

CLOSEBURN PARISH CHURCH



linked with

KIRKMAHOE PARISH CHURCH



PARISH PROFILE

Closeburn Parish Church of Scotland, a Registered Charity
Scottish Charity Register Number: SC005624

Kirkmahoe Parish Church of Scotland, a Registered Charity
Scottish Charity Register Number: SC010508

Closeburn linked with Kirkmahoe **Parish Profiles**

The vacant charges of Closeburn and Kirkmahoe were linked by the Presbytery of Dumfries and Kirkcubright in accordance with its Presbytery Plan and permission was given to call a Minister on the basis of unrestricted tenure.

A joint Nominating Committee was elected in October 2016 and is currently seeking a new Minister.

As the newly linked parishes of Closeburn and Kirkmahoe, we are prayerfully seeking a minister who will encourage outreach and mission and embrace our church families.

Our vision is to be churches which inspire the people within our linked parishes through worship and witness.

If you feel a call to show an interest in our vacancy we invite you to read the following document showing the profiles for our parishes, which we hope will give you a feel for life and work in our linked congregations and the wider communities which they serve.

If, after reading the profiles, you would like more information or wish to have a discussion or an informal chat about the vacancy, please contact our Interim Moderator. Formal applications should be sent to the Clerk to the Nominating Committee.

We would like to thank you for your interest and encourage you to contact us for anything we can help you with.

Enquiries can be made to:

Rev. Bill McKenzie, MBE, DA,

Interim Moderator

Tel; 01387 253688,

email: mckenzie.dumfries@btinternet.com

David Dick,

Clerk to the Nominating Committee

Tel; 01848 330067 or 07795 064 874

email: closeburn.kirkmahoe.vacancy@gmail.com

CLOSEBURN PARISH CHURCH

PARISH PROFILE



Introduction

Closeburn is a parish set in Mid Nithsdale, Dumfries and Galloway, straddling the A76 Dumfries to Kilmarnock trunk road, and stretching from Auldgirth in the south to near Thornhill in the north. The village of Closeburn is some 10 miles north of the University Town of Dumfries, where all major health and retail facilities can be found. The parish includes the village of Auldgirth some 4 miles south of Closeburn.

The parish population is shown in the Church of Scotland Statistics for Mission as 1,146, of which 54% are aged 45 years and over. (A link to these statistics is provided below).

Closeburn itself has a primary school, nursery, shop/post office and some small Industrial units used by local businesses, while Auldgirth has an inn and shop/post office. The local secondary school, Wallace Hall Academy, and Health Centre are 3 miles north at Thornhill.

The history of the village of Closeburn dates back to as early as 1232 when Ivan de Kirkpatrick obtained a Charter to the castle and lands, and in 1671 the Kirkpatricks obtained a Charter of Barony together with the patronage of the united churches of Closeburn and Dalgarno. The Dalgarno church no longer exists.

The present Closeburn church, designed by the architect James Barbour, opened for worship in 1878. When he died in 1912 he left a fine legacy of 26 churches, most designed in the Gothic style. Closeburn is considered one of his finest and most impressive examples.

Church Life

Closeburn was linked with Kirkmahoe following a Service of Linkage on 22nd June 2016, in line with the Dumfries and Kirkcudbright Presbytery Plan. Now we are prayerfully seeking to appoint a new Minister on an unrestricted tenure.



We hold services every Sunday at 10.00 am. We have a Church Roll of 168 and there is an average attendance of 28 to 35 each Sunday, rising slightly for Holy Communion celebrated in April and November. A Christmas Eve Service is held each year, the offering from which supports local charities.

Family services are held for Easter, Harvest Thanksgiving, Christmas and linked with the local Community Gala Committee for the Crowning of the Gala Queen. Children from the church and parish are encouraged to participate in these services by reading the scriptures and providing music.

The church building is well maintained and in good order reflecting what should be expected of such a beautiful building. It benefits from a good sound system linked to a loop hearing aid system. It also has an audio visual projector system which allows Church Hymnary 4 and the latest Mission Praise Hymns to be projected during services. It is also available for other uses such as talks to groups.

The church owns a walled garden, situated to the rear of the large car park and former manse. We are working with the Community Council's Charitable Trust to bring this substantial area into community use. This approach has met with the approval of both the Presbytery and the General Trustees of the Church of Scotland. They see this as a good project: the church engaging with the local community.

The primary school and nursery welcome involvement with the Church. A recent change of Head Teacher has not diminished that involvement. The School also uses the church for their assemblies at Christmas, Easter and Harvest. The produce which they bring to the church for harvest is left for the Church's Harvest Service then distributed to a local care home and to the needy in the community.

We as a congregation encourage the use of our church by the community and this is gradually developing. The church has already been used for a number of concerts provided by local choirs. This has benefited some local and national charities as well as the church itself.

In line with the Church of Scotland Stewardship Programme we address the issues of Time, Talent and Money. We hold a "Giving Day", using envelopes which are distributed with the Autumn Newsletter to every household in the parish. This gives members and parishioners the opportunity to demonstrate their support for and their appreciation of the witness and work of the Church in the community. The Giving Day is a very successful event helping to sustain the Church financially.

In 2014 and 2015 members of the congregation have opened up their gardens to Afternoon Tea events at which other members supplied the food and sales material. Most recently in the summer of 2016, a Flower Festival was held over two days when visitors enjoyed the displays in the church and afternoon tea in the grounds. All of these have been popular, boosted the church funds but equally encouraged members and non-members to visit the church and meet with our congregation. As the walled garden is developed we hope to utilise that area for similar events in the future.

Church Faith and Membership

We are a Fellowship within the Church of Scotland worshipping God, whom we know as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We confess Jesus Christ as Saviour, and serve Him as Lord, believing the Bible to be the Word of God.

Training of new elders and instruction of new communicants and those seeking baptism for themselves or for their children, are important in the nurture of our congregation.



Church Management

We have a Kirk Session and Congregational Board, who together form the Church Trustees. Maintenance of the church building and its environment is important to us. We have no church hall.

Manse

The manse is situated in Kirkton close to Kirkmahoe Church, some 9 miles south of Closeburn. It is a relatively modern building, well maintained and fully described in the Parish Profile prepared by Kirkmahoe.

Concluding Statement

While we in Closeburn are set in an ageing population we are particularly forward looking and modern thinking and will continue to be open to innovation. By faith in Christ and outreach in His Name, we are keen to reverse the decline in attendance and in membership, recognising that growth is being seen in many Christian Churches across the World.

We continue to explore ways of attracting younger people to Christ and His Church and He is providing some increase. We struggle against the fact that many school age sports and other events now take place on a Sunday. Nevertheless we are very keen to explore and to develop our mission.

KIRKMAHOE PARISH CHURCH

PARISH PROFILE



Introduction

Kirkmahoe is a parish in Dumfries and Galloway with a population of around 2,800. The parish covers part of the urban village of Locharbriggs together with the rural villages of Dalswinton, Duncow and Kirkton where the Grade-B Parish Church is situated.

The population of the parish is shown in the Church of Scotland Statistics for Mission as being made up of 25% pre-school/school and students, 50% young and mature adults and 25% elderly and very elderly people.

The Parish of Kirkmahoe is effectively a close knit rural charge which was linked with the neighbouring Parish of Closeburn on the 22nd June 2016. The weekly service is held on Sunday at 11.30am and is normally attended by between 15 and 24 worshippers although this number increases when we celebrate Holy Communion or other events such as weddings, christenings and funerals.

We are a financially viable church which is always working hard at fundraising with various events held throughout the year. The rear of the church was altered several years ago. We added in a small hall complete with kitchen which is used by the congregation as a meeting place to bring people together in fellowship and friendship after most Sunday services and during the aforementioned fundraising events.

We currently have a membership of around 197 and are a small but busy charge with a committed congregation and Kirk Session, both of whom have shown a proven willingness to change with the times. The membership is made up of mainly older members of the community who have lived in the area for many years and for this reason we at the moment don't have an active Sunday School but are ever hopeful that we can attract younger people into the church to get it going again.



The History of the Parish

The first church in the area was founded by St Kentigern (also known as Mungo) and there were three “Kils” in the area during the dark ages :- Kilblaen at St Blane’s, Locharbriggs, Kilfarnock at St Earnen’s, Quarrelwood and Kilmochoe at St Mungo’s, Kirkton.

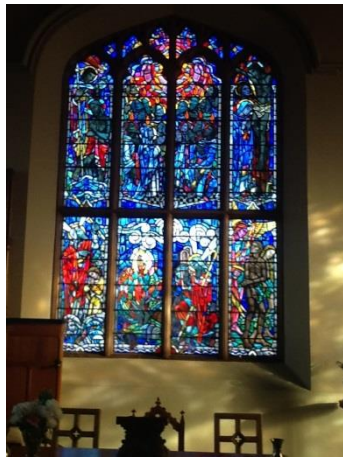
During the feudal times that followed the one parish church at Kirkmahoe was put under the patronage of the Comyns . Then in 1492 the Stewarts (The Barons at Dalswinton) granted the endowments of Kirkmahoe to the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Bishop of Glasgow and until the reformation the Rector of Kirkmahoe was usually the younger son of the Dalswinton Family and a residential prebend at Glasgow Cathedral. The Rector would appoint a vicar to serve the parish. The Barony of Dalswinton survived the reformation, the Bishopric of Glasgow did not!!

In the 17th century the parish was bitterly divided between the Covenanters and the Conformists and the local Quarrelwood Dissenters and their spiritual successors in the Free Church of Scotland remained separated until 1929.

The current church that stands in Kirkton was commissioned in 1822 by the Laird of Dalswinton and his heirs and was designed by Walter Newall of Dumfries who also stayed on to manage the construction. The work, a very striking sandstone structure, was very impressively completed by June 1823, and Mr Newall was paid the princely sum of twenty guineas for this achievement.

The building has been renovated three times since it was built, the last occasion being in 1966 when the magnificent East window was put in. This window, the work of the eminent stain glass artist William Wilson, depicts the “Mighty Acts of God”, “The Expulsion from Eden”, “Moses with the Tablets of the Law”, “The Burning Bush” and the “Crossing of the Red Sea” that lead to the fulfilment of the old in the new with “Jesus’ Baptism”, the “Coming of the Holy Spirit” and “the Christ of Kirkmahoe” reigning from the cross.

We also have the “Carzield” window gifted to the church over a hundred years ago ,which is a fine example of the work of W H Lonsdale the well known 19th century architectural artist. This window displays our Lord with St Peter and St Paul in the top panels and below that shows Peter preaching to Cornelius, the “Presentation in the Temple” and Paul preaching to Agrippa.



EAST



CARZIELD



REMEMBRANCE

The communion table, lectern and font with their ornate carvings of the Apostles along with ancient symbols of the church, were presented at the same time by the artist Cyril Wilson who was a long serving member of the church as well as being the organist for many years.

The church bell was designed and produced by T Mears of London and measures 60cm high by 60cm wide and hangs from the wooden beams in the belfry.

Finally the Norwich (transistorised) church organ manufactured by Miller was commissioned in 1965.

Church Life

The Kirk Session is currently made up of 12 members (9 men and 3 ladies) and meets every 2 months. The Session is at full strength with positions held including session clerk, treasurer, fabric convenor and child protection co-ordinator.

We are all part of the Church of Scotland and believe in worshiping God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We believe that Jesus Christ is the one true Lord and seek to serve him through his Gospels and their messages and teachings.

Membership of our church for communicants is by Profession of Faith or by being transferred from a church where they were already a member. New members are taken through a period of instruction in basic beliefs by the minister before taking their vows, normally in front of the church congregation. We have also held Alpha classes in the past and several members of our church have attended these courses. There is also a bible study and praise group which meets on a Monday evening most weeks of the year. During these meetings they read and discuss passages from the bible as well as singing their favourite hymns.

The congregation contributes reliably to church finances through regular giving and gift aid. We also hold a programme of fundraising events every year with events including sponsored walks, cream teas and garden open days.

Our church celebrates Holy Communion every May and November, Harvest Thanksgiving every October and we mark Remembrance Sunday with services at the war memorial at nearby Connan's Knowe and in church every November.

On Christmas Eve we have a service at 6.30pm at nearby Dalswinton Barony Church which is owned by The Landale family and it is a very friendly family event. There is a Christmas morning

service, which is also held at the Barony Church.

Our Ministers in the past have been connected as chaplains to both Locharbriggs and Duncow primary schools.

Our congregation sponsor a 9 year old girl from Senegal called Miriama Diuof through a World Vision project and part of the money we raise from our annual Easter sponsored walk goes to paying for this.

We also have a church choir who perform every Easter and Christmas at services in the church.

Amenities and Public Services

The manse which was built circa 1991/92 and sits just off the square in the middle of the village has oil fired central heating and double glazing and comprises of 3 bedrooms, 2 public rooms, 2 bath/shower rooms , 3 toilets, 1 study, 1 kitchen and a garage. It also has its own well maintained garden.



MANSE VIEW



MANSE DRIVEWAY

Although Kirkton doesn't have a village shop there are plenty of shops in Locharbriggs around 2 miles away and the main county town of Dumfries is only around 3.5 miles away. There is a pop up Post Office in the village hall every Tuesday and Thursday morning.

The village hall itself is very well used with badminton, bowling and old time dancing clubs and pilates classes booking it and the local heritage group and community council also use it. The community council recently purchased and installed a defibrillator on the exterior wall of the hall and arranged for members of all groups including the church to be trained in using it.

There are two primary schools close by in Locharbriggs and Duncow and there are a number of high schools and academies in both Dumfries and Thornhill. Dumfries & Galloway College and Crichton Campus of the University of West of Scotland are situated on Bankend Road on the outskirts of Dumfries.

The transport network is good in the area with Kirkton on the main bus route from Dumfries to Thornhill with a regular service passing through the village. There is a railway station in Dumfries which has trains which go north to Glasgow and south via Carlisle. You can also go to Lockerbie (around 18 miles) for services to Edinburgh. You are also only around 15–20 miles from the M74 motorway.

Concluding Statement

The Parish of Kirkmahoe is a rural community with a population which is split 25% young - 75% mature/elderly, (a link is provided below to the Statistics for Mission on the Church of Scotland

Website), but we are still determined to continue to be God's witnesses in Kirkmahoe, bringing His word and showing His love to the people of the parish, even with the difficult times the church is facing at the moment. We know it is hard to get the younger members of the community to come to church regularly but we are and will always be open to any fresh ideas on how to do this although we know will not be easy with all the different activities that take place on Sunday these days.

Useful Links

Links to Church of Scotland Statistics for Mission.

Closeburn

http://cos.churchofscotland.org.uk/resources/statistics_for_mission/parish_profiles/080436.pdf

Kirkmahoe

http://cos.churchofscotland.org.uk/resources/statistics_for_mission/parish_profiles/080466.pdf

Council

<http://www.dumgal.gov.uk/>

Education

Thornhill

<http://www.wallacehall.co.uk/>

Dumfries

<http://www.dumfriesacademy.org/>

<http://dumfrieshighschool.co.uk/>

Further Education

<http://www.dumgal.ac.uk/dumgalportal/>

<http://www.uws.ac.uk/about-uws/campuses/dumfries/>