

# *Dingwall St Clements Parish Church of Scotland*

## *Parish Profile*



[www.dingwallstclements.org.uk](http://www.dingwallstclements.org.uk)

*Interim Moderator:*

Rev Donald A MacSween  
The Manse  
Sworddale Road  
Evanton IV16 9UZ  
Tel: 01349 830472

Email: [donaldmacsween@hotmail.com](mailto:donaldmacsween@hotmail.com)

*Clerk to the Nominating Committee:*

Mrs Fay Caskie  
Cromdale  
Jamestown  
Strathpeffer IV14 9ER  
Tel: 01997 420149

Email: [caskie66@btinternet.com](mailto:caskie66@btinternet.com)

*Charity no. SC001056*

## *Our Vision*

Our vision is to be a church which seeks to inspire the people of Dingwall and its surrounding area with the Good News of Jesus Christ through enthusiastic worshipping, witnessing, nurturing and serving.

## *Our Congregation*

Our congregation has a membership of 199 along with 523 adherents. In common with many other Highland parishes, the adherents are a very important and vital part of the congregation and are involved in many aspects of church life.

We have an active Kirk Session of 27 elders who serve on the Congregational Board along with 20 elected members.



Services are held at 11.30am throughout the year with early morning services at 9.15am in the hall during June, July and August. Evening services, again in the hall, are held at 6.30pm from September to May with the exception of January and February. (N.B. Session has agreed to suspend evening services until a new Minister is appointed. Early morning services will begin in May through to September.) The average attendance at the main service is 125

and the service is recorded each week for distribution to the housebound. Prayer meetings are held each Friday at 10am in our hall.

In 2013 there were 7 baptisms, 7 weddings and 18 funerals.

The Guild has a membership of 22 and meets regularly.

Our church magazine “the Anchor” is published three or four times a year and is distributed to all households.

An annual Youth Service is held at which youth organisations from Dingwall and district attend in encouraging numbers.

We have participated in the Church’s Stewardship Programme with emphasis in 2012 on giving. This resulted in an encouraging increase in monetary giving. In 2014 we intend to make “talents” the focus of our efforts.

The Church is well served by the Session Clerk, the Assistant Session Clerk, the Church Officer, the Safeguarding Convener, the Roll Keeper, the Treasurer, and the Gift Aid Convener as well as many others who give their services willingly.

As a result of the “Roll away the Stone” event during Assembly week in 2011 we have built up links with Greenock Westburn Church of Scotland.



We are in regular contact by way of e-mail, exchange of newsletters, visits and telephone calls and hope our link grows from strength to strength as we support each other, as both congregations are seeking a new minister.

As a challenge in the future we will seek to maintain our Sunday Club membership as well as developing ways of increasing contact with youth groups and young people in general.

## *Congregational Finances*

The church is in a sound financial position with our average annual income being sufficient to meet our annual average expenditure.

Our total assets of £126,000 are double our normal annual expenditure.

All contributions due by the congregation to central funds are fully paid up. In addition we raise special funds every year which are distributed to various Christian and other charities.

Our three premises, church, hall and manse, are regularly inspected and all repairs and maintenance are carried out in a timely manner.

## *Our Manse*



The manse, a bungalow, at 8 Castlehill Road, Dingwall, was built in 1983. Situated in a quiet cul-de-sac, the property is within easy walking distance of shops and primary and secondary schools as well as Dingwall Sports Centre. The accommodation consists of a lounge, dining room, kitchen, utility room, four bedrooms and a study, a toilet/cloakroom as well as a family bathroom. There is a single garage. The gardens are mainly in grass.

## *The Sunday Club*

The club currently has a roll of 16 children and meets in the hall during the morning service each week during school term time, after spending the first part of the service in church. The children attend from the age of four until the end of their Primary School years. Attendance fluctuates, though an enthusiastic core group comes along each week. They learn about the Bible through stories, song and art work, and play an active part in our family service at Christmas. The party at that time of year is a lively affair. The rolling of eggs, followed by an Easter Breakfast, and in June, a traditional picnic are other events which are eagerly anticipated.

A crèche facility, for babies and children under four, is offered during morning worship. This runs each Sunday throughout the year.

## *2001+ Committee*

This is a group of committed members who came together to raise funds for, and to co-ordinate a project to celebrate the bicentenary of our church. They now raise funds for the future needs of the church, through hosting a very successful weekly Soup Lunch and also organise further fund raising and social events as the need arises.

## *Church Music*

Installed in the church is a 2-manual Allen computer organ with full pedal board, along with a Technics keyboard to help lead the praise. Although there is not a church choir, a group of



singers attend regularly to swell the praise of the congregation. We use CH4, Mission Praise and sometimes the Redemption Song Book. On occasions we have held Flower Festivals and Songs of Praise with a theme. There is a rota of organists/pianists who play on a regular basis. In the church hall there is a Clavinova keyboard. At Christmas, churches in Dingwall join together for an Interdenominational Carol Service in the Town Hall.

## *Church History*

In 1929 the old parish church of Dingwall adopted the name St Clements from a ruinous early 16th century chapel, or aisle, in the kirkyard.

The royal burgh of Dingwall was founded in 1226, but the church of Dingwall has a longer history than the burgh. The name Dingwall is derived from the Old Norse *þingvöllr*, meaning parliament field. The church of Dingwall was originally the church of the parliament field founded soon after 1030 by Thorfinn the Mighty, Christian Jarl of Orkney.

Following the Reformation the medieval church was adapted to be a Protestant church. That church was demolished in 1801 to be replaced in 1803 by the present A-listed building.

At the Disruption of 1843, Hector Bethune, respected minister of Dingwall, was one of the few ministers in the Northern Highlands who chose to remain a minister of the Established Church. He retained a substantial proportion of his congregation.

Reunification in 1929 resulted in there being two Church of Scotland congregations in the town. It was at this time that our church adopted its current name.

The charge is now vacant consequent to the retirement of the Rev. Russel Smith after a ministry of nearly twenty years at Dingwall St Clements.

## *Our Wider Community*



Dingwall is a small town situated at the head of the Cromarty Firth. It is a hub, being the old county town for Ross & Cromarty, for all kinds of activities.

The town is well served by various forms of transport. It sits only 5 - 10 minutes from the A9, a major artery in the Scottish road network, and other roads lead east and west. There is a railway station in the town with

trains running north, south and west. Several bus routes service the town and it is only a half hour drive from Inverness Airport.

Education is well represented in Dingwall with several nurseries, a primary school, a secondary school, a special needs school and a part of UHI (University of the Highlands & Islands), Highland Theological College. The primary, situated to the north of the town, was built in 1970. The secondary school, one of the largest run by Highland Council, has occupied its current site since 2008. It offers a wide variety of subjects, and has a good record of passes at Higher and Advanced Higher with a fair number going on to Further and Higher Education. Both schools offer Gaelic medium education.

Culturally, Dingwall is a busy place. There is a large community library on the same campus as the secondary school, providing a large range of services. Nearby is the Sports Centre with a swimming pool and various halls and gyms. A short walk away is the Highland Football Academy, situated next door to Victoria Park the home of Ross County, our local SPL team. Among the various groups and clubs for all ages are the Dingwall Choral Society and the award winning Dingwall Gaelic Choir. Other points of interest include the museum, Dingwall Mart, the Hector Macdonald Monument and the Victorian village of Strathpeffer as well as various opportunities to view our local wildlife including seals, dolphins and red kites. There are a number of walks around the town and a short drive takes you into the grandeur of the Highlands.

Dingwall is also a hub for shopping, with many local businesses on the pedestrianized High Street, a garden centre and a major national supermarket. Half an hour away is the city of Inverness with its greater variety of shops and leisure facilities (and another SPL team!).

With a doctors' surgery, Ross Memorial Hospital, Wyvis House (a nursing home), and being close to Raigmore Hospital in Inverness, Dingwall is well equipped medically. There is also a local ambulance station as well as a fire station.

### *Links:*

[www.dingwall.org.uk](http://www.dingwall.org.uk)

[www.dingwallacademy.com](http://www.dingwallacademy.com)

[www.dingwall-pri.highland.sch.uk](http://www.dingwall-pri.highland.sch.uk)