



# St Mary Magdalene's Episcopal Church, Dundee Church Profile

## Who are we?

First and foremost, St Mary Magdalene is a family. Many members have a long commitment to the church and to each other. Some members come for the sense of community and friendship. Some come for the power of the liturgy, the beauty of the music and of the Church itself; for a place to worship and feel at peace. We have a strong Sunday School tradition and welcome those children who do come to Church but although we have a few younger members, we are fairly mature congregation at the moment! That being said, there is a vibrancy and energy buzzing through the church along with plenty of laughter.

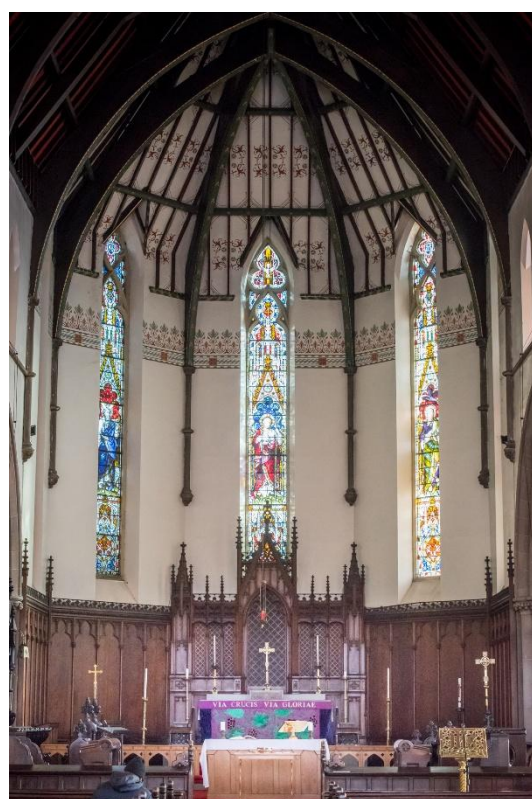


## Worship

After consultation with the congregation, we alternate the 1970 and 1982 Liturgies Sunday by Sunday at our 11 o'clock service and this works very well. A said Eucharist takes place on Wednesday mornings at 10am.

Extra services are held during Holy Week and at Christmas, including a midnight service – sung Eucharist – which begins at 11.15pm on Christmas Eve. We also have a service for Ascension Day and often for St Mary Magdalene's Day.

Refreshments are served at the back of the church after the service which gives the congregation the opportunity to mingle and welcome any new faces.



## Music

We have a strong musical tradition at St Mary Magdalene's of which we are extremely proud. Our choir is small but we sing Choral Eucharist every week, with five hymns, a psalm, an anthem, a setting and a choral Amen, enhancing greatly the beauty of our worship.

The Carol Service at Christmas and the Good Friday evening service are highlights of the year. We are also looking at introducing a choral Evensong perhaps once a month.



One of our real treasures is the organ. It was originally built by Peter Conacher of Huddersfield in 1869. In 1986, the organ was again rebuilt — this time by Nicholson of Worcester. The result has been that St Mary Magdalene's has one of the best organs in a city that boasts several first class instruments.

## Finances

Over the past few years St Mary Magdalene's, like most other churches, has experienced a challenging financial situation. The Congregation continue to be extremely generous, with a large proportion giving regularly either through a monthly standing order or FWO envelopes. With these regular income streams this allows for better budgeting to take place.

Approximately 60% of our income comes from Congregational Giving which includes the Gift Aid reclaim and annual Day of Giving. The other main source of income is from our Investments with the Scottish Episcopal Church Unit Trust Pool which accounts for approximately 25% of our annual income.

The amount raised to date from our Day of Giving held in September 2025 is 94% more than the figure raised in 2024. In June 2024 we installed a card reader at the entrance to the church to allow contactless payments to be made. We have also added a Just Giving link to our website and Facebook page. The income received from these sources continues to grow.

The Vestry receive a monthly report from the Treasurer of income and expenditure along with a Projections document. This allows the members of the Vestry to see where we are with our income and expenditure for the current financial year and take collective decisions on financial matters. The congregation are also updated by the Treasurer on the current financial position on a quarterly basis.



## Fundraising

In 2024 the Vestry put together a fundraising team, and it had a very successful year. We dragged the two “coffee mornings” kicking and screaming into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, rebranding as Spring and Christmas fayres and including crafters, dancers, Santa’s grotto and, most importantly, a hugely popular chocolate fountain!



We organised a Quiz Night in a local pub, which was attended by five other churches in the Diocese, and even the Bishop fielded a team. (We beat him!) There was also a hilarious Race Night, a Burns Supper and a Prize Draw.

The proceeds might not quite have paid for our new heating system but we raised a few thousand pounds and had some fabulous occasions of fun and fellowship in the process.

## Where are we going?

We have a congregation crammed with talent, enthusiasm and a real desire grow our church and to help others. While we are not in the very centre of Dundee, we have on our doorstep student accommodation and the University of Abertay. Dundee has a great deal of poverty, drug problems, homelessness and all the usual issues associated with a large city. The people of St MM’s have long felt we need to look beyond our doors to see how we can actively make a difference in the community.

## What Are We Looking For?

St Mary Magdalene’s needs a priest who will respect and appreciate our worship and our musical tradition, and help us develop our faith within that.

Outside of worship, the congregation wants someone who will lead us in outreach. We believe that our church needs to look beyond its doors to see how we can help our community and actively make a difference. We need someone with ideas, someone dedicated and dynamic who can organise and direct us to make it happen.

Our perfect priest is driven, caring, open, organised, down to earth and always ready for some banter.

Is that you?



## History

St Mary Magdalene's opened for public worship on 23rd July 1854. It was the first new Episcopal Church built in Dundee since 1690, and the first of many churches built by Alexander Penrose Forbes, Bishop of Brechin (1847-1875).

We moved to our present site in 1952. The building was previously a Catholic Apostolic Church, and their Trustees were anxious to sell to another Christian organisation, so we acquired the property for just £5,000 – an incredible bargain even then.

In the mid 50s, the Corporation of Dundee began to decant thousands of people to the new housing schemes on the outskirts of the city. This led to a rapid fall in numbers, and in the 1970s, the church was in real danger of closing its doors for good.

In 1979, Bishop Edward Luscombe instituted the Rev. David Shepherd as Rector, and a rapid and large programme of renovation began. The church celebrated its 150th birthday in 2004 with a superb exhibition which combined a display of vestments and embroidery, a flower festival, a Songs of Praise and a comprehensive exhibition of our church's history, including a fascinating insight into the work of the Catholic Apostolic Church in Dundee.

Beautiful memorial windows to “Bishop Ted” and David Shepherd were installed and consecrated in 2024.

## About Dundee

Dundee is a dynamic city on the east coast of Scotland at the mouth of the River Tay, known for its mix of rich history and modern reinvention. Its roots go back to at least the 12th century when it was chartered as a royal burgh, growing through fishing, whaling and especially jute manufacturing in the 19th century before evolving into a hub for creative and tech industries. Today it's the UK's only UNESCO City of Design, celebrated for blending heritage with cutting-edge culture.

The city's waterfront has been transformed into a vibrant cultural district anchored by V&A Dundee, Scotland's design museum that draws visitors with bold architecture and world-class exhibits. Alongside, Discovery Point showcases the RRS Discovery, the Antarctic exploration ship built in Dundee, linking the city to heroic age exploration. The city centre boasts galleries like The McManus Art Gallery & Museum and the Dundee Contemporary Arts (DCA), while historic sites and green spaces such as Balgay Park and the Dundee Law offer scenic views and outdoor respite.

Dundee also thrives as a student city with two major universities, lively festivals, and a growing culinary and nightlife scene.

From the vantage point of St Mary Magdalene's Church, Dundee is a city of people before it is a city of stone and industry. The church bears witness to Dundee not as a monument of power or wealth, but as a gathering of lives marked by work, struggle, hope, and grace. Like Mary Magdalene herself, the church's calling is rooted in faithful presence, compassion, and proclamation of renewal.

As Dundee has grown from a medieval burgh through industrial expansion and into a modern, creative city, St Mary Magdalene's has shared in both its joys and its hardships. The surrounding neighbourhoods reflect the city's resilience: families shaped by labour, students seeking purpose, and communities learning again how to hope. The church's ministry echoes Christ's concern for the overlooked and the wounded, offering prayer, hospitality, and sacramental life as signs of God's nearness.

In a city continually reinventing itself, St Mary Magdalene's stands as a reminder that transformation is not only economic or cultural, but spiritual. Through worship, service, and community care, the church seeks to mirror

Mary Magdalene's witness: that even amid uncertainty, resurrection hope is spoken first to those who remain, watch, and believe.

## Social Media

Our primary social media channels are our website and our Facebook pages, links below

Website: <https://www.stmarymagdalenesdundee.org.uk/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Religious-Organization/St-Mary-Magdalenes-Church-Dundee-106047664164665/>

## More information

**General Dundee History & Geography** Encyclopaedia Britannica – Dundee

<https://www.britannica.com/place/Dundee>

**Scottish Places – Dundee Town History**

<https://www.scottish-places.info/towns/townhistory399.html>

**Dundee City Council – About Dundee (PDF)**

[https://www.dundee.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/about\\_dundee\\_2021pdf.pdf](https://www.dundee.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/about_dundee_2021pdf.pdf)

**DD Tours – Dundee History Online Resources**

<https://ddtours.co.uk/archive/dundee-history-online-research-resources/> <This message was edited>

## Student Life

**University of Dundee – Student Life**

<https://www.dundee.ac.uk/student-life>

**Abertay University – Student Life**

<https://www.abertay.ac.uk/life/>