

Carlops Parish Church

www.carlopschurch.org



NEWSLETTER

Volume 15, Number 8 August 2021

In-church services remain suspended owing to Coronavirus
Contact sessionclerk@carlopschurch.org for a link to Carlops' Zoom services

Zoom Services, August 2021

1 August 10am	Colin Herd
8 August 10am	Rev Nancy Norman
15 August 10am	Mrs Mary McElroy
22 August 10am	Steven Whalley
29 August 10am	Rev Nancy Norman

From our Interim Moderator

Isn't it wonderful what a good spell of weather can do? It can lift our spirits and lighten our mood. It can give us a fresh appreciation of the spectacular beauty of our Borders countryside. It can make the lush greens of the hedgerows and rich hues of the gardens seem prettier than ever. It can renew our awareness of the variety of bird and animal life sharing our outdoor space. In short, the warm, sunny summer days heighten our recognition and enjoyment of the natural world.

When our day's work is done, and even for those of us who have retired, the heat drains our energy and provides ample justification for relaxation. Salads dominate the mealtime menus and minimise effort in the kitchen. In our house we seem to have experimented with just about every salad combination this year and there have been visible health benefits: last weekend I discovered that I had lost nearly 3lb (I'm sorry, I can't calculate in kilos!) over the previous fortnight.

There is, however, a downside to all of this. Despite lying on top of the bed, rather than under the duvet, and even with windows open to create a through draught, I cannot sleep well in the heat. Much more seriously, among many who have underlying health problems, a prolonged period of hot weather – and two weeks is a prolonged period in our context – can so easily aggravate already painful and debilitating symptoms. I used to visit a lady in my first parish who dreaded warm summer days because of the effect they had on a skin condition she had suffered from since her teenage years.

I think too of an elderly couple who would pull all the blinds and curtains in their tenement flat in an effort to shut out the heat, and even then, one or both would sometimes be hospitalised, suffering from the effects of heat exhaustion.

I have done a lot of sitting in the garden during the lazy, hazy days of this summer and I have loved every moment, but I have found myself reflecting on how easy it is to enthuse about what many of us consider to be perfect summer days, without being sensitive to the pain and discomfort that such days bring to others. As the threat of heavy showers and even thunderstorms loom, we should be as grateful for the rain as we are for sunshine.

In our seedtime and harvest praise we give thanks for the sun and rain that God sends to ripen the crops that nourish us. They are blessings indeed. A lady I know well, who moved to Scotland from South Africa some years ago, often tells of how much she loves the Scottish climate, not least the fact that the weather is so changeable.

As we contemplate the disastrous wildfires that have been sweeping across Oregon and California, or the horrific floods in Germany and Belgium that brought tragic loss of life, or the forecasts of famine in parts of Africa and Asia, we have so much for which to be thankful.

Our climate is a blessing. Seldom do we suffer from anything like the extremes experienced elsewhere. As we open the curtains tomorrow and each new tomorrow, what better way to start the day, than to take a few minutes to give thanks to God for the new day, whatever the

weather, and to commit to God's care those to whom climatic extremes bring fear, suffering and loss.

With every blessing and best wishes

Calum Macdougall

Agnes Anderson's funeral service

A few Carlops Church people were able to attend Agnes Anderson's funeral service on 30 June 2021, but numbers were severely limited by coronavirus restrictions.

A film of the service in Carlops Church is now on our website: visit www.carlopschurch.org and navigate to *About us > Worship > Carlops service > Funeral services*. Or, if you are reading this on-screen, follow this link: [Agnes Anderson.mp4](#)

Enhancing the Church windows?

The prospect of installing secondary glazing on some or all of Carlops Church's windows has been explored tentatively. This would improve insulation, provide extra protection against the elements and condensation, reduce energy consumption and costs, and enhance comfort. Such a project has significant environmental benefits, so should appeal to us as a gold award eco-congregation.

Glaze and Save, a firm which provides magnetically fixed secondary-glazing and draught-proofing systems, has inspected the windows and offered some costed solutions using *Invisitherm*, a transparent insulating material. Their proposals are attractive, flexible and would deliver some energy savings. They are compatible with the planned installation of blinds on the south windows (to reduce glare and improve viewing of the projection target area on the north wall, behind the communion table).

That said, the estimated costs are challenging in relation to Carlops Church's present and likely future finances. A specific fund-raising and grant-seeking exercise would probably be necessary. And in purely financial terms, the time required for the estimated energy cost savings to deliver a full return on the necessary investment is long.

No firm proposals exist yet; no decisions have been taken; no imminent action is anticipated. Ideas and suggestions to Gill Gold, Property Convenor, in the first instance.

Rennie McElroy *Editor*

Thank you, Douglas

The installation of the new audiovisual and information technology kit that will allow us to live-stream events from the church meant that some built-in cupboards had to be relocated within the church and some wainscotting was exposed for the first time in many years. We thank Douglas Gold for his prompt action to treat and repaint all the affected areas and restore the church interior to top decorative condition.

The Column A “Happiness” of Hedgehogs

I have lived in my present home for 43 years but discovered only two years ago, much to my delight, that hedgehogs roam my garden at night. By chatting on-line to the Carlops Church *WhatsApp* group, I learned that some other friends had hedgehog residents and were lucky enough to have them appearing much earlier in the evening than my ones seemed to do. In autumn 2020 I installed three hedgehog houses and about six months ago, I invested in a wild-life camera. Since then, short video clips of my “tiggywinkles” have become a regular occurrence. I have therefore put together a few facts about hedgehogs that I think might be of interest to our newsletter readers.

The European hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*) is Britain’s only spiny mammal. An adult has about 6,000 spines, which are its main means of defence and cover a coat of fur. Baby hedgehogs, called hoglets, are born with the spines concealed beneath the skin and shortly after birth, the spines emerge.

Hedgehogs have short tails about 2cm long, and surprisingly long legs about 10cm long, which are only really visible when they are running. The five-toed, clawed feet enable them to run, dig and climb. They are surprisingly agile and active animals. Their eyesight is poor and instead, they rely on their sense of smell and hearing to navigate and search for prey.

These little bundles of spines are our allies in the garden, with a diet mainly of creepy crawlies such as caterpillars, leatherjackets, earwigs, millipedes and slugs. Hedgehogs do not become dependent on humans putting out food for them and only use this as a supplement to their natural diet. We do not therefore need to feed “bad” about feeding them on an irregular basis; tinned cat- or dog-food is suitable; so are mealworms!

In cold weather they hibernate, dropping their body temperature to match their surroundings and entering a state of torpor. We therefore lose our little friends from November till March/April; any disturbance during this period can be life-threatening.

Surveys suggest that we have lost over half the hedgehogs from our countryside since 2000, but there are indications that this decline may be slowing. Let us hope that this is correct and may we all continue to enjoy and cherish this very welcome little creature that can be found sharing our space.

Nan Buchan

Forthcoming events

None currently scheduled

Material for next issue

To info@carlopschurch.org by Monday 23 August 2021

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