
Peterculter Parish Church of Scotland

2 Craighton Crescent, Peterculter, Aberdeen, AB14 0SB

Parish Profile



River Dee at Peterculter

See, I have placed before you an open door
Revelation 3:8

For further information: vacancy@culterkirk.co.uk

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Introduction | 3 |
| History of the Charge and Congregations | 4 |
| Our New Minister | 6 |
| Looking Ahead | 7 |
| Community Profile | 8 |
| Worship Life | 11 |
| Pastoral Care and Communication | 13 |
| Christian Education | 14 |
| Ecumenical Context | 15 |
| Stewardship and Finance | 16 |
| Staffing | 17 |
| Church, Manse, Office and Halls | 18 |
| Web Links | 22 |



Culter Kirk

Introduction

Peterculter Parish Church of Scotland is delighted to invite applications to our unrestricted charge to lead us into a new era at this time of significant and exciting change within the Church of Scotland in this beautiful and peaceful part of lower Royal Deeside, Aberdeenshire.

A new parish was formed following the union of the neighbouring Drumoak-Durris and Peterculter parishes on 1st November 2023. Both charges were vacant at the time of the union.

The vacancy in the previous Peterculter Parish Church, known locally as Culter Kirk, arose when the minister of 23 years, the Rev. Dr. John Ferguson left at the end of October 2022 to take up the position of Presbytery Clerk to the 'new' enlarged Perth Presbytery.

Drumoak-Durris Church became vacant in April 2023 when the minister of 7 years, the Rev. Jean Boyd retired.

Following the union we are now able to call a full time Minister of Word and Sacrament.



Service in Culter Kirk

History of the Charge and Congregations

The charge was formed following overwhelming support from both original congregations for the union. The name of Peterculter Parish Church has been retained.

Peterculter Parish Church was formed in 1999 with the union of the two churches in the village, St. Peter's and Kelman Memorial.

Drumoak and Durris Churches formed a linkage in 1987 followed by a full union in 2002. Durris parish is on the south bank of the River Dee and Drumoak parish on the north bank. Road bridges at Crathes and Culter and a pedestrian bridge at Drumoak provide a physical link between the north and south communities.

Aberdeen West Parish Grouping

Culter Kirk has been a member of the Aberdeen West Parish Grouping since 2022. This currently consists of four worship centres: at Springfield, (formerly Craigiebuckler prior to their union with Ruthrieston West), Mannofield, Culter and Peterculter Church buildings and four ministers, one based at each worship centre.



Kirk Session

The Kirk Session is formed of 42 elders (15 male and 27 female), 6 of whom previously formed the Drumoak-Durris Kirk Session. Their age profile lies predominantly in the 65-84 y.o. bracket with the remainder being 45 +.

A typical Kirk Session Agenda includes reports from Moderator, Session Clerk, Treasurer, Presbytery Elder, Safeguarding Officer, Hall Convenor and the convenors of the Property, Stewardship, Outreach, Care and Social Teams.

A unitary constitution operates having previously been adopted for many years by both Peterculter and Drumoak-Durris Churches prior to the union.

The new Kirk Session voted overwhelmingly in favour of departing from the church's historic and current doctrine and practice in relation to human sexuality and therefore warmly invite applications from any suitably qualified individuals.

Kirk Executive

The Kirk Executive is made up of the Minister, Session Clerk, Depute Session Clerk, Treasurer, Presbytery Elder and currently five other elders. It meets a couple of weeks before Kirk Session meetings to determine the agenda and acts as a valuable confidential sounding board for the minister. Urgent financial decisions can be taken efficiently when unable to wait for the following Kirk Session meeting for approval.

Congregation

The Communion Roll at the start of 2024 was 780, being 432 from the former Peterculter Parish Church and 348 from the former Drumoak-Durris Church. Adherents are included in these figures.

Attendance at Sunday morning worship is currently c. 80 +/- 15.

The age profile of the congregation is a fairly typical Church of Scotland profile and has most recently been estimated as:

- under 16 - 7%
- 16-24 - 0%
- 25-44 - 5%
- 45-64 - 18%
- 65-84 - 65%
- over 84 - 5%

Peterculter Parish Church is financially stable. Prior to 2023, the two churches were in separate Presbyteries, Kincardine & Deeside and Aberdeen & Shetland. Both Presbytery Plans acknowledged the synergy between the neighbouring parishes and recognised the potential benefits in considering a united future. The formation of the Presbytery of the North East and Northern Isles made this conversation far easier and so the union was created. The then 7 members of Drumoak-Durris Kirk Session had voted to dissolve their church upon the retirement of their minister due to the increasing limitations upon their time and energy but the union with Peterculter has prevented this being necessary. It also means financial resources have been aggregated to the benefit of the new church.



Drumoak Church



Durris Church

Our New Minister

The formation of the new extended parish has begun well with a good sense of togetherness already present in the newly expanded Kirk Session. The appointment of a new minister creates the perfect opportunity to consolidate the new parish and to develop a new Mission Statement which would incorporate the Church of Scotland's Five Marks of Mission. This will enable us to move forward as a united church community, building upon the strengths we already have.

The arrival of our new minister will be the opportunity for them to use their energy, compassionate people skills and understanding at individual and congregation levels to nurture, sustain and support the coming together of three geographically distinct communities as one with a solidified and continuing sense of togetherness and fellowship. Use of good communication skills to transmit confidence and enthusiasm will be key.

Working Within Aberdeen West Parish Grouping

There is close collaboration between the congregations and the Aberdeen West Steering group comprising Ministers, Session Clerks and an additional Elder from each congregation meets regularly to arrange shared events during Holy Week, at Pentecost and other opportunities as they arise.

It is important that our new minister would be happy to be an integral part of this Parish Grouping team. It is anticipated that teamwork amongst the ministers and congregations within the Parish Grouping will become more significant in the years to come and the agreed [**Basis of Parish Grouping can be accessed by clicking here.**](#)

Drumoak-Durris Church had previously been in a grouping with other neighbouring churches in Kincardine and Deeside Presbytery.

Young People in the Church

A recognised priority within our church will be to encourage and develop relationships with the young people in our parish. Previously the Culter Kirk minister had good relationships with local schools and it is hoped that this would continue.

Looking Ahead

Peterculter Church is to remain open having scored highly in the Asset Management Building Audit (AMBA) exercise and is now the main place of worship for the newly extended parish.

The Future of Peterculter Parish

The major challenge now is to inspire and create a stable and dedicated worshipping community and to move forward with a clear purpose, reaching beyond the walls of the church to continue and enhance the good work which is already established in the local communities. There are many existing examples of this connection with the church halls in both Peterculter and Drumoak being heavily used by local youth organisations, Boys' Brigade, Pipe Band, local group meetings, entertainment events and other ad hoc bookings.

We do, however, seek leadership to broaden the spread of our Christian message across our community, especially to younger age groups.

Culter Kirk Hall already serves as a social centre, providing a tea and coffee service on a Saturday and Thursday and is also used for the local 'Warm Space' initiative. Drumoak Church Hall hosts a Seniors' Friendship Group and the 'Drum Tots' parent and child group.



Continued fellowship following Sunday morning worship in Culter Kirk Hall

We recognise this engagement within the community is essential to showing Christ at work through our contributions and to ensure the future health of the church in this parish. As such, the new minister will have the passion, imagination and sense of adventure to creatively lead us in further reinforcing our presence within the parish community. This needs to be accomplished whilst at the same time creating a stable post-union identity within the congregation.

The Kirk Session well recognises the need to support the minister's own personal development whilst growing their ministry here and will offer whatever encouragement and practical assistance needed to accomplish this.

Community Profile

While our Church is called Peterculter Parish Church, our parish is large and covers both the suburban village of Peterculter which is part of Aberdeen City, the village and surrounding area of Drumoak, and the rural area of Durris, which are both part of Aberdeenshire. Peterculter itself has a history of being a separate rural community within the Shire on the old Royal Deeside railway line and in which the Culter Paper Mill was a significant employer. It is a diverse and therefore interesting parish which now extends to both sides of the River Dee.

It would be fair to say that the socio-economic profile is mixed but there are no recognised areas of social deprivation in the area. Generally, the area is considered as aspirational and the housing and schools in our area are sought after.

Education

The Parish is very well served from an educational point of view. There are three primary schools in the Parish, Culter School, Drumoak School and Durris School and all are well regarded in their local communities. Pupils in Drumoak and Durris are zoned to Banchory Academy while Peterculter is zoned to Cults Academy. Both Cults and Banchory Academies are non-denominational and achieve excellent results in Scottish Qualification Authority exams. School Chaplaincy has been part of the work undertaken by our previous ministers and would be actively encouraged.

Aberdeen City has the North East Scotland College and two universities, Aberdeen University and Robert Gordon University. These institutions all offer a very wide range of courses to suit the needs and interests of those progressing to further or higher education.

Health Services

Primary health care provision is provided by Peterculter Medical Practice or Banchory Group Practice. Hospital referrals are normally to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary. ARI is a national trauma centre and accepts patients from all over the North East of Scotland and from the Northern Isles. There are dental practices in both Peterculter and Banchory.

There are several care homes and an assisted living complex locally which have enjoyed good links with our Church. Small services of worship have been conducted in three of them in the past.

Community Activities

Each community has many active organised groups within it and the '[**Culter Courier**](#)' and the '[**Drumoak and Durris Newsletter**](#)' include details of many of these. Both publications are distributed to many households in the area and available on-line. [**Culter Community Council**](#) and [**Crathes, Drumoak and Durris Community Council**](#) websites also give some indication of the clubs available to join and the various community projects which are undertaken in our Parish.

Local facilities include Peterculter Golf Club, Peterculter Sports' Centre, Cults Academy swimming pool, Drumoak Bowling Club, Culter Village Hall, St Peter's Heritage Hall and of course Culter Kirk Halls and Drumoak Church Hall.

There are football teams for all ages, a pipe band, theatre club and many lovely walks throughout the Parish with a number of established walking groups.

A real sense of community exists and local events are generally well supported.



Park Bridge - linking Drumoak and Durris

Entertainment and Culture

Peterculter has been described as being both a part of Aberdeen City whilst at the same time being apart from the city. With our Parish being so near a major city there is good access to a broad variety of entertainment. Major world artists are now booking the P&J Live Arena, there is His Majesty's Theatre which hosts many shows each year, the Tivoli Theatre with a variety of different shows and the Music Hall which attracts many singers and groups for concerts. The Arts Centre is another venue where a lot of local shows are performed.

The city plays host to two senior football teams, Aberdeen F.C. ('The Dons') and Cove Rangers F.C.

The mix of local activities in each of our different areas added to the activities offered in Scotland's third city mean that there is genuinely something for all tastes.

Outside the city, there are so many attractions too including the National Trust for Scotland properties of Drum Castle situated within the parish and Crathes Castle just outside. Both boast attractive gardens and woodland walks. Other castles are within easy reach including Castle Fraser and the spectacular Dunnottar Castle overlooking the North Sea just south of Stonehaven.

Woodend Barn in Banchory provides a comprehensive programme of entertainment events and part of the old Royal Deeside railway line has been restored with a station at Milton of Crathes.

Transport

Peterculter is served by a frequent city bus service which crosses Aberdeen through the city centre and both Peterculter and Drumoak are served by the 'country bus' service to Ballater and Braemar up Royal Deeside.

The Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (AWPR) makes road travel north and south much easier now with a junction adjacent to Peterculter. Both Aberdeen International Airport to the north of the city, and the coastal town of Stonehaven to the south are barely 20 minutes' drive away on the AWPR. The north end of Dundee is but one hour distant on the A90 dual carriageway.

The airport has regular flights to London and many of our regional airports with further scheduled international flights to Amsterdam, Dublin, Stavanger, Bergen and Poland. Seasonal departures fly direct to popular holiday destinations.

Aberdeen has a main railway station with regular trains north to Inverness and south to several destinations including Edinburgh, Glasgow and London. Stonehaven and Inverurie stations offer handy alternatives with free parking.

A frequent Intercity bus service links Aberdeen to the major Scottish destinations too and an overnight Caledonian Sleeper service runs to London.

We are so very fortunate to live in such a scenic part of the world with excellent transport connections and where visiting Royal Deeside, coastal towns, villages, beaches, spectacular cliffs and historic castles is so easy.



View of Drumoak from Durris

Worship Life

Sunday worship is at 10.30am in Culter Kirk with teas and coffees after the service always proving to be a very popular extension to our fellowship.

There are further short midweek services once a month in each of Culter Kirk (first Thursday), Drumoak Church Hall (second Thursday) and for now, Durris Church (last Thursday) each preceded by a tea and coffee service.

The style and timing of worship is very much down to the minister assisted by the views of the Kirk Executive and Session.

The congregation is accustomed to a variety of styles of delivery with thoughtful and reflective sermons of relevance to the nature of modern society. Prayer has always been a very important element of our worship and an 'all ages' talk for children has long been part of our services before they go through to 'Young Church' in the adjacent hall.

Hymns are generally chosen from CH4, accompanied by the organ or electric piano and occasionally more contemporary material is sung led by backing tracks or videos.

Bible readings are normally read by a member of the congregation on a rota basis and a Worship Team has contributed to worship from time to time.

The Sacrament of Holy Communion is celebrated three times a year with the midsummer service being a Family Communion at which the children are invited to participate.

Baptisms have been in the range of 0 to 6 per year and funerals generally number between 20 and 40 annually with some being conducted at the nearby Baldarroch Crematorium at Crathes.

Special Services

Special services in the church include a 'Time to Remember' Sunday afternoon service in December for those in the community who have been bereaved, Candlelit and Watchnight Services on Christmas Eve, a midweek December evening Carol Service with a city brass band and one of the shared Aberdeen West Parish Grouping midweek evening services during Holy Week.

One highlight is the early morning outdoor service (weather permitting!) on Easter Sunday morning on the Culter Glebe with its unaccompanied singing and beautiful view across the Lower Dee valley, followed by breakfast in the Church Hall.

Services with a small group from the congregation have been held in the past at the local Care Homes, and Culter Primary School has used the church for end of year services.

A brief reflection has been held at the Culter War Memorial after the church service on Remembrance Sunday and further brief ceremonies have been conducted at the Drumoak and Durris War Memorials.

Boys' Brigade Enrolment takes place during a Sunday morning service.

Practicalities of Worship

The printed Order of Service is prepared by the Church Administrator on Fridays along with the appropriate PowerPoint slides to be shown on the large screen at the front of the church during the service based upon the minister's guidance. PowerPoint proficiency would be a desirable skill for our new minister to have.

Culter Kirk has an Allen digital organ, keyboard and projection equipment. Services are recorded using remote cameras in three positions and are both live streamed and available to view later on Facebook and YouTube. **Look them up!**

Drumoak Church Hall and Durris Church both have keyboards which are used for the midweek services by the organist from the previous Drumoak-Durris charge.

Parish Maildrops

Parish maildrops are organised for before Christmas and sometimes Easter where postcards detailing the various services at these times are delivered to as many households in the village of Peterculter as possible. We now have the potential to extend this seasonal exercise to the village of Drumoak too. This helps to raise the profile and awareness of the Kirk in the community, along with articles prepared by the Minister or in their absence, the Session Clerk, which appear in the two community magazines within the parish, the 'Culter Courier' and 'Drumoak & Durris Newsletter'.



Pastoral Care and Communication

The village of Peterculter is divided into c. 30 Elder Districts and district elders will deliver 'Focus', the monthly church newsletter to those members who do not have e-mail.

Culter is quite a tight knit community and there is an effective informal communication network providing information about members to the Minister.

Communication is managed by 'ChurchTrac' which is an online membership database. We are in the process of incorporating the Drumoak-Durris membership into this system.

The Minister is further informed by the members who are monitored by the Care Team. The team of six or seven members meets roughly every two months and each team member tries to visit two or three of our housebound members each month. The team also organises Christmas and Easter cards to be sent to all those members in care homes and otherwise on the monitoring list.

Seniors' events organised by the Care Team members each year include an afternoon tea with entertainment and a bus outing to a garden centre with a restaurant or similar.

We are a welcoming congregation and visiting ministers have frequently complimented us on our friendliness and sincerity.

Christian Education

Young Church is held every Sunday with the children and leaders retiring to the Small Hall after the children's address and song. Numbers attending have varied between two and eight. One of the highlights of the Young Church year is the children's Nativity Play which is a feature of the family Christmas service.

An adult bible class has run successfully in the past but needs re-invigorated.

Culter Kirk has in the past run several Alpha courses and has more recently successfully hosted one of several Alpha courses being run by an independent evangelical city church. The leader of this particular course was a local Primary School teacher and good friend of one of our members. It was a valuable experience to appreciate the breadth of the Christian faith that exists within our local community.

The 47th Culter Boys' Brigade is affiliated to Culter Kirk and has their annual enrolment service in the church.



Ecumenical Context

Culter Kirk is a member of the Aberdeen West Parish Grouping as detailed on page 4.

Other denominations close to Peterculter include St. Devenick's Scottish Episcopal Church in Bielside and the independent Deeside Christian Fellowship in Milltimber. In past years, there was an annual Lower Deeside pulpit exchange involving these two churches and the then two, now united Culter Churches of Scotland.

Drumoak-Durris Church had in the past enjoyed a close relationship with both Peterculter and Banchory East Churches of Scotland. The neighbouring town of Banchory hosts a Scottish Episcopal Church, a Catholic Church (St Columba's) and an independent Christian Fellowship Church. A previous Church of Scotland Parish Grouping with Mid Deeside Church in Torphins, Birse & Feughside Church and Banchory Ternan East and Banchory Ternan West Churches lasted for a short time.

Our congregation is open to and welcoming of pulpit exchanges with neighbouring ministers of different denominations.

World Church

Culter Kirk actively promotes and participates in Christian Aid Week, and has organised door to door collection within the community as far as resources allow.

Drumoak-Durris Church have supported Tear Fund and Christian Aid in the past, and both previous congregations were involved in selling Fair Trade produce but not since the onset of Covid.

Stewardship and Finance

Peterculter Parish Church is financially sound and as at 31 December 2023 had met in full all requirements in respect of Ministries & Mission and Giving to Grow Contributions.

At that year end unrestricted local reserves were approximately £234k, excluding restricted and endowment funds of around £35k. In addition to these locally held funds there are further capital funds of £302k and revenue funds of £44k held on behalf of the congregation by the Church of Scotland General Trustees. In due course these capital funds will be increased following the disposal of the second manse and redundant church buildings.



Culter Kirk at Easter Time

Staffing

The church has three employees, a Church Administrator, Organist and Cleaner with further contracted out services for cleaning at Drumoak Church Hall and a Gardener for Culter Kirk grounds and the manse garden. Culter Kirk has a separate building which houses the church office, a smaller meeting room and store room. The Church Administrator works part time, two mornings a week for 10 hours a week. She also willingly acts as the Kirk Session and Executive minute secretary. The Drumoak Church Hall also has a small office should this prove useful.

Currently four volunteers share a monthly rotation as Beadle.

Additionally, three members on monthly rotation operate the audio-visual desk during each service and a Door Duty rota exists for two Welcome Elders and two Collection Count Elders each Sunday.

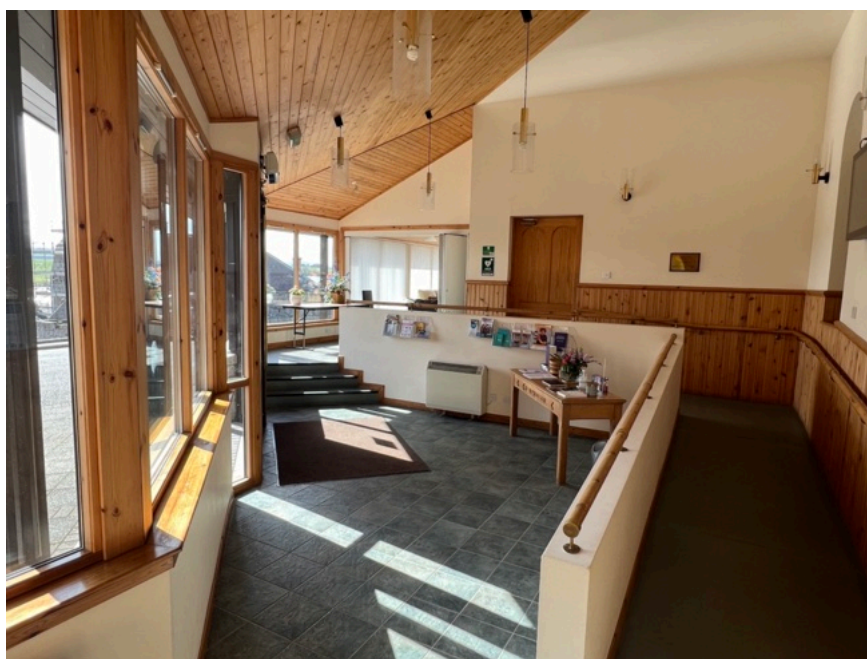


The Deeside Way

Church, Manse, Office and Halls

Church property comprises:

- three church buildings, two to be disposed of
- church halls in Culter and Drumoak, both with kitchen facilities
- church office and small meeting room adjacent to Culter Kirk
- two manses, one to be let or disposed of



The modern extension serves as the main entrance to Culter Kirk

The Manse

The manse, situated a short walk from Culter Kirk, was built in 1983 and enjoys a commanding and unobstructed view over the lower Dee valley that every visitor and resident admires. There is a good sized garden around the house with a steep grassy slope to the front. This has been used in the past for children to roll their painted Easter eggs down following the outdoor Easter morning service on the neighbouring Glebe.

Accommodation comprises 2 public rooms, 4 bedrooms, 1 family bathroom, 1 shower room with toilet, modern kitchen with open plan dining area (previously a separate dining room), utility room, detached garage and parking space for 2 vehicles.



Church Office

The church office is a self contained building adjacent to Culter Kirk and halls and comprises a main office, a meeting room, small kitchen area and toilet.

The office is equipped with computer and printing facilities, has an internet connection and there is wifi access throughout the entire suite of buildings.



Culter Kirk Halls

Culter Halls are fully utilised 4 nights a week, occasionally 5 nights by:

- Beavers, Cubs and Scouts
- Rainbows, Brownies and Guides
- Seniors' Dancing Group
- Boys' Brigade
- Culter & District Pipe Band
- Yoga Group
- Thursday, Saturday and Sunday teas & coffee



Drumoak Church Hall

Drumoak Church Hall is used by:

- Beavers and Cubs
- Drum Tots mother & infant group
- Bagpipes tutor
- Friendship Group
- Community Music Group



Web Links

- [Peterculter Parish Church of Scotland website](#)
- [Culter Kirk Facebook Page](#)
- [Culter Kirk YouTube Channel](#)
- [Culter Community Council website](#)
- [Crathes, Drumoak and Durris Community Council website](#)
- [Presbytery of North East and Northern Isles website](#)
- [Focus - Peterculter Parish Church newsletter](#)
- [Culter Courier - Culter's community newsletter](#)
- [Drumoak and Durris Newsletter](#)



Culter Kirk Newsletter



Culter Community Newsletter



Drumoak & Durris Church/Community Newsletter

Contact Details

Isabel McIntyre
Convenor, Nominating Committee
[**vacancy@culterkirk.co.uk**](mailto:vacancy@culterkirk.co.uk)

Ross Andrews
Clerk, Nominating Committee
[**vacancyclerk@culterkirk.co.uk**](mailto:vacancyclerk@culterkirk.co.uk)

Rev. Duncan Eddie
Interim Moderator
[**DEddie@churchofscotland.org.uk**](mailto:DEddie@churchofscotland.org.uk)