

The Churches of St James the Great, Cupar and St Mary's, Ladybank



Congregational Profile
September 2022



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St James the Great in Cupar and St Mary's in Ladybank are Scottish Episcopal Churches in beautiful North-East Fife. We hope very much that this profile of our congregations will inspire you to consider whether you might be called to serve as our new Rector.

Introduction

This Congregational Profile covers the Churches of St James the Great in Cupar and St Mary's in Ladybank. The Rector of St James the Great ministers to both congregations.

Financially, the churches are separate entities, although a single Treasurer deals with the finances of both.

St James the Great in Cupar draws its congregation from a radius of, roughly 6 – 8, miles. As Ladybank falls within this zone the combined 'catchment' is effectively extended by another 3 – 5 miles to the west. The nearest neighbouring Scottish Episcopal Churches are in St Andrews (2), Newport-on-Tay, Tayport, Pittenweem and Elie, Glenrothes, Kirkcaldy and Kinross.



Our Vision

The Vestry considers that the Mission of the Scottish Episcopal Church in Cupar and the Howe of Fife is to proclaim the Christian faith in our worship and in our lives, and through our concern for the wider issues facing society locally and further afield. To achieve these aims, we believe that both congregations must continue to build on their present stability whilst seeking spiritual development and enlargement, with the main focus of that increase being directed at families. At the same time the cordial and effective working relationships with other churches and key community leaders in the area must also continue, and we need to be associated with initiatives within the Diocese under the direction of the Bishop.

Liturgical Signature

St James and St Mary's could best be described as 'broad church Anglican' in signature. The main service on Sunday morning is a sung Eucharist using the 1982 liturgy of the Scottish Episcopal Church. Services on Wednesday mornings and the 8.00am service on Sunday make use of the 1970 (traditional language) liturgy. The hymnody is taken from the New English Hymnal and reserved sacrament is kept.



Cupar

Cupar, was once the county town of Fife and received its Royal Charter in 1328. It has a population of around 9,000 making it the 9th largest settlement in the county. Although the main centre for local government is now Glenrothes, 12 miles away, the Council Offices are still situated in St Catherine Street, immediately opposite St James's Church.

The town is still expanding as a result of current and proposed housing developments, but it retains its friendly community atmosphere. Its popularity can be ascribed to its intrinsic qualities and local amenities. It was reported recently that, within the UK, it is one of the healthiest places to live in, and employment prospects are also good. There is a monthly Farmers' Market, a number of small, locally owned shops and businesses; good nursery, primary and secondary schools, and a Further Education College, now a campus of Scotland's Rural College. The town also has a health centre and small hospital; and plenty of societies and clubs, including the 160-year-old Cupar Golf Club, possibly the oldest nine-hole golf club in the world.

Cupar is also very accessible: just 10 miles from St Andrews - the 'Home of Golf' with its ancient university -, 16 miles from Dundee, just over 20 miles from both Perth and Kirkcaldy, and less than 50 miles from the Scottish capital Edinburgh with its international airport. The east coast mainline railway passes through the town with hourly services (more at peak travelling times) south to Edinburgh (1 hour) and north to Dundee (25 minutes).

St James the Great, Cupar

The Church is centrally situated within the town. The present building, designed by the renowned Scottish architect Sir Rowand Anderson, was erected in 1867 on the site of the former Priory of St Catherine – one can see the remains of these earlier buildings in the basement. It opens directly on to St Catherine Street and seats up to 124 people. The Rector's vestry and the Choir vestry, at the back of the church, were later additions to the main building and a small extension comprising a storeroom, disabled access and toilets for wheelchair users was added in 2006.

The general condition of the church building is good thanks to an ongoing, regular programme of inspection, maintenance and upgrading. The church is a category B listed building and is famous for its screen created by Sir Robert Lorimer, the celebrated Scottish sculptor (erected c.1920) which separates the chancel from the nave. The 'east' window, actually on the north elevation, was installed in 1975 and is dedicated to the memory of Lt Col David Scrymgeour-Wedderburn. The church is centrally heated and has a 'loop system'. There is a two-manual and pedal pipe organ, originally built in 1897 by local builder John Miller and incorporating parts of an earlier instrument of 1875; it was fully restored in 2002/3. In 2012, in an effort to make the space within the Church more flexible, the inside of the building was completely reordered with the replacement of around half of the wooden pews with chairs, and the introduction of several round tables which can be moved, as and when required.



Ladybank

Ladybank is centrally situated in the Howe of Fife with a population of 1430 and is surrounded by flat arable land. It is a large village with small businesses serving the local agricultural, market gardening and mineral industries. As in Cupar there has been a recent spate of house-building because of its convenient location, and the population continues to expand. It too has a railway station with services to Edinburgh, Aberdeen, Perth and London.

St Mary's, Ladybank

The Church is owned by the congregation of St James the Great. It was originally a linen worker's cottage, but has been used as a cottage church for over 100 years and acts as an Episcopal presence in the Howe of Fife. It is the only remaining cottage Episcopal church in Scotland. It can hold up to 25 people. It is also well maintained. The church has a substantial garden which has often been used to host social events.



The Rectory

The Rectory is located in Robertson Road in Cupar, a relatively new housing development on the Southern edge of the town, near Castlehill Primary School. The house is all on one level, and consists of a bright spacious lounge with large dining area, conservatory, kitchen, study, four bedrooms and two bathrooms. It also has a garage, spacious drive and an easily maintained garden. The Rectory is approximately 12 minutes' walk from the town centre and does not, at present, have step-free access.



Congregation and Communicants

At St James the Great there are now about 170 people on the church roll – confirming a small net increase over the last five years. Of these, about 120 are communicants. In most weeks up to 60 people attend one or more of the main services; this includes a faithful core of about 20 people who choose to come on Wednesdays. Over half the congregation is over the age of 55 and we currently have two children who regularly form part of the congregation. We believe that the central location of the Church and the various plans for housing development offer a great potential to work with young families in the future.

At St Mary's, there is a small faithful congregation and services there are also attended by members of St James the Great.

Both congregations are open and friendly and have a policy of inclusiveness. Both churches have rotas of Stewards for all the major services and these people welcome members and non-members alike. Tea and coffee are usually served after services on Sundays, and everybody is invited to partake.

During the pandemic, Sunday and Wednesday services went online and these continue to be livestreamed on the church's Facebook page.



Services

The current pattern of scheduled services is as follows:

St James the Great, Cupar

Sundays

8.00am

Holy Communion
(1970 Liturgy)

10.30am

Sung Eucharist
(1982 Liturgy on the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 5th Sundays)

10.30am

Sung Matins
(4th Sunday)

6.30pm

Compline
(weekly or monthly depending on the time of year)

6.30pm

Eucharist for Healing
(4th Sunday)

Wednesdays

10.00am

Eucharist
(1970 Liturgy)

St Mary's Ladybank

3.00pm

Holy Communion
(2nd and 4th Sundays)

On the fifth Sunday of the month a joint service is held alternating between St James the Great and St Mary's at 10.30am and 3.00pm respectively.

Other services include Evensong (occasionally), joint services with other Cupar Churches, Lenten and Holy Week services, Christingle, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.



Church Life

Church life is settled, stable and supportive. The last Rector played an important part in the life of Kilmaron School located in Cupar and serving the North East of Fife. The pupils who attend the school have complex additional support needs.

The church has an outreach program within our local community giving support to Bethany Christian Trust in its work in our county of Fife. The Bethany Christian Trust is a national charity dedicated to ending homelessness in Scotland, and more about their work can be found online at: www.bethanychristiantrust.com

Our support seeks to add value to their work by providing outings to groups of men, women and families. Our biggest support is the gifting of a Christmas hamper to each client of Bethany. We also host a carol singing event, which has been well attended by the Bethany clients.

The social life of the Church is healthy, with fund-raising events, concerts and other activities organised on a regular basis, now slowly returning to normal following the Covid pandemic. These include an annual fund-raising concert in March, organised in collaboration with the Laidlaw Music Centre at the University of St Andrews. The church also recently hosted a concert as part of St Andrews Voices (Scotland's vocal and choral festival) for the first time and is seeking to expand its profile as a venue for such events. St James the Great is represented on other organisations within the town, such as the Justice and Peace Group, whilst individual members take part in the World Day of Prayer and in Christian Aid Week collections.

The Mothers' Union group includes some Diocesan members but runs as an open Women's group supporting MU prayers and projects where we can. We meet monthly in St Mary's Church, Ladybank which is a small building and helps us to comply with requests to economise on fuel. Meetings always open with prayer and often have a local speaker. We are never short of topics to discuss and always end with a comforting cup of tea.

Church life in St Mary's is inevitably less developed because there are fewer members, but they all cherish their Church and their independence, and the social side is certainly active and very much alive.

In addition, there is a weekly 'Pews Paper' which provides details of up-and-coming Church services, meetings and is a useful way of disseminating the latest information.



The Clergy and Lay Team

In addition to the Rector, who receives a stipend, the congregation includes a retired Bishop and several retired clergy, as well as several members who take part in the various services as servers, intercessors, stewards and readers. Other tasks such as cleaning, flower arranging, and coffee etc are also shared on a rota basis. There is an organist and an honorary organist who share the services between them, and a small (adult) choir.

Other Churches

In Cupar there are two Church of Scotland Churches, one Baptist Church and one Roman Catholic Church. The five Cupar ministers have an excellent working relationship and meet at least once a month to discuss common issues, and to arrange joint regular ecumenical services, notably during Holy Week but also at other times. They take it in turns to lead ecumenical services for the people in the five Residential Nursing Homes in the area. In addition, all participate in the annual Remembrance Day service at the Cupar War Memorial.

In Ladybank there is no comparable arrangement between the clergy but, being a relatively small place there is much mutual support between the congregations.

Church Finances

The congregation of St James the Great is financially self-sufficient. The church is able to meet the costs of its own rector and has undertaken successful fundraising campaigns when major expenditure is required, e.g. recent floor repairs in the church building and repairs to the organ. Additional financial support is available from an Endowment Fund bequeathed to St James the Great some years ago. The Vestry appreciates the importance of continued fund-raising for the future of the two congregations, and in 2008 a special 'Buildings Fund' was established to provide continued funds to support repair costs to the fabric of the building.

The management of the Church Accounts is handled by the Treasurer who reports regularly to the Vestry and at the AGM. The Trustees of the Endowment Fund are the Rector, the Vestry Secretary, the Treasurer and the People's Warden.

Separate collections are made for external charities and in the past few years St James the Great has been supporting the work of the Bethany Christian Trust who are particularly active supporting vulnerable families in East Central Fife. The Church also supports the work of the Cupar Food Bank which was set up in 2014.

St Mary's makes no financial contribution to the costs of a full-time Rector, but is otherwise financially independent on a day-to-day basis. If any major expenditure is required, this is funded by St James the Great.

Administration

The responsibility for running the church of St James the Great resides with the Vestry which is chaired by the Rector. The Vestry usually meets ten times a year, and their predominant concerns in recent years have been finance and property-related issues, but they have also considered and developed policies on Disability Discrimination, Health & Safety, Child Protection, and Food/Hygiene. St James the Great is registered in the Eco-Congregation Initiative. There is a Property Group and a Social & Fundraising Group who report to the Vestry, but who involve other members as necessary.

Mission

The Vestry considers that the Mission of the Scottish Episcopal Church in Cupar and the Howe of Fife is to proclaim the Christian faith in our worship and in our lives, and through our concern for the wider issues facing society locally and further afield.

To achieve these aims the two congregations must continue to build on the stability established in recent years. Further spiritual development and expansion must remain as key objectives with a particular focus on families. At the same time the cordial and effective working relationships with other churches and key community leaders in the area must also continue, in addition to those initiatives initiated by the diocese under the direction of the Bishop.



The Role of Rector of St James the Great, Cupar and St Mary's, Ladybank

The duties will include:

- Ministering to both congregations and leading them in spiritual growth, growth in commitment and membership, particularly of families
- Encouraging the development of the ministry of laity through a programme of continuing education and training
- Exercising a personal pastoral ministry among members of both congregations including visiting
- Developing creative strategies for bringing people into our churches, especially outside service times
- Maintaining the positive links between both churches and the diocese and, as necessary, discussing current issues within the Diocese, the Province and the wider Anglican Communion with members of both congregations
- Taking part in wider community and ecumenical activities, and fostering the good working relationship with the other churches and Ministers in Cupar
- Working with the Vestry to manage the temporal affairs of the church

To fulfil these tasks the Rector should be a person who:

- A person of prayer and humility with a vision for God's purpose for our congregations at this time
- Has a deep personal faith and understands the demands of, and has experience in, congregational ministry
- Is a good communicator, having the ability to present the gospel of Christ and the teachings of the church in a way that improves people's own understanding and motivates them
- Will be an innovative and a confident team leader who will inspire the congregation towards spiritual development and to use the individual skills and talents of their members
- Is approachable and open-minded, and can relate to all sectors of the community, both young and old, as well as those with special needs
- Has an interest in the broader issues in which the church is involved, including opportunities for Ecumenical co-operation, and would encourage both congregations to be outward-looking and to support ministries and mission in other places



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www.stjamesandstmarys.org.uk