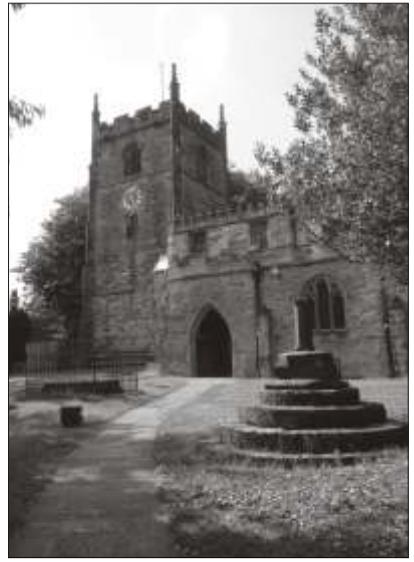


welcome to st james' church norton

Welcome to this ancient church. The earliest documented mention of a church in Norton was 1183, when the Lord of the Manor of Norton and High Sheriff of Nottingham, Robert Fitzranulph, bestowed the church upon the newly established Beauchief Abbey. The place name Norton means 'north farm' in Old English.



In its earliest form, the church would have consisted of a nave and a smaller chancel. Substantial rebuilding between the 12th and 15th centuries added the aisles and porch. The chancel was also enlarged and the bell-tower re-roofed. In churches, the north aisle was almost always added before the south. This explains the different pillar styles - the north aisle has round ones and the south octagonal.

Galleries were added in the 18th century, along the north and south aisles. To improve the poor visibility from these galleries, a pillar was removed from either side of the nave when the church had new pews installed in 1820. The church was extensively restored in 1882, to designs by Sir George Edmund Street FA, a distinguished architect famous for his ecclesiastical designs. The galleries and box pews were removed and the missing pillars were replaced. A staircase in the porch was removed, revealing remains of the original Norman archway.

The Porch (1)

The porch covers the main entrance into church, the arch above the door contains some of the original Norman zigzag moulding. Look at the six corbel stones carved with faces. They were found in the church vaults during the 1882 church restoration and are thought to be Norman or early Medieval.

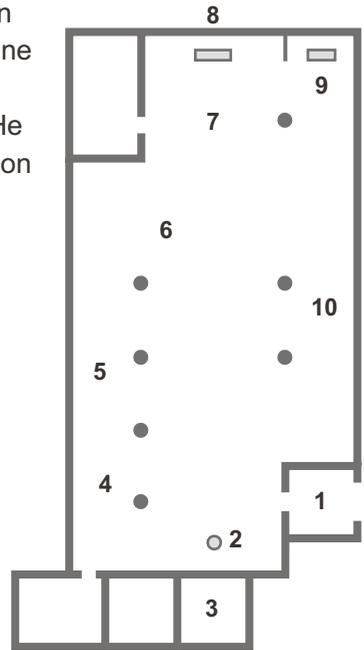
There are also several ancient tombstones in the porch. One is to Barbara Lee, who was buried near the altar in 1670 - in an upright position! Another dates from 1665 and is to William Blythe of Norton Lees who was a parliamentary commander during the English Civil War.

The Font (2)

The font dates from 1220 and is a fine example of an Early English style font. It is unusual in that it has nine sides, rather than the typical octagonal shape. The eastern face shows a crudely carved salamander. He represents the devil looking up in anger and frustration at the baptisms. You can see a list of former incumbents on an oak board near the font.

The Tower (3)

Behind the font is a door into the belfry. The tower is part of the original 12th century building and the opening arch dates from c1200. There are six original bells and two more recent ones. The west window can be seen above the screen. It depicts the 'Nunc Dimittis' (a hymn from the Gospel of Luke) and is a memorial to William Chambers Bagshawe. Several ancient gravestones can be seen under this window.



Chantrey Sculpture (4)

This statue of Sir Francis Chantrey RA was created after his death, from portraits, by John Bell. Sir Francis was born in 1781 in Norton, where he spent his childhood. He went on to become one of the most famous sculptors of the 19th century and his work can still be seen throughout the country. After his death in 1841, his body was returned to Norton and buried in the churchyard.

The North Aisle (5)

The first stained glass window dates from 1935 and was installed in memory of Revd G W Hall. It depicts Jesus calling the first disciples. The middle window draws on the Bible text "I was hungry and you gave me meat" and is in memory of James Jenkins, a benefactor of the parish. The last window is known as the angel window as the figures represent the Angel of Praise, the Guardian Angel and the Angel of Prayer. The organ is at the end of this aisle.

The Pulpit (6)

The pulpit was installed as part of the 1882 restoration. The carved figures were added in 1906 and depict (from left to right) the martyrs John the Baptist, St Stephen, James the Great, St Andrew, St Peter, St Barnabas, St Paul and St Alban. Look to the left of the pulpit where a medieval stone coffin lid stands.

The Chancel (7)

Facing the chancel, note the small window on the right hand side. This was added to improve visibility through to the altar from the south aisle. Also notice the empty niche which would have contained a statue. The chancel was completely refurbished in 1882 and with the revival of choral worshipping, the choir stalls were added around this time. The monument on the north wall of the chancel is to the Bullock family. Another memorial to Sir Francis Chantrey RA by J Hefferman can be seen on the wall. He was Chantrey's assistant for 30 years.

The East Window (8)

The east window was designed by Frampton and shows Moses holding the Ten Commandments, his brother Aaron, Christ the Good Shepherd, St Peter holding the keys and St James with his traditional blue robe and scallop shell. The lower lights show the instruments of Christ's Passion: the whips, three nails, crown of thorns, hammer and pincers, the sponge, ladder and spear.

Blythe Chapel (9)

The chapel was built around 1524 by Geoffrey Blythe, Bishop of Lichfield, as a memorial to his parents William and Saffrey who had lived in what is now called 'The Bishops' House' at the head of Meersbrook Park. Their carved alabaster tomb originally stood in the centre of the chapel and also dates from the 16th century. The roof of the chapel is original Tudor oak and has lovely carved bosses.

There are many other memorials in this chapel including one to Leonard Gill, who endowed Norton Free School. The fine incised slab on the floor is to William Selioke and his wife Joyce. It is mentioned in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, listing of brass rubbings.

Note the stone piscina to the right of the altar. This was originally used to wash the chalice and paten (plate) during the Eucharist. To the left of the altar is an aumbry, the most recent addition to the chapel. It is a cupboard built to hold the consecrated bread and wine of the Blessed Sacrament. The door shows a 'Pelican in her piety', symbolic of the Eucharist.

The South Aisle (10)

Walk along the south aisle and you can see the remains of a blocked up door. It was discovered in the 1940s and can also be clearly seen from the outside of the church. It is not known what its original purpose was. The first stained glass window depicts a Resurrection scene. The second is in memory of Dennis Beet and shows the Crucifixion.

The Churchyard

For hundreds of years, the churchyard was the burial ground for the people of Norton. The oldest grave known is a simple stone to Elizabeth Cooke, who died in 1644. Many of the gravestones carry the names of notable local families and reflect local life in times past - farmers, scythe makers and nail makers. The ground was closed for burials in 1869 and Norton Cemetery on Derbyshire Lane has been used since then.

To the right of the path is an old preaching cross. It dates from Medieval times and was moved from its earlier position to make way for the burial place of Sir Francis Chantrey RA, which lies to the left of the path. Notice the unusual example of an upright sundial on the south wall. It dates from 1782.

The Garden of Remembrance is beyond the tower. It was designed by Ivan Morris in the mid 1960s and cremated remains are buried here. The garden has grindstones, a symbol representing local industry and the rolling of the stone from the tomb. Set into the wall are Christian symbols, including the Greek letters alpha and omega which symbolise that God is the beginning and the end.

**Thank you for visiting our church.
Please do sign the Visitors' Book before you leave.**

Sunday Services

8.00am	Holy Communion (<i>Book of Common Prayer</i>)
10.30am	Sung Eucharist (<i>2nd Sunday: Family Eucharist</i>)
6.15pm	Evensong (<i>Book of Common Prayer</i>)

Visit our website:

www.stjameschurch.org



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