

Abbotshall Parish Church

Parish Profile July 2017



“All are Welcome”

Printed and Published by Abbotshall Parish Church of Scotland, Kirkcaldy
Scottish Charity No. SC002586
www.abbotshallchurch.org.uk

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1.

Our new Minister

What is Abbotshall Church looking for in a new minister? This is not something we had anticipated but due to the translation of Rev Rosemary Frew to Bowden & Melrose in March 2017 after twelve years with us, we now find ourselves asking that question. With God's guidance we will find answers.



We are pleased that we can call a minister with an unrestricted tenure and, while we do not have fixed ideas about what our new Minister will be like, we hope that he or she will be mindful of St Paul's words about faith requiring action and be prepared to take a lead on the challenges that face our congregation in these uncertain times. As a congregation we are aware of the need to look outwards to an increasingly secular wider world and not only nurture our own spiritual lives but work hard to attract others into the exciting journey of faith.

We are seeking someone with commitment, drive and vision who will enable discipleship within the congregation and the wider parish and lead us to fulfil our dreams for the future so that we can show, by example, how to live Christ-like lives.

We want to ensure that Abbotshall can continue to move forward in the 21st century, and that our Mission Statement of "**All are Welcome**" is a reflection of how we share the love of God and practise our Christian faith.

"All are Welcome"



While we are an ageing congregation, we are very supportive of one another and have skills which help us to try to make everyone feel welcome, whether at Sunday services or by contact through the various organisations, many of whom are youth organisations, who meet in our Halls.

We are committed to spreading the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and we hope that in reading this far your curiosity will be aroused and you will read on and make further enquiries.

Please note that the Kirk Session voted in terms of the Ministers and deacons in Civil Partnerships and Same Sex Marriage Act (Act 1 2015) to depart from the traditional approach followed by the Church of Scotland.

2.

Kirkcaldy and the Parish of Abbotshall

Kirkcaldy, in the Kingdom of Fife, is a formerly industrial town on the East coast of Scotland. Famous for the production of linoleum and as the birthplace of Adam Smith, today it has a population of around 50,000. There are seven other Church of Scotland congregations in the town as well as Baptist, Methodist, Muslim, Scottish Episcopal, Roman Catholic and Coptic churches and inter-church relations are positive.



Beveridge Park

There is already a support network in place between the four town centre churches, of which Abbotshall is one, with the ministers meeting regularly and instances of shared worship throughout the year. Kirkcaldy Presbytery has commended “the collaborative working by the Town Centre Churches as a model for other Churches around the Kirkcaldy area”.

Within the town are four Secondary schools, numerous Primary schools, Fife College and a College of Nursing. Within the locality is Balwearie High School and two Primaries – West Primary and Strathallan. The minister is Chaplain to Strathallan and has a shared Chaplaincy in Balwearie and West schools.

Kirkcaldy has good transport links to the rest of Scotland and the UK with a railway station on the main East Coast route, bus station and easy road links to Edinburgh, Glasgow and Dundee. The town boasts two fine parks and the long seafront which gave the town its other name of “The Lang Toun”, has recently started to undergo major re-development. In the town centre there is the Adam Smith Theatre, Library, Museum and Art Gallery and there are many sporting centres in the town including two golf courses, swimming pool, ice rink and rugby and bowling clubs. Kirkcaldy is home to Raith Rovers Football Club and dancing in the streets of Raith still happens occasionally.

Nearly all if the amenities mentioned above are to be found within approximately a half mile radius of the church. Kirkcaldy caters for all age groups and interests whether recreational, artistic, cultural, historical or sporting.

Abbotshall has a gathered congregation with most members not resident in the Parish. In recent years there have been a large number of new houses and a Primary School built within the Parish, and one of the challenges facing us as a congregation is how to attract new members living in the area.

Statistics about the Parish of Abbotshall can be read on the Church of Scotland Resourcing Mission website on the Stats for Mission page www.resourcingmission.org.uk

3. The Church today – Membership, Worship and Outreach

3.1 Constitution Abbotshall has a model constitution. Today the Kirk Session comprises 40 Elders, 20 men and 20 women. 30 of these Elders have districts. The Congregational Board comprises 22 Elders and 3 members of the congregation. A small Management team meets occasionally to discuss and focus on any problems arising before taking items to the Congregational Board. The Safeguarding Co-ordinator ensures that the Safeguarding Policy is kept up to date with a rolling programme of training for all Elders and any other applicable member.

3.2 Membership As at June 2017 membership of the congregation stood at 458 with weekly attendances of 50 – 80 people. Attendance at Communion is between 80 and 100.

3.3 Worship Abbotshall follows a traditional format of worship but with contemporary content and occasional use of multi-media. Hymns are generally from CH4. We have not been used to having elders or members helping to lead worship very often but this is something we are keen to explore with a new minister.

3.4 Services Our service is at 11am on Sundays with tea and coffee being served in the Hall after worship for a time of further fellowship. We are a Fairtrade congregation.

Communion is celebrated three times a year on the first Sunday of March, June and November at 9am with the Common Cup and 11am with individual glasses. Home Communion is taken to ill or housebound members by the minister and an Elder. In addition, at Christmas Time, there is a Christingle Service on the Saturday before Christmas, a candle-lit

Watchnight Service on Christmas Eve and a short service at 11am on Christmas morning.

The Young Church, who currently numbers 6, meets on Sundays between September and May, starting off in the Church before progressing to their own activities in the Halls.

On the Sunday after Christmas a joint service is held in rotation with the other town centre churches and in Holy Week each church holds an evening service, including a Maundy Thursday Communion. Throughout July we go round the four churches, exploring a different theme every year.

The minister holds regular monthly services for residents of two nearby Care Homes and on a shared basis in a third.

3.5 Developing Faith In recent years, we have found it increasingly difficult to develop our faith through Bible Study or discussion groups, so this is an area which is in need of nurture.

There is a small but dedicated Prayer Group which, for many years, has met twice a month before the morning service.

We try to be an outward looking church and a number of Elders have attended one-day and weekend conferences. The Session has used the “Learn” publication as a stimulus for discussion and the Session Clerk is a Church Assessor, as well as having attended the General Assembly twice in recent years. Two Elders are Presbytery Elders and another two serve on Church of Scotland committees.

3.6 Pastoral Care There is a dedicated Pastoral Care Team in Abbotshall who

work hard at being informed of any sort of need among the congregation. They have meetings to keep everyone updated on the members they visit, and try to ensure that ill or housebound members and Care Home Residents receive regular visits. They also see to the distribution of the weekly church flowers which go to ill or bereaved members, send cards for birthdays, anniversaries or bereavements and are responsible for a Prayer Shawl Ministry, where woollen prayer shawls, knitted by members of the Craft Group, are distributed to elderly members.

3.7 Young Church The Young Church is staffed by three dedicated leaders who work with the children and encourage them in their learning of Bible stories. They decorate the Church for Harvest Thanksgiving, produce small gifts for the women of the congregation on Mothering Sunday and take part in other relevant ways, where appropriate. The Young Church holds a Snowman Drive in December to raise funds for their Christmas party.

One corner of the Sanctuary has been turned into a Play Area so that younger children and their parents can be part of the service without the constraints of sitting in the pews, especially if the Young Church is not meeting that day. We have found this to be particularly useful during Baptisms, when there can be a large number of visitors with young children present.

In common with many churches, we have a rapidly declining number of children attending Young Church on a Sunday. Many children have been baptised in the last twenty years but few have become regular attenders. This is the one area in which all members of the congregation agree needs to be addressed and, hopefully, turned around if Abbotshall is

to maintain and grow its position in the community.

3.8 Music Abbotshall has long had a strong musical tradition with a fine Binns pipe organ, refurbished in 2002, attracting a series of talented organists throughout the years. The present organist, who has been in post since 1992, is also the Director of Fife Youth Jazz Orchestra and brings an extra dimension to services with his improvisations in response to sermons and worship themes, which was featured on Songs of Praise a few years ago. He is the jazz mentor of the Heart & Soul Swing Band, writing and arranging music for them.

The Choir numbers around a dozen enthusiastic singers who enjoy leading the congregation in worship and who contribute choral items during Advent. They meet at 10am on Sundays from September to June to practise a choral Introit, which opens the weekly service.

3.9 Stewardship In 2008 we held a comprehensive Stewardship Campaign which helped us clarify the Roll, as every household was visited to ascertain what sort of links members wished to maintain with the Church.

September is our designated Stewardship Season and our Stewardship Convener has successfully led a rolling programme over the last five years focussing on Talents (twice), Time, Money and Seasons.

3.10 Fellowship A Friendship Circle meets once a month on a Wednesday afternoon to chat and discuss various matters, with occasional speakers.

Another time of informal fellowship is the monthly Coffee Morning, held on the second Saturday of the month from January to



June and September and October. At the end of November there is a Christmas Fayre which enjoys a good attendance and raises a large amount of money from a variety of stalls.

3.11 Outreach A Church Newsletter is produced four times a year and is distributed to all households in the congregation so that non-active members can be kept in touch with what goes on. Every household also receives a Christmas card/calendar.

We in Abbotshall are conscious that our obligations to help people go beyond our own membership and over the past number of years have supported many charities with Retiral Offerings from Communion and the Watchnight Services.

We have been major supporters of KART – Kirkcaldy Area Reachout Trust – which funds a Scripture Union worker to work in local schools. We also support our Mission Partner, Jenny Featherstone, in Zambia and enjoy her visits telling us of her work when she is back in the UK.

Every year at Harvest time we fill shoeboxes for The Blythwood Care Project and at Christmas we give presents to the local Women’s Refuge for their children. Last year we raised funds for the Church of Scotland’s project for the rebuilding of houses in Nepal. We also Support Crossreach and the local Foodbank.



The Walking Group raises funds for Edinburgh Medical Missionary Society (EMMS).

3.12 Local Church Review Abbotshall underwent a Local Church review in 2015. There was much to be commended in the work that was going on at that time, though challenges were realistically highlighted.

Three key areas were agreed for further work:

- Develop Messy Church
The minister and five members of the congregation started to explore the possibility of hosting Messy Church in Abbotshall but over a few months realised that we would be unable to run it on our own as the numbers of volunteers needed were not forthcoming.
- Develop the prayer life of the Church
- To look at new ways of continuing to support KART
- To develop use and understanding of Fairtrade

The Session is looking forward to addressing these and other challenges and opportunities with the new minister. The full report can be seen on our website. [click here](#)

Abbotshall Walking Group in Maspie Den



4. Profile of the Church today (Property and Finance)

Properties: The Church buildings comprise three properties: Church, Church Halls, and Manse

Church



The present Church building is of traditional stone and is located in central Kirkcaldy. Over time various alterations have been carried out to provide an open, light and comfortable environment within which to worship. Internally it consists of a sanctuary with a choir range, dais, main seated area set in a semi-circular layout with a central aisle and two other aisles to the east and west transepts. There is a children's play area. There are three

balcony areas, East, West and Raith.

There is an office/vestry with robing area and toilet, a session room, a tower and spire with cast iron bell still in use to the present day. There is a toilet and Beadle's cupboard to the side of the entrance vestibule. The church buildings support disabled access, with disabled toilets being provided within the Halls complex. There is a hearing loop and PA system installed with capabilities for the play back and recording of services and other events held within the Sanctuary.

Halls

The Halls are separate but adjacent to the main church. There are two halls, the Main hall and the Kennedy hall. A small but effective kitchen supports organisations using the halls and any social events held. There are male, female and disabled toilets within the complex. External ramps provide disabled access to the complex. A stage exists within the main hall and has been used for concerts, pantomimes, drama and fetes. There is a hearing loop within the main hall and arrangements are in place to add a hearing loop to the smaller Kennedy Hall. The main hall can seat 120 and the Kennedy hall can seat 60. There is a wall mounted projection screen and presentations can be made to meetings via a PC capable TV.



The halls are used on a daily basis by a wide range of groups including: Tai Chi classes; Scottish Country Dance Group; Fife School of classical Ballet; Taekwondo group, Zumba; Craft Group; Royal Scottish Country Dance Group; Ladies Probus Choir; Rainbows, Brownies and Guides; Beavers, Cubs and Scouts; Monthly Coffee Mornings; Young Church; Coffee after Sunday Worship.

They are also used on a one off basis for: Birthday Parties; Charity Functions; Elections.

Manse



The **Manse** is a stone built detached villa with slated roofing and traditional sash and case windows. It is centrally located in Milton Road, a distance of some 0.5 miles from the church and close to the main shopping area, train station, schools, theatre and sports facilities. On the ground floor there is a spacious entrance hall, lounge, dining room, living room, kitchen with adequate storage and a WC. Upstairs there is a master bedroom, 3 bedrooms, a study and a bathroom with shower. Heating is by gas fired central heating. A tarmac driveway leading to a single garage accesses the property. There is a small garden to the front and a large garden to the rear. Approval has been obtained that, if necessary, the current manse could be exchanged for another family home.

Property Management and Condition

All properties are in good condition. The manse in particular will be subject to a schedule of repair detailed to ensure that all regulatory requirements have been met before a new Minister takes residence. Areas subject to personal choice will be discussed with the incoming Minister and, where relevant, the new manse family.

Supporting documentation is on the Abbotshall website click [here](#)

Finance

In 2007 we received a large legacy which allowed us to do significant work on the fabric of the church properties. We continue to run a comprehensive five year rolling maintenance programme. Due to our ongoing Stewardship campaign, overall income has resulted in modest excesses each year.

Accounts

EXTRACT FROM THE 2016 ACCOUNTS

	Total 2016	Total 2015
Receipts		
Offerings	55,135	59,264
Tax recovered on Gift Aid	9,637	9,418
Tax recovered on GASDS	943	1,035
Contributions from Congregational Organisations	2,324	2,063
Fundraising events	4,597	4,570
Bank and Deposit interest	150	134
Investment income	695	1,104
Rental of premises	11,709	11,606
Sale of investments		2,336
Receipts from General Trustees		1,079
Endowment income	1,580	1,617
Funerals and Weddings	3,260	2,480
Other income	26	77
Organisations' petty cash	452	470
Total Receipts	<u>90,508</u>	<u>97,253</u>
Payments		
Costs of generating funds	447	453
Charitable activities	88,129	87,137
Governance costs	576	576
Total Payments	<u>89,152</u>	<u>88,166</u>
Excess of Receipts over Payments for the year	<u>1,356</u>	<u>9,087</u>

NET ASSETS AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2016

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Endowment	Total
Fixed Assets				
Investments	32,271	1,409	15,446	49,126
Current Assets	53,595	83		53,678
Current Liabilities				
Net assets at 31 Dec 2016	<u>85,866</u>	<u>1,492</u>	<u>15,446</u>	<u>102,804</u>

5. Presbytery Plan

At the meeting of Kirkcaldy Presbytery on 6th December 2016 the Presbytery accepted the continuation of the 2014 plan for the Kirkcaldy area with no changes, allowing Abbotshall to call a Full time minister with unrestricted tenure. Kirkcaldy Presbytery website is on www.presbyteryofkirkcaldy.org.uk

6. For further information

Further information can also be found on our website: click [here](#)

We very much look forward to hearing from you.