

## Rosskeen Parish Church of Scotland    SCO 10093

Rosskeen is a small but active church in the middle of Alness about 20 miles north of Inverness.



Since becoming vacant we have been very fortunate to have the services of the Rev Carol Rattenbury, an O.L.M. who is also our Interim Moderator. Carol is pictured here with some of our weekly collections for HomeStart and Highland Foodbank



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Like many churches we have struggled with falling numbers in our Sunday school so recently our committed team of leaders launched a new initiative. The “J-Team”

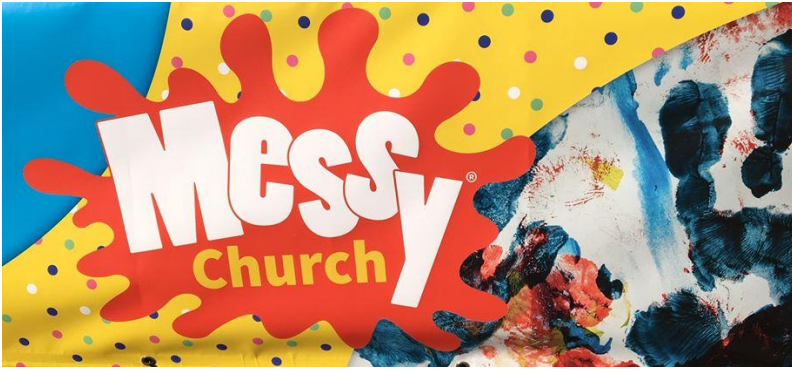


The children meet in our hall at 11am and then come into the church for the last ten minutes of the service to tell us what they have been doing.

They may still be few in number but they are having a great time and the congregation really enjoy hearing from them at the end of the service.



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Another initiative with young people has been to start having Messy Church. This is on the first Sunday of the month and is held at 3pm in the big hall. People are warmly invited to join the fun crafting, singing and snacking and find out in a different way about Jesus



Sometimes it is really messy



This initiative has been very popular and we have had up to twenty children plus adults on a Sunday afternoon with many of the children having no previous church connection.

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## Mums and Toddlers



For a long time now we have successfully run a Mums and Toddlers group which meets in the church halls once a fortnight on a Tuesday morning at 10am.



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Although we have been vacant since September 2017 the life of the Church has carried on.



Flower Festival in the Church



Weddings



## Rosskeen Parish Church of Scotland SCO 10093

The annual Soup and Pudding Lunch  
to raise funds for the Guild Projects



Miriam Singers and Iain's Boys



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### Location

Rosskeen Church of Scotland is located in the town of Alness. Alness is the largest town in the county of Ross-shire in the Highlands of Scotland UK. This beautiful Highland Town is located on the northern shore of the Cromarty Firth. For many years the town regularly won Britain in Bloom and Scotland in Bloom.



The town no longer enters competitions but still puts on a first class display each summer. It is a thriving vibrant community which has seen many changes over the years. In the 70's the area was dominated by the opening and subsequent closing of the Smelter at Invergordon. The town expanded rapidly during this time and went from a population of 3000 to over 7000. The result of this was that a rural population became overwhelmed by an urban influx. The following years have seen this cycle continue. Nigg Oil Fabrication Yard, Global Energy Group etc. has led many skilled workers to move into the area. Many of the families that moved north chose to make the move permanent and a wide variety of accents can be heard. The current downturn in the oil/energy industry is affecting the area again as many people in the area work in the oil industry or in green energy projects.

Conversely Alness is seeing a boom in house building. Inverness has expanded greatly in recent years and a large number of people commute daily from Alness to work in Inverness. There are plans approved for almost a 1000 new homes at the east end of Alness.

The town has a thriving main street with a wide variety of shops including several supermarkets. There is a well-resourced Health Centre and Leisure centre. There are good rail and road links with a regular bus service to Inverness which is 20 miles away. Raigmore Hospital in Inverness is the main hospital for the area. The local secondary school is Alness Academy which has a swimming pool open to the public. It is scheduled to be replaced with a new

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building and the planned opening is Easter 2020. In the town there are three primary schools Coulhill, Bridgend and Obsdale. There is also a small primary school in the neighbouring community of Ardross which is part of the parish.

### The Parish and Church



Alness is divided by the River Averon and this splits the town in two parishes. Alness in the west and Rosskeen in the east. The church is in the centre of the town just north of the main street. Historically the congregation of Rosskeen began as the UF Church in 1910, with the Rev John Ross as minister. It became part of the Church of Scotland with the Union of 1929 and was known as Rosskeen West. Rosskeen East was the original parish church near Invergordon. The two parishes were united in 1943, with the East Church closing in 1947.

Since then there have been three ministers: - Duncan McDermid(1947-1967), Andrew Howe (1968-1989) and Robert Jones 1990 - 2017)

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Rosskeen Parish Church is to be found in Perrins Road in the middle of Alness and is an attractive stone built building with pitched slated roof and large windows. There is an extension on the back of the main church which is used for meetings and evening services. This includes a kitchen and a disabled toilet. There is a large hall to the rear of the church which is used by the Sunday School and other organisations. There is disabled access to the church and its halls. The church has a public address system and induction loop which is organised from a cabinet at the front of the church

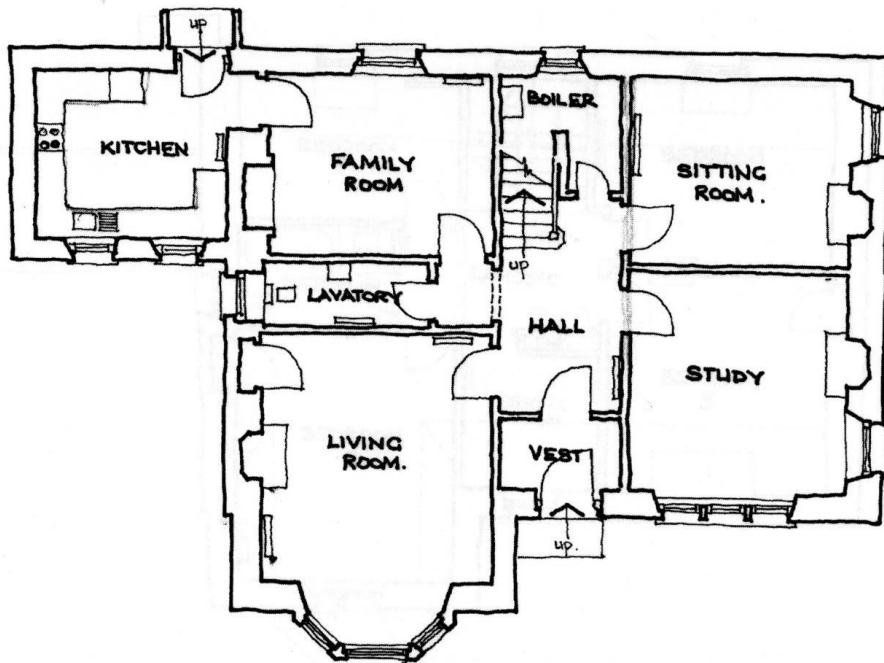




### **The manse**

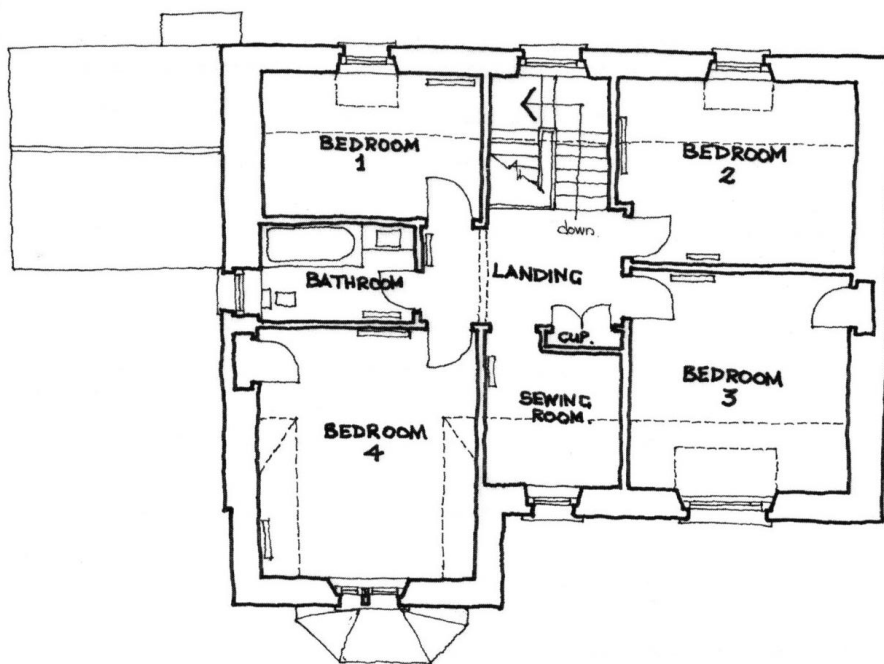
The manse is a substantial one and a half storey sandstone building situated to the East of the Church in its own mature garden. The roof is natural slate. Internally the floors are original timber, the walls and ceilings are generally plaster on lath. On the ground floor there is kitchen, dining room, family room, study and toilet. Upstairs there are four bedrooms, boxroom and bathroom. For some time now a regular program of maintenance and decoration has been in place and the manse has been well maintained and is in good condition. The manse has gas central heating and has double glazed windows. Below it is a large enclosed area of grass and trees which unlikely to be turned into housing as it is owned by the church. In the recent Local Review carried out by Presbytery the congregation has once again been commended for its diligence and noted that it is proactive in its care of the properties.

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GROUND FLOOR PLAN

NOT TO SCALE.



FIRST FLOOR PLAN.

NOT TO SCALE.

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### **Minister**

The charge became vacant on the 21st of September 2017. Since then we have been very fortunate to have the services of the Rev Carol Rattenbury, an O.L.M. who is also our Interim Moderator. In general we are seeking a Minister who will be readily approachable, pastoral in outlook, community and parish minded, whose teaching will continue our Christ Centred Biblical Teaching.

As in every walk of life, a sense of humour is imperative. The individual selected is assured of the support and friendship of an enthusiastic congregation and Kirk Session.

Over and above the normal Pastoral duties, the previous Minister was involved in the local secondary and primary schools. It is anticipated that this involvement will continue into the future. The Kirk Session fully supported our minister in his involvement with the Highland Theological College and the church has been blessed with a number of students carrying out placements in Rosskeen.

### **Rosskeen**

The Kirk Session currently stands at 12 members (5 men and 7 women) who regularly attend meetings on a Tuesday evening. Rosskeen recently moved to the Unitary Constitution. The Communion Roll currently stands at 95 members with 44 adherents. Some 80-90 attend the morning Service on a Sunday at 11.00am. There is a Sunday School and the children come into the church for the last part of the service. Like many churches the size of the Sunday School fluctuates wildly from week to week. We also have an Evening Service at 6.00pm and on the 2nd and 3rd Sunday of the month the Minister takes a small service in the rural village of Ardross which is north of Alness. We have several organists and once a month a small Praise Band take part in the service. At events in the church and hall we also have the Miriam singers which are led by a member of the congregation and involves woman from local churches. Sometimes they are even supported by Iain's Boys, men from local churches. The hymns for the services are projected onto a screen and an audio recording is made of the service and put on the church website. A newsletter is produced and distributed four times a year.

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### **Congregational Organisations.**

Mondays - Guild – small but active Guild which meets in the small hall.

Tuesdays – Tuesday mornings we have the Ladies' Bible Study which meets in the small hall. This meeting runs alternate weeks with the Mums and Toddlers which has recently become so popular that we have had to start using the large hall. The majority of the mums are not church attenders but we see it as an important outreach.

Wednesdays – There is a fortnightly Bible Study which meets in the evening. This has proved very successful and we begin with fellowship over tea/coffee and then move to the study. This normally sees 15-20 people attend and we are using the Book by Book Study Guide. The session is led by one of the elders and we are currently studying Leviticus

Some members of the congregation are also involved in the Easter Ross Interchurch Group which involves local Christians of different denominations.

As well as these church run meetings the hall is also used by Rainbows, Beavers, Brownies, Cubs and Guides. Our halls are also used once a week by Homestart. On a Monday night there is a Dog Obedience Class.

### **Wider Church**

Alness is served by Alness Parish Church in the west of Alness and Rosskeen which is in the centre of Alness. There is also the Baptist Church and Rosskeen Free Church. We have a good relationship with the other churches and the ministers have regular visits to the Academy and the local primary schools. We also work together and have for some time had joint services at particular times in the year.

The congregation also accepts its responsibilities to the wider community and during 2019 collections for other charities raised over £3000. These included the Viyele feeding program (which we have supported now for a number of years. Viyele CCAP, a congregation in northern Malawi.), Poppy Appeal, Tearfund Yemen Appeal, Archie's and Homestart. We have also for several years now used income from various bequests to support the work of the

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Highland Foodbank. The Sunday school collections support a young child in the Punjab.

### **Finances**

During the last financial year our income remained healthy. Over the last few years we have spent a considerable amount of money on the church property including re-wiring, dealing with asbestos in the boiler room, refurbishing the large hall and replacing the boiler. Fortunately, our Fabric Fund is healthy and we were able to cope with the extra expenditure. A full set of accounts is available on request.

### **Information and Statistics**

Information on Rosskeen Parish, including location, parish map and statistics, is available from the Church of Scotland website at [Rosskeen](#). Rosskeen Parish website can be found at <http://www.spanglefish.com/rosskeenchurchofscotland/>