

A SHORT HISTORY OF SAINT JOHN THE DIVINE, HORNINGLOW

St John the Divine is the Church of England parish church situated in the suburb of Horninglow, Burton upon Trent, Staffordshire. It is part of the Diocese of Lichfield.

John Lonsdale, Lord Bishop of Lichfield, consecrated the church, which was originally dedicated to St John the Evangelist, later St John the Divine, on 24th October 1866. The architect was Mr Edwin Holmes, of Birmingham.

The church was designed in a Geometrical style and consists of a chancel with a vestry to the north side, a nave of five bays, north and south aisles, and an attached tower at the southwest with a spire. It is built of brick faced externally with cream Coxbench stone and rendered internally with plaster and dressings of Bath stone. The east window depicting the life of St. John the Evangelist is by William Warrington of London. The vestry was extended northwards in 1911, (fn. 20) and in 1928 the east end of the south aisle was fitted out as a Lady chapel with a memorial window for Sarah Auden depicting St. Chad and St. Hilda with Celtic motifs. The font is at the west end. A peal of four steel bells was increased to six in 1875-6.[1]

The churchyard contains the war graves of eleven service personnel of World War I and six of World War II.

The Nave

The nave arcades have octagonal piers with

heavy, crocketed capitals and arches of blue York and red Alton stone in bands, and the high and wide chancel arch rests on corbels with short, detached stone shafts. The capitals are carved in flowing foliage, rather more in the French style of Gothic than the English.

Among the capitals on the north side you will find the symbols of the four evangelists, from the West End they are: St John, Angel, St Mark, Winged Lion, St Luke, Winged Ox and finally St Matthew an Eagle.

On the capital of the column nearest the Lady Chapel you will see a man's face, this is believed to be the architect, Mr Edward Holmes.

The Pulpit

The pulpit, dating back to 1866, was a gift of Mr John Hopkins and has four sides. It is thought that originally there were five sides, four of them showing the evangelists and the other the crucifixion. Now there are only four sides, which of the four Evangelists is missing, perhaps you can work it out.

The carvings throughout the church both inside and out were executed by Mr Thompson of Ollerton, Nottinghamshire

The Rood Screen

The rood screen is dated from 1919 and was erected in memory of the 130 men of Horninglow who lost their lives in the 1914-18 war. It originally contained just the crucifix; the Rev. Percy Mills, in memory of his father, presented the figures of the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. John in 1938.

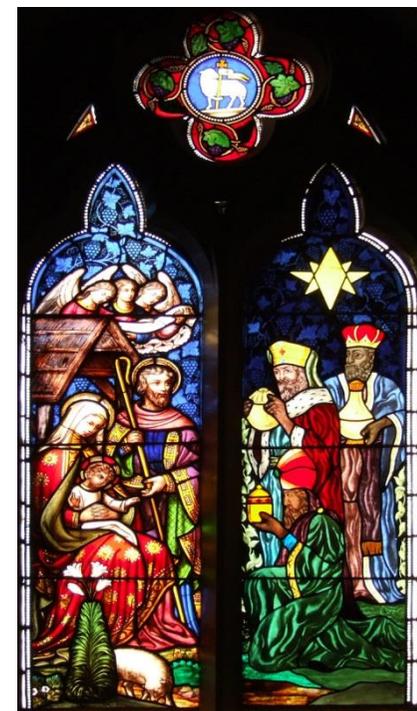
The Pews

There were originally enough pews for 448 people, two-thirds of them being free and unappropriated. Many of the pews have been removed to make way for other furnishings. The pews that are left are the original ones dating from 1864. You will notice that the ends of the pews nearest the walls on the north and south sides of the church have still got the carvings on them they had 140 years ago, the rest were removed some time between 1920 and 1966

The Stained Glass Windows

We will start with the smaller west End window, the extremely beautiful 'Epiphany' window. It is the oldest of our stained glass windows, dating back to 1865 and must have been installed whilst the church was being built. The inscription at the bottom reads 'Presented by William Nichols 1865'. One of the original panels was destroyed in the 1920s but thanks to an anonymous donation this was replaced and the whole window was renovated in 1990.

There are two windows in the



sanctuary, the east window was installed at the time the church was consecrated in 1866 and was given by Henry Smith in memory of his father. The five main panels each depict a scene from the life of St. John. Apparently the original window was quite ugly and when it was restored in 1949, the comment was made that in restoring such an appalling window to some degree of beauty, a wonderful transformation had taken place. The other stained glass window in the sanctuary is on the south side and was installed to the memory of the first vicar of St. John's, John Auden, who died November 23rd 1876. He was also the Grandfather of poet, W.H. Auden. Its two panels depict two parables. On the left the sower, on the right Jesus the Good Shepherd.

The window behind the altar in the Lady Chapel also has two panels, the left one showing St Paul holding a sword, which as a citizen of Rome he was entitled to carry. The right hand panel shows our patron St. John.

The other window in the Lady Chapel showing the figures of two 7th century saints, St. Chad and St. Hilda, was given in memory of Mrs Sarah Auden as was the credence table below.

Finally we come to the large window over the west door. Given by Mrs Martha Hopkins in memory of her husband who died in January 1891, it was dedicated on November 8th 1892. The window, although not particularly colourful is full of inscriptions and details. Unfortunately it is difficult to decipher much of this from ground level. The four main lights show the figures of the four Greater Prophets; from left to right, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel

and Daniel. Because their books are the longest of the sixteen Old Testament 'Prophet' books they are known as the four 'major' prophets. Each prophet is shown with a scroll entwined around him that carries a text from his respective book. There are three smaller lights at the top of the window depicting the Archangels, Michael, Raphael and Gabriel.

The Font

The font was the gift of Mr John Upton, and dates from 1866. It is octagonal in shape having four figures carved on it, again thought to be the evangelists, in between each is a cluster of foliage.

The Bells

The current ring of 6 bells at St Johns are originally from Holy Trinity Church, Batley Carr in West Yorkshire and they were installed in 1996 to replace the old steel bells. The first ring of the new bells was on Monday 21st October 1996 and were dedicated by The Archdeacon of Stoke

Thank you for visiting Saint John the Divine

A Visitor's Guide to



the History and Architecture of St. John the Divine, Horninglow