



Church of St Michael & All Angels

Abban Street, Inverness
Scottish Charity Number SC010352

St Michael's is a church of the United Diocese of Moray Ross and Caithness, in the Scottish Episcopal Church; and part of the Worldwide Anglican Communion.

Our main worship on a Sunday Morning is a Family Mass (Communion) and there is an open welcome to anyone who would like to join us. The time alternates from month to month between 9.45am and 11.15am

History of the Building

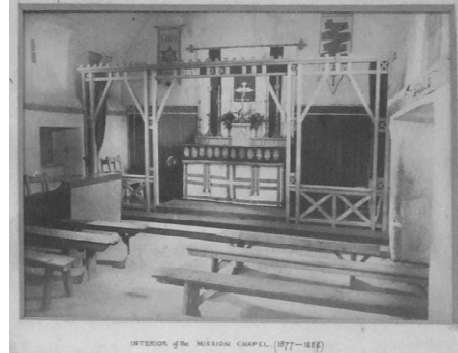
The congregation of St Michael's dates itself back to 1877, when Canon Medley, serving on the clergy team at St Andrew's Cathedral, set up a Mission in a cottage near the Maggot Green. In 1886, money was raised to build a stone church nearby in Factory Street. Each in turn was dedicated as *The Chapel of the Holy Spirit*.

With the population growth across the river, it was decided in 1903, when Canon William Lachlan Mackintosh was Rector, to move the chapel, stone by stone and with much of the internal furnishings, to the present site in Abban Street. During the time of the re-siting of the church, the congregation met for worship in the Queen Street Church of Scotland (now Chisholm's Funeral Directors). A typical feature of Comper is the large stone altar surrounded by riddle posts with gilded angels holding tapers.

In 1923 the church underwent major reconstruction according to the design of the noted church architect Sir Ninian Comper – friend of Canon Mackintosh, and son of the Revd John Comper, who had served in Inverness at one time as a Mission Priest. The main features of the reconstruction of the building included the lowering and enlarging of the nave windows, and the extension of the Lady Chapel.

The installation of the East Window, which depicts the four Archangels, and the gilded tester above the altar, adorned with a dove signifying the Holy Spirit, (a reminder of the previous dedication) and scrolls on which are written the gifts of the Spirit, both designed by Comper, were later additions in memory of Canon Mackintosh who died in April, 1926.

HISTORICAL IMAGES



The thatched cottage where the Mission of the Holy Spirit was set up in 1877, with Canon Medley and members of the congregation; and interior of that first Mission Chapel, which existed from 1877 until 1886.



Interior of the stone Chapel of the Holy Spirit, which existed from 1886 until 1913.



Interior of St Michael's in 1913, before the east window was installed. The painting above the altar is now on the north wall of the church, and the crossbeam of the screen is below the organ on the partition at the west end of the church.



TOUR of the CHURCH

As you enter the porch, you will see a stained glass window of St Michael and the Dragon, installed in memory of Mr Roddy MacRae, a devoted and long serving member of the congregation.



On entering the church, you first come into the Lady Chapel, separated from the main nave of the church by a screen, and above which is the organ loft. It is often the case in churches of a high-church tradition, if they are not actually dedicated in the name of St Mary, for there to be a small chapel dedicated to Mary.

Passing through the screen, on your right is the Font – traditionally placed by the door of the church, symbolising baptism as entry into the church. Beside the font is the Paschal Candle or Easter Candle, a symbol of Jesus' Resurrection and of new life. It is marked with the Cross, the year number, and the Greek letters Alpha and Omega to signify Jesus in eternity from the beginning to the end.



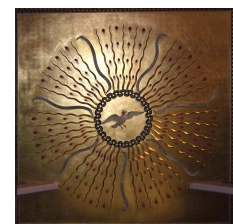
On the right is a statue of the Archangel Michael, given in the 1940's in memory of Jane Spiers Cuthbert by her family.

Opposite the statue is the Warrior's Altar above which hangs the painting of the Holy Family which hung above the High Altar before the East Window was installed.

Originally there was a wooden screen separating the nave from the choir and the sanctuary. It was removed in the early 1960's, and the light oak communion rail was installed.



In the sanctuary stands the large stone altar, surrounded by the riddle posts with gilded angels carrying tapers. The altar is covered with a fair linen cloth, and has a frontal which varies in colour according to the season of the church's year. Above, is the golden tester with the symbol of the dove for the Holy Spirit, and the list of the gifts of the Spirit –



Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness and Faithfulness.

The East Window is a magnificent example of Comper's stained glass work. Each lancet depicts one of the four chief archangels. From left to right they are:

Raphael, who appears in the book of Tobit in the Apocrypha and whose name means "God heals".

Michael, who appears in the Book of Daniel and the Book of Revelation and who fights against the dragon. His name means "who is like God".

Gabriel, the "Mighty man of God" and messenger of Divine comfort, who announced to Mary that she would conceive a child who was to be the Saviour of his people.



Uriel, the "flame of God", who brings light to Israel, and is mentioned in the Book of Enoch as the one who helps him interpret his visions.

While the Archangels are only rarely named in scripture, they are frequently mentioned in ancient Jewish texts, particularly the Book of Enoch, and very quickly were adopted into the western Christian tradition.

Canon Mackintosh, in whose memory the window was installed, appears in the same lancet as Gabriel. Also in the tracery at the top of the window are coats of arms associated with Canon Mackintosh himself: the Clan Mackintosh, Pembroke College Oxford where he studied, Ely Theological College where he trained for the priesthood, and the Royal Burgh of Inverness, his birthplace.

