

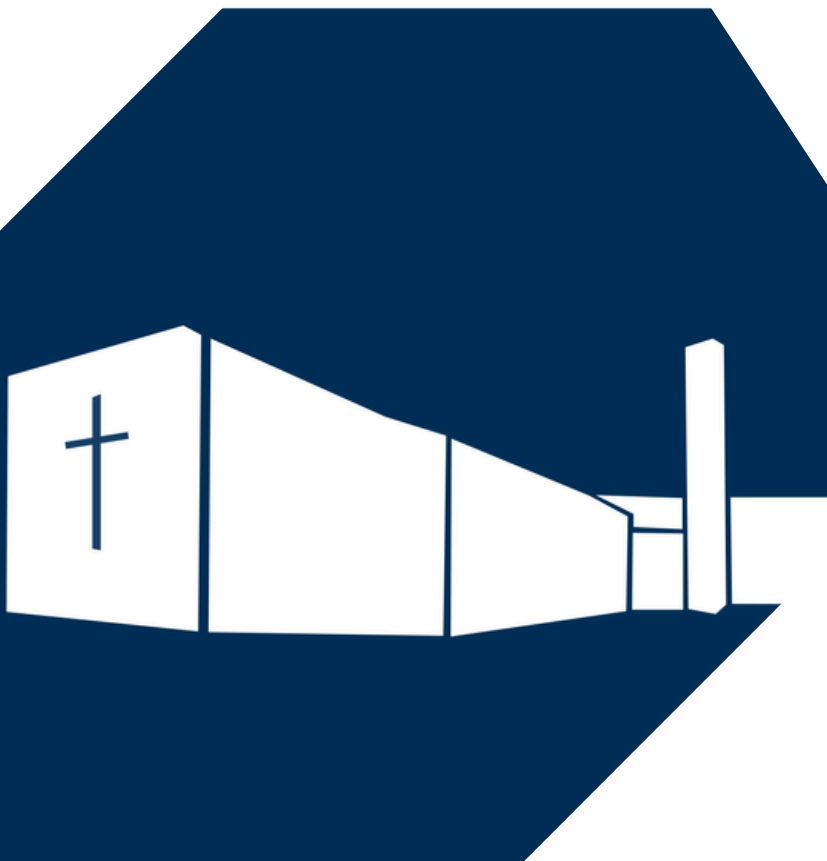


CRAIGOWL CHURCH

PARISH PROFILE

MORE INFORMATION:

Further detail on all aspects of the church can be found on our website which can be viewed by [CLICKING HERE](#).



INFORMAL ENQUIRIES TO

Interim Moderator:

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Scottish Charity No: SC021763

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INTRODUCTION

Thanks for opening this. Is this the first, fifth or maybe even the fifteenth profile opened? It's hard, isn't it, knowing just what God might be saying? Hopefully, this document will give a glimpse of who we are, help your understanding of what we believe and maybe nurture a feeling that it might be right for you to consider walking with us, as together we build on our vision for the future.

Like many other congregations, the reality of Presbytery planning has hit hard and has left some hurting. You could say that we are in infancy as a 'new' congregation, yet in reality we are not new. Craigowl was formed by the Union of neighbouring congregations - Chalmers Ardler and Strathmartine. Each has a long history and over the years has established a strong foundation from which many initiatives around mission, discipleship, service, care and compassion have developed.

Whilst we recognise that change has hit us and understand that we need to evolve to meet the needs of the future, we firmly believe that our journey with God, yesterday and today, will ensure that our tomorrow will be filled with opportunities to share and experience the love of Christ, both personally and with the community we serve.

Could you be the person to join us, in all that God is doing here and lead a new and exciting phase of ministry?



*For I know the plans I have for you,
declares the Lord, plans to prosper
you and not to harm you, plans to
give you hope and a future.*

Jeremiah 29:11



CRAIGOWL CHURCH

Loving Jesus • Loving our community

OUR *HISTORY*

THE BEGINNING

Craigowl Church came into being on 1 July 2024 following the Union of neighbouring congregations, Chalmers Ardler and Strathmartine.

CHALMERS ARDLER

Chalmers Ardler was originally Chalmers Church which began life in 1851 situated in the centre of Dundee. In 1967, the area around the church was being developed as the University of Dundee grew, whilst the housing within the parish was being demolished and replaced with housing in estates on the periphery of Dundee. The congregation became a 'church extension' and moved to serve the new community of Ardler and part of the established community of St Mary's. The renamed Chalmers Ardler held its first service in the purpose built complex comprising a sanctuary and associated halls in October 1968.

STRATHMARTINE

Strathmartine has a history extending back into the 1700s with its initial location making it very much a church serving a rural community on the outskirts of Dundee. In 1848 the congregation was established in its present building (now closed and subject to sale). Initially the parish was rural. However since the mid 1950's, development of land to provide housing, mostly privately owned, saw

the parish transformed to become one which was predominantly situated in an urban setting within the confines of Dundee City.

MINISTRY

In what we shall term the 'modern' era i.e. 1968 onwards, Chalmers Ardler had three ministers. The first retired after ministering to the congregation for 26 years, the second was called to another parish after 21 years, with the third leaving the charge in 2021 after a short ministry. Since 2021, Chalmers Ardler remained vacant, principally due to the moratorium put in place in conjunction with the Presbytery planning process.

Strathmartine had two ministers with both retiring following respective ministries of 27 and 32 years. Since 2022, when the most recent minister retired, Strathmartine remained vacant.





WHAT WE BELIEVE

- Jesus is the Son of God. He died for our sins and salvation is through Him alone.
- The Bible is the living Word of God through which God continues to speak words of comfort and challenge to all people.
- God, by His Holy Spirit, equips His people to serve Him and to serve others as all are encouraged to use their God-given abilities.
- The Church grows as Christ is seen in His people and individuals come into a relationship with Him.
- We affirm the historic and current doctrine and practice of the Church in relation to human sexuality, as it applies to ministers and deacons of the Church.

CHALLENGES

Challenges are numerous, whilst vision and dreams for the future have no bounds. However, we are realistic. Some challenges are more demanding of early consideration and we believe it sensible to consider our vision for the future in terms of what is realistic, with potential for positive outcomes.

Here are what we believe to be the immediate challenges:

- Following the Union of Chalmers Ardler and Strathmartine there is a need to build relationships across the whole congregation.
- There is a need to ensure that existing members continue to feel cared for and loved by the church.
- There is now an expanded parish to serve.
- We are required to recognise that we have an ageing congregation.
- Perhaps the greatest challenge - a willingness to recognise that the existing and traditional model of church across our land doesn't always work. Burying our heads in the sand is no longer an option!

VISION

A strapline used over recent years has been "Loving Jesus - Loving our Community" and this in a simple way reflects who we are and what we seek to achieve. In a sentence, we would say,

"We want to see transformation of our communities by making the reality of Jesus Christ known so that others can come to know the love of God for themselves."



Going beyond the single visionary sentence, we want to.....

- See JESUS - the face of God - visible in our neighbourhoods through us being present and active in our community.
- Encourage and develop people of prayer, praise, worship and witness, full of the Holy Spirit in order to create:
 - thriving worship services
 - home groups
 - ministry teams
 - innovative mission and evangelism
 - practical community involvement
- Build upon the existing partnership with YMCA Tayside in order to encourage young people in our community to see that Jesus is not just for 'old' people.
- Review and develop our existing 'playgroup' as a starting point in re-establishing contact with parents and carers and young families all within a caring and Christian environment.

WHAT ELSE CAN WE SAY?

We continue to trust God to build us into a people whose faith is alive and visible in the community and beyond. Over the years we consider ourselves to have been innovative. Redevelopment of our sanctuary was ahead of many other congregations who now follow a similar path. Our former manse has been reborn as The Living Rooms - a comfortable space to meet and chat. We have recognised that partnership with other Christian based organisations can enhance our outreach and help make Jesus seen in our community, so we are not afraid to do something different or challenging.

Perhaps most importantly, we are people who think that Jesus matters. Some of us have tried to walk His way for a lifetime; most of us feel as if we are still learning; some of us are still dipping a toe in the water and wondering about it all. Between us we are at many different stages in our spiritual journey but we recognise that the important thing is to travel together with the Lord. As we do this with a new minister, our hope is that each of us will get to grips with what it means to be a disciple of Jesus.

The post advertised is for a full-time minister of word and sacrament on a Reviewable Charge (7 years) basis.

WHAT WE SEEK FROM OUR MINISTER

We could produce an almost endless list of what we would like our minister to be and to do but that's not necessarily helpful. So at this time, ours is a relatively short list. We are praying for -

- A minister who will help us make our vision real and meaningful.
- Someone who will help us develop our own personal faith through positive Bible teaching and by encouraging discipleship and prayer.
- A minister who recognises that pastoral care of the existing congregation is important and that for it to be effective needs time spent comforting, caring and supporting those who perhaps need that little bit extra.
- A leader who recognises that gifts extend across the whole congregation and who will encourage the use of these gifts to glorify God as part of the overall ministry. We want a 'team' player.
- Someone who will take an interest in youth and family work and have a heart for the community.
- A 'risk taker' who will encourage us to seek out and develop new initiatives as we respond to a changing society.



WHAT WE OFFER OUR MINISTER

We recognise that as a congregation we have a role to play in supporting our minister. There are so many differing ways of doing this but we select the following as being worthy to commit to at this time.

- Prayer for him or her and their families.
- A willingness to follow God through our minister's leadership and be receptive to doing things in new ways as we see God's hand in the direction of travel.
- A willingness to be involved through the sharing of God given gifts and talents. We recognise that all have a role to play in delivering God's love to our community.
- Support to ensure that the living and working environment is comfortable and adequately meets the needs of the minister and his/her family.

OUR WORSHIP

A single worship service is held on a Sunday at 11am.

The singing is led by a praise band with the members all giving of their time voluntarily. The style of praise is a mixture of contemporary and traditional, with the music sourced from a range of books and internet searches. New songs are introduced from time to time. We are always keen to encourage freshness and enthusiasm in our praise.

The hymns/songs, scripture reading and illustrative materials are all projected through multimedia systems, thus enhancing the worship experience.

Members of the congregation take part in all services reading scripture and leading prayers for others.

Communion is held four times per year. There are occasions when Communion is celebrated in an informal way.

There is an induction loop system installed within the sanctuary area.

The sermon is recorded each week and posted onto our website. During the Covid pandemic period, services were recorded and posted on Youtube, however neither the technical expertise nor equipment to facilitate continuance of this was available.



We recognise that worship in all its forms can be styled by tradition. As we go forward, whilst we would seek to hold on to the positives of tradition, we believe that our worship requires to be culturally relevant and developed in a way that not only allows people to express their praise and joy in the Lord, but creates opportunities to allow those who have yet to experience the forgiving grace and empowering love of God in their life to hear the gospel message. Through our worship we want to enable people to be brought to salvation through Jesus Christ and into the church family.

PASTORAL CARE



Historically, each legacy congregation operated differently.

At Chalmers Ardler up until the interruption caused by Covid (and at the time when the most recent minister demitted), a team of pastoral visitors had undertaken visits up to three times a year to those in the congregation who had given indication that they would like to be visited.

At Strathmartine, elders visited in the traditional manner with districts being allocated and visits generally linking with the celebration of Communion.

CONGREGATIONAL CARE

We recognise that going forward, the best way to deliver pastoral care across the congregation needs consideration. Whilst personal contact will in many situations be required, in today's society with differing generations engaging with differing forms of communication, we cannot ignore the fact that some change might be required. The challenge is how do we as a church respond?

Many individuals within the congregation have a strong sense of compassion and care and outwith the structure of organised visitation there are many who regularly visit, telephone and message.

At present and pending the appointment of a minister, Presbytery has made available an OLM to assist with funerals and some pastoral care. One of our elders, an approved worship leader, has undertaken several funerals at the request of families of deceased members. Across the past 3 years, 49 funerals were taken, baptisms numbered 13 and there has been 1 wedding.

A magazine/newsletter is produced regularly and is distributed by email to those who are on-line and delivered to those who are not. Across the period when no ministers were in post, determined efforts were made to ensure that the congregations were informed that pastoral care was a continuing priority and the route for obtaining it was regularly made known.

COMMUNITY CARE



A monthly service, led by one of our elders is held in the local care home.

Pastorally caring for the wider community during the period of vacancy has not been easy. Prior to the Covid pandemic, there was a presence at the Macmillan Ardler Community Hub held in the local community centre. For people affected by cancer and other significant issues, the Hub operated to provide support and information from a number of services, including the church.

To a lesser extent, although in an important way, it has been possible through conversation to share care and compassion with those from the community who attend the Food Larder. Going forward, exploring new opportunities for pastorally supporting those outwith the church membership is something which we would want to undertake.

PRAYER AND DISCIPLESHIP



PRAYER

Prayer is the bedrock of all that we do at Craigowl. Whilst the congregation is encouraged to pray regularly, there are several initiatives taken on a regular basis in order to assist the congregation in their prayer life.

- A monthly prayer meeting is held on a Wednesday evening utilising Zoom.
- During Lent, people are encouraged to pray for a specific period each day. Resources are provided to support the initiative.
- In the period leading to Pentecost, we promote the prayer initiative, 'Thy Kingdom Come.'
- A prayer diary is produced every month and distributed to the congregation.
- Our partner church in Nairobi, sends their prayer diary and this is made available to the congregation.

HEALING MINISTRY

Intertwined with our prayer life is a healing ministry.

A list of those who would like prayer for healing or other issues is maintained and a group of people commit themselves to regularly praying for those listed. In addition, a prayer chain operates for urgent matters.

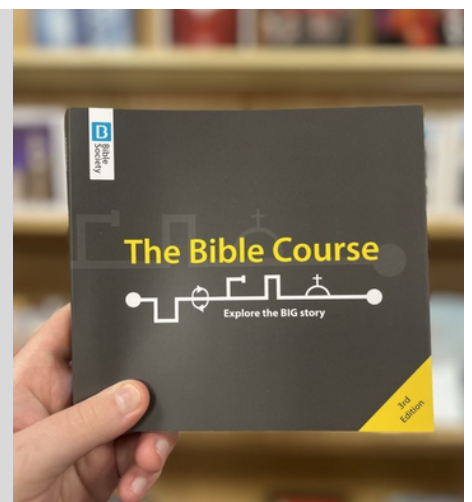
Those who are part of our healing team ministry have faithfully committed to this over many years. Several are now becoming less able to commit to this vital pastoral ministry and we see a need to revitalise this important ministry.

DISCIPLESHIP

During the week a ladies' Bible study meets via Zoom. There are around 20 woman who engage with this.

Members of the congregation are encouraged to purchase Bible notes and/or engage with initiatives available via various online apps etc. in order to help with their personal devotions.

On several occasions we have delivered the Bible Society Bible Course and also a Prayer Course. We anticipate the delivery of such courses to continue.





WORK WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

SUNDAY

On a Sunday, all young people (including babies) are encouraged to be in church for the early part of our worship. We offer 'time out' for all young people with a small group of leaders providing age appropriate activity in a single group setting. Numbers attending can be erratic ranging from just one or two up to around seven or eight. The age range from two up to eleven years combined with fluctuating numbers makes this time challenging, however at present what we do seems to work.

MID WEEK

In 2022 Chalmers Ardler entered into a partnership with YMCA Tayside to provide provision for young people. This partnership continues. At present, YMCA provides us with a team of youth workers employed by them, with our minimum financial commitment totalling £20,332 per annum. The YMCA leaders work alongside several church volunteers.

Two groups operate:-

Junior Group (P6, P7, S1); Thursdays, 5.30 - 6.45pm

Teen Group (S2+), 7.30-8.30pm

The Teen group operates on a 'drop-in' basis.

PLAYGROUP

The current playgroup, commencing August 2024, has its roots in Strathmartine Church although for many years Chalmers Ardler had run both a Family Project and playgroup. We seek to enhance our engagement with families and see the development of the playgroup alongside family working to be an important part of our outreach into the community.



MEMBERSHIP AND HOW WE WORK

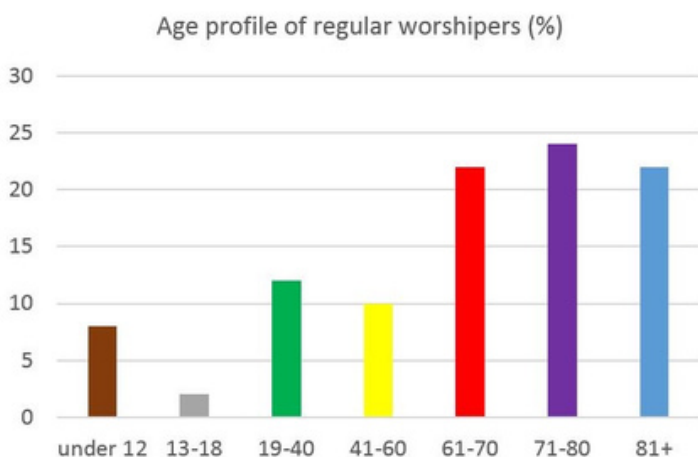
MEMBERSHIP

The congregational roll is currently 270 but our congregation also includes approximately 15 non members who worship with us. In the last 3 years, 5 people have joined the church.

Approximately 60% of the membership is drawn from the parish with the remainder largely being gathered from across the city. Most of the 'gathered' members have had a long association with the church.

The average attendance at Sunday morning services is 90-100. As the Union has begun to establish itself, there has developed a more consistent attendance with gradual increase continuing.

An approximation of the age profile of the membership attending Sunday worship is shown in the graphic below (children, teenagers and adherents are included).



HOW WE WORK

As a new unified charge, we operate a Unitary Constitution. For several years, this had been the situation at Chalmers Ardler whereas Strathmartine had operated a Model Constitution.

The Kirk Session comprises 27 elders (9 men and 18 women).

At present, the Session meets monthly.

For many years Chalmers Ardler had Task Groups made up of not only elders but others. The groups were Outreach, World Mission, Community, Pastoral Care and Discipleship. Unfortunately, these ceased to operate, partly due to the impact of the Covid pandemic and partly due to a need to re-assess aims, the nature of the groupings and group membership. The leadership's time commitment to contributing to the discussion around parish reappraisal and the need to maintain ministry during a lengthy period of vacancy was also a factor.

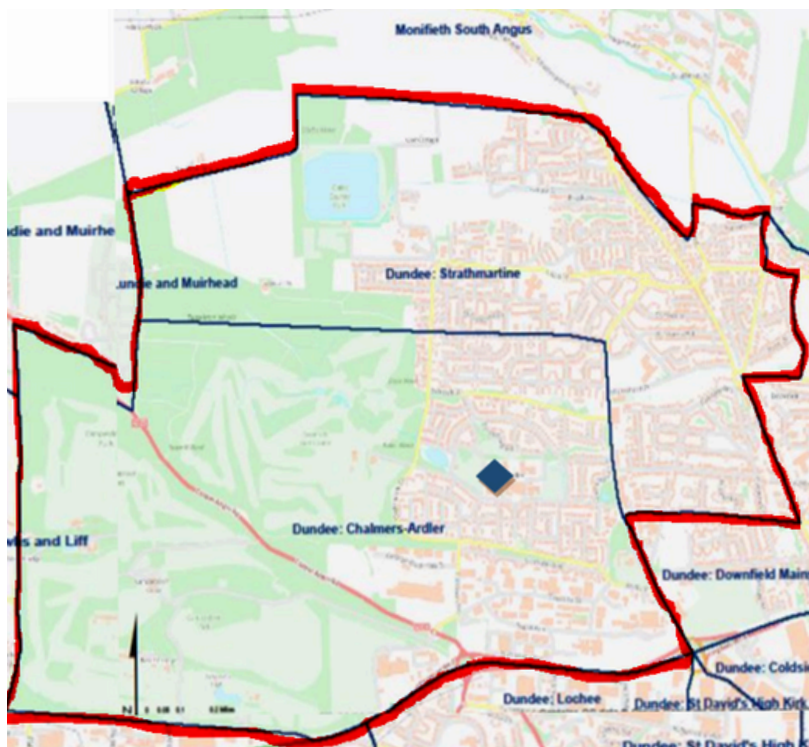
Going forward, we envisage a model of leadership which aligns itself to the earlier engagement with 'Task Group' working. The specifics have yet to be determined.

COMMUNITY PROFILE



The parish has 5 distinct parts. To the west is largely open ground utilised as a private members golf club and a public park whilst to the south is an industrial estate.

The populated area comprises three parts - the area known as Ardlar in which the church is centrally situated, the area to the north of Ardlar known as St Mary's and the area to the far north known as Brackens/Craigowl.



Craigowl Church



Parish boundary

The church is close to Ardlar (non denominational) and St Fergus (Roman Catholic) primary schools, the Community Complex, a sheltered housing complex, Health Clinic and open land used for recreational purposes. To the north and west there are further primary schools, Craigowl (non-denominational) and St Andrews (Roman Catholic).

The area known as Ardlar has changed radically since being established in the late 1960's. Six large multi-storey blocks and smaller blocks of flats were demolished during the mid 1990's and replaced with greatly improved housing, some rented (46%) from Sanctuary Housing Association or private landlords and around 54% privately owned.

St Mary's is a housing estate constructed during the late 1940's/ early 1950's. Other than the

demolition of some tenement properties, the general upgrading of homes and the building of a small community centre, this area has seen little change since its first conception.

Brackens and Craigowl is, for the most part, an area of housing where properties are owner occupied. Housing in this locality dates back to the early 1980's with on-going development progressing as demand for private housing has increased. At present, on the northern edge of this area, building of new homes is continuing.

The population of the parish is around 12,300.

Notwithstanding the improved housing across the parish, in pockets many social problems exist - unemployment is high, poverty prevails and there is some evidence of drug and alcohol misuse. Whilst in recent years the improvement of housing and incorporation of new build owner occupier homes has altered the social dynamic of the area, social problems across parts of the parish have not diminished.

OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT WITH THE COMMUNITY

OVER RECENT YEARS, MANY INITIATIVES AND ACTIVITIES HAVE BEEN TAKEN FORWARD IN ORDER TO ENGAGE POSITIVELY WITH THE LOCAL COMMUNITY. THE FOLLOWING HAVE BEEN AT THE FOREFRONT OF RECENT ENGAGEMENT.

- Alpha courses are held regularly with the most recent concluding during March 2024.
- Our Playgroup, almost exclusively, draws carers and pre-school children from non-church families.
- The church has always enjoyed a close relationship with the two local primary schools – Ardler and Craigowl, with previous ministers each being afforded opportunities to lead assemblies and speak with children in individual classes. Over several years, volunteers from church have assisted in varying roles at each school. In recent times, the Family Worker attached to Ardler Primary has utilised our premises for the purpose of supporting families through cooking classes, whilst SU leaders use our premises to deliver 'Bible Alive' activity to school pupils.
- A 'one-off' activity day for children and parents/carers was held at Christmas 2023. This was an effort to re-engage following a history of 'Messy Church' which went into abeyance around 2019.
- Each Christmas, the young people linked with the church visit Sidlaw House, the local sheltered housing complex, where they sing carols and deliver gifts they have made to all residents.
- A monthly service at the local Care Home is led by a Worship Leader (Elder) who is part of our congregation.



- A Food Larder is held weekly. This is supported financially via Dundee City Council through their partnership with Dundee Community Food Network. Around 40 regularly attend benefitting approximately 120 individuals.
- A carpet bowling club is held weekly and attracts several non members who during the summer months play outdoor bowls as part of Strathmartine Bowling Club.
- Throughout the year various coffee morning events are held encouraging the community to come along and meet us.
- Whenever appropriate, we engage with Community Forums to ensure that our presence in the community and care for the people is visible. Local community workers engage with us and are supportive of any community focused activity which we might arrange.

FINANCE AND PROPERTY

Finance

The legacy congregations have consistently met all their financial commitments.

The 2024 Giving to Grow contribution for the respective congregations was:-

Chalmers Ardler: £31,090

Strathmartine: £28,100.

Each congregation has benefited from a reduction to reflect the Vacancy situation. Following the completion of the Union an amendment to the Giving to Grow contribution is expected.

A full copy of the most recent Annual Accounts applicable to the legacy congregations can be accessed by referring to page 19 and following the relevant links.



Property

Church

The church has excellent accommodation with the main complex comprising a large modern sanctuary, large hall, small hall, meeting room, office, fully equipped kitchen and toilets.

The original complex was refurbished in 2004 when pews were removed with some reconfiguration of space and installation of multimedia equipment.

Adjacent to the main complex is 'The Living Rooms' which comprises a conversion of the former manse to provide a comfortable social area with a small kitchen, two meeting rooms, office and toilets. External to The Living Rooms there is an area of private garden.

Manse

The current manse, a modern and well maintained detached dwelling, is situated in a private housing estate towards the northern boundary of the parish. The property built in 2013 was purchased in August 2018 and in all respects it meets the requirements as specified by The Church of Scotland. The link below can be used to view the full property description and detail with regard to local facilities, schooling, transport links and the like.

[READ MORE](#)

WORLD CHURCH



In 2010 and through the Church of Scotland World Mission Council, Chalmers Ardler entered into a partnership with the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA) at Kayole in Nairobi. Groups from Chalmers Ardler and from Kayole visited each other in alternate years up until 2018 when the combination of the start of a new ministry at both Chalmers Ardler and PCEA Kayole followed by the impact of the Covid pandemic necessitated the rota of visitations to be put on hold. At present, the partnership continues to be held in abeyance. Alongside this partnership we seek to discover and support other mission initiatives operating under the umbrella of the World Mission Council.

We regularly promote the work of Christian charities through specific slots in church services or by features in the church magazine. Organisations recently highlighted and/or financially supported include Tear Fund, Christian Aid, Mercy Ships, International Justice Mission, Mary's Meals, Leprosy Mission, Open Doors, Crossreach and Blythwood Shoebox Appeal.

ECUMENICAL CONTEXT

Historically, there was some engagement with the local Scottish Episcopal Church and the local Baptist Church and although we had no close relationship with the Roman Catholic Church serving the area, there was a positive relationship with the Roman Catholic school, St Fergus. However, since around 2019 there has been no engagement with these groups. We would be hoping to re-establish these relationships.



WHAT'S ON AT CRAIGOWL

Some of what we do at Craigowl has been referred to separately. Here is a full list of all that is presently happening. Further details linked with each group can be found on our webpage.

Badminton Group
Friendship Group
Ladies Bible Study
Carpet Bowling
Food Larder
Welcome Group
Youth Group
Playgroup
British Sign Language Group (BSL)

In addition to those listed above, our premises are made available weekly to the following independent groups.

YoungLives Tayside
Dundee Carers



SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

By way of providing supplementary information, we append below several links allowing you to access the relevant detail. In some instances, amalgamated documents are not yet available. Just click on the relevant boxes.

[C CRAIGOWL CHURCH WEBSITE](#)

[CRAIGOWL CHURCH FACEBOOK](#)

[CRAIGOWL CHURCH INSTAGRAM](#)

[PRESBYTERY PLAN - EXTRACT \(URBAN AREA DUNDEE NORTH\)](#)

[DUNDEE - A BRIEF REVIEW OF THE CITY](#)

[STATISTICS FOR MISSION \(2011\) - CHALMERS ARDLER](#)

[STATISTICS FOR MISSION \(2011\) - STRATHMARTINE](#)

[UPDATED COS STATISTICS \(2022\)](#)

on opening the file, click on Perth and scroll to select congregation

[ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2023 - CHALMERS ARDLER](#)

[ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2023 - STRATHMARTINE](#)



WHAT'S NEXT?

Informal enquiries may be made to the Interim Moderator

Rev Dr Jean Kirkwood

Email: jkirkwood@churchofscotland.org.uk

Te: 01382 526071

Applications with a brief outline of how you might see yourself being suitable for this vacancy, together with a CV and the names of two referees (one to provide a professional reference, the other a personal one), should be sent to:-

Fiona Ewen

Clerk to the Nomination Committee

EMail: fionaewen58@gmail.com

