

St Mary's Parish Church, Haddington

Parish Profile



Contents

Introduction	page 3
History: Our Church and our congregation	page 4
Community Profile: Haddington	page 5
Worship	page 6-8
Pastoral Care	page 8
Young Church/Home Group	page 9
Ecumenical Links	page 10
Our Wider World	page 10-11
Stewardship and Finance	page 11-12
Church Teams	page 13-14
Music	page 15-16
Our Manse	page 16
Web Links	page 16

Introduction

This vacancy has arisen due to the untimely death of our much-loved minister, Jennifer Macrae. This has been a traumatic experience for us all but our congregation has shown considerable resilience. We are keen to build on all the progress made in ten years of Jennifer's ministry here and to go forward in faith.

We are seeking a minister who can engage positively with all the diverse groups in our congregation and help us to grow as one Church family; who can inspire and lead us to make the best use of our talents; who will participate fully in our local community and help and support us to do the same; who can help our St Mary's family face the challenges of the future with creativity.



History: Our Church and our Congregation

One of the three great pre-Reformation churches of the Lothians, St Mary's is a church rich in history. Nearly destroyed during the Siege of Haddington in 1548 following the 'Rough Wooing' by Henry VIII, the church was not fully restored until the early 1970s. History and faith meet in this place and the church continues to play a vital part in the life of our community today.

We currently have 490 people on our Communion Roll and 120 or so members regularly attend our Sunday services for worship on a week-by-week basis. In the first nine months of 2018 (January to September) we had 7 baptisms, 5 weddings, 11 funerals and 22 new members joining our congregation.

We have 40 Elders on our Kirk Session, 22 male and 18 female. Our newest Elder joined in May 2018. We occasionally hold informal training sessions for Elders on topics such as bereavement, visiting and safeguarding. Meetings usually take place on a Monday evening five times a year.

We have a Unitary Constitution with various teams such as Fabric, Finance and Open Season who report to the Kirk Session on a regular basis.

All of our paid positions are part time. We have a Director of Choirs, an Organist, a Church Officer, a Church Secretary and a cleaner.

Our Kirk Session has voted to depart from the traditional position of the Church of Scotland in relation to human sexuality and its application to ministers of the church.

Community Profile: Haddington

Haddington is a historic market town set amongst agricultural country. It is the main administrative, cultural and geographical centre for East Lothian and lies about 20 miles east of Edinburgh, just off the A1.

The town has a good mix of shops including Tesco, Aldi and several independent retailers, cafés, restaurants and pubs. A state-of-the-art library and museum, the John Gray Centre, is also located on the High Street and a new East Lothian Community Hospital is due for completion in 2019.

The socio-economic profile of Haddington is mixed, with pockets of deprivation and all associated issues.

Haddington offers schools at both primary and secondary level. There is also an independent primary school.

The town has a golf course, the Aubigny Sports Centre with swimming pool, gym and AstroTurf hockey and football pitches and tennis courts, a skateboard park, cricket pitch and rugby ground at nearby Neilson Park.

There are frequent bus services to and from Edinburgh and trains from nearby Drem and Longniddry stations.

Haddington, like similar towns in East Lothian, is expanding rapidly with extensive new housing being built at the west of the town. This presents both an opportunity and a challenge for us as a church trying to reach out and serve the whole community.



Worship

We hold two services on Sundays. A printed service sheet is made up each week for both services and our notices. A newsletter is produced monthly for our members.

9:30am Family Service

This is a half hour service, which tends to be informal in nature. It takes place at the East End of the church. We use PowerPoint projection for the words. A small team takes responsibility for the audio visuals. Songs, taken from a variety of sources including 'Worship Today' and 'CH4', are mainly of a contemporary style.

There is a rug at the front for children under three to play and a selection of toys is provided. Volunteer children take the offering each week. The music is led by our Praise Band: comprising piano, two guitars, clarinet, recorder and African drums.

We stay seated for most of the songs but stand for the final one. Children are invited to the front to play along on percussion instruments during the last hymn.

We conclude each Family Service by joining hands and saying the Grace together.

In between services

After the 9:30am service and before the 11am service, children and young people meet for Young Church in the South Transept and adults are invited to stay for a coffee and a blether. The choir often rehearses at the crossing from 10:20am onwards.

11am Morning Worship

This is a more traditional church service, with the Minister leading from the front and preaching from the pulpit. Hymns are taken from CH4. The choir sings an introit and anthem as well as leading the congregational hymns. Our Choristers sing at the 11am service on the first Sunday of each month during term time. Coffee is served again after the 11am service.

At certain times of the year - Nativity, Easter and Harvest - we have shared worship at 11am. On the second Sunday of each month we have joint tea, coffee and fellowship between the two services so that folks can meet and chat to people who normally attend a different service.

Communion Services are held four times a year with a more informal style at the early service and a traditional liturgy at the 11 o'clock. Children and all people feeling called to partake in the sacrament are welcome to attend these services.

On the third Wednesday of each month from 7-7.30pm we hold a different kind of worship. This is a time and space for quiet reflection in the church: some music, some words and some silence. We also open the church on Wednesday evenings during Advent and in the afternoon on Christmas Eve.



We have held Christingle Services with our choristers and last year held a successful and well-attended candlelit Advent Carol Service.

From time-to-time our minister also takes assemblies at some of our local schools – Haddington Infant School, Compass School and Knox Academy.

Pastoral Care

Our Pastoral Care Team in St Mary's is a small group, all with full PVG disclosure, who offer help and caring to others in the Church or wider community by listening, supporting, encouraging and befriending people in their pain, loss or anxiety.

Our team is active in supporting relatives when they visit loved ones in hospitals or care homes and offers transport to and from church services and activities.

Posies provided by our Flower Team, are delivered to mark bereavements, anniversaries and special birthdays or to remind those that are housebound that they are not forgotten.

The Minister meets regularly with the Pastoral Care Co-ordinator. The District Elder and the Pastoral Care Co-ordinator care for the Manse family - both minister and spouse are offered individual support.

The Minister holds services once a month at the Haddington and District Day Centre and at Hilton Lodge, a local nursing home. An afternoon Communion Service is held once a year for housebound members, or those who are not able to attend morning services. This is followed by afternoon tea.

Young Church and Home Group

Young Church

St Mary's has a thriving Young Church with 43 regular attendees between the age of 3 and 18. We welcome an average of 17 young people into our groups. We have a team of 11 dedicated volunteers who run groups for nursery-P1, P2-4, P5-7, and S1+ after the 9:30am service each Sunday. In addition to this, we run a monthly evening group for secondary school pupils, entitled 'Not-So-Young-Church' (NSYC).

Thanks to the boundless imagination of our children and volunteers, we find ourselves embracing all kinds of activities and adventures. For example, our NSYC group love to play 'hide and seek' in the church with the lights out! Treasure hunts, kazoo orchestras, ark building, drama, puppetry and parties have all featured in recent months. Whatever our activities, we ensure that the message of God's love is at the heart of all we do.



Home Groups

Our home group meets weekly on a Tuesday morning. The format is a DVD-led slot followed by discussion. We try to find topics which are relevant to life as it is today, the aim being to help us become better followers of Jesus. We also run a Lent group for six weeks in the Manse or in the Church. Our young church mums are networked and meet when they can.

Ecumenical Links

We have strong ecumenical links with other churches in Haddington and we often all come together for worship. Joint services are held each year at the beginning of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, the World Day of Prayer, the beginning of Christian Aid Week and during Holy Week. As we are the largest church building in Haddington, we host Remembrance Sunday every year and a number of other civic services.

Other churches in the town include: St Mary's RC Church, Holy Trinity Episcopal Church and Haddington West (Church of Scotland). We have a particularly close relationship with Holy Trinity.

Our Wider World

We are a Fair-trade Church.

Alongside members from other churches in Haddington we support the work of Christian Aid by taking part in door-to-door collections for Christian Aid Week, the annual sponsored walk over the Forth Road Bridge, brunches and quiz nights.

We collect used stamps for the World Mission Stamp Appeal, milk bottle tops for the Margaret Kerr Palliative Care Unit at Borders General Hospital and food for the East Lothian Food Bank.

We have a formal link with St Peter's, a PCEA church in Ihindu, Kenya. For various reasons this has not been a successful twinning.

Our Church is accredited as an eco-congregation but activities are currently dormant.

Donations from our tea and coffee table on Sunday mornings are shared between St Mary's and various charities. We have links with local community groups such as Blooming Haddington, Friends of the River Tyne, the Bridge Centre, Friday Friends and Haddington & District Day Centre.

Stewardship and Finance

Fabric

The cost of keeping this magnificent medieval building wind and weather-proof, and fit for use in the 21st century is a constant challenge. We receive limited funding from the central church, local, Scottish or UK Government. Nevertheless we have embarked on major upgrades - recently installing a glass lobby at the north door and proceeding with an ambitious lighting project (work is scheduled to begin in January 2019). We also have plans for a substantial redevelopment of the west end and gallery, upgrading of the kitchen facilities and creating meeting spaces for church and community use.

Finance

The day to day running of the church can be a balancing act of income and expenditure. Income has been dropping in recent months and we are currently raising the congregation's awareness of this challenge. Fundraising ventures such as our Martinmas Fair in November each year are often critical to keeping us in the black. We are looking to hire out the church as a venue for more large -scale events as a way of raising revenue and opening up our building to the wider community. We have included our accounts for the last two years below.

Safeguarding

St Mary's has two safeguarding co-ordinators who divide their efforts between adults and children. Co-ordinators seek to ensure that our volunteers, paid staff and Elders are safely recruited and trained. St Mary's has hosted two training events and another is planned for autumn 2018. A recent annual audit of the safeguarding register confirmed that our training record is good. We have 21 volunteers and 3 paid staff registered, of whom 13 are trained. 13 of our Elders have also completed training and we are actively seeking to increase these figures.



Church Teams

Flowers

Our Flower Team volunteers their time and talents to provide fresh flower displays in church throughout the year. Members of the congregation will sometimes sponsor arrangements in church in memory of a loved one. The team



plan and arrange flowers for weddings, funerals, concerts and the Nungate Gala.

Social Committee

Our Social Team organises fundraising events such as coffee mornings, fashion shows and afternoon teas. They also provide refreshments and volunteer their services at various church and community events.

Open Season



We are fortunate that a lot of people wish to visit our beautiful church. From May to September the church is open to visitors and is staffed by our fifty strong volunteer open season team, some, but not all, church members. We welcome around 2,500 visitors per

year to our sanctuary. St Mary's is listed as a Visit Scotland Tourist attraction and has a three star Quality Assurance Award.

Crafty Folk

Our Crafty Folk knit, sew, crochet and craft a wide range of goods, which are sold in aid of church funds. The group includes but is not limited to church members and provides support and fellowship to older members of our congregation and the wider community.



Walking Group



Our walking group meets on the second Saturday of each month to explore the countryside of East Lothian. We are pleased to welcome local folk who are not church members to take part. Many

of the group also take part in the “Rugged Pathway,” the East Lothian Pilgrimage from St Mary’s, Haddington to St Mary’s, Whitekirk via Athelstaneford and Prestonkirk in May each year.

Music

Music is an integral part of worship at St Mary's and we have a variety of music groups: bell ringers, a choir, choristers and a praise band.

Our church is also used for concerts, recitals, recordings and other events and is a major venue for the Lammermuir Festival, held in September each year. The church is let via the church office with details of how to book, forms and terms and conditions available on our website.

Choir

We have a salaried organist and a director of choirs. (This position is currently vacant). Our director of choir's role is to support and enhance worship week by week. Our adult choir is well established with around 20 regular members. Our choristers often collaborate with the adult choir. We have nurtured several choral scholars, some of whom have gone on to study music full time. The choir's library is extensive, stretching from Tallis to Rutter. We also make ourselves available to sing at weddings and other special events.

Choristers

Our choristers range from the age of 8 up until S6. They sing once a month at the 11am service and perform one or two concerts a year.

St Mary's at 4

St Mary's at 4 is our Sunday afternoon concert series. Admission is free with an opportunity to make a donation towards church funds. Individual musicians and groups are invited to perform on a Sunday between Easter and October. Performers are unpaid but given the opportunity to make music in the beautiful acoustics of our church.

Bell Ringers

The bell ringing team in St Mary's is comprised of around twenty and calls us to worship on a Sunday morning. We also ring for weddings and other special occasions. We are a part of the wider Scottish Association of Change ringers and have close links with other towers and ringers elsewhere in Scotland.

Our Manse

The manse is located at 1 Nungate Gardens, Haddington. It was built by Cala Homes in 2007 and has three reception rooms, four bedrooms, a kitchen/diner and a garage. The house has gas central heating. There are open views to the West and it is in close proximity to the church. It has been well maintained and is in excellent condition.



Web Links

Statistics / Parish Profile

http://cos.churchofscotland.org.uk/resources/statistics_for_mission/parish_profiles/030206.pdf

Church Website: www.stmaryskirk.co.uk

Town Website: www.haddington.org.uk

Church Facebook Page:

https://www.facebook.com/stmaryskirk/?ref=br_rs