

a guide to the parish church of st LEONARD thryBERGH

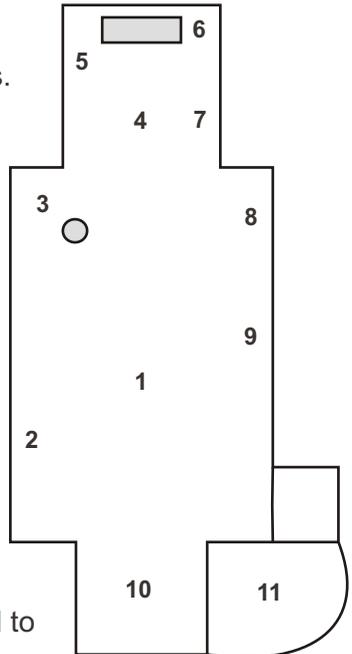


Welcome to our beautiful old church that has been welcoming visitors for over 1000 years. Parts of the building date back to 900AD when small rough stone was first used to in-fill the walls and side alternate large cornerstones were used for the corners. A blocked doorway of this period is clearly visible in the south nave wall, this would have been a round-headed arch but this is missing due to a Perpendicular window being placed there at a later date.

The church was increased in size during the Norman period and the nave extended in length and height. We know this because of the ashlar stone block used for the purpose, in marked contrast to the earlier rough stone. The chancel was extended and an apse added to the east end with a burial crypt underneath for the local lord of the manor who paid for the extensions. A tower was also added to the west end which was increased in height in the 1400s. A porch was added around 1640 and the first church clock for Thrybergh was fixed to the east tower wall in 1687. The apse was taken down as it became unstable during the 1400s and this stone was used to increase the height of the tower.

The Nave (1)

Enter the church through the porch, the nave is the central part of church where people sit for the services. There are many wonderful memorials in church. The grim monument with skulls, pikes and guns in front of you dates to 1699 and commemorates Sir John Leonard Reresby's military career and his governorship of York. In the corner to the left of this monument is a war memorial to soldiers killed in action.



Hedges Memorial (2)

This is a memorial to the family of William Hedges who was the longest serving rector at Thrybergh - for 61 years. He died in 1811. Further along the north wall there are memorials to Saville Finch and Revd Arthur Fullerton and his son Lieut Henry Howard Fullerton.

The Font & Pulpit (3)

The font is used to hold the water for baptisms. The pulpit is next to it and is from where sermons are delivered to the congregation.

The Chancel (4)

Moving into the chancel, to your left there are several small memorial brasses and plaques to Fullerton family members. Also see a memorial to John and Elizabeth Finch.

Elizabethan Monument (5)

Further along the north wall of the chancel, there is an Elizabethan monument to Lionel and Anne Reresby and their seven sons and nine daughters kneeling. Notice the little bundles - one to the left of the sons and one to the right of the daughters. These represent a son dying in infancy and a girl being stillborn.

The Altar (6)

The altar stands under the East Window. Next to the altar is an unnamed half tomb which is used as a side altar. Also here is another memorial to the Hedges family.

The Priests Door (7)

The priests door on the south wall of the chancel is still in use. The monument above it commemorates the death of Sir Leonard Reresby in 1748. He was the last of the Reresby line. Next to the door is a piscina which is a shallow stone basin with a drain. It is used for washing the paten and chalice.

Chantry Tomb (8)

Coming back into the nave, there is the chantry tomb of Sir Ralph Reresby. Above this is a stained glass window made from 14th century glass.

South Wall Memorials (9)

There are more memorials on this side of the nave. The first to Louisa Fullerton and also one to John Fullerton. Walking back towards the porch you will see a memorial tablet to Sir John Rereby Snr and on the west wall, there is a memorial to Mary Finch.

The Tower (10)

In the base of the tower is a stone figure of a priest, you can also see another in the church extension near the porch. If you look at the tower from the outside of the church, you can see old Norman stonework fixed in the tower wall. Also outside the church, walk around to the east end and you will see an old stone coffin on top of the crypt.

The Vestries (11)

The vestries were built in 1970 and are used for meetings, Sunday morning coffee after services, children's church and other church business.

The Thrybergh St Leonard Legend

This is the legend of our St Leonard. Sir Leonard Resesby, after marrying his sweetheart went off to the Holy Land as a knight to fight in the Crusades. After fighting in several battles he was captured and held prisoner by the Saracens.

Seven years passed and having not heard of him at all, his family assumed he was dead and decided that his wife must marry another to protect the Resesby inheritance - a marriage was arranged. In prayer for her husband Leonard's soul, her words somehow got through to Leonard, still a prisoner of the Saracens. He was ill from imprisonment and unable to escape so he prayed and prayed with all his power and his prayer was answered! He opened his eyes and found he had been transported from his prison in the Holy Land to Thrybergh's East Hill, where the graveyard now is.

Unable to walk he hailed one of the villagers who, on recognising him, told him that his wife was remarrying on that very day in one hours time. The villager was dispatched to Leonard's wife who came as soon as she could, gathered him up, took him to the church and re-affirmed their marriage vows. She nursed him back to health and he served Thrybergh and Christianity for the rest of his days and was made a saint.

The St Leonard's cross, now just a stump was originally situated on the East Hill but was removed to the churchyard to reduce vandalism to the remains of the cross.

The Bells of St Leonard's

Our first bell bears the inscription 'sancte Leonarde ora pro nobis adeum' which means 'Holy Leonard pray to God for us'. It has no actual date but it was made before 1580 and was probably cast in the tower base.

The bell weighs 8cwt and rings the lowest note of the six bells. No5 bell was cast in 1586 and is inscribed with 'ano D MDLXXXI by Quernbis from Nottingham'. No4 was cast by Oldfield of Nottingham with the inscription 'gloria in excelsis deo 1609'. No3 bears the inscription 'John Reresby Esq 1638', it was recast in 1946. No2 bell was given by the famous John Reresby in 1687 and was also recast in 1946. Bell No1, the treble, was new in 1946 when the belfrey was reordered.

Since then, St Leonard bellringers have earned the best of reputations, played regularly in competitions and have become renowned throughout the north of England. The bellringers usually practice on Wednesday evenings at 7pm and always welcome new people into the skills of bellringing. Mrs Pat Roper is the bellmaster.

Goodbye

We hope you have enjoyed your visit to our church and hope that you will return again soon.

Regular Services

The church is open for services on the second, fourth and fifth Sunday of each month for Holy Communion at 10am.

The Rector is

Revd Janet French

The Rectory, 14 Manor Farm Court, Thrybergh, Rotherham, S65 4NZ
01709 850336

There is a monthly church magazine that has lots of details of the church month. Visits by arrangement - telephone churchwarden T. Knapton 01709 851537.

This guide has been produced by St Leonard's Church, Thrybergh with support from Rotherham Churches Tourism Initiative (RCTI).

Text and Research: Mr Terry Knapton
Design: RCTI



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Supported by the
Heritage Lottery Fund

