

WELCOME



ECHT AND MIDMAR CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

Come and Share in Our Ministry

Echt and Midmar Church of Scotland, became one united church on the 1st of September 2017 and has been given an unrestricted call. We now look forward to sharing this new opportunity with you.

Echt and Midmar Church is a friendly, caring congregation with a strong sense of community. The parish offers opportunities for someone called to rural ministry with a heart for reaching out to the community, a passion for the Good News of Christ and a willingness to allow the Spirit to lead us to where we need to be.

The parish location makes this the ideal place for anyone who enjoys rural life but appreciates the amenities of a large city. Situated in the heart of rural Aberdeenshire approximately 15 miles from Aberdeen, the parish is within easy commuting distance of Aberdeen city with good transport links. Aberdeen airport is only 12 miles away and there are railway stations in Aberdeen, Inverurie and Stonehaven. The towns of Inverurie and Banchory are also within easy reach. There are excellent retail, sport, and leisure facilities nearby and the area is renowned for its historical landmarks and castles. The parish's location is near to Royal Deeside where there are endless opportunities for walking, outdoor pursuits, winter sports and beautiful scenery.

I am the church,

You are the church,

We are the church together.

Our New Minister

We understand that an applicant may not feel they fulfil all of the qualities listed below, but we would welcome working with someone who is an ordained minister of the Church of Scotland and aspires to be the following:

- A Minister of the Parish - be visible in the community
- Someone who will guide and grow with us
- Someone who will encourage outreach, fellowship and spiritual growth
- Lead worship effectively and preach the Good News, relevant to today's world
- An excellent communicator, who will reach out to all ages, be approachable and engage with the community
- Willing to consult with head teachers and continue to explore the opportunity to serve as chaplain to the three local primary schools and, along with other ministers work with Alford Academy; the secondary school for the catchment area
- Encourage the development of family and youth work
- Someone who will inspire and enable people to develop their talents and participate in the life and work of the church
- Share a good sense of humour

Our Mission

Echt and Midmar Church of Scotland,
is committed to working together to provide a
place of welcome, Christian worship and
fellowship to everyone.

Echt & Midmar Union Celebrations 2017



ECHT AND MIDMAR CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

Our Congregation

Links between Echt & Midmar church parishes were established in the 1960's and over the years the linked charge has developed in a natural way, resulting in a close and most friendly cooperation between both churches culminating in our union in September 2017. The parish population is around 1,356 with a church membership of 272. Our congregations are mainly over 50 years of age and we regularly have 30-40 worshipers each Sunday. At present, we have no demand for Sunday school. In a typical year, there would be around 12 funerals, 6 weddings and 4 baptisms. Find more about our parish demographic @ www.churchofscotland.org.uk church finder.

Family activities have recently included: A 'Joseph' Holiday Club, Christian Aid walk and Family Film night. The church in conjunction with the Echt school run a fortnightly activity group for toddlers and mums: 'Teeny Tiny Tots' in Echt village hall which has around 15 users and is valued by all and provides us with a mission opportunity.

Our Kirk Session

Prior to the formation of the union in September 2017 both parishes had a Session and Board. The new parish of Echt and Midmar Church has a unitary constitution. We are happily, cooperatively and optimistically learning to adjust to these different arrangements. As a united congregation, it is important that all our meetings and activities include members of both congregations thus providing greater opportunity to pool all our talents and skills and finances together and avoid unnecessary duplication. We aim to work in an enthusiastic, proactive way, across the whole parish and for the benefit of the Kingdom of God's Church.

The involvement of Congregational Boards in the past demonstrates the willingness of members to be involved in the life of the parish. We need to ensure that we maintain this enthusiasm and involvement.

Our Parish

The parish is in a rural part of Aberdeenshire. In recent years, there has been some new housing development. Local employment opportunities are limited and largely agricultural. Other employment opportunities involve a short commute into Aberdeen, Inverurie and Banchory.

We try to keep our members and parish up-to-date with church news in a quarterly newsletter, church calendar, website and Facebook link. The Minister is chaplain to three local primary schools and shares in the chaplaincy to Alford Academy with the ministers of neighbouring parishes.



OUR WORSHIP

We get together as a church with the aim of learning more about how God reveals his love for us and what God's love means to us in practical terms. We do this by worshipping together and sharing in fellowship e.g. with a welcome cup of tea after the service.

In 2005, our congregations began worshipping together every Sunday, whilst rotating monthly, the use of our two beautiful churches. We worship at 10.15am each Sunday in one of our two buildings. The yearly Church Calendar provides details of where we meet month by month and is distributed regularly throughout the Parishes. We also have information on our web site at www.echtandmidmarchurch.co.uk and can be found on Facebook.

Our Worship style in the past can be best described as 'informally reverent'. We have built on the heritage we have received from earlier generations in such a way that feels welcoming and accessible to the widest range of people possible. Echt church has a screen and projector which is used to display the order of service, hymns and relevant power point presentations. Both churches have modern electric organs and sound systems. There is the potential to reform a small choir that was established two years ago that enhanced our worship at Christmas and Easter services.

Our Families and Children We are a family friendly church; always ready and willing to adapt to the needs of the families that come and join us. Both churches have created areas **within** the church where there are activities available for the children; and where families can comfortably sit together during Sunday worship. Our services provide a time 'Point to Ponder', where the focus is on the young at heart. We feel it important that worship includes something for everyone. The church in conjunction with the Echt school run a fortnightly activity group for toddlers and mums: 'Teeny Tiny Tots' in Echt village hall which has around 15 users and is valued by all and provides us with a mission opportunity.

Teeny Tiny Tots Group



OUR CHALLENGES

1. We see the involvement of families in the church as a major priority. Apart from the Teeny Tiny Tots group there is no children or youth work currently being undertaken. There are three primary schools in the parish, one is next to the church in Echt. Relationships with the schools are good, but require development. The schools offer significant opportunities and we feel we need help to develop this aspect of our ministry.
2. The population of the parish is quite dispersed. There is a wide range of need; some of it hidden. The pastoral care of members and the wider parish is important if we are to be Christ-like in the world.
3. We need to find new ways that will help us to grow in our understanding of the scriptures and to help us develop our individual and collective relationship with God.
4. We need help to find new ways of bringing our communities into the life of the church and indeed, bring the church into the life of the community.
5. It is important to us that our horizons impact is beyond the parish. We need to be encouraged and enthused to further develop our contribution to world mission.

WHAT WE CAN OFFER

1. A dedicated, friendly and enthusiastic Session.
2. Members willing to be involved and to accept change.
3. To pray for our minister, our ministry together and for God's Kingdom in the parish.
4. A modern Manse, see below.
5. Well maintained church buildings that are fit for purpose.
6. Healthy finances.
7. Opportunities for a flourishing and fruitful ministry.

THE MANSE

Situated on the southern outskirts of the village of Echt but only five minutes from the Church and all the village amenities, the Manse is a modern, centrally heated, double glazed bungalow, sitting in its own grounds with a south westerly aspect looking towards the Hill of Fare.

Accommodation consists of the entrance vestibule and large hall; the study (accessible off the hall), lounge, kitchen/dining/day room, toilet/shower room, and four bedrooms and bathroom in a separate wing off the hall. Extensive, part floored loft space is accessed by a folding loft ladder.

Refurbishment and improvement to the Manse is an annual and ongoing process. Considerable re-carpeting was recently carried out and re-decoration is presently underway.

Externally there is a single garage with light and power complete with security lighting for it and the Manse. The surrounding garden/lawn areas are presently designed for minimal maintenance though with undoubted potential for development and expansion. Regular routine garden maintenance is undertaken at the moment by a local gardening contractor and this is financed by the Session.



THE CHURCH BUILDINGS

Echt church was built in 1804 and underwent some major remodelling in 1930. This work was carried out by Dunecht Estate tradesmen. They installed a marvellous wooden ceiling. The names of the craftsmen are preserved on the back of the lectern that is used each Sunday.



Midmar Church is unusual in that it has a church and an ancient stone circle on the same site. It was built in 1787 and has retained many original features such as the end of pew paraffin lamps that give it a rural charm.



Both church buildings have been well maintained; resulting in two attractive and up to date church buildings that suit our church family needs.

Recent improvements to our churches include, sound systems, partial re- roofing, screen & projector (Echt), disabled toilet facilities, kitchen facilities, and office/meeting areas. Neither church has a dedicated church hall but both villages are fortunate in having access to excellent community halls which are used for church meetings and church social events. Echt Hall is directly across the road from Echt Church.

It is planned to remove the pews from Echt church and reorder the interior to make it a more accessible and flexible space that is more appropriate for less traditional styles of worship.

OUR VILLAGES

MIDMAR

Midmar is an attractive, rural village situated about 17 miles West of Aberdeen and 3 miles from Echt. It lies between the Hill of Fare and Bennachie and is equidistant to the towns of Banchory, Inverurie, Alford and Westhill.



Midmar is a widespread area, with community life centering on the school, the village hall and the church. The land is mainly agricultural and tenant farming was traditionally the main employment. This changed in the 1980's when the development of oil related industries in Aberdeen led Midmar to be considered a favourable commuter area, and many of the old steadings were bought and converted into housing. This brought an increase in population and added a rich diversity to the culture of Midmar. At present Midmar has lots of young families who are very active in the community.

The hall has become the hub of community life with its newsletter and website keeping everyone informed about local news and events. It is used by a variety of groups and organisations. There is a monthly Community Cafe that offers a welcome meeting place and the Church takes its turn of hosting the Cafe by providing home-bakes.



The school is a well-equipped, traditional village school that nestles in a beautiful country location.

The Head teacher and 2 class teachers provide a well-rounded education for the 52 children from Primary 1 to 7. Links between the school and the church are well established with Christmas, Easter and/or Summer assemblies held in the church. Secondary education for all three villages is provided 12 miles away at Alford Academy; a brand-new school and community campus opened 2 years ago.

The hills and single track roads around Midmar are an excellent resource for hill walking, cycling, horse riding and dog walking. If you enjoy fishing, then the Midmar Fishery offers a tranquil setting to sit a while and maybe catch some fish!

The village of Echt straddles the B9119 Aberdeen - Tarland road, 12 miles from Aberdeen and 5 miles from its Westhill suburb. It lies in a small fertile plain to the North of the Hill of Fare. The parish has a strong agricultural tradition and the village is surrounded by farms, many of which are on the Dunecht and Cullerlie estates.

Echt is very much an expanding village with a young growing population; a result of the recent completion of 58 new homes.

The Church, village hall and primary school/nursery are very much at the heart of community life in the village.

The village hall is multipurpose and is in constant use providing an excellent venue for social functions, meetings and many organisations including the Church, WRI, Young Farmers Club, Guides and Rainbows, Bowling Club, Horticultural Society and local Agricultural Show Committee. It provides accommodation for weekly yoga and art classes and has a room set aside for Banchory Medical Group to hold three surgeries a week and provides a stance for a visiting library van and mobile bank.

The school buildings house both the primary school for the village with a roll of 31 and the nursery which caters for all three parishes, with a roll of 28. Both are also expanding and thriving under the guidance of a progressive head teacher. Secondary education is provided once again at Alford Academy.

The village park is next to the school and Church and is used weekly by Echt Amateur Football Club and annually by our Agricultural 'Echt Show'. It is also used by the school for some of their outdoor activities. There is a children's play area and toddler park within the park. Public footpaths border the park and connect to attractive walks in the surrounding area.

The village has a well-stocked shop which also provides the Post Office and is the nearest shopping facility for Midmar, with Westhill only 5 miles away. The village has its own Indian Restaurant and Takeaway that is highly recommended and is presently voted the best in Scotland!



Dunecht village lies to the north of the Parish, situated on the A944 Aberdeen – Alford road also 12 miles from Aberdeen City and 5 miles from its Westhill suburb.



Dunecht is a traditional and expanding estate village with further developments planned.

The village school has an excellent reputation and a roll of 67 pupils. Dunecht also has a popular public bar & restaurant called ‘Jaffs’. There is a combined garage/car sales/shop & Post office and a village hall that is well used by local organisations and clubs.

Dunecht estate policies and grounds are under the ownership of the Pearson family and provide excellent facilities and amenities for the people of the Parish. These include a private nine-hole golf course, football pitch, cricket pitch, sailing club facilities and access to the nearby Loch of Skene, Pony Club facilities and cross country course, as well as extensive walking and cycling tracks and trails within wonderful scenic surroundings. Antiquities also abound in the area with remnants of three stone circles at Sunhoney, Corskie and New Wester Echt and an Iron Age hill fort on the Barmekin Hill situated between Dunecht and Echt.

LOCAL GROUPS AND ORGANISATIONS

Our villages support a large variety of groups and organisations and we are always looking for ways of encouraging these groups to become more involved in the church. This year, 15 groups took part in our annual Christmas Tree Festival. This resulted in an amazing display of Christmas trees that had been imaginatively decorated by each group.

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| ➤ Playgroup, Toddlers, | ➤ After school clubs | ➤ Echt Horticultural Society |
| ➤ Rising 5's | ➤ Bowling Club | ➤ Community café |
| ➤ Echt & Midmar S.W.R.I | ➤ Art classes | ➤ Echt Amateur Football Club |
| ➤ Guides, Brownies & Rainbows | ➤ Whist | ➤ Midmar & Echt Drama Groups |
| ➤ Friendship group | ➤ Badminton | ➤ Club Mobile library |
| ➤ Young farmers | ➤ White sheet movies | ➤ Walking Group |
| ➤ Echt Show | ➤ Book club | |
| | ➤ Upholstery classes | |

CHURCH ACTIVITIES

We run an active social programme aimed at involving as many people as we can, both within the church family and the communities around us. Many of these activities include fund raising as we recognise that the Church needs money to build God's kingdom - but we make sure that there is plenty 'funraising' too!

Church Family and Community Events

- Christian Aid walk
- Soup and sweet lunch
- Christmas tree festival
- Smartie Sunday
- Easter egg rolling and decorated egg
- Family film night
- Open air services
- Harvest Celebration
- Knitting group
- Christmas services
- Echt Pantomime
- Traid Craft activities
- Daffodil Tea
- Teeny Tiny Tots
- Quilting group
- Quiz nights
- Echt Show – church stand
- Flower festival
- Coffee Morning
- Holiday Club 'Joseph'

AREA GROUP

Each congregation in the Presbytery of Gordon is a member of an Area Group. Echt and Midmar Church is grouped with the Parish of Skene and Trinity Church, Westhill. This has been a successful relationship. We have shared in a variety of events including an Ice Cream Sunday, Praise on the Lawn in Dunecht Estate gardens and a Souper Sunday charity event held alternately in Echt or Skene church.

Skene Church join us in manning the 'Church Tent' at the Echt Agricultural Show. The Echt Show is an important annual community event and gives us another opportunity to be to be visible and interact with the wider community.



ECHT AND MIDMAR CHURCH VACANCY

Unrestricted Call

Thank you for your interest in our church.

If you would like to visit our parish or make an informal enquiry, please contact our **Interim Moderator:**

Rev Martyn Sanders

The Manse

Chapel of Garioch

Inverurie

AB51 5HE

Tel: 01467681619

Email: rev.sanders@gmail.com

To apply, please send your CV along with a letter explaining how you feel you meet our Person Specification to:

Clerk to the Nominating Committee:

Mrs Ruth Williams

Gormack House

Midmar

Inverurie

Aberdeenshire

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ECHT & MIDMAR CHURCH OF SCOTLAND
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