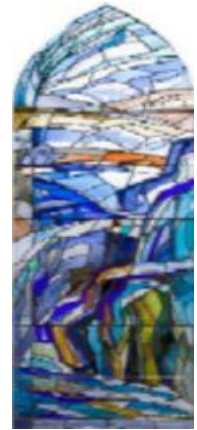
**[www.carlopschurch.org](http://www.carlopschurch.org)**

***Carlops is one of the West Tweeddale linkage of churches***

**[www.westtweeddale.org.uk](http://www.westtweeddale.org.uk)**

# Our Minister

## The Morality of Obedience



*'Alas for you Pharisees, for you pay out your tithe of mint and rue and every little herb,  
while ignoring the justice and love of God.'* LUKE 11:42

A major bone of contention between Jesus and his opponents centred around the morality of obedience. Our world's recent and not-so-distant history is full of examples of how that issue is still very much with us today. Of how, often in the pursuit of State defined goodness, people can unconsciously find themselves adapting to the normalisation of cruelty towards others under the guise of 'Law'.

When the language of morality is manipulated and used to lead people away from the '*weightier matters of the Law*' it invariably becomes a means of leading a populace to commit previously inconceivable actions in the cause of the 'national good'. This happens when the self-serving morality of a ruling party usurps the role of public and personal conscience. The subsequent 'politically responsible' moral code then becomes a means of ensnaring the populace into an unquestioning mind-set. Christians living through such eras are often faced the question: '*How does a Christian live in a society that preaches goodness but worships power and lauds compliance?*' How does one live in a society that conflates being a good person with being an obedient citizen, who is passively compliant to the new political and cultural norms?

Aldous Huxley's novel, *Brave New World* tells of a world where pleasure has replaced purpose, and an addictive desire for comfort displaces the growth pains associated with developing critical faculties. A world where life is lived out under the dictatorship of entertainment, of endless distractions that bring momentary pleasures. A world where the thoughts of its citizens are regulated by dopamine fixes wrapped up in entertainment all designed to pacify the populace and incapacitate their critical thinking faculties.

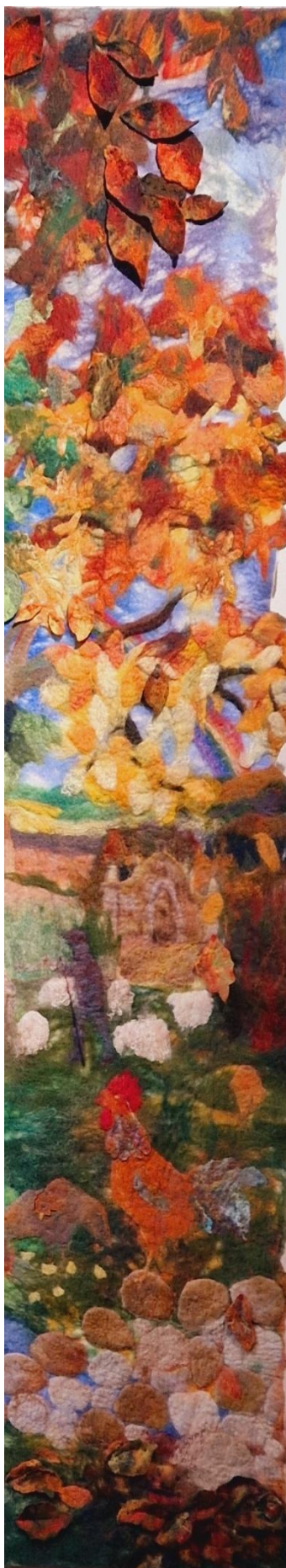
We presently live in the age of the 'Selfie'. An image-driven era where virtue has become a performance art led by a celebrity priesthood. A time where appearance is lauded and substance ignored. A culture where overt political deceptions are justified in the service of 'lesser evils'. Where appearing good is praise-worthy but doing good can be considered subversive activity. In such a culture how do we determine whether we are actually being good or simply being compliant?

How can Christians think about the morality of obedience? We could start by being determined to never to lose sight of the '*weightier matters of the Law*', like compassion and justice. We could start by insisting on standards of truth telling in public life that serve the public good and not simply the policy aims of a political party. We could start by being leery of people who ask us to give uncritical compliance to their opinions.

*"Do not conform to the standards of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.*

*Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is..."* ROMANS 12:2

*Peace,*  
*Tony*



## Meteorological Miscellanea

It's often said, without foundation, that a change of month brings a change of weather - well, it did this month. There was as much rain in the first four days in October as in the last three weeks of September and much more than we got in the whole of April. Much of the first four days' rain can be attributed to Storm Amy.

The Met Office warning was the earliest for a winter storm. On the 3rd, Tiree was treated to a gust of 96 mph. It wasn't so wild in Carlops, but your reporter was on the front line at the time.

Anna and I were attending the Annual Gathering of Reforesting Scotland held this year near Findhorn on the Moray Firth coast. On our journey north on the A939 we passed through a charred wilderness running the full length of the west face of Knock of Braemoray. It was a reminder of the hot dry summer that triggered the wildfires. The first evening was like no other - our accommodation was a 'Wigwam Pod'. Now think of lying on the edge of a station platform with express non-stopping trains thundering through. Our pod was buffeted, thumped, slapped and shaken as the rain lashed down. We decided to ditch the pyjamas in favour of waterproofs and boots with all belongings bagged up ready for the evacuation. Remarkably daybreak found us in the same place. Many trees in the neighbourhood were lying horizontal, and roads were blocked. 90,000 properties in "the north" were left powerless. There were some adjustments to our programme.

We stayed on for a wee holiday. On Monday the 6th nearby Forres recorded 22°C and on Tuesday the 7th we basked in the sunshine by the storm resculpted beach that fringes Burghead Bay. Gentle waves lapped through the beautiful pebbles. Storm, what storm?

In recent reports I have blethered and fretted about strange clouds. I have been vindicated. Proper meteorologists are now muttering about new and rare formations, and a new cloud word is out there - asperitas. They are a bit puzzled and so am I. Something strange is going on up there. Watch this column!

*Peter Woolverton, Pyethall, 24 October 2025*

# News



## Summary of Stated Annual Meeting

Our Accounts for 2024 have been checked by Jean McNab and submitted to The Church of Scotland at 121 George Street and OSCR.

Total income was £31,726, plus £1,286 Fair Trade and £1,677 for charities.

Total payments were £30,109, plus £1,117 Fair Trade and £2,387 for charities.

This left us with a surplus of £1,076.

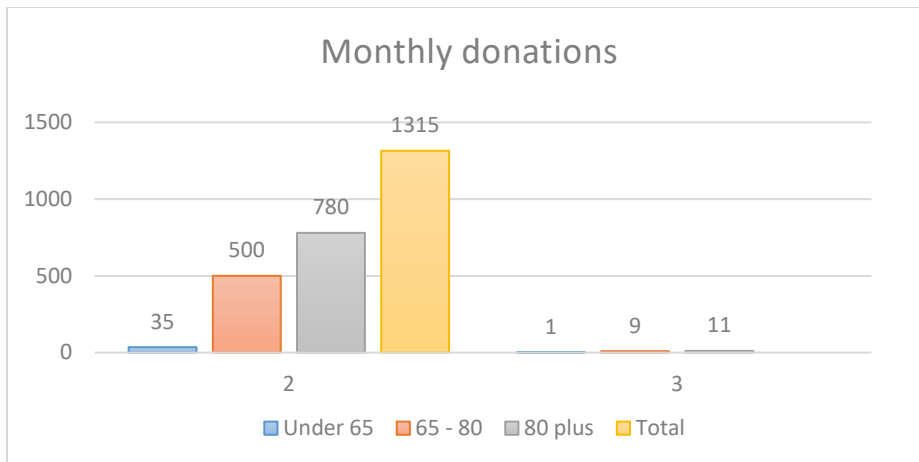
For 2025 our budgeted income is £31,915, but it looks as though we will only reach £28,000.

Expenses are likely to be £32,000, leaving us with a projected deficit of over £4,000.

Our 2025 contribution to the National Ministry and Mission & Wider Work, which is calculated by 121, is £15,283 (compared to £13,035 for 2024). This is by far our greatest expense, followed by electricity £6,000, linkage expenses £3,400, and manse expenses £2,500.

Fundraising to date this year is £4,408 which coincidentally would cover our anticipated deficit. It is wonderful that we can support Malawi, and other regular favourite charities, but we do now need to think about church funds.

Our monthly income from regular donations through our bank account is £1,315. Of these, only one donor is under 65, nine are 65-80 and eleven are over 80. Half our donations are from the over 80s. You can see how vulnerable we are as we start to lose our older members.



For those who make a regular donation, it would be really great if you could consider a cost-of-living increase in your monthly amount. All our costs have increased with inflation, and it may have been some time since you set up your standing order.

If you are eligible for Gift Aid, please let me know. This adds 25% to your donations and is a crucial part of our annual income.

If you haven't done so already, please consider starting a standing order. It also gives us the confidence to know what our income will be each month.

Our bank details are:

Carlops Church

80-09-39

00246459

We are fortunate to have a cushion of funds in a Fabric account which we may need to access this year as we have plans to improve the area at the front of the church as the final part of our Patio Garden project. We can use some of this money to kick-start the project, but our own fundraising will have to pay it back to Reserves.

So, with your support, I think we should be OK this year, but I expect costs to continue to rise next year.

*Anna Woolverton, Treasurer, 19 October 2025*





## Our Village Talks

### Monthly talks and a chance to chat

(Raising funds for Malawi and Carlops Church, suggested £5 donation per event)

**Friday 14 November, 7.30pm**

#### **The Life and Works of John Buchan**

Ted Shields will present on John Buchan, 1<sup>st</sup> Baron Tweedsmuir, the Scottish novelist and historian who served as Governor General of Canada and is best known for his iconic novel *The Thirty-Nine Steps*.

**Friday 5 December, 7.30pm**

Festive evening with music, nibbles and Fair Trade Stall.

In a change to our last newsletter, we are planning an evening with music, some festive treats to eat and drink plus a Fair Trade stall and perhaps stalls from some local businesses. Final plans will be advised in next issue and via usual channels.

## Wreath Making Class – 28<sup>th</sup> November

Gill Gold will lead a wreath making class again this year, taking place at the church at 10am on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> November. If you wish to go, please let Gill know by Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> so appropriate materials can be provided.

Cost is £15 and proceeds will go to church funds.

## National Day of Prayer 29<sup>th</sup> November

Rt Rev Rosie Frew, Moderator of the General Assembly, is encouraging Church of Scotland congregations to join together in a special Day of Prayer on Saturday 29 November, the eve of St Andrew's Day. The Moderator said this is a good date for the Church of Scotland to gather in prayer.

"There is very little about St Andrew in the Bible," she said. "He's remembered as the disciple who brought people to Jesus - his brother Peter, the boy with the loaves and fish, the 'inquiring Greeks'.

"This year on the eve of St Andrew's Day can I encourage you to take part in the Church of Scotland Day of Prayer 0800 to 2300 and come together to bring your prayers to Jesus.

Resources, flyers etc go to

<https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/worship/prayers/national-day-of-prayer>

### The Five-Finger Prayer

Thumb - Pray for those closest to you, closest to your heart, your family and loved ones.

(Colossians 4.2)

Pointer finger - Pray for those who instruct/teach you, the people who point the way. (I

Thessalonians 5.25)

Tallest finger - Pray for those who lead and instruct us including our government and our church. I

(Timothy 2.1-2)

Ring finger - Pray for those who are struggling or are in trouble or pain. (James 5.1)

Little finger - Pray for ourselves and our own needs (Philippians 4.6)

## Swiss Adventures

We send good wishes to Rev Chris Levison who has been invited to minister to the Church of Scotland in Geneva for a few weeks in Nov/Dec. We hope both Chris and Mary enjoy this opportunity to make new friends and connections (and eat a lot of cheese and chocolate) and that the congregation there enjoy the teaching and the company.

More about the church - [Church of Scotland in Geneva](#).



## Christmas Giving – Scottish Women’s Aid



We have chosen Women’s Aid East and Midlothian for our Christmas appeal and, as with last year, instead of collecting shoeboxes with gifts inside we have agreed to collect cash donations. They will use the donations to give Christmas bundles to affected families across the area.

**Donations should be made before 7th December please,** and you can give in the following ways;

### Bank transfer (BACS)

Use the reference WA (for Women’s Aid, the beneficiary charity) and transfer to ...

Account name Carlops Church

Account number 00246459

Sort code 80-09-39

### Physical cash

Place in an envelope marked WA and add to the collection plate at the back of the church. Our Gift Service, where we give thanks for the generosity shown to others at Christmas, takes place on Sunday 15th December.

## Remembrance Service – 9<sup>th</sup> Nov 9.30am

A reminder that our Remembrance Service will begin 30 minutes earlier than our usual Sunday services and takes place on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> Nov at 9.30am.

# The Column

## Thou shalt have a fishy

Edinburgh fisherman Scott Hutchison is on a quest to catch every species of fish in Scotland, and his tally is impressive. He combines this with fishing trips all over the world and keeps all catches on record via his blog - [Something Fishy Going On](#)

His talents don't end there – here's his fishy take on Cecil Frances Alexander's famous hymn...

|                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>All fish bright and beautiful,<br/>All fishes great and small,<br/>All fish wise and wonderful,<br/>I try to catch them all.</i> | The minnow and the stone loach.<br>The lady of the stream,<br>A conger after darkness,<br>A lovely gilthead bream. |
| From tiny little goby,<br>To skate with massive wings,<br>The wrasse with lovely colours,<br>The weever with their stings.          | The Connemarra clingfish<br>A tope with teeth so sharp<br>The funky tompot blenny<br>All variants of carp          |
| A rockling after darkness<br>All fishes that are flat,<br>The goldfish in your garden,<br>An introduced Wel's cat.                  | A meat cube munching barbel<br>The cod in winter time<br>A pollock from a kelp bed<br>An eel covered in slime      |

These are some of the beautiful fish he has caught so far.



Left to right from the top;  
 Rock Goby, Flapper Skate, Lesser Weever, Shore Rockling,  
 Goldfish, Stone Loach, Grayling, Gilthead Seabream,  
 Connemara Clingfish, Tope, Tompot Blenny, Barbel.

If you've been hooked, his blog contains hundreds more pictures and plenty of fisherman's tales!

*Julie Gamble*

Contributions for *The Column* are sought for forthcoming issues. If you have anything you'd like to share – a thought, a poem, a good-spirited rant - it will be gratefully received.  
 Email to [julieggamble@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:julieggamble@yahoo.co.uk)



## Christmas Events

# CHRISTMAS AT CARLOPS CHURCH 2025

**WREATH MAKING WITH GILL GOLD**

FRIDAY 28<sup>TH</sup> NOV 10AM

(£15 - PROCEEDS TO CHURCH FUNDS)

**ADVENT GARDEN WITH GERDA STEVENSON**

SUNDAY 7<sup>TH</sup> DEC 3.45PM FOR 4PM START

**FESTIVE MISC, NIBBLES & FAIR TRADE STALL**

FRIDAY 5<sup>TH</sup> DEC 7.30PM

**CAROLS BY THE PATIO GARDEN CHRISTMAS TREE**

SUNDAY 21<sup>ST</sup> DEC 11.15AM

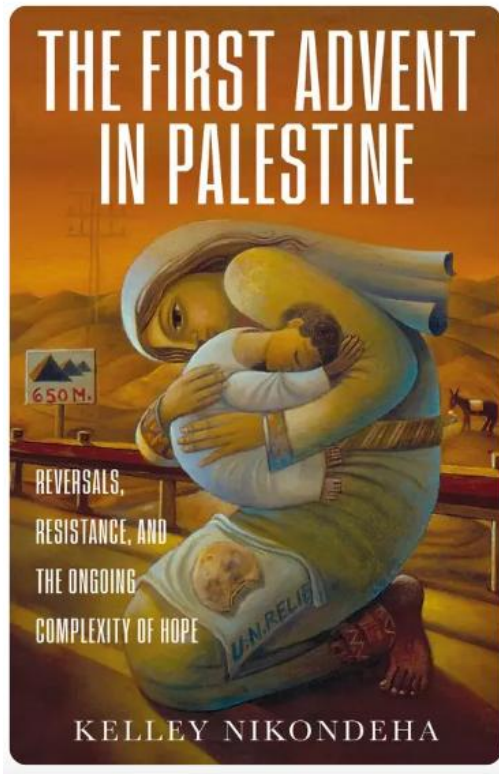
**CHRISTMAS EVE CAROLS**

WEDNESDAY 24<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 7PM

**CHRISTMAS DAY MORNING WORSHIP -  
ST ANDREW'S CHURCH, WEST LINTON, 11AM**

# Advent Studies 2025 – The First Advent in Palestine

## by Kelley Nikondeha



*“When we picture the first Advent, we see Mary and Joseph huddled by a manger. We picture Gabriel, magi, and shepherds tending their flocks. A shining star against a midnight sky. But this harmonized version has lifted the Advent story out of its context—those who experienced the first Advent had to travel through great darkness to reach the hope that shining star announced. Trusted scholar and community organizer Kelley Nikondeha takes us back, to where the landscape of Palestine is once again the geographic, socioeconomic, and political backdrop for the Advent story.*

This book has been chosen for the 2025 Advent Studies series across the linkage. The dates for the linkage-wide meetings will be available in due course.

Murray is open to having a study group here in Carlops, as we did last year. For those interested, please speak to him about what time and day suits you.

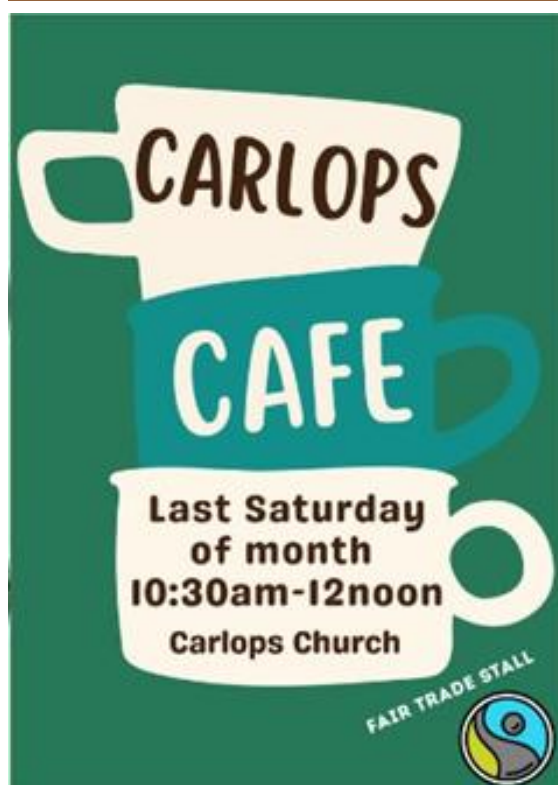
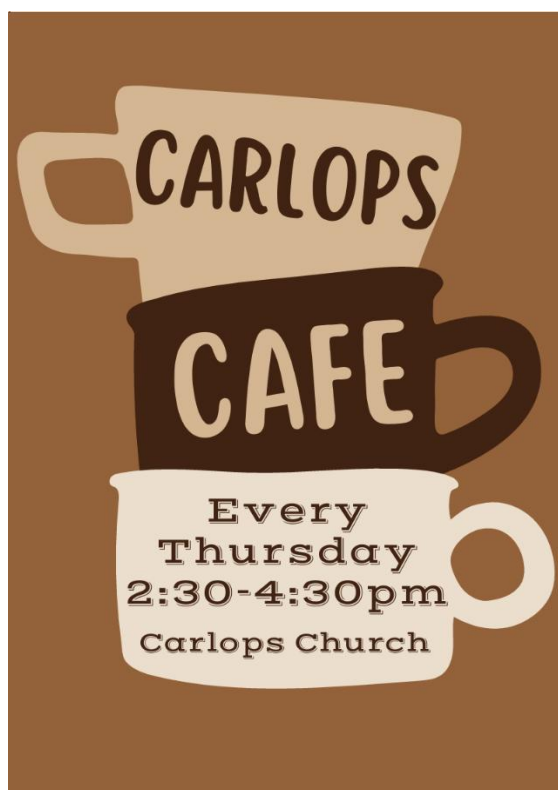
Your local bookshop would be happy to order this for you – perhaps if we knew numbers we could order as a group. Please contact Julie if you wish to do this.

Hardback ISBN 9781506474793

Paperback ISBN 9798889838258



## Our regular events



Our regular events will take a 2 week break over Christmas and New Year, spanning 21 December 2025 to 6 January 2026.

Keep up to date with all events across the linkage [West Tweeddale Parishes Diary](#)



## Children's Events



Sunday Club meets on the first Sunday of every month in the Old Church Hall during school term times. We leave from church during the service (start time 11.30am) and walk the children to the hall and for those who wish to meet us at the hall we suggest 11.45am. This is particularly useful for those who attend the earlier service in Carlops Church. After Sunday Club we bring the children back to the church or they can be collected by parents around 12.15pm.

### Dates For Diaries

Sunday 2nd November

Sunday 7th December

Sunday Club Christmas Party - 21st December in the New Church Hall between 2pm until 3:30pm

Thank you,

*Ann Lyon and Kate Whalley*

# Messy<sup>®</sup> Church

CANA  
WEDDING  
WATER  
INTO WINE

**Sunday 9 Nov. 2025**  
**4pm**  
**New Church Hall**  
**West Linton**

Messy Church offers a warm, welcoming space to everyone who wants to join in. Join us for an afternoon of fun activities and a meal together.



**For more info contact [howatjean@gmail.com](mailto:howatjean@gmail.com)**

## If you need help

As well as The Open Gate (advertised below) 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](mailto: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](mailto:tfoley@churchofscotland.org) or our pastoral group lead Jean Howat [howatjean@gmail.com](mailto:howatjean@gmail.com)

We are not professional counsellors but rather sympathetic listeners.



## Got a problem?

Stressed? Anxious? Depressed?  
Parenting difficulties? Relationship issues? Work  
problems? Trouble at school/college? Etc.

Whatever the problem - large or small, recent or  
long-standing - Solution Focussed Brief Therapy  
can help.

Ask for an appointment at

**THE OPEN GATE**  
**Fridays 2pm to 5pm.**

Anyone who wants help for their problem is  
welcome, and will be seen locally and in  
confidence by arrangement.

**PHONE OR TEXT 07535 898 244**

**The Open Gate** uses a counselling approach which is brief,  
effective and future-orientated, building on your own solutions.  
All sessions are free and confidential, with no long waiting-list.



## Contacts

### **Minister: Rev Dr Tony Foley**

Telephone 01968 660 221  
Mobile 07793 294 000

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

### **Church Administrator: Kate Whalley**

Telephone 01968 733 112

Email [kate@westlinton.com](mailto:kate@westlinton.com)

Office - Friday 9.30 am – 12.30pm

Old Church Hall - Friday 2.00 – 4.00pm

### **Christian Aid: Mary Levison**

Telephone 01968 674 566

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

### **Church bookings: Sheena Livingstone**

Telephone 01968 661 282

Email [sheena@deanfoot.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:sheena@deanfoot.onmicrosoft.com)

### **Coffee drop-in, Carlops Café and Soup Lunch : Mary Levison**

Telephone 01968 674 566

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

### **Treasurer and Eco Group: Anna Woolverton**

Telephone 01968 660 382

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

### **Flowers: Hilary Watt**

Telephone 01899 221 100

Email [hilarywatt9lf@btinternet.com](mailto:hilarywatt9lf@btinternet.com)

### **Newsletter and website: Julie Gamble**

Telephone 01968 661 042

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

### **Session Clerk and Organist: Murray Campbell**

Telephone 01968 660 530

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

### **Request a card for someone: Bridget Wilcox**

Text only 07980 836 817

# Diary notes



## Forthcoming events

|                       |               |                                                                                      |
|-----------------------|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Tuesday 4 November    | 7.30-9.30pm   | <b>Gaelic Psalm Singing</b>                                                          |
| Thursday 6 November   | 2.30-4.30pm   | <b>Carlops Café</b>                                                                  |
| Tuesday 11 November   | 7.30-9.30pm   | <b>Gaelic Psalm Singing</b>                                                          |
| Wednesday 12 November | 12.30-2pm     | <b>Soup Lunch</b>                                                                    |
| Thursday 13 November  | 2.30-4.30pm   | <b>Carlops Café</b>                                                                  |
| Friday 14 November    | 7.30-8.30pm   | <b>Talk – Life and works of John Buchan</b>                                          |
| Tuesday 18 November   | 7.30-9.30pm   | <b>Gaelic Psalm Singing</b>                                                          |
| Thursday 20 November  | 2.30-4.30pm   | <b>Carlops Café</b>                                                                  |
| Tuesday 25 November   | 7.30-9.30pm   | <b>Gaelic Psalm Singing</b>                                                          |
| Thursday 27 November  | 2.30-4.30pm   | <b>Carlops Café</b>                                                                  |
| Friday 28 November    | 10am          | <b>Wreath Making Class with Gill Gold</b> £15 (proceeds to the church)               |
| Saturday 29 November  | 10.30-12 noon | <b>Coffee drop-in (Carlops Café) and Fair Trade stall</b>                            |
| Tuesday 2 December    | 7.30-9.30pm   | <b>Gaelic Psalm Singing</b>                                                          |
| Thursday 4 December   | 2.30-4.30pm   | <b>Carlops Cafe</b>                                                                  |
| Friday 5 December     | 7.30-8.30pm   | <b>Our Village Talks – an evening of Festive music, nibbles and Fair Trade Stall</b> |
| Sunday 7 December     | 3.45pm        | <b>Advent Garden</b>                                                                 |
| Tuesday 9 December    | 7.30-9.30pm   | <b>Gaelic Psalm Singing</b>                                                          |
| Wednesday 10 December | 12.30-2.00pm  | <b>Soup Lunch</b>                                                                    |

|                       |             |                                   |
|-----------------------|-------------|-----------------------------------|
| Thursday 11 December  | 2.30-4.30pm | <b>Carlops Cafe</b>               |
| Tuesday 16 December   | 7.30-9.30pm | <b>Gaelic Psalm Singing</b>       |
| Thursday 18 December  | 2.30-4.30pm | <b>Carlops Cafe</b>               |
| Sunday 21 December    | 11.15am     | <b>Carols by the Patio Garden</b> |
|                       |             | <b>Christmas Tree</b>             |
| Wednesday 24 December | 7.00pm      | <b>Christmas Eve Carols</b>       |

## Material for next issue

To Julie Gamble by Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> November please