



The Church of Scotland  
Presbytery of Edinburgh

CURRIE PARISH CHURCH – 2018

WHERE ARE

WE NOW?

Local Church Review – Section 2

*Paul said: "God is not far from us for in him we live and move and have our being."*

# WHERE ARE WE NOW?

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All churches do the same things – they gather to praise God (**WORSHIP**), they help each other grow in faith (**DISCIPLESHIP**), they care for their neighbours (**SERVICE**), they look for new Christians (**EVANGELISM**) and they work at being a family of faith (**FELLOWSHIP**). The healthy church keeps a balance between these five purposes. But *how* churches do these things varies enormously.

Some of the variety comes from the place where they are set, the context where they live out their calling.

And in the same place at different times the patterns also change as relationships develop or diminish and as the world around us changes too.

In this part of Local Church Review the emphasis is on laying out what you do and why you do things the way you do them.

*Note that the sections below will expand when you type into them.*

## Worship

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### WHAT?

Sunday morning worship includes a children's address, with our Sunday school (currently called Kidz@Currie) and creche taking place at the same time in adjacent accommodation. Audio-visual screens in the church play an integral role and include everything from intimations, scriptures and words of hymns, to relevant video clips.

We benefit from having occasional guest preachers and drawing from our list of best loved hymns. All Age Services are held regularly throughout the year.

For five-and-a-half years we have run a monthly Messy Church for youngsters up to Primary 7 with their accompanying adult and this year have increased it to twice a month, by popular demand.

Special worship includes main communion four times a year and informal communion eight times.

Christmas worship includes advent services with children lighting successive candles for Hope, Peace, Joy and Love; a nativity drama in the church; a Pyjama Christingle service at 6.00pm on Christmas Eve and a candlelit Watchnight service at 11.00pm; and a Family service in the church on Christmas Day.

Our Remembrance Sunday service features an Act of Remembrance, a Boys' Brigade piper playing the lament and poppy wreath laying at the War Memorial.

Other special services are Harvest Thanksgiving with donations to the Trinity Centre Foodbank at Wester Hailes Holy Trinity Church and an Easter Day service with a walk and breakfast beforehand. Our Boys' Brigade co-ordinate an Easter egg collection for the local foodbank. Our own Festival Choir sings at all these special services.

We take part in Holy Week services alongside other local churches, including the Roman Catholic church. We hold a joint valley service with Juniper Green and Balerno churches and a joint service with Currie Community Church (formerly Baptist church) and occasionally a shared meal at evening services.

Annual services are held for a number of local organisations, large and small. There is the Town and Gown Service for Heriot Watt University Founder's Day, which is hosted by the University Court, including their student choir and a guest preacher, often a distinguished academic.

The Kirkin' of the Community Council service is held on the Sunday after the Riding of the Marches with the Ensign and Equerry carrying the Currie Banner. There are also rededication services for the Boys' Brigade and the Guild.

We have enjoyed shared worship with a visiting youth section of a US Presbyterian church who offered to host an exchange visit for our youngsters.

Local primary schools come to Currie Kirk at the end of term at Easter and Christmas and hold special services (including a mock wedding with children taking the main roles).

## WHY?

We do things this way, partly for historical reasons to maintain long held local tradition, but also because this variety of approach seems to suit different age groups and community groups. Sermons, which are often based on lectionary readings, also incorporate current topics linking to everyday life. We see the need to reach out to the community in everyday life as part of the mission of Currie Kirk, reflecting our motto of *Where Faith and Life Cross Paths*.

# Discipleship

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## WHAT?

It is important to note that much of what we do under the earlier heading of Worship helps each other grow in faith.

Services are recorded on CD and distributed to the housebound or sick along with a paper copy of the Order of Service which shows the intimations.

We held a lively *trypraying* re-launch service in conjunction with Currie Community Church and their Praise Band, when we also welcomed guest speaker, David Hart, to highlight the teaching in the *trypraying* booklet. We continue to distribute the booklets.

The *trypraying* initiative continues to be supported in sermons.

A short Prayer Tree Service takes place monthly following worship, where members can follow the ancient and anonymous way of sharing prayer concerns by pinning leaves on the prayer tree for a need or a person. Through our Prayer Covenant Group we can ask for anyone or any situation, knowing that you or someone in need are in the thoughts of others and that prayers being said can have a wonderful calming effect and the reassurance of being held in God's love. Once a month, we hold a Wednesday morning prayer meeting to which all are welcome.

Our Family Worker, shared with Juniper Green Church and working 10 hours a week, leads a Prayer Group with church members, people from other local churches, Christian parents and teachers, to pray for the ongoing work with children, youth and families. This Prayer Group allows local Christians to share, be encouraged by and give thanks to God for all that is going on, as well as praying for our work going forward.

A Quiet Day for the bereaved is held in the Kirk on the third Saturday in December and we also arrange follow up visits to the bereaved after funerals.

We have bi-annual Sunday Afternoon Communion for those unable to come to regular church, attended by about 60, and also occasional Home Communion on request for the housebound or those in residential care homes.

We have follow-up Baptismal visits with families and an invitation to those baptised to revisit the church with their parents.

Guild meetings begin with worship and include visiting faith speakers.

The Minister is Chaplain to the Boys' Brigade and regularly attends their meetings with our Family Worker. In visiting the BBs, they provide spiritual encouragement and teaching to the boys who attend and support to the BB leaders as they strive to develop Christian faith and nurture Christian values among the boys. BB officers encourage the boys to attend church – and to be proud to do so. This year the Currie 65<sup>th</sup> Boys' Brigade Company hosted the All Edinburgh Battalion Annual Worship.

A Lenten Studies programme is held every year before Easter and this year we had NOOMA Conversations and in 2017 a Lenten Retreat in Daily Life in collaboration with the Epiphany Group. Eighteen people attended this retreat with an initial service on Ash Wednesday and a closing service on the Wednesday before Easter. The journey provided a chance to pause, reflect, pray and recharge one's batteries in the midst of everyday life, whilst being accompanied on one's spiritual journey.

We organise pilgrimages to Iona every two years, which have also attracted members of other nearby churches to attend. Lasting new friendships have developed from sharing in these spiritually uplifting retreats, drawing people closer with morning communion and evening prayers.

Our Pastoral Care Visitor Teams replaced the visiting Elders model and was set up to meet requests for visits or support for the housebound, the long or the short term sick and those in residential care. They are also involved in baptism and bereavement situations.

NOOMA video ministry to young people by Rob Bell is incorporated into the Sunday service as appropriate and is also used by the Boys' Brigade.

## WHY?

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We aim to provide a varied diet of nurture to meet pastoral needs which appeal to different ages and stages of life. Prayer is a very important

communication channel between us and God, both for talking and listening to God and asking for guidance in our everyday lives. At Currie Kirk, we strive to act as Christ's ambassadors, working with schools, charities, local organisations and councils as faithful servants showing God's care to each one we meet, encouraging both young and old to live the Christian life.

## Service

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### WHAT?

The Gibson Craig Hall is owned and run by Currie Kirk and is locally regarded as the 'village hall'. It is widely used by local organisations ranging from Baby Ballet to Zumba and also for one-off functions like birthday and anniversary parties. Kirk members and our shared Family Worker assist with running the Mother and Toddler Group, providing crafts and refreshments on Friday mornings.

Transport – our Kirk minibus picks up members of the congregation who need assistance to get to and from church and other groups such as those attending the Day Care Centre in the Gibson Craig Hall. The branded minibus is a familiar sight throughout the local community helping those who need help. Cars are also made available by a small team of members to take congregation members to hospital appointments.

The Minister is school chaplain to Currie's two primary schools and Woodlands Special School and also joint chaplain to Currie Community High School, providing a weekly 'listening ear' for pupils. Our Family Worker assists in delivery of religious education and assists with Scripture Unions at local primary schools.

Our Flower Group provide the Kirk's Sunday morning flower displays, enhancing the Sanctuary and later dividing these into bouquets for delivery to comfort the bereaved and sick or to celebrate special occasions such as the birth of a child or an anniversary.

The Guild supports a selected project each session for mission at home or abroad. The project last year was 'Prospects in Scotland' working

towards welcoming people with disabilities into church. This year they are supporting 'Free to Live Trust' which aims to rescue abandoned children of trafficked sex workers in India. In addition, we assist Edinburgh Direct Aid, including the co-ordination of the hand-knitting of 2,200 hats and provision of other goods for children and adults in refugee camps in Lebanon.

We have an on-going collection and delivery of goods requested by Fresh Start and two of our members give monthly assistance with packaging of goods at the Fresh Start warehouse into 'Starter Packs' for homeless people moving into first tenancies. A fundraising walk raised £1,000 from the congregation for Fresh Start. We have a collection point for donations of goods to the Trinity Centre Foodbank at Wester Hailes Holy Trinity Church, which are regularly delivered to their centre.

Teams of volunteers serve on the Care Van in Edinburgh on a monthly basis and distribute donations of clothing. Some prepare and serve food and staff the Bethany Homeless Night Shelter in winter.

The Church actively supports a Friday Day Care service for the frail elderly and a dementia café, Tuesday Tea and Tunes, which is held monthly, and £3,000 a year is given to support an AIDS project in Thailand started by our former mission partner, Jane Fucella, who has now returned to the UK with her husband.

We also support the Link to Hope Shoebox Appeal for families in Eastern Europe, collecting about 70 shoeboxes each year.

The Boys' Brigade enjoy being actively involved in Kirk initiatives, for example by sorting books for the Morningside United Church charity book sale and collecting Easter eggs for distribution to 11 foodbanks. BBs assisted at summer Holiday Club for primary school age children.

An Elder is deputy chair of Currie Community Council and schoolchildren are escorted on visits to learn the history of our 12<sup>th</sup> century Currie Kirk



site.

The Minister is committed to visiting any members of the congregation in hospital, a growing number, sadly, reflecting the age of our membership.

## WHY?

Currie is an ever-growing community and new housing developments, underway or planned, suggest it is becoming ever more a commuter extension of Edinburgh. We are working hard to keep our identity as a locally supportive community with Currie Kirk at the heart of a caring and lively environment. We have identified that there are great needs in both the local and wider community and are committed to help meet these needs. Our local, national and international projects reflect that Currie Kirk cares about the needs of the parish, young and old, but also the nearby City of Edinburgh and the wider world.

# Evangelism

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## WHAT?

Our 'Talents' evenings in September 2017 welcomed people across the parish to two showcase events to learn what Currie Kirk is about, its many ministries, service projects and organisations, and to encourage more participation. The fellowship at these events was enjoyed by over 100 people and some felt motivated to seek further information and they have been welcomed with open arms to join their chosen activity or project.

Messy Church is now held twice a month to encourage the younger generation to become involved. It teaches bible stories with songs, drama and crafts, and routinely attracts up to 25 children. Our Family Worker (shared with Juniper Green Church) liaises with Kidz@Currie, Currie schools and runs fun days.

We have run a Holiday Club almost every year for a week during the summer holidays for Primary 1–7 children, followed by a celebration

Sunday service for families. This year our Family Worker enthusiastically organised 'Teambuilders', co-ordinating a large team of helpers from several churches with different backgrounds and locations to work with and minister to over 40 children, uniting everyone in Christ. We have received tremendous feedback from the children and their families and we are already looking forward to next year's Holiday Club.

In conjunction with Juniper Green Parish Church a Monday Madness Outreach to Youth event was held at Easter featuring a morning for primary school aged children consisting of crafts, games and songs tied to a biblical theme, and an evening of games, snacks and discussion for high school aged young people.

This was part of the Year of the Young Person project with a commitment to undertake more evangelistic activities for young people. We are hopeful of much more success with our Family Worker's input to replace our previous project, TEEN Café, which sadly dwindled in numbers after the initial group of youngsters grew up and the café was no longer relevant to them.

Our Currie Kirk pamphlet, giving insights into the life of the Kirk, is delivered to those in new homes as a welcome to attend events.

Our monthly Kirk News magazine, containing a varied selection of articles and the diary of Kirk activities that month, is delivered to all members (and others who request it) or sent by email if preferred.

We also have our own Website, which is regularly updated, and are to be found on Facebook.

A Christmas card is delivered to every home in the parish with details of the Season's services. We have a Carol Service jointly with Currie Community Choir, the Community Church and Currie Primary School.

Following on from our *trypraying* launch, we continue to distribute these booklets and encourage members to pass them on to people who want to know about prayer.

Our Kirk Singers choir of mature (!) males occasionally lead praise singing in Church and also perform at care homes, guilds, etc. throughout central Scotland to carry a message of goodwill from Currie Kirk.

## WHY?

The community of Currie continues to grow as part of a wider Edinburgh and we work hard to keep both a local identity and show that Currie Kirk offers a caring and lively environment. In this way we hope that more new and existing families will feel welcomed and join us in whatever capacity they feel able.

The purpose behind Monday Madness, Family Games Nights, Holiday Club etc. is not only to evangelise directly to the children and young people in our community but also to begin and continue building relationships with the families in the area in order that we may support them as they raise their children. As well as demonstrating God's love and care to families, over time it can lead to ministering and evangelising directly to parents and other family members. Ecumenically, the ministry team has worked hard to build relationships with neighbouring churches in Colinton, Wester Hailes, Juniper Green, Balerno and Currie in this outreach.

## WHAT?

After worship, refreshments served in our new Welcome area next to the Sanctuary have proved to be a lively gathering place for many of the congregation who previously went straight home.

Our Mission and Outreach Team hold a series of well-attended events to fundraise and promote Christian Aid throughout the year, aiming for a range of activities to appeal to different age groups. These include Fairtrade Lunch following the service during Fairtrade Fortnight; Strawberry and Songs Afternoon Tea; an all age Quiz Night and the Summer Pop-Up Café on Tuesday mornings. This year's Christian Aid Week Launch Day for families had a bouncy castle, face painting, messy play and a BBQ and attracted some of the new families following a leaflet drop and knocking on doors by the Minister and Guild President at the new housing developments. These fundraising events replaced the annual Christian Aid house to house collection which last year suffered from a diminishing number of volunteers available to cover the area, but has resulted in a growth in fellowship at events.

The Guild meets twice monthly with guest speakers, often stimulating follow-up discussion and fundraising or craftwork among members not previously involved in church activities.

Our Winter Market with charity stalls and refreshments raises funds for local causes, such as lighting for Braidburn Special School swimming pool, and attracts many from the community other than church members.

We organise ecumenical Snack Lunches on a weekly basis from September to May, fundraising for charities, local and national. Lunches are open to everyone, attracting customers from a wide area to the warm and friendly setting in the Gibson Craig Hall. Many of the older folk in the area look forward to meeting up there, knowing there will always be someone to sit and talk with whilst enjoying the home-made soup and baking.

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The Walking Group of some 20 members enjoy monthly walks after church led by experienced volunteers and hold an annual weekend away to various locations when they worship at the local church. Walkers

raised over £1,000 in a sponsored Forth Road Bridge Walk for Christian Aid.

Super Sundae was held in June with ice cream after the service for all the congregation. Occasional meals and BBQs take place at the manse.

We hold an annual 60s/70s disco to fundraise for charity, eg British Heart Foundation and FACE (Fight Against Cancer Edinburgh) which provides an opportunity for dressing up while supporting good causes.

A variety of concerts continue to be held in the Gibson Craig Hall or the Church, including a brass band recital in the Kirk grounds as part of the Edinburgh International Festival in 2015 and Masai Warriors in 2017.

The monthly Good Book Group members enjoy lively discussion and fellowship.

Banner Group meets every Tuesday to make beautiful banners dedicated to church themes and activities, whilst enjoying fellowship with church members and non-members.

We hosted a lively mini Highland Games for a visiting US Presbyterian Youth Section with Boys' Brigade and Explorer Scouts, which attracted lively participation from local Currie teenagers, not seen at Church for some years.

A Boys' Brigade Ceilidh helped raise funds for the Currie Youth Initiative Project in this Year of the Young Person. BB Summer Camp at Craggan, Loch Tay is greatly enjoyed by the boys and officers (!).

## WHY?

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As part of God's calling to love one another we see fellowship as an integral part of our Kirk and community. We have identified many needs within our congregation along with the worship and prayer needs, and use the teas after each service to allow our members, new and old, to get to know one and other better. The small groups, such as the Book Group and the Banner Group, allow fellowship and friendships to grow

and often provide a place not only of social togetherness but real pastoral support, e.g. if a loved one or pet has died or if someone is undergoing treatment.

Within the community of Currie, we offer events and activities to every age group in a more relaxed and informal setting to encourage friendships to grow and demonstrate God's love for each one of us. Our fundraising events for Christian Aid, FACE and other worthwhile charities have been chosen to appeal to all. God in Christ calls us into fellowship and this is central to Currie Kirk's identity *Where Faith and Life Cross Paths*.