



CARLOPS CHURCH

In the community, for the community

Newsletter

Volume 18, Number 4; April 2024

Services, April 2024

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

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31 March 10am: Murray Campbell
7 April 10am: Rev Dr Tony Foley
14 April 10am: Sheena Livingstone
21 April 10am: Murray Campbell
28 April 10am: Rev Dr Tony Foley
5 May 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



‘Are we wrong about rights?’

We live in an age when there is frequent talk of *rights*, and little said of *obligations*.

Are we really entitled to human rights? Can we lay claim to them without first owning our human obligations? Are rights self-existent? Or are they brought into existence through our obligations to one another? Do they spring fully formed from the individual or are they gifted by the community of others who consider themselves to be under obligation to that individual.

It is hard to see how rights exist as a self-generated entity in a given individual. Surely, they are based on common recognitions and agreed upon definitions, and do not exist apart from obligations. Are they not first a consequence of the actions and attitudes of others who consider themselves under an obligation towards the other person. A person left alone in the universe would have no rights, but they would have obligations.

For Christians, the notion of claiming a right without first owning a primary obligation is to put the cart before the horse. Let me explain.

Once when Jesus was engaged in a debate one of the scribes overheard them debating. ‘Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, “*Of all the commandments, which is the most important?*”

“*The most important one,*” answered Jesus, “*is this: ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.*”

Well said, teacher,” the man replied. “*You are right in saying that God is one and there is no other but him. To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbour as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices.*” ‘

As Christians, our obligation towards other human beings always comes before any sense of entitlement of rights. In other words, our rights always come second to our obligations towards one another. The command to love our neighbour is not an option, it is an obligation that we owe to others. Our failure to fulfil our obligations towards each other does not mean that those obligations lose any of their force. They don’t suddenly cease to exist they simply go unfulfilled.

According to Jesus our obligations toward one another belong to a realm situated above all conditions. The fulfilment of these obligation result in the kind of behaviour others can expect from us but are not necessarily entitled to. It is the recognition of our obligation towards one another that gives human rights their substance and thereby makes them effectual. It therefore makes no sense to say that people have rights without the primary existence of obligations.

In the conversation cited above Jesus is telling us that for Christians the prioritising of our obligations to one another over our expectations from one another is the best way to ensuring human rights for all.

News



Holy Week Pilgrimage Services

The last service in the series is in Carlops

Good Friday, 29th March - 8pm - Carlops Church - Theme: He prayed that there might be another way - Tenebrae service led by Murray Campbell and the Worship Team

Tenebrae is Latin for 'darkness' and during the service a series of candles will be extinguished to symbolise the death of Christ, which is remembered on Good Friday.

Carlops Easter Breakfast - Sunday 31st March, 9am

Join us for a simple breakfast in Carlops Village Hall on Easter Sunday morning at 9am.

Everyone is most welcome.

Our usual 10am service will be held afterwards in the church, where Murray Campbell will be taking the service.

Palm Sunday reflection – Rev Chris Levison

Chris led the services at Newlands and Skirling on Palm Sunday and his reflection was recommended as something our readers might like to digest. You can read it at the following link

<https://carlopschurch.org/24-march-2024/>



Christian Aid news

Val Brown, head of Christian Aid Scotland, recently posted the following thought provoking article, connecting events in the 18th century Highland Clearances with horrific, present day refugee situations around the world. In this period, people were forcibly removed from their land to make way for more profitable sheep rearing. An earlier CA report "Becoming Human Together" vividly depicted the experience of crofters. "Old men and women, too feeble to walk were placed in carts, the younger members of the community on foot were carrying their bundle of clothes and household effects, while the children, with looks of alarm, walked alongside. When they set forth once more, a cry of grief went up to heaven, the long plaintive wail, like a funeral coronach, was resumed.....the sound seemed to re-echo through the whole wide valley of Strath in one prolonged note of desolation. (The Crofter's Trail, David Craig, Birlinn)

Take out the words "coronach" and "valley of Strath" and that description could hold true today for Ukraine, Sudan, Gaza, Israel, and so many other places. Across the globe, people are on the move and that often goes hand in hand with lament.

CA was recently awarded a grant from the Scottish Government's Humanitarian Emergency Fund (HEF) to support families from Sudan living in a refugee camp in South Sudan. Many thousands have crossed the border since the conflict started in April 2023. Cash assistance for 4000 of the most vulnerable people will enable them to buy food and essentials.

As the invasion of Ukraine ticks into its third year, millions remain displaced. Another Scottish Government grant will enable CA to work with Heritage Ukraine to repair homes and water sources, as well as giving people seeds to grow food.

Recent reports have estimated that 1.9 million, or 85% of the population of Gaza, have been displaced. Our partners are responding as best they can to provide the people of Gaza with the essentials they need in what are very difficult circumstances.

CA is also supporting Israeli partners to cope with the escalation of violent conflict through the provision of bespoke trauma and wellbeing support. We are calling on the UK Government to work for a permanent ceasefire, without which the foundations cannot be laid for a sustainable and just peace, in which all people in Israel and Palestine can live in security and with dignity.

Lent is a time of wilderness and lament but as we approach Good Friday, we do so sure in the knowledge of the Hope of Easter Sunday. Lament is not just a time of grief, but rather a plea to God for justice.

As we come into the spring and celebrate the resurrection of our Lord, let us keep on as we journey towards a just peace for all.

REMINDER – CHRISTIAN AID WEEK 12-18TH MAY 2024
Robert Higgins, CA Chair



TALK IN NEWLANDS CHURCH – MONDAY 8 APRIL

Samantha Myers will give a talk about the work of Shelter Scotland

- *What it aims to achieve*
- *What homelessness looks like in Scotland – and ways to fight it*
- *How we can help*

This talk will take place at 7.30 pm on Monday 8 April. Tea and Coffee provided

For more information contact David Howat (01968 660677)

Every 16 minutes a household in Scotland becomes homeless!

Your Will Be Done

Linda Hill writes the following and would appreciate the prayers of our whole linkage community.

Come and pray with us for and about the future of Broughton Kirk. We will meet from 7.00 p.m. to 8.00 p.m. on the first Sunday and the third Thursday of each month at Broughton Village Hall.

The plan is to look at the many ways in which it is possible to pray, focusing on a particular type of prayer each month; to use that prayer in praying for the Holy Spirit to guide us in the way forward for the church in Broughton; and to reflect on our experiences of using different ways of praying.

We begin in April on Sunday 7th and Thursday 18th.

Coffee With a Bookseller

Most readers will know that Carlops Church and its supporters made me a generous gift when I stepped down as Newsletter editor. It was a *Coffee with a bookseller* session: a clever twist on book tokens by Topping's bookshop in Edinburgh (www.toppingbooks.co.uk).

Recipients receive a voucher of stated value to be redeemed against books of their choice. The clever twist is that it comes with expert advice. You email Topping's to explain what subjects interest you and to name some books you've enjoyed. Then Topping's subject-specialist booksellers select several books that they reckon you may enjoy. You meet the bookseller(s) in Topping's shop and chat about your subject and the books s/he has selected over a pot of excellent coffee and a wedge of cake. S/he talks you through the books: explains how they may fit your interests; suggests others you might like to see. Then you make a relaxed choice over more coffee and cake! The bookseller returns at intervals to discuss the books further, answer questions, show you more books which conversation has suggested, and generally, ensure all is going well.

I emailed Topping's to arrange my *Coffee with a bookseller* session, and said I'm interested in history; mainly mediaeval, say 800 to 1500, but earlier and/or later appeals too. Someone I know had suggested firmly that it would do me no harm to read outside my comfort zone, so I said that the booksellers should not feel limited to history and invited them to suggest other material too. I listed a few books I've enjoyed particularly, and I mentioned some I'd heard about or found on Topping's website. I was a librarian; I still do booklists!

When I visited the bookshop, I met George: "I'm early to late mediaeval, about 350 to 1550." and Duncan: "They call me modern, but I can go back to about 1700." They both came with about a dozen books and talked me through their suggestions. They were knowledgeable, articulate and smiley. In my email, I'd listed three books which Topping's website listed as *Not on our shelves at the moment, but we can order it for you*. George and Duncan produced all these titles, amongst the eventual 30 plus that they showed me.

I spent nearly three hours dipping into the books and choosing. I drank the coffee and I ate the cake. I had further helpful chats with George and Duncan, who returned with more titles that our conversation prompted them to identify. I roamed the shop and browsed the shelves; I found only one book that George and Duncan had not selected for me. Some decisions were easy, other choices harder to make. I came away with eight books, only two of which I'd known about before. I know I will enjoy reading all of them.

Coffee with a bookseller. Great product in a great bookshop with great people. I enjoyed it immensely (thank you all, again). Highly recommended. Give it a try.

Rennie McElroy

Rennie's haul...



The Column

Soup songs and poems

Our recent 'Man Soup' lunch included the now traditional song and prompted Nan Buchan to tell me about a reply in verse which she wrote in 2018.

The original song now has 9 verses and goes to the tune of 'Mud, Mud, Glorious Mud!'
The old editor (him again!) has supplied the latest update with verses from various contributors...

The Carlops Soup Song

Soup, soup, glorious soup –
There's nothing quite like it for feeding a troupe.
It's healthy, nutritious,
And we're all ambitious
To fill up your dishes with glorious soup.

Soup, soup, glorious soup –
We're in it together, all part of the loop.
So sip it with gusto,
Not just 'cos you musto.
There's really no fuss to our glorious soup.

Soup, soup, glorious soup –
It's tasty to eat and it's great fun to boot.
It brings us together,
Whatever the weather,
Just for a blether and glorious soup.

Soup, soup, glorious soup –
If you're just back from Saltcoats or e'en Guadeloupe;
If you're freezing or smoking;
If you're sunburnt or soaking –
We'll welcome you home with our glorious soup.

Soup, soup, glorious soup –
It's all made by us and we're quite cock-a-hoop.
There's biscuits and baking,
All there for the taking.
But there's no mistaking, it's glorious soup.

Soup, soup, glorious soup –
Just one word of warning before you all scoop:
No one ever told me
To wash the broccoli –
So please just spit out all the glorious *mud!*

Soup, soup, glorious soup –
We men cooked them all just for you to eat up.
Your choices are simple:
Just pick one and sample.
Say “Yes” to a refill – it’s glorious soup.

Soup, soup, glorious soup –
Made just for you if you need to regroup.
It's good for digestion,
Not just a suggestion.
There's really no question, it's glorious soup.

Soup, soup glorious soup –
It still feels like winter; we need to recoup.
So cheer up and eat it,
There’s nothing to beat it,
We don’t want to reheat it – this glorious soup.

And Nan’s reply in verse went...

‘Man Lunch’

Before we end our ‘Man Lunch’
And each go our own way
I’d like to take a minute
On behalf of all – to say:-

Before we came we wondered
“What can a ‘man lunch’ be?
Just what risks are we taking
If we go along to see?

But we’re delighted that we risked it
You’ve made us feel like VIP’s
The service was spectacular
As we relaxed here at our ease.

We found there were no men to eat
So we did not need to worry.
Good things were laid before us
With no hurry and no flurry.

So all that's left is for me to say
We hope it's the first of many
And the church by all your work and effort
Will raise a pretty penny.

Your soups were really excellent
You've certainly raised the bar.
The consensus of opinion is:-
You deserve a **'Man Lunch' Star!**

Diary notes



Forthcoming events

Coffee drop-in, Saturday 30 March 2024, 10.30am-12noon

Easter Breakfast, Sunday 31 March 2024, 9am Village Hall

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

Soup lunch, Wednesday 10 April 2024, 12.00-1.30pm

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

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

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

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

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

Soup lunch, Wednesday 8 May 2024, 12.00-1.30pm

Cuppa and company, Thursday 16 May 2024, 2-4pm

Cuppa and company, Thursday 23 May 2024, 2-4pm

Coffee drop-in, Saturday 25 May 2024, 10.30am-12noon

Cuppa and company, Thursday 30 May 2024, 2-4pm

Cuppa and company, Thursday 6 June 2024, 2-4pm

Soup lunch, Wednesday 12 June 2024, 12.00-1.30pm

Cuppa and company, Thursday 13 June 2024, 2-4pm

Cuppa and company, Thursday 20 June 2024, 2-4pm

Contacts

Minister: Rev Dr Tony Foley

Telephone 01968 660 221
Mobile 07793 294 000

Email tfoley@churchofscotland.org.uk

Church Administrator:

TBC

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

Telephone 01968 674 566

Email marylevison@btinternet.com

Telephone 01968 661 042

Email maryhmcElroy@outlook.com

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: Julie Gamble

Telephone 01968 661 042

Email julieggamble@yahoo.co.uk

Session Clerk and Organist: Murray Campbell

Telephone 01968 660 530

Email d.m.campbell@ed.ac.uk

Soup lunch: Nan Buchan

Telephone 01968 678 352

Email nan.buchan@hotmail.co.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 Julie Gamble by Monday 22nd April