

St Michael's Parish Church - Edinburgh

Parish Profile February 2018



Introduction

St Michael's is a vibrant congregation with a strong core of regular attendees and looks to continue to build upon the sturdy platform left behind by the previous minister. The Session is forward-thinking, a Care Team provide regular communication to those in need and the weekly Welcome Teams ensure warm greetings are offered to all who pass through the doors of St Michael's on a Sunday morning.

St Michael's is open, ecumenical and liberal in theology. The Kirk Session voted to depart from the Church's traditional position in respect of ministers in civil partnerships and same-sex marriages.

The Presbytery of Edinburgh has approved a five year renewable tenure for the next minister.

We look forward to the next stage of St Michael's ministry and seek the leadership to maintain and develop our faith and stability.

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Community Profile

St Michael's Parish is situated to the west of Edinburgh city centre in a mainly residential area consisting of a mixture of flats housing single professional people, a student development and tenement/colony houses with families. The only school within the Parish is St Cuthbert's RC Primary although there has been contact in the past with Craiglockhart Primary which serves the majority of homes within the parish. A historic association with North Merchiston Care Home has been maintained following parish boundary realignment.

More details of the parish can be found in the Church of Scotland's Statistics for Mission (see http://cos.churchofscotland.org.uk/resources/statistics_for_mission/parish_profiles/010098.pdf)



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Worshipping Life

Sunday morning worship is at the core of life at St Michael's, contemporary versions of The Creed and The Lord's Prayer are used within an order of service, which is in 3 parts, our Approach to God, the Word of God and our Response to the Word. Members regularly take part in reading the scriptures and leading prayers.



Congregational singing is from CH4. Our Director of Music has served for 25 years and has a planned programme of high quality music. <http://stmichaels-kirk.co.uk/music-at-st-michaels/>

Special services are held during Holy Week, Good Friday, early morning service in the garden on Easter Sunday, Remembrance Day, Midweek Christmas Carol Service with the uniformed organisations and other community organisations using our halls, early evening Family service, Candlelit Watchnight Service and a bi-annual Bereavement Service (last held in November 2017).

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is celebrated on the last Sunday of January, March, June and October. A combination of individual glasses and Common Cup are used at these services.

On Easter Sunday we have a Family Communion Service when children help with the distribution of the bread. Communion is also celebrated on Christmas Day.

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Fairtrade fortnight and Guild Week are celebrated each year during Sunday Worship. A joint Evening Service with St Martin of Tours Scottish Episcopal Church is held on the last Sunday of the month – this is informal and meditative with congregational input and occasionally Communion.

Whilst this is the present pattern of worship, it does not mean we are not open to change.

Fellowship continues following worship with tea and coffee in the hall where a Traidcraft stall is available. A soup and sandwich lunch is held on the second Sunday of the month, September to May. This raises funds for the Church and also Fresh Start Cookers for Christmas – December, Church of Scotland HIV Souper Sunday –January and Christian Aid –May.

The Congregation

The roll currently stands at 317 with 23 adherents with average Sunday attendance of around 80.

The congregation is 50% resident within the parish and 50% gathered.

The Kirk Session

The Kirk Session is representative of the congregation, comprising 26 active elders, 10 men and 16 women.

The session has occasionally held an “Away Day”, which allows time for study and reflection. This has been led by the Minister with a guest speaker and many of the initiatives undertaken in the past few years have been germinated at these sessions.

The Congregational Board

The Board is comprised of the Session plus 5 elected members. There are three sub-committees – Fabric, Finance and Personnel to manage the daily work of the Church.

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Youth Work

Sunday School and Creche



Sunday School is held during Morning Worship. There are around 10 children from P1 to S2 and Crèche facilities for under 5s. We are currently using "Roots" a website based resource.



Christian Education

Study groups have been convened during Advent and Lent being jointly led by the Minister, Elders and the Clergy of St Martin's. Occasional lectures on a variety of subjects have been organised in recent years.



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Administration

There is a secretary, employed for 12 hours per week in the church office to assist the Minister with all administrative duties, hall and church bookings.

Communication

The Tower

Our congregational magazine is published quarterly and delivered to most homes in the congregation.

The Website

A recently updated and comprehensive website provides a focus for information on the parish and is updated regularly. Access is through:

<http://www.stmichaels-kirk.co.uk>

Facebook

The congregation has a Facebook page updated regularly with events in the Church and sharing other Church of Scotland posts.

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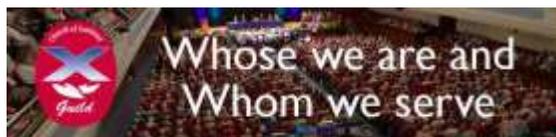
Outreach

The Care Team

The Care Team was set up to virtually “care” for certain people in the congregation. These folk had just been bereaved, were ill - at home or in hospital and who had specific problems.

A small group of members meet every month headed by the Minister and discuss who require a visit and then take action. A service for the bereaved of the parish and congregation has been organised every two years.

St Colm's@St Michael's Guild



St Colm's @ St Michael's Guild meets every second Tuesday at 7pm. The Guild has 28 members this session and an average of around 20 members each meeting. For the past 3 years the Guild strategy has been “Be Bold, Be Strong” with this year's theme “Go in Love”. We follow the Guild Partnership Scheme and over the past 3 years we have heard about and supported Street Pastors, Breaking the Cycle of FGM and the Haiti Project. The syllabus includes a mixture of speakers on various subjects, social evenings and outings. The strategy for the years 2018 - 2021 is to be One Journey, Many Roads and we look forward to hearing more about this and also a new set. The Guild meets every second Tuesday at 7pm. The Guild has 28 members this Session and average around 20 members each meeting. For the past 3 years the Guild strategy has been 'Be Bold, Be Strong with this year's theme of 'Go in Love'. All are welcome to Guild meetings whether as members or visitors.

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Friendship Club

The Friendship Club holds meetings on alternate Monday afternoon, for over 50 retired people in the parish and beyond. They enjoy a varied programme of talks, choirs and other musical entertainment.



Coffee Mornings

A Coffee Morning is held on the first Saturday of the month, which is mostly a social gathering but also raises extra funds. A greater effort is made in November when we hold a Christmas Fair and in May when we have a coffee morning for Christian Aid.



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I.O.M. Society

The Indigent Old Men's Society is a charitable trust providing financial support for men below a certain base income. They meet every Thursday afternoon for a programme of entertainment.

Scouting

Beavers and Cubs meet in the hall on Friday nights.

Guiding

Rainbows and Brownies meet weekly throughout the year on Wednesday nights.

The Young Ones

A long established youth musical theatre group, The Young Ones, meets weekly from October to May rehearsing and performing their annual show. This group attracts children from ages 5 to 16 years from within and outwith the parish and is a popular starting point on the amateur dramatic circuit.

Outreach out with the Parish

Christian Aid

A door-to-door collection is organised in parts of the parish during Christian Aid week. A Coffee Morning is held in May. Additionally the congregation responds well to emergency appeals throughout the year.

Amnesty International

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We have been associated with Amnesty International for many years through individual members involved with writing letters and the congregation as a whole taking part in the annual Write for Rights campaign towards the end of the year. Hundreds of postcards and greeting cards are signed and sent with messages of love and solidarity to victims of injustice and human rights supporters across the world.

It is always a moving occasion as we learn, not just of those suffering now, but hear of the testimony of those whose situation improved, often radically as a result of previous campaigns. Encouragement to continue campaigning for justice often comes when someone in the congregation receives a reply from a prisoner.

Fresh Start

St Michael's has supported Fresh Start, the Church's charity, set up to help those who have been homeless, for many years now.

The main events are the Harvest Thanksgiving Service, when the congregation is invited to bring donations of food and household items which are then transported to Fresh Start during the following week or two.

The other main event is in December when the congregation, while tucking into a delicious bowl of homemade soup, is asked to donate money to go towards Fresh Start Cookers for Christmas Appeal.

There is also an ongoing collection of household goods and food throughout the whole year. Donations can be brought to the Church at any time or if that is not possible then the St Michael's Fresh Start coordinators will arrange to collect the donations from their home.

Notices in the Tower, the Order of Service and on the notice board at the back of the Church keep the congregation up to date with what Fresh Start are most in need of and is also a way of sharing any news and thanks from Fresh Start.

Bethany Care Shelter

We continue to support the Bethany Care Shelter, having in the past catered and hosted the shelter 2 -3 times during the winter, prior to Bethany making permanent use of Meadowbank Church. Donations of toiletries, hats, gloves and socks have also been collected for distribution among the homeless. Our Christmas Service offerings are donated to Bethany.

Traidcraft

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Here at St Michael's we encourage one another to think globally. We support Traidcraft plc with a weekly stall which is open for business before and after the Sunday morning service. We stock a wide variety of fairly traded goods and have an annual turnover of £1300, with the profits shared between Fairtrade Exchange and the



Church.

Lent Appeal

Lent always provides an annual focus for others. St Michael's young folk (and not so young) are encouraged to 'save their pennies' during Lent. Their interest is encouraged during the Children's address; in recent years the appeal has gone towards "Heart for Art", "A Place at the Table" for Syrian Refugees and this year Medical Aid for Palestine.

Ecumenical Relations

Over the past 15 years we have developed a strong bond with St Martin of Tours Scottish Episcopal Church on Dalry Road, having joint evening services each month September to November and January to June. We also have enjoyed shared study groups during Advent and Lent and a shared programme during Holy Week. The congregation of St Martin's joined us for worship for six months when their building was refurbished in 2016.

We have worked together with other local Church of Scotland congregations as well as other denominations such as St Cuthbert's RC and The Salvation Army in Gorgie.

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Last Summer we pioneered an event "G in the Park" with local churches in Murieston Park.



We continue to take part in joint events such as The World Day of Prayer and have been involved in Holy Week Services and the Week for Christian Unity.

Finance and Stewardship

St Michael's principle source of income is through the weekly offering scheme, both gift aided and non-gift aided.

To supplement our income we hire out the halls for use by various organisations and youth groups. We also raise funds on a regular basis with monthly coffee mornings and a monthly soup and sandwich lunch after the morning service.

In 2015 we had a surplus of £130,267 due to a large one off legacy, 2016 showed a deficit of £17,081 due in part to an electricity overcharge.

Our largest item of expenditure is our contribution to Ministries and Mission which in 2015 was £51,315 and 2016 £57,502.

We are aware of the need to increase our financial giving and to encourage people to share their time and talents. We propose to designate a

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stewardship season each September with a worship focused campaign – Talents in 2018, Money in 2019 and Time in 2020/.



Building/Facilities

Church and Halls

St Michael's Parish Church is a listed Category 'A' building opened for public worship on 3rd December 1883.

The main entrance consists of outer vestibule with glass doors, installed to mark the millennium, leading to the inner vestibule. Access to the halls and the gallery is to the right and access to the church to the left.

The sanctuary seats over 500 with traditional pews and is in good decorative order being refurbished in 1999.

The chancel area has been extended to allow flexibility in worship together with a ramp for wheelchair access. There is a large open space at the front with a grand piano which complements the pipe organ. The vestry is accessed from the chancel area and has a separate external access. A small gallery gives access to the session room and the tower.

The halls consist of modern ladies & gents toilets, a toilet for the disabled with baby changing facilities, kitchen, lower hall with a seating

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capacity of around 120 and identical upper hall. The former church officer's house has been adapted to provide committee rooms and church office.

There is an induction hearing loop and wheelchair access is by means of a ramp at the side entrance of the hall.

The Manse

We are currently in the process of selling our Manse, a terraced Edwardian villa, just outside the parish boundary and looking to purchase a smaller more manageable property within a reasonable distance from the Church.

In Conclusion

St. Michael's has a current roll of 317 with over 20 adherents and an average Sunday attendance of around 80. We have a good structured pattern of worship and extended outreach with the Minister supported by members of the congregation and the Kirk Session. We regard ourselves as a positive and proactive group of people, open to change and development within the church family.

We have worked together with other local churches of various denominations and look forward to expanding and maintaining our ecumenical relations in the future.

The congregations of St Michael's greatly appreciate the challenge offered up and seek the leadership to maintain and develop our faith and stability.

Applications and further enquiries to the Convener of the Nomination Committee

Allan Gordon

E-mail: allanjangordon@icloud.com

Tel: 0131 443 0522

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Or informal enquiries to the Interim Moderator

Rev Angus Mathieson MA BD

E-mail: ANGUSMATHIESON@churchofScotland.org.uk

Tel: 0131 225 5722