

SHOTTS CALDERHEAD ERSKINE PARISH CHURCH of SCOTLAND

PARISH PROFILE 2008

www.calderhead-erskine-church.com

(Charity No: SC006538)



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1 INTRODUCTION

This document provides a high level overview of the parish served by Calderhead Erskine Parish Church. It illustrates the centrality of our church to the local community and outlines the many ways we currently reach out to people, including through supported organisations. It also gives a flavour of our enthusiastic congregation and the forms of worship typically undertaken in recent years.

Within the Presbytery of Hamilton, Calderhead Erskine Parish Church has been serving the parish for approximately nineteen years since its formation in 1989 as a union of the former Calderhead and Erskine Churches of Scotland.

Situated centrally within the town, it has sole responsibility for the pastoral needs of Shotts and its surrounding villages, namely Allanton and Hartwood.



2 SERVING THE PARISH

In keeping with our stated vision of increasing outreach and building meaningful links with our surrounding communities, the church undertakes a variety of events throughout the year and supports a range of organisations with close church connections. Further information on these is summarised below.

In addition, the church operates a Care Group comprised of members of the congregation and elders. This voluntary group conducts visits, sends cards and generally offers pastoral care to those in need, which typically includes sick and elderly people in our community.

2.1 Events

A monthly service of worship is held in the nearby Rosehall Manor Nursing Home. This service has recently been led by an Elder, with support from other members of the congregation as required.

Opportunities to share in fellowship are provided through Coffee Mornings, Pancake Mornings, Christmas and Summer Fayres and many other social events, typically organised by the hard working Fund Raising Committee. These are typically well attended by parishioners, including many without a formal church connection.

The Church has a long established link with the Open Door Trust and generous support is given both at Harvest and Christmas in the form of donated food and children's gifts. The congregation also enthusiastically supports appeals in connection with Operation Christmas Child, Teddies for Tragedies and fund raising events on behalf of the Bible Society.

2.2 Organisations

The Sunday School operates from our two regular places of worship in Shotts and Allanton, with crèche facilities available as required. While operating under the jurisdiction of the Kirk Session, our trusted leaders have enjoyed considerable autonomy. Additionally, a Sunday Bible Class is conducted at both locations.

The Church enjoys the considerable support of a healthy Women's Guild and Men's Club at both Shotts and Allanton. These groups are popular, active and extremely supportive of the Church and its activities.

The Kirk Session has responsibility for the local Girls Brigade and Scouts. These organisations are well attended and are regularly represented at worship throughout the year.

In addition, the establishment of a Male Voice Choir, ten years ago, has proved to be a considerable success. This organisation has contributed to worship in our own church and has been 'in demand' from numerous other churches and social groups, providing both outreach and fellowship.

3 PARISH LOGISTICS

The Parish of Calderhead Erskine Parish Church is fairly disparate with a total population of approximately 14,000, extending from its southernmost boundary with the Parish of Bonkle, in an easterly direction to the boundary with St Andrews Church of Scotland, Harthill thereafter westerly to Kirk of Shotts Parish, Salsburgh and northerly to the M8 motorway.



The Calderhead Erskine building itself is centrally located on the main street in Dykehead area of Shotts, being Station Road. It is close to the Shotts Health Centre and Leisure Centre, both relatively modern buildings. The library and town Cenotaph are also in very close proximity. The former Mission Station is situated in the centre of Allanton village on the main A71 trunk road. The Church enjoys close relationships with local schools in the community, principally Allanton Primary, Dykehead Primary and Calderhead High School. Close links have also been encouraged with the other churches in the community being the Congregational Church, Baptist Church, the Salvation Army, Mission Hall, Gospel Hall and St Patrick's RC Church.

Situated within the Parish boundary are the institutions of HM Prison, Shotts and Hartwoodhill Psychiatric Hospital. Whilst not attached to this charge, the Minister may be afforded the opportunity of becoming involved with these institutions, should this be considered relevant to their Ministry.

Like many other former industrialised towns in Lanarkshire, Shotts has suffered in recent years through the closure of local factories and businesses. In particular, the cessation of the mining industry in this area and the closure of the nearby Cummins factory and Ravenscraig steel mill resulted in heavy job losses within the Parish. Those parishioners who are in employment now tend to work further out of the town, with the result that Shotts now finds itself firmly as a commuter centre for other industrialised areas and in particular the cities of Glasgow and Edinburgh.

3.1 Transport

Road links within the central belt of Scotland are excellent with the church situated only 5 minutes from the M8 motorway, midway between Glasgow and Edinburgh. Allanton lies some 3 miles South West of Shotts on the A71, which runs from Kilmarnock to Edinburgh, with Hartwood due North of Allanton some 2 miles distant.

Shotts and Hartwood railway stations are on the main railway line serving both Glasgow and Edinburgh, each of which can be reached in less than an hour. Transport plans are believed to include a forthcoming upgrade of this line to provide a "high speed" rail link. There are also regular bus services to the surrounding district and nearby towns and cities.

3.2 Planning

Local development plans include a potential 1000 to 3000 additional units of housing within the immediate vicinity of Shotts. Plans are at various stages of approval and construction is expected to take place over the next 10 to 15 years. It is a strong aspiration of the church to treat such developments as a clear and viable opportunity to realise our outreach objectives as expressed in our Mission statement.

3.3 Leisure

Shotts Golf Club was founded in 1895 and hosts an impressive eighteen hole golf course. The town's Leisure Centre has a gymnasium, sports halls for various activities and a free form leisure pool. Adjacent to the leisure centre is both the Public Library and the main Health Centre. Close to the church is Shotts Ironworks Bowling Club, popular with many of the congregation. Shotts Bon Accord Football and Social Club is also located in the Dykehead area of Shotts. This team has enjoyed considerable success in Junior League football over many years and their football ground, Hannah Park, hosts the annual Shotts Highland Games attracting visitors from home and abroad. Music enthusiasts have access to the various musical and singing groups in the vicinity, including Shotts and Dykehead Caledonia Pipe Band, the world's most successful pipe band.

The parishioners of Shotts are fortunate to be located in the central belt, making it easy to access various museums, visitor centres and parks. Approximately 20 minutes drive from Shotts, Strathclyde Park hosts many activities including land and water based recreation and will be a principal venue for outdoor water sports at the 2014 Commonwealth Games.

4 WORSHIP

The following describes the typical programme of worship undertaken throughout the year. It should be noted that the church is open to both traditional and contemporary styles of worship.

There have traditionally been two diets of worship weekly. The first diet takes place in Shotts at 11.00 am with the same service repeated in Allanton at 12.30 pm. There has recently been no evening service at either venue. Praise is typically taken from the Mission and Junior Praise publications with the Church using the New International Version Bible in the pews.



Communion has been held at various frequencies in the past, but more recently has been held quarterly. Special services are held throughout the year, reflecting the Christian calendar. In particular, Easter has included a Tenebrae Service on Maundy Thursday, a Good Friday service and an Easter Sunday Communion Service (at which children participate). Early on Easter Sunday a Dawn Service has been held at Dura Kirk in Allanton. This is a form of Conventical, much enjoyed by the hardy few who attend. A community breakfast has followed thereafter.

Advent has been celebrated by the entire congregation with a service of lessons and carols taking place on the third Sunday in Advent. A Watchnight Service, generally one in both Shotts and Allanton is held on Christmas Eve. This service is very atmospheric and is generally well attended.

The Remembrance Sunday Service and Dedication Services are well attended by the Youth Organisations of the Kirk and take place appropriately throughout the year.

The Church choir, although reduced in numbers in recent years, continues to enthusiastically lead our singing in Sunday services.

Every effort is made to welcome visitors to Sunday worship and to help them feel at ease with the service format. Printed Orders of Service are typically available and audio/visual technology (including laptop with projection facilities, CD player and induction loop system) are regularly used. Singing is typically led by playing of our modern church organ or electric piano, or using recorded music.

5 CONGREGATION

The church congregation comprises attendees at both the Shotts and Allanton services. The total roll is approximately 550 members with a number of adherents. The congregation is comprised generally of middle age to retirement members with an average Sunday attendance approaching 150 at Shotts and 70 at Allanton. The tradition of two diets of worship – one in each

building – is largely historical, representing the strong community commitment of the people of Allanton to their Mission Station.

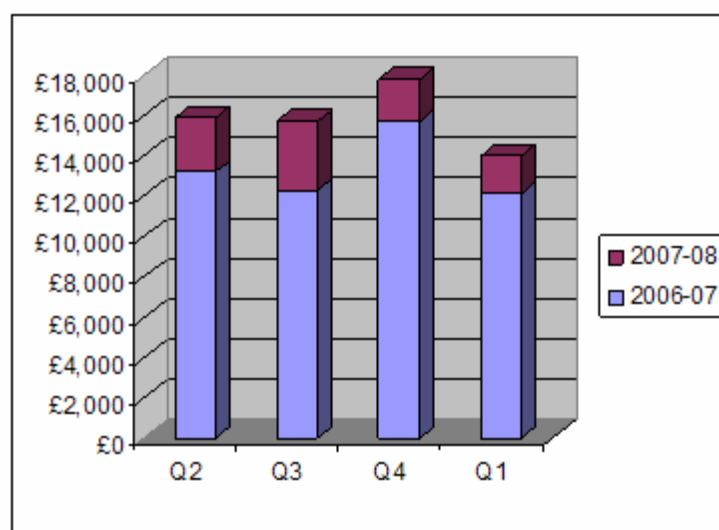
The Church continues to enjoy a number of new communicants and baptisms. The figures in respect of new communicants, christenings and weddings are provided at Appendix 1.

The Kirk Session comprises approximately 50 Elders of which 60-70% are considered active. The Congregational Board numbers approximately 30 in addition to the Elders. Over the last 12 months, attendance at Board meetings has averaged approximately 30-40.

Kirk Session members (and other members of the congregation) are involved in various Groups according to their talents. This includes an active Worship Team, willing and able to lead worship in our own church and neighbouring churches when required.

Some Elders are involved in the Communications Group. This team's work includes preparation and photocopying on a weekly basis, of the Order of Service and Intimation Sheets. They also collect and prepare items for the Kirk News magazine which is produced three times a year and delivered to all members of the congregation.

In the last six years, we have held two successful Stewardship Campaigns resulting in considerable increases in giving on each occasion. Over the last 12 months there has been increased giving of approximately 19%. This is broken down by quarter as follows:



6 BUILDINGS

Calderhead Erskine Parish Church comprises a suite of buildings in both Shotts and Allanton. In Shotts, there is the church building itself (Church, Vestry, Session House, Guild Room) and Memorial Hall (situated approximately 100 yards down Kirk Road.) 2010 will mark the 150th anniversary of the main church building and it would be the intention of the Session to mark this in an appropriate way. At Allanton the buildings comprise the former Mission Station building (Church and Vestry) and a modern, purpose built and fully integrated Church Hall.

The Manse is situated in Shotts adjacent to the main church building. It comprises a large fitted kitchen, dining-room, bathroom, downstairs toilet, four bedrooms, utility room and study. Like the main Church building, the Manse has been the subject of recent upgrade and is considered to be in excellent condition. In addition, the surrounding Glebe contains well maintained gardens and is situated approximately 250 yards from the main Station Road. The Manse is fully double glazed and centrally heated. A large garage is situated to the rear of the Manse.

The main church building in Shotts has undergone extensive renovation. In excess of £100,000 was expended by the Congregational Board over a period of three years shortly before the millennium, making substantial improvements to both the inside and outside of the church building. The chancel is open plan and is ideal for youth participation. It is light and airy with good acoustics and an induction loop system. A copy of the 2004 Quinquennial Property Report is available on request.

The church building at Allanton is situated in the centre of the village. It is both geographically and spiritually the focus of this small former mining community. The people of Allanton engender a strong community spirit and the extension of the Church to include a purpose-designed hall owes much to the closely integrated community. The hall is completely integrated to the kirk building and was built approximately ten years ago at a cost of £70,000.

The Congregational Board presently exercises a mission of care, ensuring that the high standard of building maintenance continues.

Appendix 1 – Statistical Data

THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND STATISTICAL RETURN AS AS 31st DECEMBER 2007

Presbytery: 17 Hamilton

Congregation: 17151 SKOTTS CALDERHEAD ERSKINE

I Members on Communion Roll:-		TOTALS	
1. Communicants on Roll as returned in Schedule for 31st December 2006 (This number must not be altered)		596	
2. Communicants admitted during the year ended 31st December 2007			
(a) By Profession (for the first time)	4		
(b) By Certificate	2		
(c) By Restoration or Resolution of Kirk Session	11		
(d) For Start of Union	/		
3. Communicants removed during the year ended 31st December 2007		17 To Add	
(a) By Death	21		
(b) By Certificate	4		
(c) Otherwise	59		
(d) To Join a Union			
4. Communicants on roll as at 31st December 2007		84 To Deduct	
		529 Net Total	
II Members in respect of whom intimations of removal to another district have been sent		/	
III Number of Persons on Supplementary Roll		/	
IV Involved in Life of Congregation			
(a) Children 17 or under			35
(b) 18 years of age or over who are not on the Communion Roll			/
(c) Children receiving Communion			/
V Number of Office Bearers:-			
(a) Elders	34	15	49
(b) Deacons (Not Elders)			
(c) Managers (Not Elders)			
(d) Members of Congregational Board (Not Elders)	2	28	30
VI Number of Baptisms during the year			
(a) Total Number of Baptisms (including adult baptisms)			10
(b) Adult Baptisms			2
(c) Number of 'Thanksgiving and Blessing of Children' services			0
VII Weddings and Funerals (In each case count all of such services (i) held in the church (by whomever conducted), or (ii) conducted elsewhere by the minister or a member of a ministry team as part of their duties)			
(a) Weddings			1
(b) Funerals			73

In name, and by authority, of the Kirk Session, Jan Murdoch Minister (or Interim Moderator) 3/2 January 2008
James Logan Session Clerk

Please return this form to your Prebytery Clerk

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