

# Edinburgh Northwest Kirk

(Cramond Kirk and The Old Kirk and Muirhouse)

Church of Scotland



## PARISH PROFILE

**Will you come and share our vision of worship, service and outreach  
to our newly-formed community of Christ's Church?**

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## Interim Moderator

Rev Dr Martin Scott

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## Clerk to the Nominating Committee

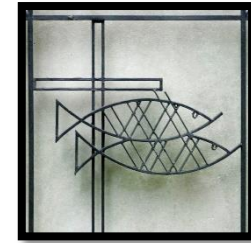
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**Charity No SC006457**

**Northwest Kirk seeks to share the love of God with the wide diversity of people in our congregation and parish by nurturing, caring for, serving and celebrating our people and our Lord.**



As a newly united congregation within the Presbytery of Edinburgh and West Lothian, Edinburgh Northwest Kirk affirms the Church of Scotland Mission Statement. We are seeking a Minister who will help lead us in achieving our vision:

**In our congregational life ...**

- Faithful to the ***call to be disciples of Jesus Christ*** in the way we live our lives, learning from the biblical story and from our Christian heritage, but open to new ideas and ways of reaching out to others;
- People who maintain a ***place of welcome*** both through open doors and in our attitude and response to others;
- A community which is ***hospitable***, both physically in terms of our buildings and in our activities for and with others;
- An ***inclusive*** congregation, being both a sanctuary for those who need acceptance and through unconditional respect for people regardless of their race, social standing, gender, sexuality or ability;
- Active in our work with ***children and young people*** in Sunday Funday, Sunday Club, youth organisations and through engagement with schools and nurseries within the parish;
- ***Ecumenical*** in our outlook and practice, building strong relationships with other denominations and faith groups;
- ***Caring and supportive*** of both our own members and the wider parish community in which we are called to serve.



### As a newly united congregation, beginning to...

- **Explore** our parish further, getting to know its strengths, weaknesses, its opportunities and needs, building on the experience we already have of the two former parishes;
- **Understand** what is already happening around us to which we may respond and add value, especially where our combined knowledge can identify opportunities;
- Get to know one another better and learn to **function effectively** together as Edinburgh Northwest parish, a united congregation;
- Create a new structure for **governance** and the operation of parish structures, including shaping of the new Kirk Session and proposed Teams which will coordinate our activities (Resources; Parish Mission; Pastoral Care; Worship; Media & Communications; Young People; Social and Community Events);
- Plan the shape of our new Ministry Team to help meet the mission opportunities which have been created through the union of our former parishes.

### Accepting the challenges we face, including...

- Working with others locally and nationally to address the major issues of our community, particularly around the alleviation of poverty and care for the environment;
- Connecting with young people in our area and engaging them in the life and worship of the congregation;
- Shaping parish life in ways that utilise the skills and abilities of all, given the diverse socio-economic make-up of the parish;
- Building meaningful relationships with the wider Parish Grouping to which we belong, including the joint appointment of a pioneer worker between TOK&M, West Pilton and Drylaw (part of a neighbouring parish);
- Choosing the right person to be our Parish Minister to lead our life as a new and vibrant congregation;
- Addressing the age profile of the congregation, particularly at Cramond;
- Developing a viable plan for the use and development of our buildings.





## Edinburgh Northwest Kirk – Our Parish Community

Newly formed through the union of the Old Kirk and Muirhouse (TOK&M) and Cramond Kirk on **1<sup>st</sup> September 2023**, we are nevertheless known well to each other having a long and amicable history of working together. Both congregations were already in vacancy before the union, but were unable to move towards calling a Minister until the Presbytery Mission Plan was formed and finally approved in April 2023. We are now looking forward with excitement to the appointment of a full-time Minister of Word and Sacrament to lead us in opening our minds and hearts to serve our diverse community.



Local  
parishes



Where will you find us? The clue is in our name! At the northwest corner of the City of Edinburgh, our parish has watery boundaries formed by the River Almond to the west and the Firth of Forth to the north. It extends south and east over four square miles and has a rich history. There has been a church on the present site at Cramond since the 6<sup>th</sup> century and whilst TOK&M was formed through a succession of unions, one strand tracing its roots back to The Old Kirk of John Knox and the Reformation.

The area is a suburban community with pockets of deprivation and poverty adjacent to affluent and prosperous areas. With new housing developments in Cammo Meadows and several other locations, our parish now encompasses homes for around 22,000 people.

There are currently two centres for worship and outreach stemming from the two churches of the union. A presence across the whole parish is seen as essential given the wide extent and size of the population.

There is a strong call to work in the fields of education and care across the parish. Included in our area are...

- 7 primary schools and 1 secondary school, with all of which we have good relationships and some of which we have built close relationships.
- A good number of nurseries, with a new one to come in Cammo Meadows
- 3 elderly care homes, where Ministers from within our wider Parish Grouping lead worship on a monthly basis
- 3 medical practices and a new All Care facility at Pennywell

The majority of retail outlets across the parish comprise small grocers; food outlets and cafes; 2 Post Offices and a number of individual shops. Supermarkets of all price ranges can be found towards the edge of neighbouring parishes and are easily accessible. There are good and frequent bus services from all parts of the parish, offering links to the city centre, the main hospitals and other key parts of the city.

## Our Ministry Team

The **Ministry Team** currently consists of an Interim Moderator, two Locum ministers (one locally paid) and two Parish Workers (1.5 FTE). One of these has a contract until 25.3.25 the other is on a life contract and may remain in this post until the end of 2025. The permanent staffing of the parish as outlined in the Presbytery Mission Plan will be the **Parish Minister**. In addition to those who provide ministry, there are other valued employees of the parish, including a Kirk Secretary, who has long provided administrative support to the Minister and congregation at Cramond, and is highly respected for both her work and for the compassion she shows people. There is a Properties Manager and Beadle (full time), two properties' assistants (one part, one full time) and a cleaner (part time). Our regular contractors include a cleaner and a gardener at TOK&M and a gardener who tends both manse gardens and the Cramond Kirkyard. The future shape of the team serving the whole parish will be an area for significant input from the new Minister.



Edinburgh Northwest Kirk has completed the process of Act 1, 2015 by which we indicate that we welcome applications from Ministers in a civil partnership or same sex marriage.

A process of union understandably brings its anxieties for both parts of the congregation. Physically there is distance of 2 miles between the church buildings and there is no direct public transport link. The smaller congregation at Pennywell Gardens may be wary of being dominated by the larger one at Cramond, with the larger one anxious of being domineering. Our new Minister will be sensitive to this, enable open communication and develop the skills of the whole Ministry Team and staff.





## Our Congregation and Kirk Session

Our Communion **Roll** holds over 870 names. The larger proportion on the Cramond roll historically enabled that larger congregation to support its neighbour with volunteers and advice, assisting it to stand alone. This included a succession of Elders from Cramond fulfilling the role of Session Clerk over the past +20 years at TOK&M and assistance with finance and buildings in particular. This has provided a firm foundation of co-operation and friendship on which to build the new union.



Edinburgh Northwest Kirk has a **Unitary Constitution**. A Co-ordinating Committee, now called the **Union Integration Group**, was set up in 2022 with representatives from both congregations, including the Session Clerks and Interim Moderators. This group has led and advised what is now the united Kirk Session on the process of union and will continue to support the new Kirk Session in the inaugural period of union. The Kirk Session structure is being revised and we are discussing a new model with a slimmed down Trustee body, envisaged to have around 20 members. Elders who are not part of the Trustee body would continue pastoral and worship duties and support overall church needs and activities by working in Teams. We expect our new Minister will help shape this new structure but in the interim we are proposing 7 Teams for:

- Resources (*including Finance, Property*)
- Parish Mission (*including liaison with work in Cammo Meadows*)
- Pastoral Care
- Worship (*including Special Services and Holy Week*)
- Media & Communications (*including Social Media; website; Parish magazine*)
- Social and Community Events (*including sales; Christian Aid Week*)
- Young People (*covering work with up to 30-year-olds*)



## Worship

Worship lies at the heart of all that we do. We fully anticipate that new patterns will emerge from the new united parish and the appointment of a new Minister. Our worship aims to be highly participative, with congregational members sharing in the conduct of services through prayers, readings, drama and other forms of expression. In both of our centres we are blessed with very capable musicians, including a choir at Cramond. While our orders of service have been relatively traditional, we are open to change and look forward to developments in this area. There is technology to support new ways of worshipping and services from both centres are live-streamed on a regular basis. Short online devotions are posted midweek. Typical attendance at services is around 50 at TOK&M and 130 at Cramond Kirk. We have special focus services at Christmas (incl. Christingle), Easter (incl. Holy Week), Pentecost, for Christian Aid Week, Harvest – and regularly in local schools.



In addition to regular and special services, we also serve the parish by seeking to offer comfort and support to those who experience bereavement through the conduct of funeral services. All stages of the life-cycle are marked as we offering baptism and blessing to those seeking this as well as being fortunate to occupy an area with significant beauty making Cramond popular as a wedding venue.

## Children and Young People



Children's church is a part of the service at both venues each Sunday morning. Teaching is provided by a team of leaders usually using Godly Play. Over 20 children attend regularly in Muirhouse though numbers vary from week to week, but we currently expect less than five children at Cramond. This is one of the main differences between the two worshipping communities. Over 400 young people and countless leaders take part in The Boys Brigade, Guiding or Scouting which meet in both sets of halls. Good relationships have formed and involvement in church services and events are part of their annual calendar.





**Pastoral care** is high on the agenda of the parish. Given the age profile of the congregation (predominantly over 50) this poses a challenge in terms of communication for effective pastoral support. There are over 870 on the Cramond Kirk Roll and most of the active Elders there look after a group of 10-15 church members living in or close to Cramond. Pastoral care in Muirhouse is offered by the pastoral assistant and elders as need arises. There are around 300 members who live further afield, and 22,000 people in the community who we would wish to provide for where needed. We are working on ways to improve communication and increase the roles of some Elders to support the Ministry team both locally and through representation our Parish Grouping.

### **Connecting with the Wider Parish Community**

There are many existing connections between the united congregation and the wider community in which it is set. While it might be seen as a parish of contrasts, there are needs which we are called to serve right across the parish. **West Pilton and Muirhouse** is an area of the city with many groups seeking to support those with differing needs and the church seeks to join hands with others in doing so. Distribution of excess supermarket food is channelled through TOK&M on a Sunday morning to any who wish to help themselves. Like the loaves and fish, there is always some remaining which is either left for anyone to collect from the church gates or taken to The Millennium Centre where it can be accessed. Volunteers work with Esperanza, a group of immigrant women who are given confidence to live in their new land, aided by friendship, counselling facilities and space to share their common languages of needlework and cooking for one another. These are but examples of existing engagement with others in support work and our new Minister will want to bring his or her expertise and ideas to deepen and expand our relationships across the parish as a whole.



Some further examples of current engagement between church and community are:

- **Low Income Families Together @ Muirhouse Millenium Centre** - family support – <https://www.lift-edinburgh.com/>
- **North Edinburgh Arts** centre – multi cultural, family and adult learning support and activities – <https://northedinburgharts.co.uk/>
- **Fresh Start** – a charity founded to help alleviate homelessness. The last Minister of Cramond, Very Rev Dr Russell Barr, was one of the main instigators as were members at TOK&M. It has grown to serve thousands with a staff of 20 and a host of supporting volunteers – [www.freshstartweb.org.uk](http://www.freshstartweb.org.uk)
- **R<sup>2</sup> Response and Recovery Group** which supports over 30 organisations working in and around the area



The halls in **Cramond** are in constant use throughout the week, including a café which is well supported by locals and visitors. It can be a lifeline to many who experience loneliness, a significant issue facing many in modern Scotland. There are Scout groups and other activities for young people as well as a regular stream of people hiring the facilities for family and other celebrations. Ministers from the wider Parish Grouping share leading regular services in a number of care homes for the elderly around the parish. A recent development has been the creation of a memorial garden at Cramond and the flourishing of a peaceful haven for reflection around the kirkyard. This serves the local community and connects us in a very practical way with it. A tree planting project held by the kirk has strengthened links within the community. The halls in **The Old Kirk and Muirhouse** are also well used with a coffee morning, Boys' Brigade, parent and toddler group, Guides, etc. Local community and City of Edinburgh Council events

have recently been hosted in the halls addressing issues such as refurbishment of Council houses and “20 Minute Neighbourhoods”. The gardens are used well by the community and include a labyrinth, raised beds and areas where different groups grow vegetables or flowers.





## Connecting Ecumenically and Globally

We enjoy good and fruitful relationships with other churches in the neighbourhood and want to see this area of connection developing into the future. The local Church of Scotland Ministers began meeting regularly during the development of the Presbytery Mission Plan and continue to do so intentionally. Other denominations in the area include Baptist, Roman Catholic, Episcopal and the Reformed Church. There is a local grouping of the Church of Scotland churches including Cramond Kirk, TOK&M, Blackhall St. Columba's, Drylaw and Davidsons Mains. We are open to developing relationships with those of other faiths.



Edinburgh Northwest congregation recognises that we belong in a global context and affirms its intention to engage with, support and learn from partners in different parts of the world. We have applied to partner with a Mission Partner at St Andrew's, Church of Scotland in Jerusalem. One of our teenagers recently worked as a freelance volunteer in Israel overseen through the Church of Scotland, and both TOK&M and Cramond have a long history of working through the Christian Aid Scotland Team to support that charity's worldwide commitment.

Turi Childrens Project in Kenya has been an adopted charity at Cramond since 2015, and donations are made three times a year to aid the charity in feeding and educating children, many of whose lives have been greatly affected by AIDS.

We have a strong tradition of regular fundraising for local and worldwide charities, in addition to those above-mentioned we also support:

- Water Aid, World Mission Appeal,
- Fresh Start, Blythswood Care, Poppy Scotland
- Cramond Kirk is a Fair Trade church. A stall is held monthly and supplies our favoured choice for congregational teas and coffees.
- Annual Jumble Sales and Christmas Fairs in both centres raise funds for agreed charities.



## Caring for our environment

Cramond became an Eco-friendly Congregation some years ago and we are looking to widen this commitment across the parish. Roof insulation, double glazing and energy efficient light fittings are installed in our buildings wherever possible, and special collections of recyclable waste have been arranged after difficulty with council collections. Assessments have been made for electrical car charging points and solar panels and remain to be taken further.

## Our Buildings – Churches, Halls and Manse

The decision to retain both centres of worship has brought comfort and a sense of security as we enter a new phase of common life.



The Old Kirk and Muirhouse building is 1950s architecture and contrasts that of Cramond, with a modern central focal area and natural light filling the interior. It stands in the heart of Muirhouse, an area developed through social housing in the 1950s. The sanctuary and adjoining halls are a standout landmark, and although not at their best in terms of condition, we have the go ahead to improve the buildings (with plans in place before the end of 2025), in order to provide appropriate resources to further the church's mission.

Situated in spacious grounds at the upper end of old Cramond village, Cramond Kirk is an iconic building with a bell tower dating back to the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The interior, rebuilt in 1911, has lovely wooden roof timbers and pews blending side by side with high spec monitor screens and online streaming equipment. Popular with local residents and tourists alike, the kirkyard and memorial garden form a peaceful haven, well maintained by a gardener and band of volunteers. A path leads through the kirkyard to the suite of halls, a well-used hub for the community.





**Manse 1** This is a late Victorian detached stone villa, situated at 35 Silverknowes Road. It previously served as the manse for TOK&M. This manse is well positioned at the centre of the united parish and comprises on the ground floor, an entrance hall, lounge, dining room, study, kitchen and toilet; and on the first floor, 4 double bedrooms and a large bathroom. There is a detached single garage, and extensive, well-kept gardens. The Minister will be able to view both manses before deciding which s/he might prefer. The Kirk Session considers this manse to be more suitable.



**Manse 2** Dating from 1745 this manse stands beside Cramond Kirk in the village. It comprises kitchen; bathroom; shower room; 5 bedrooms; dining room; lounge; family room; basement; attic rooms; a spiral staircase; outhouses and garage; extensive grounds. There is potential for this property to be a significant resource to enhance God's work in the Parish and beyond.

**Cramond House** A large stately house lies adjacent to the Cramond Kirk Halls, from which the church receives a welcome rental income through a lease to Little Monkeys children's nursery.

## Stewardship and Finance

Both TOK&M and Cramond Kirk were in the fortunate position of holding good reserves which have been carried into the union. That said, we are mindful of the need to plan for changes to our buildings at TOK&M as well as considerable long term maintenance costs at Cramond which could utilise a large proportion of these reserves. The annual accounts for 2022 are available on our website/s. A stewardship campaign seeking talents, time and money within the congregation is due now the pressure of the pandemic and changes in our structure has receded.



**Further information and links to the following are available under the Northwest Kirk Parish Profile page at [www.cramondkirk.org.uk](http://www.cramondkirk.org.uk) or from the Kirk Office on 0131 336 2036 or at [office@cramondkirk.org.uk](mailto:office@cramondkirk.org.uk)**

1. The Old Kirk & Muirhouse website ([www.tokandmchurch.co.uk](http://www.tokandmchurch.co.uk))
2. Cramond Kirk website ([www.cramondkirk.org.uk](http://www.cramondkirk.org.uk))
3. Trustees Annual Reports and Accounts for 2022 – The Old Kirk & Muirhouse and Cramond Kirk
4. Manse Summaries – The Old Kirk & Muirhouse and Cramond Kirk
5. Manse Condition Schedules – The Old Kirk & Muirhouse and Cramond Kirk
6. Histories – The Old Kirk & Muirhouse and Cramond Kirk
7. Facebook Pages – The Old Kirk & Muirhouse and Cramond Kirk
8. X / Twitter Page – Cramond Kirk