

# Kintore Parish Church

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*Denomination: Church of Scotland.*

*Status: Parish Church. Presbytery of Gordon.*

*Visited by: Bruce A Lindsay.*

*Date of visit: 6 May 2018.*

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The current church was built in 1819 and was designed by Archibald Simpson who was the nephew of the then minister, Robert Simpson. It replaced an earlier church on the site which had fallen into disrepair and which could not cater for the growing population associated with the agricultural and industrial improvements of the time. At the 'Disruption' in 1843, Robert Simpson demitted his charge to join the Free Church of Scotland, taking some of his congregation with him. The two congregations re-united, after a fire in the Free Church, in 1937. By a twist of fate,

Robert Simpson is buried in the kirk-yard of the church he deserted.

The present building incorporates features from its predecessors; part of the sacrament house of the pre reformation church is built into an internal wall and a pew door panel, dated 1653, is located in the chancel. More recently, in the 1950s and 1960s, three stained glass windows were added. The designer was one William Wilson who created windows for many churches, including Canterbury Cathedral. Wrought iron work in the church, some functional, some artistic, was designed and created by local blacksmith Eddie Strachan (1933 – 2013) who was the property convenor for many years. Other interesting features include a seventh century carved Pictish Stone in the kirk-yard and an impressive, arched, war memorial over the main entrance gate.



Interesting as the history of the church may be, the real worth of a congregation is the here and now. I spoke, briefly, with the minister, Neil Meyer, and from this short conversation I could easily discern his enthusiastic and sincere ministry. A look at the church web-site suggests an active and vibrant congregation.

My visit was on a Sunday, half an hour or so before the morning service. Neil was busy working with a praise band as it got itself organised. I received a warm invitation to stay on for the service but, due a tight schedule, was unable to do so. I now wish I had.

Neil was interested in where I came from and my connection with the Church. He asked that I convey the best wishes of Kintore to Newlands South. As I left I encountered a few cheery individuals who greeted me warmly as they walked through the grounds to the church.