



CARLOPS CHURCH

In the community, for the community

Newsletter

Volume 19, Number 5; May 2025

Services, May 2025

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

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4 May 10am: Rev Dr Tony Foley
11 May 10am: Isobel Hunter
18 May 10am: Peter Worthington
25 May 10am: Rev Dr Tony Foley
1 June 10am: Chris Levison
8 June 10am: Murray 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



The Healing in Post-resurrection Pain

Why do we sometimes act as if God is made of porcelain?

We profess faith in an almighty God, yet we often act as though we secretly fear for His ego. *‘Will it shatter if our spiritual lives get too complicated?’ ‘Will we break God if we honestly confess to an ongoing sense of rage, or a free-floating doubt, or a nagging sense of despair?’*

The human cost of tiptoeing around God is staggering. I’ve watched so many people I love do this. Who don’t dare for just a moment to name an honest feeling to God *about* God. Feelings like *“I’m so furious at you God right now,”* or *“God, my faith is doing nothing for me in the midst of this pain.”* Who is this god we are trying to protect? Is he really so dependent on our shiny pretence?

What helps me here is Jesus. The tears he shed for Lazarus. The anger he expresses in the temple. The fear-filled sense of despair he expresses in Gethsemane. But most of all the wounds he carries with him out of the grave. Jesus’ resurrected body doesn’t carry faded scars. These are fresh wounds, raw enough to allow a doubting disciple to put his fingers into them.

I find it easy to imagine Jesus wincing when Thomas touched him. I imagine it was a pain that to Thomas signalled real presence. A pain that spoke to what Thomas truly longed for: *‘I am here. I don’t float in an artificial, antiseptic reality; I dwell in the heart of things. Exactly where you live’.*

All around us, people are packaging and pummelling themselves into all forms of piety. A piety they can’t sustain because it is not real. Not real like Jesus’ honest expressions of grief, anger, and fear. At the apex of his resurrection, Jesus won a doubter over with His open wounds. Often we realise our Christian faith holds its greatest appeal when it demonstrates courage and steadfastness in the face of those pains that scare us and hurt us and ravage us. Our wounds don’t tell the whole story. But like those of Jesus the stories they do tell are holy and worth sharing.

Peace, Tony



Meteorological Miscellanea

Readers may remember that a month ago, when we went to press, there was a chance of a record dry March. By the way, when I ramble on about records, I'm drawing on the last 32 years. Well, precipitation for the 27th, 28th, and 29th almost equalled that for the first 26 days so there was no record, but we still finished the 4th driest March. This followed the 5th driest February by the way. We can do better than that. Across the UK it was the sunniest March recorded since 1910. Now we are talking!

April was keen to follow the extremes of March. The first 13 days of the month saw no measurable rainfall, and with the last two days in March added on, the 15 consecutive dry days qualified as a drought in meteorological terms. It was the first drought since June 2023 and just the 8th in 32 years.

The first two weeks of April were meteorologically fascinating. We've established that there was no rain. It was sunny too - an estimated 132 hours - an average of almost 10 hours per day. Five days were cloudless from sunrise to sunset. There was a bit of haar thrown in and an inversion before 8 am on the 8th.

Temperatures were at it too with large diurnal ranges. Many days started close to, or below freezing point, and rose by 25 to 30 Fahrenheit degrees. On the 12th we went from 34°F to 65°F in a few hours - the warmest day of the year so far. Elsewhere, on the 8th, Altnaharra in Sutherland recorded -5.5°C when it rose to 20.9°C in Tyndrum. On the 10th Aboyne was the coldest place in Scotland and the warmest place as well - -3.2°C in the morning and 22.7°C in the afternoon.

The weather had to break sometime as it did when the jet stream shifted. The 14th was a wet day, but there wasn't much for the gardeners in the end and we seem to be heading back to "dry and warm". Sunny too. What really shone were the daffodils!

Peter Woolverton, Pyethall, 25 April 2025

News



Malawi update



Since last month Sheena Livingstone has visited Robert in Malawi where they spent time in the project village meeting the volunteer teachers, local decision makers and key people from the community. She spent time helping the children to learn through play and showing the volunteers how they might teach writing and numeracy. She was able to take some laminated learning resources out with her after a monumental day of laminating with 5 volunteers before she left!

The building has one large classroom and 2 small rooms where vaccinations can take place. Work has paused for now until the wet season is over – more bricks can be fired from June onwards and then the toilets can be completed.

On 30th April Sheena did a presentation in the church to update us on everything she had found out from the villagers and local authorities and to set out some possible options for the next steps in the project. There was good interaction from the audience and I'm sure more comments to come, so the next issue will have more details on any agreed plans.



Our Village Talks

Monthly talks and a
chance to chat



Upcoming talks

Friday 9th May, 7.30 pm The Life of a Chemist in 2025

Martin O'Dwyer from West Linton Pharmacy will talk about his experiences running a village pharmacy.

Friday 20th June, 7.30pm Injury Prevention – is it for me? Thoughts and Tips from an NHS Physiotherapist

Juliet Gold, Physiotherapist, Edinburgh Royal Infirmary, will provide her thoughts and tips for staying injury free.

Friday 11th July, 7.30 pm Garden Design in the Scottish Borders

Gill Gold will give a short talk on garden design considerations when establishing a garden at about 1,000ft. in the Scottish Borders.

The evening will include a garden visit and refreshments.

Please note: the venue for this talk will be Birchbrae, Macbiehill, EH46 7AZ

Watch this space for more talks in the coming months! Topics include The Pentland Way and a Japanese novel with a local link.

Event report – The Philosophy of Rudolf Steiner

We were delighted to welcome Craig McGregor, CEO of Garvald West Linton, along with David, one of the residents, for a wonderful and insightful talk on the life of Rudolf Steiner and his influence on the Garvald community.

Garvald West Linton is a residential home for people with learning disabilities near West Linton, run with the guiding principles of Rudolf Steiner's philosophy. Many in our audience were already familiar with the work of Garvald, and it was a pleasure to learn more about their approach and vibrant community life.

The presentation was accompanied by a tempting display of beautiful art and craftwork created by the residents. We were also treated to delicious home-baked biscuits—thank you, Garvald!

Don't miss the upcoming Garvald Summer Fair on June 14, from 12:00 pm to 3:00 pm—a wonderful opportunity to experience their creativity and community spirit firsthand.

Sophie Pilgrim

Garvald use the following quote from Rudolf Steiner to open each day

“The healthy social life is found, when in the mirror of each human soul, the whole community finds its reflection, and when in the community the virtue of each one is living

Thank you from Mary McElroy



It is my delight and privilege to thank Carlops Church community for the generous gift given me to mark my work as Treasurer.



Murray presented me with a pair of gold earrings after morning service in the church on Sunday 30th March 2025. I said my immediate thank you at the time, but I hope this may reach those unable to be present on that occasion.

The earrings are a design, named “Flagstone” by Sheila Fleet, an Orcadian jeweller known to any of you. Writing about the design, Sheila says

Flagstone was born from my love of the natural rock shorelines that once linked Orkney and Caithness. The Caithness flagstone is composed of fine-grained sand and mud deposited in Lake Orcadia over 380 million years ago in the Devonian age. The lake covered an area the size of present day Caithness, Moray Firth, Orkney and Shetland. “Flags”, a wonderful gift from the sea, have been used over the past few hundred years for roofs, floors, fencing and recently, in the Scottish Parliament.

I will treasure (sorry!) the earrings for their beauty and craftsmanship, and because they will remind me of happy years trying to help Carlops Church and its people, the projects I was involved with during that time, and several happy holidays spent in Orkney.

Thank you all.

Mary McElroy, April 2025

Easter Breakfast

The annual Easter Breakfast was a lovely affair with over 30 people gathered round to mark this special occasion. Someone (no names) had more bacon rolls than the rest of us, but it didn't affect his delivery of the Sunday service straight afterwards.

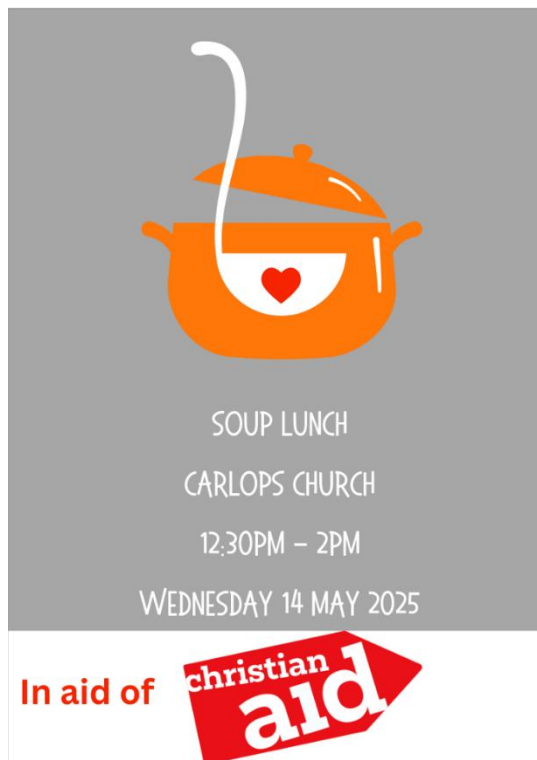
Thanks to Mary Levison for organising and to everyone who helped out, especially Hannah who stayed to do all the dishes!

Donations were collected for Food, Facts, Friends in Penicuik.



Christian Aid events in May

Christian Aid Week is 11-17 May 2025 and in Carlops we will be supporting this with one event during that week and one later in May.



Our monthly Soup Lunch on 14th May will be for Christian Aid.

As always there will be a delicious array of soups to sample.



We will be having a Plant Sale, as we did last year. This will coincide with our monthly coffee drop-in so it's a perfect opportunity to chat and have a browse.

As always, we welcome donations of plants – any shape and size – on the day.

Christian Aid Week - Around the Linkage and beyond



Volunteers are needed to help with the car boot sale.

Donations of items to sell also required.

Contact Isobel Hunter if interested
isobel@skirlinghouse.com

Donations

Ideally, donate online at www.christianaid.org.uk

Your money goes directly to CA with no hidden deductions reducing its value.

If you still prefer to use the traditional CA envelope, these will be available to pick up from the church at Sunday services in May.

CA Service St.Andrew's church Sunday 11th May at 1130am conducted by Isobel Hunter.

CA Cryptic Quiz

The theme this year is "things that can be worn", 30 teasing questions. Printed quiz sheets can be picked up from the church (optional voluntary donation). Alternatively, an electronic version is available from Robert Higgins at higfam72@gmail.com

Answers by request (but not yet) if you get stuck.

Christian Aid 80th Anniversary at St. Giles Cathedral, Edinburgh on Saturday 17th May from at 7pm. Guests will be warmly welcomed - No RSVP required. Keynote speech by the First Minister of Scotland John Swinney. Worship will be led by the Wild Goose Resource Group and Siskin Green. Other speakers include Temwa Kasakula, CA's Global Advisor for Sexual Reproductive Health and Gender and Patrick Watt, Christian Aid CEO.

The unstoppable power of hope is what keeps driving us to work for a world where all can live with dignity, equality and justice. Because we still believe in Life before Death.

Christian Aid Book Sale, New Town Church, 13 George Street, Edinburgh.

Opens Saturday 10th May, Sunday closed, then Monday 12TH to Friday 16TH May 10am-330pm, late night Thursday 7pm.

Not just books – music, stamps, postcards, CDs and records, jigsaws, toys, games and ephemera.

Further details by email at ca@edinburghnewtownchurch.org.uk

Robert Higgins, CA Chair

Charity Trustee Duties – for Kirk Session members



Guidance and good practice for charity trustees – be the charity large or small (see

<https://www.oscr.org.uk/managing-a-charity/>)

As is required by law, all members of Carlops Kirk Session are Trustees for Carlops Church because we are a charity registered with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR). Each year our Treasurer is required to send to OSCR a copy of our annual report which has been signed off by an external examiner.

Recently, Carlops Church trustees have been reviewing their obligations to ensure that we satisfy OSCR requirements. I hope that the following graphic and concise explanation of the underlying principles, provided by OSCR, will be of interest to all who contribute funds to our church and through the church, to the charities we support from time to time.

Collective responsibility

All the charity trustees are collectively responsible for the charity. No one individual charity trustee should have more power or control over the charity than the others. Charity trustees are not only responsible for their own actions; they are also responsible for the joint actions and decisions taken by the charity trustees.

Decision making

Making good decisions is an important part of running a charity. To make good decisions you should:

- Have the right information to make decisions
- Make decisions in line with rules set out in your governing document
- Record the decisions
- Be able to justify our decisions as necessary.

Do not be afraid to think again about a decision if it doesn't work out the way the charity trustees planned or if circumstances change. You should get professional advice if you need to.

Finance and assets

Make sure you have the right skills, policies and procedures to look after the charity's finances and assets. This includes anything the charity owns like property, investments, money in the bank. It also includes any money the charity may owe to anyone else (liabilities).

Having the right skill includes making sure that all the charity trustees have access to and understanding of the charity's finances.

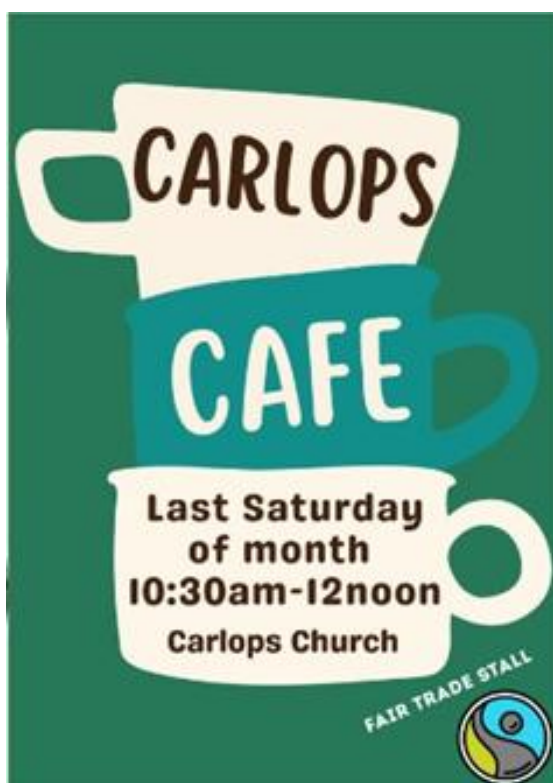
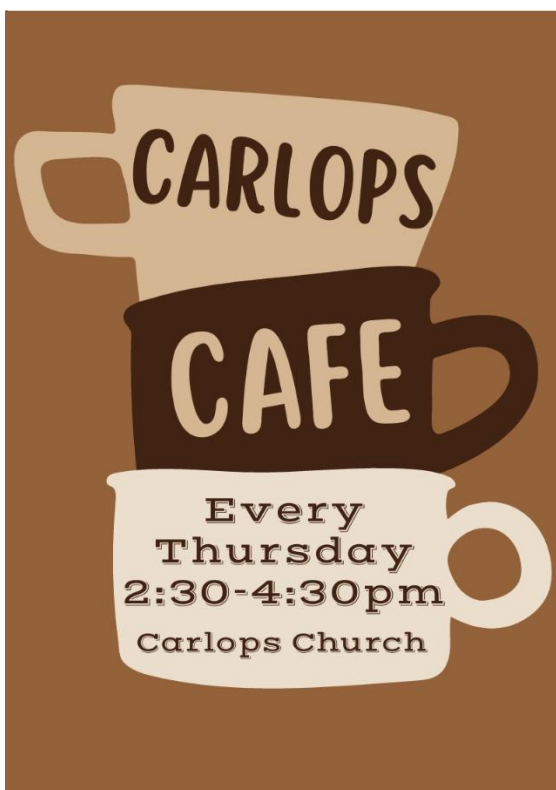
Reputation

A charity's reputation is one of its assets and where that reputation is in question this can have a negative impact on how the public supports the charity and whether funding organisations will give the charity money. It can also impact on how the charity sector is viewed in general.

Charity trustees have individual and collective responsibility for the charity's reputation. It is important that you maintain the respect of your beneficiaries, the public and others, by behaving with honesty and integrity when acting as a charity trustee. If you do not you risk bringing your charity and its work into disrepute.

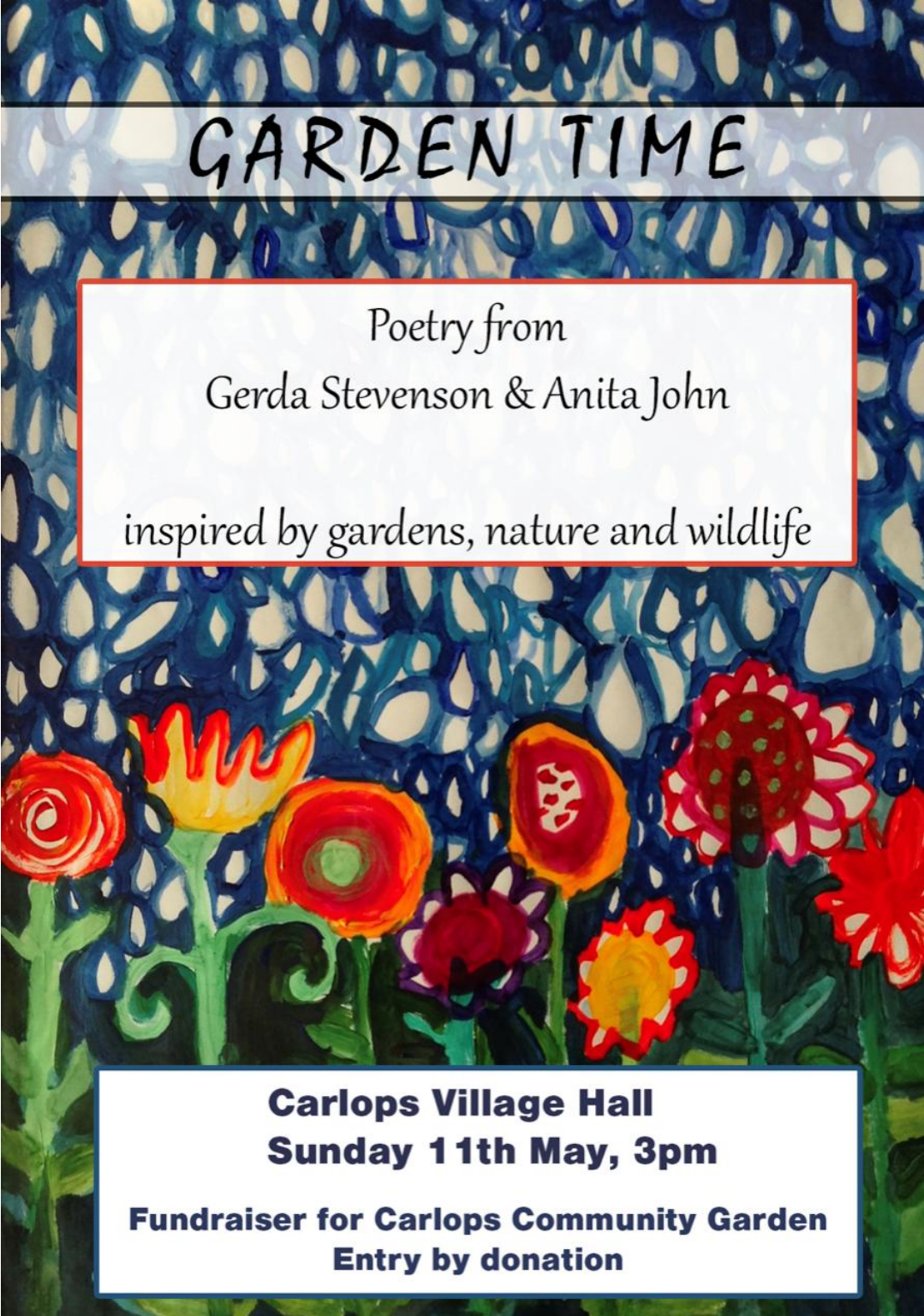
Mary McElroy, *Elder and Trustee; former Treasure*, March 2025

Our regular events



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

Other events



GARDEN TIME

Poetry from
Gerda Stevenson & Anita John

inspired by gardens, nature and wildlife

**Carlops Village Hall
Sunday 11th May, 3pm**

**Fundraiser for Carlops Community Garden
Entry by donation**

Newlands Picnic and Open-Air Service - Sunday 29 June 3pm

There will be a picnic followed by an open-air service for the whole West Tweeddale linkage at the site of the old Newlands church on Sunday 29th June at 3pm. Parking will be in the car park opposite the current Newlands Church. In the event of the weather not co-operating then we will take refuge for the picnic and service in the current church. Everyone is welcome.

Wanderings – walk followed by lunch -Thursday 8 May 10.30am Broughtonknowe Woods

Wanderings is a relatively new project being run in partnership with the Church of Scotland parish of Upper Tweeddale. We meet twice a month, once on a Saturday afternoon and once on Thursday or Wednesday mornings followed by an option to join in a community cuppa. If you would like to join a Wander just turn up at Broughtonknowe woods main carpark with warm, waterproof clothing and stout boots with good grip.

The Wandering for Thursday 8th May starts at 10.30am and is followed by lunch in Skirling Village Hall.

The Column

Pope Francis

The passing of Jorge Mario Bergoglio, more commonly known to us as Pope Francis, signals the loss of one of the most compassionate and important voices in recent history.

His real burden was for the plight of the poor and marginalised and his position gave him the biggest platform imaginable to speak to the world about how to respond. Below is a selection of his thoughts on this and other issues that we as humans can find challenging. Perhaps take a few minutes to dwell on each one.

"Having doubts and fears is not a sin...The sin is to allow these fears to determine our responses, to limit our choices, to compromise respect and generosity, to feed hostility and rejection...The sin is to refuse to encounter the other, the different, the neighbour, when this is in fact a privileged opportunity to encounter the Lord ... to overcome our fears so as to encounter the other, to welcome, to know and to acknowledge him or her."

"Even hope, like all good things in this world, has enemies... Hope is the push in the heart of those who leave their home, and sometimes their family and relatives - I am thinking of migrants - to find a better life, with more dignity for themselves and their loved ones... It's also the push in the heart of those who welcome: the desire to encounter, meet, dialogue... hope is the push to share the journey,"

"Openness to God makes us open towards the marginalized of this world and gives us the courage to leave the confines of our own security and comfort to become bruised, hurting and dirty as we joyfully approach the suffering other in a spirit of solidarity. I prefer a Church which is bruised, hurting and dirty because it has been out on the streets, rather than a Church which is unhealthy from being confined and from clinging to its own security."

"Grace is not part of consciousness; it is the amount of light in our souls, not knowledge nor reason."

"We must restore hope to young people, help the old, be open to the future, spread love. Be poor among the poor. We need to include the excluded and preach peace."

"The faith we proclaim tonight makes us see God present in all those situations where we think he is absent... He is present in the unwelcomed visitor, often unrecognizable, who walks through our cities and our neighbourhoods, who travels on our buses and knocks on our doors."

Do you have something to share?

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

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

We are not professional counsellors but rather sympathetic listeners.

Diary notes



Forthcoming events

Carlops Cafe, Thursday 1 May 2025, 2.30-4.30pm

Gaelic Psalm Singing, Tuesday 6 May 2025, 7.30–9.30pm

Carlops Cafe, Thursday 8 May 2025, 2.30-4.30pm

Our Village Talks – Martin O’Dwyer from West Linton Pharmacy
Friday 9 May 2025, 7.30pm – 8.30pm

Gaelic Psalm Singing, Tuesday 13 May 2025, 7.30–9.30pm

Soup Lunch, Wednesday 14 May 2025, 12.30-2pm (proceeds to Christian Aid)

Carlops Cafe, Thursday 15 May 2025, 2.30-4.30pm

Gaelic Psalm Singing, Tuesday 20 May 2025, 7.30–9.30pm

Carlops Cafe, Thursday 22 May 2025, 2.30-4.30pm

Gaelic Psalm Singing, Tuesday 27 May 2025, 7.30–9.30pm

Carlops Cafe, Thursday 29 May 2025, 2.30-4.30pm

Christian Aid plant sale and Coffee drop-in, Saturday 31 May 2025, 10.30am-12noon

Gaelic Psalm Singing, Tuesday 3 June 2025, 7.30–9.30pm

Carlops Cafe, Thursday 5 June 2025, 2.30-4.30pm

Gaelic Psalm Singing, Tuesday 10 June 2025, 7.30–9.30pm

Carlops Cafe, Thursday 12 June 2025, 2.30-4.30pm

Gaelic Psalm Singing, Tuesday 17 June 2025, 7.30–9.30pm

Carlops Cafe, Thursday 19 June 2025, 2.30-4.30pm

Our Village Talks – Juliet Gold, Physiotherapist, on injury prevention
Friday 20 June 2025, 7.30pm – 8.30pm

Gaelic Psalm Singing, Tuesday 24 June 2025, 7.30–9.30pm

Carlops Cafe, Thursday 26 June 2025, 2.30-4.30pm

Coffee drop-in (Carlops Café), Saturday 28 June 2025, 10.30am – 12noon

Contacts

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Office - Friday 9.30 am – 12.30pm

Old Church Hall - Friday 2.00 – 4.00pm

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Church bookings: Sheena Livingstone

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Email sheena@deanfoot.onmicrosoft.com

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Soup lunch: Nan Buchan

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Material for next issue

To Julie Gamble by Tuesday 27 May please.