

SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH

ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, PITTENWEEM, FIFE AND ST. MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS' EPISCOPAL CHURCH, ELIE, FIFE PROFILE OF THE POST OF PRIEST IN CHARGE 2023

Scottish Charity nos. SC010982 & SC005954



THE VACANCY

The vacancy for a full-time Priest in Charge at St John's, Pittenweem and St Michael's, Elie has arisen due to the retirement of the previous incumbent. Appointing a full-time priest is a new venture for us as previous incumbents have been part-time. We sense that now is the time for us to invest in a full-time incumbent to spearhead the vision we have for our churches. Our vision is to be a strong Episcopalian presence in the East Neuk offering opportunities to develop our spiritual life, providing pastoral care and support to the wider community where appropriate and interacting with other denominations and supporting their initiatives. The post is initially for five years, at the end of which time a review will take place to assess the progress made.

The churches are in the Diocese of St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane. (Provincial Website: www.scotland.anglican.org. Diocesan Website: www.standrews.anglican.org) and are situated **on the coast in north-east Fife**.



LOCATION

Pittenweem and Elie are two of the villages that stretch along the picturesque southern coast of north-east Fife known as the East Neuk. St Andrews, with its world renowned University and School of Divinity and thriving cultural life, is approximately 12 miles distant. The cities of Dundee and Perth, and the Highland mountains beyond, are also within easy reach. The main railway line from Aberdeen to Edinburgh and on to London is some 15-20 miles away at Kirkcaldy or Leuchars. A new branch line connecting Leven to Edinburgh will open in spring 2024, with new stations being built at Leven and Cameron Bridge. Both villages are on the bus route between St Andrews and Edinburgh. There are airports at Dundee and Edinburgh, about 60 minutes and 90 minutes' drive away respectively.

The East Neuk is known for its rich agricultural land and once thriving fishing industry; Pittenweem is the sole surviving working harbour. The area is popular with holidaymakers and second home owners. There are numerous golf courses, a marina in Anstruther and the Fife Coastal Path which stretches from Kincardine to Newburgh (www.fifecoastalpath.co.uk). During the summer months various festivals are held in the local villages. In late June there is the East Neuk Festival, attracting many nationally-renowned musicians (www.eastneukfestival.com), and in August the Pittenweem Arts Festival which attracts artists from all over Britain. (www.pittenweemartsfestival.co.uk)

Pittenweem has a population of 1,430, a vibrant mix of long-established families and those who have come to the area to work, to retire or to pursue their artistic talents. It has a chemist, post office and small general store in the Hub as well as several other shops, cafes, restaurants and galleries and a Community Library and Information Centre run by volunteers.

Elie and Earlsferry are attractive coastal resorts with a population of about 800. This increases greatly in the summer as there are a large number of holiday houses and second homes. There are seven shops including a Chemist, a half day mobile bank, an ATM machine, a twice weekly Post Office van and a renowned Farm Shop on its outskirts. There are facilities for golf, tennis, bowls, sailing, fishing and wonderful beaches.

Each village has its own primary school, and Waid Academy in Anstruther offers secondary education to a wide area. There is a dental surgery in Anstruther, and each village has a doctors' surgery. Nearby hospitals are the Community Hospital in St Andrews, the Victoria Hospital, Kirkcaldy and Ninewells (teaching hospital), Dundee.

The Church of Scotland is currently reconfiguring its ministry and outreach throughout the East Neuk. This means a number of church buildings will be closed and congregations amalgamated. The Parish Churches in Pittenweem and in Elie are scheduled to close. The Coastline (Baptist) Church is healthy and currently in the process of calling a new minister. The nearest RC church is in Crail.

OUR CHURCHES

St John's, Pittenweem and St Michael's, Elie are small and enthusiastic congregations only five miles apart. Both congregations are active in their respective community. There is a potential for ministry and outreach among the resident communities and among visitors and people with holiday homes. The members of the congregations are people who have a rich diversity of life experience, a wide range of professional skills and a willingness to share in the work of ministry. More details can be found on our website at www.eastneuk-episcopal.co.uk

PROFILE OF ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST, PITTENWEEM

Congregation

The congregation of St John's is drawn from the coastal area and its hinterland. We have 18 regular communicants and 25 on the roll. They include people with a background in business, academia and the professions, but most members of the congregation are now retired. At present there are three retired clergy and a Lay Reader who willingly take services when the need arises. Lay participation is strong and includes roles such as sacristy, welcome, readers and intercessors.

The congregation is also involved in a number of activities throughout the year. Events are organised for the congregation such as the Fish and Chip Harvest Supper, and, as a means of outreach, the Summer Fayre and occasional recitals, talks and expert-led discussions on matters of social concern. As a congregation we have responded to the needs of the community by providing a drop off point for the Food Bank in Anstruther; we are developing a peaceful garden space with benches for all to sit and enjoy; and during the COVID pandemic the church was open and continues to be open daily which is much appreciated by tourists and locals alike. We are offering Fife Carer's Centre a local venue for supporting carers, and the church is used as an artist's venue during the Pittenweem Art Festival.



Services

Sunday worship is at 11.30am and we use the 1982 Scottish Liturgy. We have a 19th century chamber organ, but following the retirement of our organist, recorded music is used for our hymns. We have exchange visits with our sister church for our respective Patronal Festivals and our congregations join together for occasional services for Ash Wednesday, Good Friday and Ascension Day.

We welcome the few occasions when we share worship with other churches in the area. Holy Week has for many years been marked by an ecumenical service on Maundy Thursday in the Church of Scotland Parish Church, while on Good Friday St John's holds a service of reflection to which our ecumenical neighbours contribute as occasion permits. In the run-up to Christmas, we hold a Carol Service open to all. The World Day of Prayer and the Act of Remembrance are also occasions for the various churches to come together.



Church

St. John's Church was founded by Bishop David Low who bequeathed his wealth for the support of its ministry. Built of stone in 1805, it is B-listed. The interior has examples of oak carvings designed by Sir Robert Lorimer as well as fine examples of mid-nineteenth century-stained glass windows by James Ballantyne of Edinburgh. The porch windows were gifted in 2005 to commemorate the church's bicentenary. The church has a good sound system, gas central heating, disabled access, a toilet accessible to all and a kitchen area in the Vestry.



The church sits in one corner of the site of the medieval Priory of Pittenweem. The precinct was divided by a wall at the Reformation and the Parish Church built on the footings of the former priory church. Bishop Low's Trust owns land and buildings once part of the Priory, as well as St Fillan's Cave. The Trust is chaired by the diocesan bishop and the incumbent is a Trustee *ex officio*. The Trust's properties are managed on its behalf by St John's Vestry. St Fillan's Cave is open to visitors, with a small charge, and can be used as a place for meditation and for short services.

Vision

Our vision is to be recognised as a strong Episcopalian presence in the East Neuk, living the Gospel as we build on what we are already doing whilst exploring new initiatives to enhance our worship and service to the wider community.

Worship and spiritual development

We seek to

- maintain St John's as a welcoming place of peace, prayer and quiet reflection;
- continue with our Sunday morning Eucharist accompanied by traditional and contemporary hymns and songs, as well as occasionally holding different styles of worship which may be more widely appealing;
- develop and deepen our spiritual life by setting up Bible study/discussion/prayer groups and Lent/Advent courses, open to all;
- increase our congregation, attracting members of all ages;
- explore how we can make better use of the church space for services and socialising and St Fillan's Cave for services, prayer and reflection.

Outreach

We seek to

- provide opportunities for those enquiring about spiritual matters to learn about Christianity and its relevance to their life;
- expand our talks/lectures on religious and ethical topics and organise concerts/recitals, especially those featuring the organ;
- support local initiatives that seek to address social needs;
- inform visitors of our unique historical foundations by highlighting the former Priory and establish links with the Fife Pilgrim Way, offering groups and pilgrims the use of the church and cave for services and reflection;
- use the church's website and social media for information about services and activities.

Ecumenical relationships

We seek to

- build strong relationships with the other churches in the East Neuk.



St John's Summer Fayre

PROFILE OF ST MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS, ELIE

Congregation

“In this place will I give Peace”

These words, which are at both entrances to the Church grounds and are prominently displayed on the arch above the Communion rail, summarise the feelings of those who attend St Michael's.

The regular worshippers come from Elie and the neighbouring villages. We have ecumenical links with the Church of Scotland which currently alternates between Elie and Kilconquhar.



Services

Sunday worship is at 9.45am and we mostly use the 1982 Scottish Liturgy. Average attendance is around 18 and there are 29 on the Roll. The very enthusiastic congregation includes retired professional people as well as several younger members. We are the only church in Elie to hold weekly services.

On Christmas Eve we hold a “Dressing the Crib” service for children and adults; in 2022 more than 100 came. During Easter we join the Church of Scotland on Maundy Thursday for Communion, on Good Friday there is a Service of Reflection while on Easter Sunday we are actively involved in an ecumenical open air service at 8am at the Harbour.

Church



A Flower festival in 2023 was attended by many visitors and allowed us to show off our Church. It is “a tin tabernacle” built of wood with a covering of corrugated material. It is 118 years old and is in excellent condition. Less attractive it may be from the outside, its interior surprises many and provides a place for prayer, fellowship and peace.

We have a modern chamber organ (but alas no organist). A full set of discs of hymn tunes gifted by a previous Priest provides accompaniment for hymns, largely from Hymns Ancient and Modern (New Standard).

The acoustics within the Church are regarded as excellent; every summer musicians from the annual East Neuk Musical Festival use St Michael's for rehearsals.



Vision

We wish to increase our congregation by attracting members of all ages to regular Sunday worship, and to continue to provide a place of peace.

We intend to increase our ecumenical links. When, as is envisaged, Elie Church of Scotland closes, we will maintain our links with Kilconquhar (1 1/2 miles away) which will be the only Church of Scotland Church left. We believe that the vestries and congregations can work together to share the Christian message. We already have joint Services for Christian Aid, Remembrance Sunday and summer evening Songs of Praise.

We plan to restart weekly meetings in Lent for Bible study and spiritual development.

We want to work more closely with the Earlsferry Care Home (which is close to the Church) including participating in Services within the Home regularly. We also intend to build up our links with the Isaac Mackie Trust which provides supported accommodation in Elie for the elderly. These plans are part of our overall objective to reach out to the local community.

HOUSING

Bishop Low's Trust makes available the Great House to serve as the Rectory. The accommodation is on the first and second floors of this 17th C A-listed building and is accessed by a spiral stone stairway. There are four bedrooms, kitchen/dining room, sitting room and two bathrooms. There is a private garden with space for parking as well as a car port. The Trust maintains the external structure while the two churches share the cost of internal maintenance.



FINANCES

The Memorandum of Agreement between the churches will ensure that all the costs of the incumbent's stipend, pension, National Insurance, and work related costs will be covered, as well as fees and travel expenses for locum clergy. Housing costs, including Council Tax, will be met by the churches.

JOB DESCRIPTION

We seek an energetic, creative, self-motivated priest who makes things happen, an incumbent who is spiritually oriented, mission minded and ecumenically open. This is an opportunity to work with other Christians in the East Neuk.

The incumbent will

- lead us in our worship and organise opportunities to develop and deepen our journeys of faith;
- be highly visible and actively involved in the life of our communities by developing an incarnational-style ministry;
- develop strong working relationships with other church leaders.

CONCLUSION

We are welcoming and faithful communities who seek to continue and deepen our journey of faith and to be a visible Christian presence in the East Neuk. We look forward to a positive future with an open door, open church and open mind.