



CARLOPS CHURCH

In the community, for the community

Newsletter

Volume 20, Number 3; Mar 2026

Services, March 2026

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

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1 Mar 10am: Steven Whalley
8 Mar 10am: Patsy Campbell
15 Mar 10am: Rev Dr Tony Foley
22 Mar 10am: Isobel Hunter
29 Mar 10am: Patsy Campbell
5 Apr 10am: Rev Dr Tony

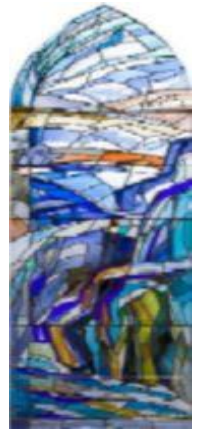
Join us, in the church, and in other activities

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

A Lunchtime Interrogation

It was lunchtime. I decided to sit on one of the benches near the village green in West Linton with my Co-op meal deal. There were families playing on the green that day. A young girl approached and sat on the same bench.

Turning to look at me she said,

“I have been talking to my Granny about things and Mummy says I should ask you.”

‘Ask me?’ I replied.

“Yes, she said the man with the collar might know.”

‘What is it you want to ask me?’ I replied.

“I want to know how big a soul is?”

‘A soul.’ I said.

“Yes, are they all the same size, like really small, like small enough to fit inside my baby sister?”

‘Well,’ I said. But the little one carried on...

“I mean can they grow? Can some be bigger than others? Like, is my Daddy’s bigger than my Mummy’s?”

‘What great questions,’ I said. The stream continued unabated,

“And can they be broken, you know like the way your arm or leg can sometimes get broken? If they can, where do people go to get their souls fixed? What do you do with a hurt soul? Granny says there are lost souls. How do you do that?”

Do what?’ I asked.

“Lose your soul, I mean can it fall out of your body, and if it does, how do you get it back in? Is there a place for lost souls? You know, like the lost property at school? Granny says that your soul is what keeps you alive, but if you lose it how do you stay alive while you are looking for it?”

Just then the family got up to leave, and the little girl’s mother called for her. She looked up at me

smiling and said, "I have to go now, thank you for listening to my questions." And with a hop, skip and jump she was gone.

What do you think of the little girl's questions? How would you answer them?

Peace, Tony.

Letter from our Minister

The following letter from Tony was communicated to all our congregations on Sunday 22 Feb

Dear Church Family,

It is with deep and sad emotions that I share the news that I will be leaving my position as Minister for the Parishes of West Tweeddale. My last Sunday as your minister will be on the 31/05/2026.

Serving this community of churches has been one of the richest and most profound blessing in my life and ministry. I am and will remain so very grateful for the opportunity you all gave me to be part of your lives as church communities. You are easy people to be with, easy people to minister among, and even easier people to love. I have learned a great deal from you all during my time with you and have really enjoyed the blessing and support of sharing the responsibilities of ministry with all the members of the various Kirk Sessions and of course the members of the Worship Leadership Team. I will take those lessons together with a great many happy memories with me.

I really wanted to say all of this to you in person but because of the logistics of our family of churches, the timing of our services etc that was not possible. It has to be done this way so that everyone gets to hear the news at the same time. There will of course be opportunities in the coming weeks to talk with you in person but for now this is the best I can do.

While I am now moving on to what I hope will be a new chapter in life and ministry I will always cherish my time West Tweeddale and will continue to hold you all in my prayers. During the coming weeks I will of course remain fully committed to ministry here and will do all I can to make this period of transition as smooth as possible.

With gratitude and blessing,

Rev Dr Tony Foley



Meteorological Miscellanea

On Tuesday 24th February we noted the first “50” of the year, if you are Fahrenheit fan, or the first double digit day if you are a Celsius supporter. “First 50s” are well spread from 1st January in 2015 and 2022, to 13th April in 2013. The average date for the ‘first 50’ is mid February so we are not running too late. By the way, the record temperature for 27th February is 21.2C at Grantown-on-Spey in 1986 - so you know what it can do in Scotland!

February has been little different from January with many adjectives beginning with the letter ‘D’ still in use. One advantage of being retired is that if I wake early I can roll over, having no commute, and listen to the drumming of rain. Back on the 3rd of February in a late evening bulletin TV weatherman Tomasz Schafernaker commiserated with “folk in SE Scotland” for the “lousy weather” - not too technical then.

I have recently unearthed my father’s dusty ring binder full of monthly weather statistics for Edinburgh for 1st January 1973 to 31st December 1984. Well, I was drawn to stats for February 1976 - 50 years ago. Compare and contrast! Well, the February rainfall in Edinburgh 50 years ago was just 1.34 inches. We have notched 3.62 inches in Carlops this month already. One similarity was with sunshine - days without sunshine in ‘76 : 12. Number of days without sunshine in ‘26 in Carlops : 12.

The first 50F/10C is a forerunner for Spring. The snowdrops are plentiful, crocus too, daffodils are sprouting, the Vernal Equinox occurs on the 20th March and the clocks change on the 29th. Meteorological Spring is just around the corner.

There was little ‘real winter’ this winter - 16 days with snowfall, 28 days with lying snow. The last spell coincided with the Winter Olympics -



plenty of snow on the Dolomites. We were pleased that our grandchildren were out - sledging and snowman rolling in the garden. Snow events were not available in Edinburgh.

That was maybe it, but maybe not. You never know!

Peter Wolverton, Pyethall, 27th February 2026

Other Situations Vacant

We are looking for volunteers for the following positions

- **Property Convenor**
- **Flower Convenor**
- **Sunday morning coffee makers (rota on notice board at the back – just add your name)**
- **Helpers at Our Village Talks**

Each of these positions is valued by the church community. Anyone who believes they can help will be making an essential contribution to the ongoing life of the church in Carlops. Please contact me if you are interested - *Julie Gamble*



Our Village Talks

Monthly talks and a chance to chat

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

Friday 13th March 2026 7.30pm – Juliet Gold – Orthopaedic Trauma in Northern

Malawi – a physiotherapist's perspective of the challenges and rewards during a two-week volunteering trip with Project Kuyenda. Donations will be split with this project.

Friday 10th April 2026 7.30pm – Marianne Hazlewood Local botanical artist Marianne will give a talk on her intricate work, accompanied by some of her pieces.

Friday 15th May 2026 7.30pm – Alex Gray Alex and helpers will give a talk on the different musical influences in Scottish Country Dancing.

Event Recap – Geraldine McFaul

– From Home to Rome

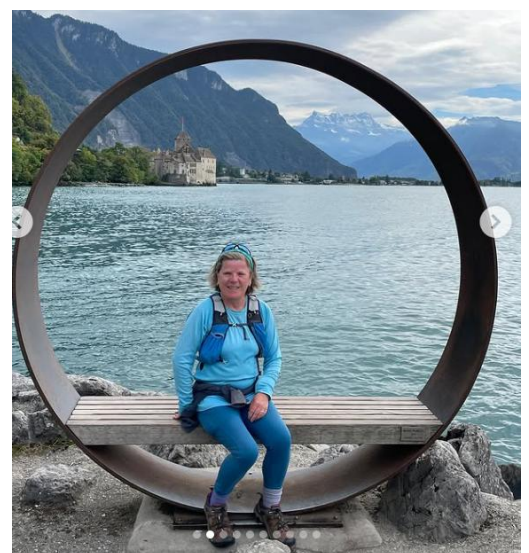
Geraldine McFaul joined us for the February talk on what was a rotten night weather-wise.

Geraldine walked from Glasgow to Rome over a 6-month period in 2023 and brought this pilgrimage to life for us through her stories, which were full of warmth and humour.

She was raising money for Mary's Meals and Dementia UK along the way in memory of her parents and these charities have benefitted from thousands of pounds of donations from her walk and her subsequent talks around the UK.

Walking down through Scotland and England, a ferry to France, on foot through France into Switzerland and then crossing the Alps into Italy is no mean feat! For her own comfort she didn't bring a rucksack, but a buggy aimed at parents who run. It was affectionately known as Roamin' and clipped round her waist so it could be pulled behind her.

As well as the highs she described her challenges and some of her doubts, always overcoming these with a one day at a time attitude.



The kindness of others also played a starring role – she called this “kind-napping” – for example she would ask staff in a pub or café if there was somewhere she could pitch her tent and end up with a home cooked meal and a warm bed instead.

Her story showed that putting your mind to something and then doing it with a purpose in mind can bring great rewards not only for you and your cause but for those who helped you, welcomed you, fed you, kept you company and cheered you on.

Geraldine's arrival in Rome, where she was greeted by friends and supporters, was not the end of

the story, a personal tour of the Swiss Guards' Museum and Vatican gardens plus a 7-course meal with the Guards were to come. A ticket for the General Audience with Pope Francis had been arranged and after he had taken the Mass some of the audience members were presented to him, including Geraldine!



Picture by Vatican Media

For those of you who missed the talk the good news is that Geraldine is in the latter stages of writing a book about her journey.

Lent Study – Life Attitudes – Thursdays 7pm at the Campbell's home

Our group study for Lent is based on the book *Life Attitudes* by Robert Warren and Sue Mayfield. This is a 5-part course on the Beatitudes. Link to the book - [Life Attitudes](#)

A group will meet on Thursday evenings at 7pm at the Campbell's home in Carlops. We covered the first part, an introduction to the Beatitudes, on 26 Feb and the study will continue weekly until 26 March.

Holy Week Services

There will be church services around the linkage during Holy Week centred around the Beatitudes which are the basis of the Lent Study programme:

Monday 30 March 7pm – Tweedsmuir Church

Tuesday 31 March 7pm – St Andrews West Linton

Wednesday 1 April 7pm – Broughton Village Hall

Thursday 2 April 7pm – Maundy Thursday Communion Service – Newlands Church

Friday 3 April 7pm - Skirling Church
8pm - Tenebrae Service - Carlops Church

Gaelic Psalm Singing - on film!

Sailm nan Daoine (Psalms of the People), a film by Jack Archer, features Rob MacNeacail as he celebrates the cultural heritage of psalm singing in Scotland and Ireland and includes an appearance by his group of singers who meet in Carlops church on Tuesday nights.

The film debuted at the Glasgow Film Festival on Sunday 1st March and the beautiful trailer is linked below.

[Sailm nan Daoine \(Psalms of the People\) Trailer](#)

There is more info here

[Gaelic psalm singers from Carlops set to hit the big screen - BBC News](#)

Also, to note, this is the 2nd year running that Carlops folk have featured at the Glasgow Film Festival! Some familiar faces appeared last year in the locally shot John Maclean film *Tornado*.

Form an orderly queue for autographs!



MAN SOUP!

Returns Wednesday 11th March

All are welcome. This year's souper chefs issue a warm invitation to everyone to come and join the fun. We look forward to greeting you, feeding you, and serenading you.

No fixed charge is made for lunch, but we invite charitable donations by cash or card. This year, the beneficiary from Man Soup will be Carlops Church itself; monies received will help to maintain our building, so that we can continue to serve the Carlops community with Sunday services, family occasions and celebrations, and fun, social events for everyone.

The 2026 Man Soup team

Christian Aid Annual Review 2024-25

“Our Year of Impact”

You can read the full report on the CA website but here are the edited highlights:

Last year, as CA marked its 80th year, it's time to reflect on what truly sustains our life-changing and life-saving work to end poverty. It was a turbulent year, marked by the scale and intensity of emergencies around the world, and dramatic cuts in official aid funding.

The answer is simple – DONORS, like YOU!

This partnership between you, CA and the communities they serve is what keeps hope alive. Please don't underestimate the phenomenal difference your donations make. Time and again, CA hears from communities that it's not only the practical help they value. What they treasure most is knowing they aren't forgotten – that you love them, pray for them and speak up for them. That knowledge gives them real HOPE because it shows that compassion travels across borders.

Every page of the review celebrates the power of ordinary people – supporters like you who believe that change is possible, even in the hardest times.

CA's work has always been powered by FAITH – a shared belief that every family deserves to live in hope and dignity. Whether you give, act or pray, you are part of a movement changing lives for good and helping to end the injustice of extreme poverty.

Statistics – number crunching

Total income raised was £71.1m, of which £52.2m came from supporters in the UK.

CA Week alone generated £5.2m

£77m was spent:

£32.9m was used for humanitarian emergencies which met the immediate needs of 8 million people.

4.1m people were directly engaged, 57% of whom were women and girls. A further 12.4m were reached indirectly.

6486 churches supported CA (Scotland 766, England 5126 and Wales 594).

463 projects were funded in 28 countries in Africa, Asia, Europe, the Middle East, Latin America and the Caribbean.

70 groups of UK CA supporters spoke face to face with their MPs about global policy.

CA website can be found at: www.christianaid.org.uk

Note for your diary – Christian Aid Week 2026 is 10-16 May

Robert Higgins, CA chair

Sowing Seeds for Christian Aid Plant Sale

We will be having a Plant Sale for Christian Aid in May, as we did last year.

Now is a great time to sow seeds indoors, so why not plant a few extras and bring them along for the plant sale?

Easter Breakfast – Sunday 5th April in Village Hall

We will host an Easter Breakfast in the Village Hall from 9am – 10am on Easter Sunday, 5th April.

Hope to see you there!

Volunteers most welcome, just contact Mary Levison or Julie Gamble to see how you can help

The Column

The Crossing Sweeper

I have been listening again to Miriam Margolyes' brilliant reading of Dickens' solemn novel *Bleak House* and, as ever, am affected by the life of the destitute boy Jo, the crossing sweeper. I asked ChatGPT to tell me more about this role...

In Victorian London, the crossing sweeper was a small but highly visible figure in the vast machinery of urban life. As the nineteenth century progressed, London grew into the largest city in the world, swollen by industrialization and rural migration. Its streets were crowded with horse-drawn carriages, omnibuses, carts, and pedestrians. They were also filthy. Mud, manure, refuse, and ash accumulated quickly, especially in wet weather. In this environment, the crossing sweeper emerged as an informal yet essential worker.

A crossing sweeper typically occupied a busy street intersection. Armed with a broom, shovel, and sometimes a barrow, he (and occasionally she or a child) would clear a narrow path across the road, enabling ladies and gentlemen to cross without soiling their boots and dresses. In return, he relied on small gratuities from passersby. The work required no official license in many cases, though some crossings were jealously guarded territories. The sweeper's income was uncertain and depended heavily on location, weather, and the generosity of the public.

Crossing sweepers became emblematic figures in Victorian literature and social commentary. In Charles Dickens's novel *Bleak House*, the character Jo is a homeless crossing sweeper whose life



Harold Copping's illustration of Jo from Bleak House "With an old broom softly swept the step" 1924, taken from The Victorian Web.

illustrates the vulnerability of the urban poor. Dickens used such figures to highlight the stark inequalities of the age. The sweeper stood at the literal and symbolic intersection of wealth and poverty: clearing a path for the affluent while inhabiting the margins of society. In the novel Jo observes much (being a touch point for many of the most important parts of the story) and is used much but retains his pure spirit. Due to his lowly status, he is not seen as a credible eyewitness by the authorities.

The moral issues surrounding crossing sweepers were complex and often contradictory. On one hand, sweepers were sometimes praised as examples of honest industry. In a society deeply concerned with the distinction between the “deserving” and “undeserving” poor, the sweeper’s visible labour could be interpreted as a sign of moral worth. Unlike beggars, who simply asked for alms, sweepers performed a service. Philanthropic tracts and conduct manuals occasionally cited them as models of self-help, reinforcing Victorian ideals of industriousness and independence. On the other hand, critics questioned whether crossing sweeping was truly work or merely a disguised form of begging. Since payment was voluntary and not contractual, some contemporaries viewed the practice as coercive or manipulative. There were anxieties about territorial disputes, intimidation of pedestrians, and the presence of children in the streets. The employment of children as crossing sweepers raised particular moral concerns. Many of these children were orphans or came from destitute families. Their exposure to harsh weather, traffic accidents, and exploitation troubled social reformers.

The existence of crossing sweepers also reflected broader systemic moral questions about Victorian society. Why, in the wealthiest city of the industrial world, did so many individuals rely on such precarious labour? The sweeper’s presence exposed the inadequacy of poor relief systems and the limited reach of state intervention before the expansion of municipal services. As local governments gradually improved street cleaning and sanitation later in the century, the independent crossing sweeper became less common.

Ultimately, the crossing sweeper embodied the tensions of Victorian morality: charity versus self-reliance, public responsibility versus private benevolence, and sympathy versus suspicion. Though often overlooked, this humble figure offers valuable insight into the social conscience and contradictions of nineteenth-century London.

Julie Gamble with assistance from ChatGPT

Our regular events



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.



Thank you,

Ann Lyon and Kate Whalley



Messy Church

Mary and Martha meet Jesus

All children from babies to P7 are most welcome to come and join in the fun!

We will start with a Bible Story and a song; then the children will do a range of craft activities, followed by a prayer and finish off with a meal together.

All children **MUST** be accompanied by an adult.



Sat 28th Feb 2.30pm

Wed 4th March 10am -

**(this is an accessible Wandering at Glenholm
followed by bite and blether, Broughton)**

Thurs 12th March 10.30am

**Wanderings is a reflective woodland wander; a gathering where
everyone is welcome to come and reflect, talk and walk together.**

Meet at the main layby carpark at Broughtonknowe woods. We will be walking about 3km, slowly through the woods on rough, steep, muddy tracks. It is essential folk wear stout boots with good grip and warm, waterproof clothing. There will be some thoughts shared, a Bible verse, time to chat, share and consider as well as some silence and a cuppa. For up to date info or to contact us visit our Facebook page.

Under 18s must be accompanied by an adult.

Meet at what 3 words: [certainty.questions.flown](https://www.facebook.com/certainty.questions.flown)

OS grid ref: NT103391



#Wanderings - Scotland

Eco Congregation Scotland Annual Gathering – Reconnecting with Creation

Reconnecting with Creation

Eco-Congregation Scotland 25th Anniversary

Annual Gathering and Annual General Meeting

Saturday 28th March 2026

10.30am to 4pm

Doors open 10am, Annual General Meeting 12noon to 1pm

St Matthew's Church of Scotland and online

Tay Street, Perth PH1 5LQ

Please register today to join us in Perth or online for our free and open Annual Gathering when we celebrate the 25th anniversary of Eco-Congregation Scotland. Our theme this year is “Reconnecting with Creation” with an emphasis on nature and biodiversity, prayer in a time of climate crisis, and a look to May's Scottish Parliament election. This will be a hybrid gathering and able to viewed live online thanks to St Matthew's experienced audio-visual volunteer support, although we would love to see you in Perth if possible!

Registration <https://forms.office.com/e/FC8ysaBTcx>

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER

A service for everyone!

Friday 6 March

I will give you rest, come

Nigeria 2026

St Andrews Parish Church, West Linton at 2pm on Friday 6th March, led by West Tweeddale Guild.

The service is based on material produced by the women of Nigeria.

After the service refreshments will be served with a Nigerian theme.

You will be made most welcome to join us.



INFORMED PRAYER PRAYERFUL ACTION

24-7 365 Days a year Prayer movement Ecumenical International Women-led

wwdp.org.uk

Registered Charity Number 233242

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

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.



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

Church Administrator: Kate Whalley

Telephone 01968 733 112

Email 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

Church bookings: Sheena Livingstone

Telephone 01968 661 282

Email sheena@deanfoot.onmicrosoft.com

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

Telephone 01968 674 566

Email marylevison@btinternet.com

Treasurer and Eco Group: Anna Woolverton

Telephone 01968 660 382

Email annapye@btinternet.com

Flowers: TBC

Telephone

Newsletter and website: Julie Gamble

Telephone 07980 258 381

Email julieggamble@yahoo.co.uk

Session Clerk and Organist: Murray Campbell

Telephone 01968 660 530

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

Request a card for someone: Bridget Wilcox

Text only 07980 836 817

Diary notes



Forthcoming events

Tuesday 3 March	7.30-9.30pm	Gaelic Psalm Singing
Thursday 5 March	2.30-4.30pm	Carlops Cafe
Tuesday 10 March	7.30-9.30pm	Gaelic Psalm Singing
Wednesday 11 March	12.30 – 2pm	Soup Lunch
Thursday 12 March	2.30-4.30pm	Carlops Cafe
Friday 13 March	7.30-8.30pm	Our Village Talks –Juliet Gold – Orthopaedic Trauma in Northern Malawi
Tuesday 17 March	7.30-9.30pm	Gaelic Psalm Singing
Thursday 19 March	2.30-4.30pm	Carlops Cafe
Tuesday 24 March	7.30-9.30pm	Gaelic Psalm Singing
Thursday 26 March	2.30-4.30pm	Carlops Cafe
Saturday 28 March	10.30-12pm	Coffee Drop-in (Carlops Café) and Fair Trade Stall
Tuesday 31 March	7.30-9.30pm	Gaelic Psalm Singing
Thursday 2 April	2.30-4.30pm	Carlops Cafe
Sunday 5 April	9am	Easter Breakfast in Village Hall
Tuesday 7 April	7.30-9.30pm	Gaelic Psalm Singing
Wednesday 8 April	12.30 – 2pm	Soup Lunch
Thursday 9 April	2.30-4.30pm	Carlops Cafe
Friday 10 April	7.30-8.30pm	Our Village Talks –Marianne Hazlewood – Botanical art

Tuesday 14 April	7.30-9.30pm	Gaelic Psalm Singing
Thursday 16 April	2.30-4.30pm	Carlops Cafe
Tuesday 21 April	7.30-9.30pm	Gaelic Psalm Singing
Thursday 23 April	2.30-4.30pm	Carlops Cafe
Saturday 25 April	10.30-12pm	Coffee Drop-in (Carlops Café) and Fair Trade Stall
Tuesday 28 April	7.30-9.30pm	Gaelic Psalm Singing
Thursday 30 April	2.30-4.30pm	Carlops Cafe

Material for next issue

To Julie Gamble by Friday 27th March 2026 please