



*Cults*



*Collessie*

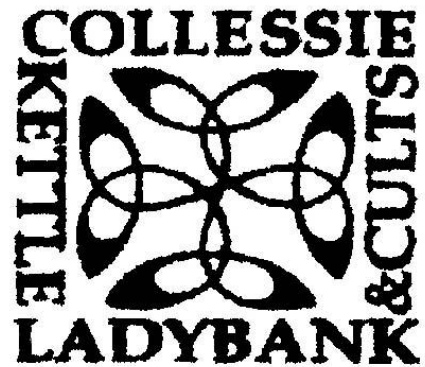


*Ladybank*



*Kettle*

# The Howe Of Fife Parish Profile



Minister: Rev. William Hunter

## 2012

# ABOUT US



## OUR VISION

The **PURPOSE** of the Church is to glorify God.

The **VISION** of the Church of Scotland is to be a Church which seeks to inspire the people of Scotland and beyond with the Good News of Jesus Christ through enthusiastic, worshipping, witnessing and serving communities.

Our **MISSION**, in the Howe of Fife, is to bring the Good News of the Gospel to all the people of our Parish

by

Encouraging the worship of God

by

Living and Sharing the Faith

by

Finding Fun in Fellowship

by

Giving of Time and Talents

and all

To the Glory of God.

*By the end of 2015, we would like to see our Church.....*

- Sharing the Glory of God through worship that is vibrant, relevant and closely engaged with the community.
- Living and Sharing our faith by worshipping centrally in one Parish centre and addressing the needs of the wider community.
- Finding Fun in Fellowship as we move forward together as one Church, using our facilities to draw people into our fellowship through social events.
- Giving Time and Talents so that all take part in all aspects of Church life, helping one another in a positive and friendly way.





## LOCATION



*Looking across The Howe from Balmalcolm*

The Howe of Fife Parish is located within the Presbytery of St Andrews and the Parliamentary Constituency of Fife North East. The main centres of population are in Ladybank, Kingskettle/Kettlebridge, Pitlessie and Collessie and there a number of other smaller villages and hamlets in the Parish. The population of the Parish is approximately 4500 and the active Church Roll is 530.

Centrally located with access to the main A92 trunk road and the main East Coast railway with a station in Ladybank, we

are within 30 - 40 minutes travel distance, by car, to Perth, Dundee and St Andrews, an hour to Edinburgh and 90 minutes to Glasgow.

There are busy primary schools in Ladybank, Kingskettle and Pitlessie which feed into Bell Baxter High School in Cupar with a roll of about 2000.

There are local shops in Kingskettle and Ladybank with the latter also having a bank, chemist and the local medical centre and health clinic. There is a farm shop in Balmalcolm.

There are restaurant facilities in Pitlessie, Ladybank, Kingskettle, Balmalcolm and Kettlebridge.

There are major hospitals 13 miles away in Kirkcaldy, 19 miles away in Dundee and 25 miles away in Dunfermline.

There are Community Hospital facilities at Cupar and St Andrews.

There is an internationally renowned golf club in Ladybank and we are less than 20 miles from the home of golf in St Andrews.

There are a number of areas of historic importance in the area including Falkland Palace and

other National Trust for Scotland properties.

The whole Parish is an area of rich natural beauty surrounded by rolling farmland, wooded areas and nestling at the foot of the Lomond Hills, with the river Eden running through the Parish towards the North Sea.



*Looking across the Golf Course to Ladybank*



## HISTORY

The new ecclesiastical Parish of the Howe of Fife was formed on 23rd January 1983 when the then Presbytery of Cupar determined that the Linked Charge of Cults and Kettle Parish Churches (1963) and the United Charge of Collessie and Ladybank Parish Churches (1968) be united.

The Parish is geographically large extending towards Auchtermuchty in the West, from near Newburgh in the North, from Springfield and Craigothie in the East and near Kennoway in the South. Whereas the Howe of Fife Parish is now a single entity each of its constituent parishes has a rich religious and social history. There is a United Kirk Session and there are 40 Trustees, i.e. 31 Elders and 9 Members of the Congregational Board. The Congregation of the Howe appreciate that the Church in this Parish will only continue to be relevant and effective, as it has for more than a millennium, if all the members work together to attain common aims and objectives.

So, as we move forward in this place in the 21<sup>st</sup> century we have begun to embrace the opportunities that technology offers to help us reach out to people an important element of that is our Parish website:

[www.howekirk.co.uk](http://www.howekirk.co.uk)



## FELLOWSHIP AND WORSHIP



*Collessie Church*

Although we are one Parish we normally have four places available for worship: Ladybank, Cults, Kettle and Collessie Kirks, although the Church in Ladybank is not available for use meantime due to a dry rot problem. There is currently a Whole Parish Service in Kettle Kirk each Sunday except on the first Sunday of every month when there are individual services held in a programme agreed by the Kirk Session. Where there is a fifth Sunday in any month a United Service is held in one centre and the

opportunity is taken to do something "different". Special events such as Communion and Remembrance Services are held in each village.

Family events such as weddings, christenings and funerals are held in each of our Churches. There is an active Sunday school at Kettle (which incorporates Ladybank Sunday School) and a Young People's Group at Collessie with other youth activities in Pitlessie and Kettle.

We appreciate the fellowship of enjoying social activities and events which bring us together in a variety of ways.

There is a monthly prayer meeting held in Kettle Church Hall. During this time all those known to be sick, troubled or grieving are prayed for. Church activities and workers are prayed for regularly. In addition there is a theme each month, most commonly the same as the theme for the monthly prayer letter. Prayers are written on the prayer letter in such a way as to allow all members of any

group to take turns to read or make responses. This has enabled those unfamiliar or nervous of open prayer to be comfortable and confident to take part in these informal and friendly meetings. All sorts of styles of prayer and themes have been used including using hymns, songs, psalms and bible passages as prayers.

We have also enjoyed sharing prayers that people have found particularly helpful and often use the Prayer Trust booklets and prayers from *Life and Work*.

A Worship Group of 9 individuals is currently engaged in formal training workshops under the auspices of the Presbytery with the aim of developing these individuals to participate more fully in leading appropriate services within the Church.



## MUSIC IN WORSHIP



*The Praise Band*

Worship in the Howe of Fife Parish is enriched by the Parish Choir and by the Praise Band - two very enthusiastic and committed groups. The Praise Band (guitars, recorders, keyboard and accordion) leads the singing every Sunday. The Praise Band enlivens many traditional hymns, and along with the Parish Choir it helps introduce contemporary praise items to the congregation. The Parish Choir contributes an introit, or an anthem, on various Sundays throughout the Church year and also during Songs of Praise services. The Songs of Praise services are particular favourites as the

Howe of Fife Parish congregation enjoys the opportunity to revisit familiar traditional hymns and new classics.

We would like to continue the lively and energetic music tradition already established within the Howe of Fife Parish by welcoming new members to both our music groups and by continuing to extend our repertoire of contemporary hymns. Finally, in the fullness of time, we would hope to make better use of modern technology in order to share services with our house bound Parishioners



## ACTIVITIES

- Youth  
Through the dedicated work of our teachers and supporters within the Howe of Fife Parish, the outreach to the youngsters of the local community

includes Sunday School provision along with a mid week club and a Sunday evening club.

At Collessie the Young People's Group meets regularly within the Church and the youngest member is the tender age of three! At Pitlessie the Wednesday midweek club meet in the Scout Hall immediately after school.

At Kettle during the Sunday service the Sunday School teachers, originally based at Ladybank Church now host a Sunday morning session which is open to all. In the early evening the Church Hall in Kettle plays host to youngsters currently aged up to secondary school age. All of the groups run a mixed programme allowing the youngsters to learn through

games, craft, music and story proving fun for all. Increasingly, opportunities are taken to join up together, for example, to take part in the United Harvest Thanksgiving Service and at Advent Services.. The opportunities which have been taken to reach out to young people are a credit to the adults who dedicate themselves to the task of bringing the word of God to our next generation.



*Walking in Ladybank Woods 2010*

- Eden Group .  
The Eden Group is really a function within the Howe of Fife Parish rather than a discrete group. It facilitates the

opportunity to meet together to explore a topic or book in the bible and to enjoy fellowship in someone's home or on outings and trips. The small group settings enable people to ask questions and to listen to those of others. It has been running for 4 years. During this time there has been a series of meetings each term for bible study mostly using the "Life Builder" Scripture Union study guides but also using good DVD guides such as "Glad you asked". We are currently following an excellent DVD series entitled "What's so Amazing about Grace?" which explores prejudice, tolerance, forgiveness and grace. We have arranged Lent programmes for the Parish and had Christian Aid Week events. We were recently asked to take a Parish Service for which we took the theme of mission. We made

contact with 7 Church of Scotland Missionaries for this service, reading their letters and praying for them (dressed in costumes appropriate to the countries) and including, slides, songs, instruments, fruit and flowers to help us picture the environment in which the Missionaries work. We hope that members of the Congregation will adopt and continue email contact with them and bring the newsletters for prayer to the monthly prayer meeting. Over the four years we have enjoyed trips to films such as "Amazing Grace" and "Black Gold". We have regular theatre trips including an annual summer trip to Pitlochry Theatre- High tea seems to be an essential part of most trips! In October 2008, we had a more ambitious adventure; spending a long weekend on Iona exploring this wonderful Island and joining together for

Celtic prayers and readings. In 2008 we also had an Eden Project redecorating the manse and preparing the garden. For our regular studies there are 12 who attend regularly but others come along to themed evenings and outings or particular studies. It is hoped that we can increase the number of groups meeting for the studies in the future.



*Trip to Iona 2008*

- **Celebrations Group:**  
The Celebrations Group was formed 6 years ago. The purpose of the group is to organise events which celebrate different

aspect of life in The Howe. A key objective has been to use our facilities as a community resource, to bring people to events within our buildings where they might not join us at Sunday services. Events have included a Festival of Flowers, Walks across the Parish and a diverse range of concerts from local Choirs and bands. Although fundraising is not the principal aim, many of the events have raised funds for the Church or other charities.



*Merchiston Castle School Choir in Concert*

- **Kettle Thursday Coffee Mornings:**  
The ladies of Kettle Kirk have for many years now organised a weekly coffee morning in the Church Hall. These are enjoyable

and well supported events which provide an opportunity for villagers to socialise and have raised many £1000s over the years which have been used to enhance the Church buildings.

- **Church Choir and Praise band:**  
See music in worship, above.
- **The Ladybank Maltings Tuesday Afternoon Teas:** another example of a highly valuable social event providing outreach into the local communities.
- **Outreach**  
Recently, The Heart of Fife Riding for the Disabled Association benefitted from donations raised at a concert by the Fife Strathspey and Reel Society.  
Retiring collections at the Armistice Services raised funds for Poppy Scotland.  
A Celebration of Christmas in

association with The Big Sing raised over £400 for Christian Aid and additional funds were raised over the year. Retiring offerings over the Christmas period raise funds for local charities.

Each year, over 200 shoeboxes are collected for the Blythswood Care Appeal for distribution in Eastern Europe.



*Parish walk 2009*



### COMMUNICATION

We produce a monthly Prayer Letter. Each month this provides a calendar of Church

activities and details of Services together with suggestions for prayer each week. The yearly cycle tries to include all the Church workers and members of the Congregation, the locality and the wider world. It puts special emphasis on prayer to support current events such as Christian Aid Week or Sunday Schools. The reverse of the letter provides material for prayer partners, prayer groups or private prayer and advertising of Eden Group and Celebration Group events. It also includes a monthly Focus prayer "Claiming God's Promises" for use in any meeting which uses a verse in the bible as a prayer. The idea behind the letter was three fold: 1) to aid communication, 2) To encourage prayer and to enjoy the encouragement and benefit of corporate prayer knowing that a large number will be praying for the same people and themes , 3) To bring together on one single A4 sheet, material for the various prayer initiatives. It is now in it's fourth year of production.

We also produce a quarterly Parish Newsletter entitled "Howe's Life". This is distributed to every household in the Parish and provides information on forthcoming events and items of news within the Parish including non Church related activities . Members of the Congregation are encouraged to contribute to this Newsletter and there is usually a message from "The Manse".

Information on Church news and events are also found on the Parish website.

[www.howekirk.co.uk](http://www.howekirk.co.uk)

- Sunday school teachers
- Property maintenance
- Cleaning of Churches
- Grounds and gardens upkeep
- Flower arranging
- Supporting activities and events
- Hospitality after Whole Parish Services
- Administrative duties such as photocopying
- Production and distribution of Parish magazines etc
- Providing transport to Church and events
- Fundraising
- Choir
- Praise Band
- Organist



### VOLUNTEERS

Our talents are valuable to the Church in a variety of ways:

- Reading in Church
- Contributing to worship
- Visiting the housebound and sick



### STEWARDSHIP

In 2008 the Kirk Session agreed to pursue a Stewardship Campaign; to invest in the services of a Consultant and establish a Planning Group to plan and prepare for the Campaign as

"an exercise to get those outside the Church in and to turn insiders on!"

The Planning Group met over the Winter of 2008/09 and committed to a Stewardship Campaign focusing on the building-up of the Church Family and, as a first step, arranged for a Family Meal, together with a parallel Exhibition of Church Activities, for Members of the Congregation subsequently held in the Corn Exchange, Cupar on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2009.

An integral part of the Stewardship Campaign was the publication of a brochure, which we called "Howe is it for You?", the purpose of which was to:

- Remind every one of the history of the Church in the Parish,
- List the current activities within the Church
- Highlight the variety of ways Members could assist within the Church,

- Provide some background to the Church's financial position,
- Outline the meaning of stewardship whilst reminding members of our Mission Statement, and
- Challenge Members to use their time, talents and treasures to benefit the Church.

The Family Meal / Exhibition was attended by 230 Members who in enjoying the meal and fellowship praised the organisation of the event; congratulated the "catering team"; made mention of the happy and relaxed atmosphere and commented very favourably on the extent of the Exhibition, the thought provoking presentations and the musical entertainment, including the childrens' performance of "Joseph".

"Visitors" delivered a copy of the brochure personally to each Member who in turn was invited to complete a Response Form for collection by their "Visitor". The "Response Forms" were designed to enable

Members to indicate how they could participate in the life of the Church by using their time, talents and treasures.

The main benefits accrued in embarking on the Stewardship Campaign were:

- Brought together a sizable number of Members of the Congregation working towards securing the primary objective of building up the Church Family,
- Engagement with every Member of the Congregation in their own homes during which a personal invitation was issued to participate in the Stewardship Campaign,
- A significant increase in the number of Members participating in the life of the Church as a direct consequence of completing the Response Forms,
- A noticeable increase in confidence exhibited by the Congregation

attending Sunday Services,

- A welcome increase in numbers attending Sunday Service,
- A significant increase in financial liberality,
- Provided information to facilitate the updating of the Communion Roll.

The Kirk Session will consider how this initiative should be revisited and progressed now that a new minister is in post.



#### INTERIM MINISTRY

On the departure of the previous minister in 2007, it was agreed to appoint an Interim Minister to assist the congregation to develop workable patterns of worship across the four communities, to strengthen the fellowship and unity of the congregation, to develop pastoral, youth and communication strategies and

to tap the gifts and talents of the Congregation through fresh focus on stewardship.

In the period of the Interim Ministry from July 2008 to March 2010, new worship patterns (Whole Parish Services in Kettle for three Sundays and the local centres of worship on the first Sunday) were established and have become an accepted rhythm, a successful stewardship campaign was implemented, and the essential unity of the charge was affirmed along with new communication links. The dispersed nature of the Parish makes a coherent youth strategy difficult, but the children in each community are served in a variety of ways. The Interim Ministry helped to stabilise the Congregation and give it a deeper sense of common identity while seeking to serve four distinct communities.

A new Minister, Rev. Bill Hunter was called to the parish and took up appointment in December 2011.



## BUILDING REVIEW

The major issue to emerge in the course of the Interim Ministry was the need to review the use of the four buildings, a process which involved the General Trustees and an Economic Planner as professional Consultant. A proposal to sell Kettle Kirk and Ladybank Church for redevelopment as affordable housing and to establish a new Parish centre in Ladybank was brought to the Congregation shortly after the Interim Ministry ended, but the proposal was defeated by two votes.

After consultation with the General Trustees, further architectural surveys and numerous conversations with the congregation, the local Trustees have decided, in principle, to redevelop the Church at Ladybank, integrating into that design, as far as possible, the creative

ideas generated for the new build parish centre.

Representatives of the General Trustees have recently affirmed this direction of travel. Architects are being commissioned to draw up appropriate plans for redevelopment, and funding options are being explored.

The future of Kettle Kirk is a matter of concern for the community of Kingskettle as much as for the congregation, and we hope to address those issues together as we move forward. The separate church hall at Kettle will be retained as a base for worship and service in the community. We hope the church building will be developed for housing in a way that is compatible with the aspirations of the village.

Helping the congregation implement these proposals and turn dreams into a reality will be a core task for our new minister. We recognise the challenge this represents, but, with the right leadership, we believe this could offer a fresh

focus to the life of our church within the parish.

The manse is a 1970's house on ground level, adjacent to Ladybank church. Due to the generosity of the General Trustees, the kitchen and bathrooms of the manse were upgraded in advance of our new minister's arrival.



## FINANCE

The finances of Howe of Fife Parish are in a reasonably sound condition. In 2007 there was a deficit of around £4000 but the following two years produced a surplus which helped to build up reserves towards the level specified in the financial policy of the Church. In 2009 the Stewardship Campaign produced an increase in

voluntary giving and in gift aided pledges. Voluntary giving has fallen away slightly in recent months, probably reflecting these financially straitened times. However, in 2010 the General Fund will probably again end up showing a surplus. We cannot be complacent however, as insurance costs have increased by 25% this year and 90% in a full year. We are also looking at the likelihood that, in future, water rates will be charged on at least two of our properties.

As indicated earlier, Howe of Fife Parish is also outward looking and generous to others less fortunate. In 2009 support totalling over £2700 was donated to the Poppy Fund, CHAS and Christian Aid. This year already over £1000 has been raised for the DEC appeals for Haiti and Pakistan and Christian Aid benefited from more than £1800. Collections at the Christmas Services are normally given to charity and the Blythswood Shoebox Appeal is generously supported by Church members

every year. We are now in our fourth year of supporting this venture.

Last year we opened a Development Fund to help finance future improvements to facilities for worship in the parish. This benefits from any profit made by events organised by the Celebrations Group and at present stands at over £6000.

There is also a separate designated fund which provides money for maintenance of the manse. At present this is benefiting from income from rent as the house is let during the vacancy.

The Congregation has a large maintenance burden for four Victorian Churches and two halls and this is a constant drain on the Fabric Fund. We are fortunate indeed that three of these Churches have a group of "Friends" who raise funds to help with the upkeep of the buildings.

