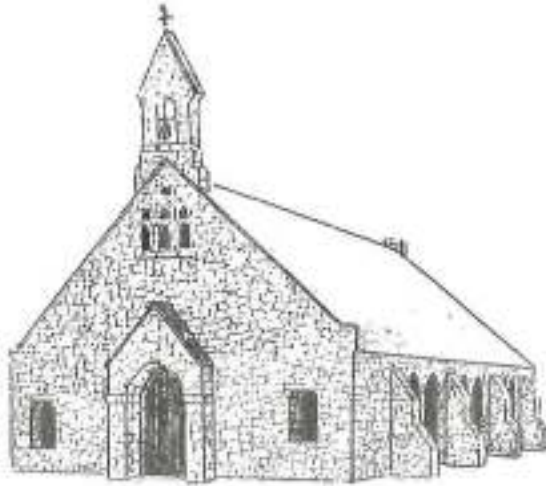


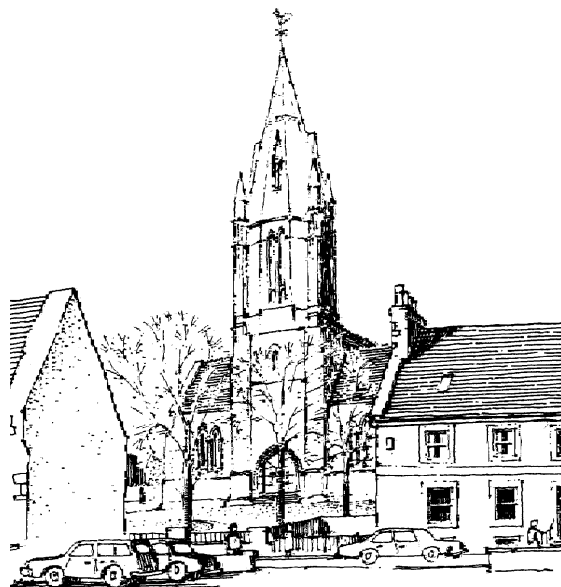
CUPAR ST. JOHN'S and DAIRSIE
UNITED PARISH CHURCH

PARISH PROFILE

September 2010



Dairsie Church



St. John's Church. Cupar.

Charity No. SCO15721
www.stjohnsanddairsie.org

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The Future

Attached – i. Unitary Constitution and Team remits
ii. Abbreviated Statement of accounts for the year to 31st December 2009
iii. Map of the Parish

These 2 Churches came together first in a linkage lasting 3½ years until they united on 1st January 2009. The formal Church service took place on 1st February, when Rev. Sheila Blount was inducted as the minister of the United Church, having been Minister of Cupar St. John's since December 2002. Worship takes place in both churches each Sunday. To the great regret of the congregation the Minister has been forced to demit office because of ill health, as of 31st July 2010.

The parish covers Cupar, north of the A 91 (the main thoroughfare), and the village of Dairsie and includes a considerable area of rich farm land, most of it to the north of the town and village although some lies to the south and east of Dairsie. By coincidence, worship in Dairsie is held in the church which was originally St. Leonard's Free Church until the coming together with the Church of Scotland in 1929 and St. John's was Cupar Free Church, then St. John's United Free Church until 1929.

This is a friendly and welcoming congregation.

CUPAR ST. JOHN'S

THE CHURCH AND TOWN

The congregation was founded in 1843 following the Disruption, and the present building was erected in 1878 on a dominant site in the centre of the small market town that Cupar then was.

Following the long ministry in St. John's, from 1956-97, of Rev. Dr. J.K. Porteous, Rev. John Hegarty took over in November 1997. He was called to another charge after 4 ½ years and was succeeded in December 2002 by Rev. Sheila Blount.

The town of Cupar has grown greatly over the past 30 years and the population is now around 9000 with further projected growth over the coming decade. There is one other Church of Scotland (Cupar Old and St. Michael of Tarvit). There are 3 other congregations in the town – Baptist, Scottish Episcopal and Roman Catholic, and inter-church relations are very good, with joint services taking place at Easter involving all of these congregations with occasional other joint services. The pattern of such Services and activities is regularly reviewed.

The town has a Christian bookshop – cum – café (The Lighthouse) which is staffed by volunteers from all denominations.

The town has excellent educational facilities. There is a Nursery School, a large Primary School, a separate Roman Catholic Primary School (now housed in a new building), an excellent Secondary School, Bell Baxter High School, which has around 1800 pupils, and Elmwood College of Further Education. St. Andrews University is only 9 miles away and

Dundee University and Abertay University 13 miles away.

The town is very fortunate in having a railway station on the main East Coast line and good bus services. All the Scottish cities are therefore within easy reach by public transport, and by car even Aberdeen is only about 2 hours drive away.

There is an 18-hole golf course just outside the town, owned and run by Elmwood College, and also a much older 9-hole course on the southern outskirts of the town. The St. Andrews courses are within 15 minutes by car. There is a swimming pool, a Sports Centre and 2 Bowling Clubs. The town abounds in clubs to cater for most tastes – choral music, light opera, camera, junior opera, rugby, football, cricket, history, art.

There is a very well organised and active “Y” centre with a professionally trained leader/ secretary and many activities in the evenings. It combines the work of the YMCA and the YWCA. A youth café, under the auspices of the “Y”, has operated in the town for a number of years with the declared aim of giving young people a place to call their own, off the streets - with some, albeit limited, success. The congregation has a representative on the Y committee and held a service last summer to mark the Centenary of the foundation of the organisation.

Until the 1975 Local Government reorganisation, Cupar was the County Town, and it still retains some local administrative offices for the North East of Fife.

DAIRSIE

THE CHURCH AND THE VILLAGE

Dairsie is a parish of approximately 350 inhabitants, lying 2 ½ miles East of Cupar, on the main St. Andrews Road. The church lies at the centre of the village, having been the original Free Church, St. Leonard’s, which united with the old Parish Church, St. Mary’s, in 1929. Until the 1960s winter worship was held in the church in the village and in summer people worshipped in St. Mary’s which lies about a mile outside the village. In the 1960s it was decided that St. Mary’s should be closed and deconsecrated. It was finally sold off 3 years ago.

For around 23 years, Dairsie Church was linked with Strathkinness and Kemback under the ministry of Rev. Alex Strickland. When he retired in 2004, the Presbytery decided to terminate this linkage. Kemback was united with Ceres and Springfield, while Strathkinness was linked with Hope Park Church, St. Andrews. This left Dairsie on its own and after some discussion both congregations agreed that it should be linked with St. John’s with the firm condition that there would be a union after 3 years, with 2 places of worship being in use Sunday by Sunday.

The village lies in a rich farming area, amid rolling hills and green fields, on the main A91 leading east from Cupar to St. Andrews and to the Tay Bridge and the North Fife towns of Wormit, Newport and Tayport.

There is a village school and a village hall which is well used by the community.



PROGRESS OF THE UNION

The union has worked very satisfactorily and happily, with the services being held at 9.45 am in Dairsie and at 11.15 am in St. John's. The Kirk Session and Session Teams are working well together in a very happy atmosphere.

It had been agreed, at the instigation of the Minister, at the time of the linkage that both congregations should move immediately to the Unitary Constitution, with 4 Session Teams, so that the move to the Union would operate much more easily and seamlessly.

The 3½ years of the linkage gave us the opportunity to get to know each other and this has greatly helped the union to function well.

THE CONGREGATION

The current roll of the congregation is 821 plus 10 adherents, although the active roll is considerably less. There is a very involved group of parents with young families but we would like to encourage many more.

There are 51 active Elders and 2 Associate members who are retired Ministers.

One of the essential elements of the linkage and union is that there will be 2 places of worship in use every Sunday for the Dairsie Church is very much at the heart of the community.

For details of all the congregational organisations, see below.

WORSHIP

Sunday worship is at 9.45am in Dairsie and at 11.15 a.m. in St. John's. Attendance at the Sunday morning services is normally between 90 and 130 in St. John's, including children and teenagers, and around 20-30 in Dairsie.

The Sunday- School in Dairsie resumed in September 2009, having ceased to meet some time before the linkage took place. It was by a young woman from Cupar who is studying for the Ministry and she was assisted by a Cupar girl who was a very active member of the Sunday Squad in St. John's. However success was very limited and the young woman who was in charge has now left to continue her studies. The situation will be reviewed.

The Sunday-School children and young people in both churches join the Congregation for the last part of the service.

There is a mid week service in St. John's at 9.30am every Wednesday throughout the year except during Christmas week and the first week of the year. Attendances range from 15 to 30. These services are taken on a rota basis by the Minister, 4 retired Ministers who are members and by several lay members of the congregation.

During 6 weeks in the summer, from the 3rd Sunday in June to the end of July, Dairsie and St. John's alternately have the service taken by a group of 3 or 4 members from both congregations and one of the services is taken by the Sunday Squad (the Teenage Group).

Communion is celebrated 4 times a year – on the 1st Sunday of March, June, September and November - and on Easter Sunday in St. John's. An afternoon Communion is held in St. John's and is a very short seated service which has proved popular with elderly and disabled

people.

Joint services with other congregations are normally evening services.

On Christmas Eve there is a Christingle Service at 6.30 p.m. and a Watch Night Service at 11.30 p.m. in St. John's. The former attracts a very large congregation (around 300-350) and the latter a more variable number but sometimes up to 100, many of whom are not regular attenders, nor, indeed, in many cases, members. Dairsie also has a Watch Night service. There is a short, half-hour service on Christmas morning in St. John's.

A Tape Ministry has been well used but is awaiting reorganisation at the moment.

OTHER LINKS

Some years ago Rev. Sheila Blount was keen to have contact with an Urban Priority Area church and Carnwadric in Glasgow was the congregation nominated. It has not proved easy to keep the link meaningful in practical terms because of the distance between the churches, but some contact has been maintained following 2 meetings in Carnwadric and one in St. John's and a pulpit exchange. The Minister of Carnwadric, Rev. Graeme Bell, took a service in both churches in February 2008 during the Minister's absence, assisted by his son, his wife and his Session Clerk.

We have recently decided also to participate in the Presbytery link with Keith and Ida Waddell in Zambia.

There is also a Kirk Session Consultative Group in which representatives from Cupar Old, the United Parish and the Parish of Ceres, Kemback and Springfield meet twice a year to organise joint events throughout the year.

KIRK SESSION

There are 51 active Elders on the Session. Nine new Elders were ordained in April 2009 and one admitted.

The Session Teams are composed of Elders and non- Elders. The Teams (details follow at the end of this Profile) proved their value during the minister's first prolonged absence, enabling focussed meetings to take place and aspects of the congregations' work to continue in a way which would otherwise have been much more difficult. This was particularly true of the larger congregation. It greatly eased the process of merging the congregations at the union.

The Session meets 4 times a year and the Session Teams likewise, with extra meetings as required. Reports from the Teams are presented at the Session meetings, which may be attended by Team members, except when "session only" business is being discussed.

The Teams have taken over much of the work which was previously done by the Session and which left little time for discussion of important Church issues. The Session retains, naturally, the remits which are assigned to it. Details of the remits are attached to this Profile.

We would like to have more non-Elders joining the Session Teams.

All meetings are held alternately in Dairsie and St John's.

FINANCES

Despite the prolonged absence of the Minister from November 2006-June 2008, givings were maintained and the finances are very sound, although the resignation of the Treasurer after the Union (following 9 years in the post) and the difficulty in finding someone else to take on the duties has caused delays in the smooth merging of the accounts. The Depute Treasurer has coped with the considerable problems and has brought in professional assistance. We have no outstanding debts.

The roof of St. John's was repaired thoroughly several years ago at a cost of £20,000 and the Church redecorated 12 years ago at a cost of around £35,000. The spire is in the process of being repaired and thoroughly inspected and a long-term programme of work on the spire is being undertaken, under the guidance of an approved architect, to repair damage, although the basic structure is sound. Consideration is being given to the financing of the project and the architect is optimistic that we should be able to obtain considerable funding from such sources as the Heritage Lottery Fund and Historic Scotland. We are also giving careful thought to other ways of paying so that we do not have to encroach on capital.

A generous offer from a member of the congregation to pay for the redecoration of the Hall means that a long postponed job will be undertaken this summer.

The Dairsie building, too, is in very good condition, the last major work having been the repair and reinstallation of the weather vane on the spire 2 years ago and the up-grading of the toilets and the refurbishment of the Hall. New lighting in the Church is also due to be installed.

The modern manse in Cupar was built in 1997 and the financial commitment of the congregation (then St. John's only) was met by a single vestry day on which almost £40000 was raised, including reclaimed Income Tax. At the time of the linkage, Dairsie Manse was sold and the proceeds from this have been invested.

It is now the practice at Harvest Thanksgiving to distribute Christian Aid envelopes and there are also retiring offerings after Communion services.

A copy of the Finance report for the year to 31st December 2009 is attached.

ACCOMMODATION

St John's has a good Hall with a modern kitchen, at the back of the church. Several years ago the Session Room and the former Vestry were adapted for use by the Nursery Sunday School and the Crèche. Another room, previously used for those purposes and lying between the main hall and the church, became a much more suitable vestry. The original kitchen acts as a utility room where flowers can be arranged and a small printer is kept. The main printer for longer runs is kept in the vestry.

The toilet accommodation was modernised at the same time as the new kitchen was installed in the early 1990s and includes a toilet for the disabled and a toilet at the side of the front vestibule of the Church.. The stage area in the Hall was adapted very simply to accommodate the Sunday Squad, the teenagers' group, for their Sunday morning meetings.

Dairsie has, behind the church, a very good hall which was recently repaired and redecorated and the toilet facilities were also up-graded and include a disabled toilet. There is also a large car park on ground to the rear of the church.

The grounds to the front of St. John's are very well maintained by the Gardening Group and contribute greatly to the reputation of the town for its appearance in summer, promoting the work of the "Cupar in Bloom" organisation.

PUBLICATIONS

The Church magazine, "Outreach", is produced 4 times a year. It is printed in an A4 format and is distributed free to each household by the Elders when they visit their Districts before Communion. The title was changed from the former St. John's "Aspire" at the time of the Union so that it was clear to all that this is a new congregation.

Until recently the printing was done at Bell Baxter High School, but recent price increases made us rethink this and we now print it "in house" for around £50 a time.

In Dairsie a thrice yearly publication called "Outreach Plus" is distributed to every household in the village, whether Church members or not. It is produced and edited by one of the retired Ministers who lives in Dairsie. This, too, is printed in the church.

There is a weekly Order of Service, including the Church News and intimations.

CHAPLAINCIES

The Chaplaincy to Castlehill Primary School is a shared Chaplaincy with the other Church of Scotland Minister, the Baptist Church Minister and the Rector of St. James's Episcopal Church. The same applies to the The Chaplaincy at Bell Baxter High School.

The Minister of the United Parish is also Chaplain to Dairsie Primary School.

Two sheltered housing complexes (one private and one local authority) and three nursing homes (one a local authority one and the others privately owned and run) hold a service once a month with all the denominations participating on a rota basis.

WEDDINGS, BAPTISMS, and FUNERALS

The number of weddings, baptisms and funerals conducted by the Minister over the past 4 years is as follows:-

(The 2006,-7,-8 figures are for St. John's. Only 2009 refers to the new congregation).

Weddings :-

2006 - 7 2007 - 4 2008 - 4 2009 - 2

The number arranged for 2010 stands at 5 at the moment.

Baptisms:-

2006 - 10 2007 - 5 2008 - 10 2009 - 11

Funerals:-

2006 - 36 2007 - 30 2008 - 36 2009 - 29

(This year an initiative was taken by the Sunday -School superintendent to encourage families of babies who have been baptised to come to crèche and Sunday-School and this was very well received.)

ORGANISATIONS

YOUTH GROUPS

There are 46 young people under 18 at the Cupar Church and in Dairsie there are just 2 or 3 children who come from time to time. Attendance is variable, largely because of the number of other activities in the town on Sundays.

There are 6 regular teachers and one leader (with a "back-up" during maternity leave) for the Sunday Squad (the teenage group) in St. John's. As indicated above, the children and young people are in Church for the last part of the Service.

The teen-age group of 8 - the Sunday Squad – has its own area on the stage and the young people attend remarkably faithfully and take the first of the Summer Team services.

There is a very successful Holiday Club in the first week of August. This was originally a St. John's venture but is now shared with Cupar Old and it alternates each year between the 2 Halls, with a joint service taking place to mark the end of the Week. There is also a barbecue in the grounds of St John's on the Friday evening.

There is now a new interdenominational group for teenagers from S1-S6 which has made a promising start. It meets monthly.

There is a Youth Group in Dairsie which is a village organisation, not specifically a Church one, and which has some input from Cupar "Y".

There has never been a Youth organisation attached specifically to any one of the Churches in the town. Scouts and Guides have always been "whole town" organisations, while the Boys' Brigade (now sadly defunct) was set up in 1932 to involve all the congregations, with the ministers of all the churches except the Roman Catholic Church taking it in turn to act as Chaplain. All attempts to resuscitate it have failed for lack of staff, which was, of course, the reason for its demise.

GUILD

There are two Guilds, one in Dairsie and one at S. John's and both have a very committed group of ladies, who have supported the church devotedly over the years, not least by their generosity.

The St. John's Guild meets monthly, on the first Thursday afternoon of the month, from October to April. There are at present 28 members.

The Dairsie Guild meets on the 3rd Monday evening of the month (September, October, March and April) and in the afternoon (November – February) and has 16 members. They also provide the teas after the service once a month and are also responsible for the monthly coffee mornings held throughout the spring and summer.

PARENTS AND TODDLERS

This group meets every Thursday forenoon in St. John's Hall. Quite often there are grandparents present. There can be as many as 21 adults. Many are not Church members. There is a good supply of quality toys for the children. Ladies from the Congregation go along to make

the coffee, so that the parents can concentrate on the little ones. Fruit and juice are available for the children.

In Dairsie there is a similar group held in the village Hall.

REFRESHMENTS GROUP

The ladies of this group provide the tea after the morning service every Sunday in St. John's. The ladies also provided the refreshments for other larger Social occasions.

In Dairsie tea is served in the Hall once a month after the service and during the spring and summer months, until October, a coffee morning is held in the hall once a month.

PRAYER GROUP AND BIBLE STUDY GROUP

These groups meet fortnightly from September to May on Thursday evenings. The Prayer Group meets for half an hour followed by the Bible Study Group which meets from 8-9pm.

Although both are at the moment very small – 5 in the Prayer Group and up to 7 or 8 in the Bible Study Group – it is important that they exist and continue to play an important part in the life of the Congregation.

LADIES' GROUP

After a very active Young Women's Group in St. John's had folded around 20 years ago, as it was failing to bring in the next generation of younger women, this group was established to see if it could have more success. It is a very informal group, with minimal organisation (a Committee of 3 which changes every 2 years). They meet once a month and, although there has been no great success in attracting younger women, it does bring along a number of ladies who are not Guild members, although they are faithful members of the Church. The final meeting in May is always a walk followed by a meal. The attendance is normally around 20-25.

GARDENING GROUP

This small group of men and women– by definition, retired - meets on a Friday forenoon at St. John's to plant out the borders in the early summer and to cut the grass, weed and generally maintain the grounds which are in a very prominent place in the centre of the town. The work they do contributes greatly to the success of "Cupar in Bloom" each year.

MUSIC

New Electronic organs were installed in both churches 2 years ago.

The young organist in Dairsie has been in post for a number of years and he now plays also for weddings, afternoon Communion and other extra services in St. John's. He is also the regular Sunday organist for the church in Wormit.

The organist in St. John's moved to another church in August 2008 and since then the congregation has been very well served by 3 supply organists on a rota basis. There is a choir of around 10/11. They do not normally do any anthems as the bass and tenor sections are under-represented, but they would be very happy to do occasional items if we had our own organist.

“DROP-IN” AT ST. JOHN’S

A number of years ago a severely disabled Elder, whose father had suffered from dementia, decided to set up this group to enable carers to have a place to come together for friendship and relaxation. They meet one Friday each month for soup and sandwiches. It is well attended and much appreciated. Following the death some years ago of the lady who initiated this, the group has continued under other leadership.

OTHER ORGANISED WORK

There is an annual Ceilidh in August for the migrant workers who come to the local farms every summer. Around 80 of the workers attended the Ceilidh this year. On several occasions we have also hosted a lunch for Asylum Seekers from Glasgow on a summer outing to St.Andrews.

A group of retired people meets weekly in the Hall, on a Wednesday afternoon, to play indoor bowls, to enjoy the friendship and a bit of gentle exercise.

On Friday afternoons “Time To Talk ” did meet from 2-4pm but it has proved hard to bring people in. It was originally set up for chat, reminiscence and board games, with people suffering from dementia specially in mind. It was then decided to include crafts to try to encourage more people to use the facility. At the moment the group is in abeyance and it is hoped to move it to a Wednesday afternoon when the Leisure Group is present also.

There is a rota of ladies supplying the flowers for Services in both churches, and another of those who distribute the flowers.

*We look forward, with hope, to being led and accompanied in our journey
of faith, reaching out to all groups within the church and the community.*

UNITARY CONSTITUTION

Cupar St John's and Dairsie

United Parish Church

Kirk Session /Session Teams

Kirk Session.

The United Parish Church has adopted the Church of Scotland's new Unitary Constitution.

There is a Kirk Session made up of those appointed to serve as elders in the congregation.

Kirk Session meetings are open to members of the congregation to attend. In the new structure, meetings are held as intimated.(Currently the first Mondays of February and September at Dairsie and the first Tuesdays of May and November at St John's – all at 7.30pm) These meetings now provide an opportunity to hear briefly about the work of Session Teams, to break for coffee and then to have a general discussion of wider issues relating to being the church today. Some of the discussion will relate to issues sent by St Andrews Presbytery or The General Assembly.

The Kirk Session has delegated many of its responsibilities to The Session Teams, but remains responsible for the following:-

appointing elders and the Session Clerk, admitting new communicants, the congregational roll, preparation of the sacraments and communion arrangements, nominations (formerly vacancy) procedure, sale of property, the keeping of appropriate records and presentation to Presbytery for annual inspection, discipline, matters remitted from Presbytery or Assembly, and any issue which does not fit obviously within the remits of the teams.

As with all constitutions, the minister remains responsible to Presbytery for the charge, rather than to the Kirk Session, and while “worship” appears under the Faith and Support part of the Session Team, to enable wider participation and reflection, this remains the responsibility of the minister as before. Elders continue to have a pastoral role and make regular visits to members of the congregation.

Session Teams

The Session Teams consist of elders and up to an equal number of members of the congregation or adherents. Recruitment can be by invitation, recommendation, offers to volunteer and by co-option Elders should serve on at least one team. It is possible to be involved in the work of one specific part of the Session Team without being a member of that particular part (eg Elders who are not on Faith and Support will continue to have districts, and members of the congregation involved in Refreshments may not wish to serve on Fellowship and Outreach, but are of course welcome to do so.)

The minutes of the Session Teams are lodged with the Session Clerk, and incorporated into the Kirk Session Minute Book. **Minor expenditure within budget is approved by the Teams, but major decisions need to be agreed by the Kirk Session.**

The Session Teams should meet at least once between Kirk Session meetings and can generally take action immediately. Reports to the Kirk Session should be shorter than the minute of the meeting giving a general view of what is happening.

Session Team Remits

Faith and Support

Pastoral Ministry	Church Pastoral Visitors	Bereavement/special needs
Youth Work	Holiday Club	Safe-guarding Register
Christian Education	Childrens' Work	Guild
Worship	Bible Study	Prayer
Flowers/Harvest	Organist appointment	World Mission
Social Care Council	Tape Ministry	Elder Support
Visits to Organisations	K.I.T forms (from stewardship campaign)	

Fellowship and Outreach

Events	Refreshments	Parish Visitation
Fundraising	Leaflets and Communication	Sunday Duty Rotas
Ecumenical Contacts	Traidcraft	Christian Aid
Schools	Carnwadric	Migrant Workers

Finance

Christian Giving	Gift Aid	Stewardship
Ministries and Mission Allocation		Insurance cover
Budgets for Teams	Special Appeals	Investment management
Accounts for Presentation		

Property

Care and maintenance of Facilities	Equipment Resources	
Health and Safety	Inventories	Insurance value
Domestic arrangements (including cleaners)	Church Officer	
Hall Bookings	Key-holders	Utilities
Church Decorations	Property Register	

