

The History of

St James' Church Bartonsham



Welcome to St.James' Church, Bartonsham

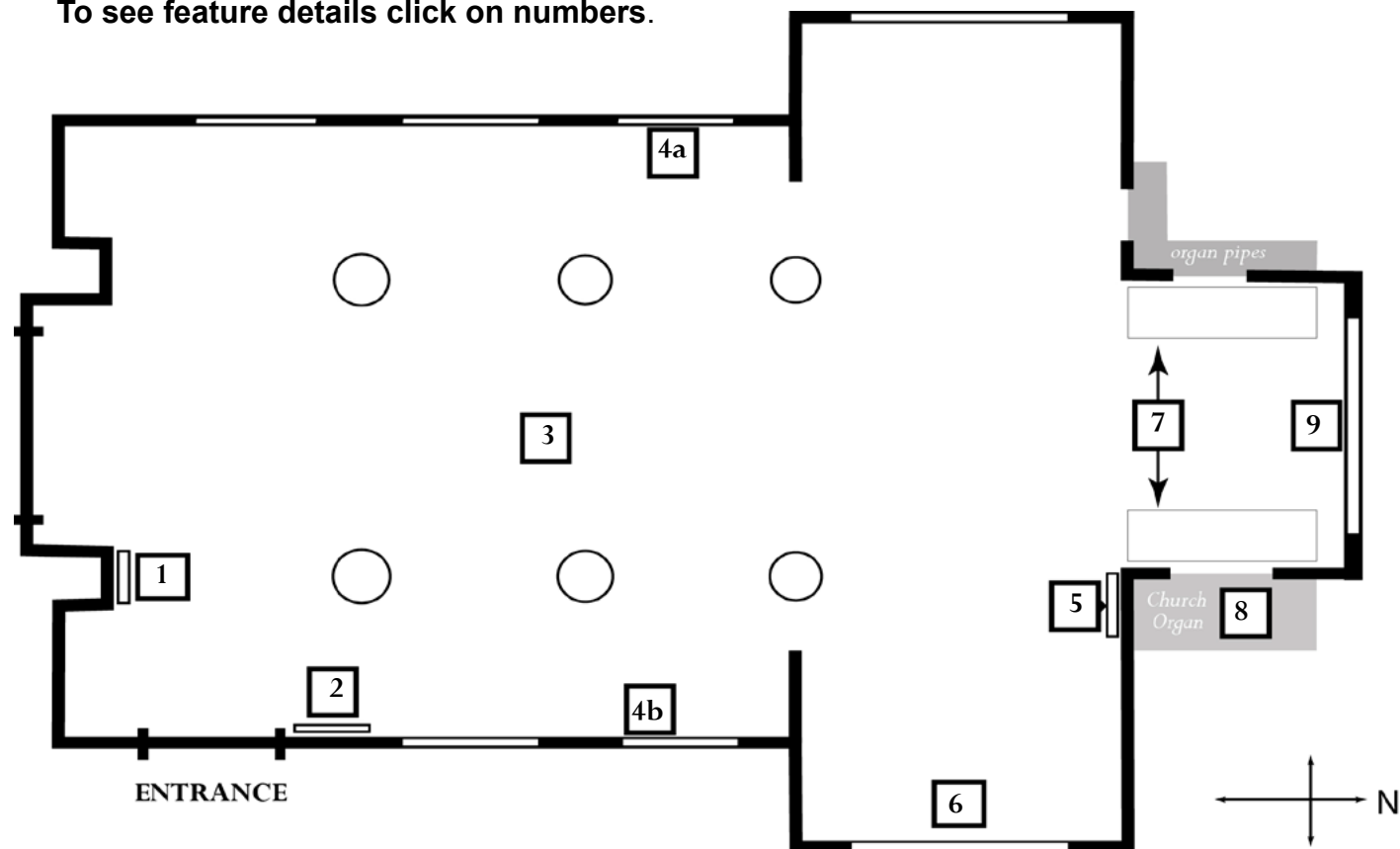
The church dates from 1869 and was proposed by Rev John Venn (see timeline on back of leaflet) to meet the needs of the rapidly expanding area of the then-new housing at Bartonsham. It has been a focus of Christian worship since then to the current day.

It was designed by Hereford architect Thomas Nicholson in the Early Geometric style and built in Bath stone, at a cost of nearly £4000.

Unusually, the church is built on a North-South orientation, with the communion table placed at the North of the church, rather than east (perhaps because of the constraints of the site). It is laid out in the traditional cruciform plan with a chancel, clerestoried nave with four bays, aisles, transepts and sacristy.

The church is named after St.James, brother of John, son of Zebedee and one of the twelve apostles. The Bible describes him as 'put to the sword' by Herod for his faith, an event depicted in the main window above the altar. Legend says James' body was covered in scallop shells, carried to the shores of Galicia and buried at Santiago de Compostela in Northern Spain, where it became a place of pilgrimage. Pilgrims to the shrine often carry a symbolic scallop shell, also featured in the window, and used to this day as a symbol for St James' CE School.

To see feature details click on numbers.



1 Foundation Stone

Entering from the porch, the foundation stone commemorating the reopening of the church stands on the wall to the left.



Rtn to Church plan

2 WW2 Memorial

To the left of the porch door, (standing inside the church) is the the memorial to the parishioners killed during World War Two 1939–1945. They include a butcher's son from St Owen Street, John Tillam; a policeman's grandson, William 'Jack' Gristman (shot escaping from the German prison camp Stalag Luft III - as depicted in the film "the Great Escape"). Also a young man who, as a prisoner of war under the Japanese, survived working on the Burma railway, only to drown when the ship transporting him to Japan was sunk by the Allies.



3 Roof and pillars



Standing in the central aisle before the communion table, note the roof timbers and attractive, ashlar-dressed Bath stone walls. The four-bay arcade is supported on circular piers decorated with delightful foliage capitals. The corbel shafts to the chancel arch are finished in red marble.

4a & 4b

Pair of Heaton, Butler and Bayne Windows:

There are two pairs of stained glass windows in each of the side aisles by Heaton, Butler and Bayne.



The first pair of windows to the left, is in memory of Mary Ann Powell, wife of Rev. Richard Powell, 1871–1882. It depicts a mother pleading with Jesus for the healing of her daughter, to which he responds “O woman, great is your faith” and heals her daughter. (Matt.15. 21 – 28).

The second pair of windows to the right, is in memory of Rev. Preb Henry Askwith, 1887–1899. One of this pair depicts Jesus as the Good Shepherd and the other as the Light of the World. The latter is based on Holman Hunt’s painting of Revelation 3.20: “Behold, I stand at the door and knock”. The window was erected by “parishioners and friends” following Rev. Askwith’s death in 1901.



Return to Church plan



On the wall above the baptismal font stands the memorial to the dead of the First World War.

On Remembrance Day the names of the fallen from both World Wars are read aloud, including that of William Henry Williams, who, unlike his brother, Alfred, is not listed with the 51 names because he had emigrated to Canada. Both brothers died on the Front Line depriving their parents, William and Annie Williams of Park Street, of their two sons. Among those listed is William Henry Charles, who served with the Australian Light Horse Battalion in the Dardanelles/Gallipoli campaign. Gallipoli not only claimed the lives of thousands of Australians and New Zealanders, but also men from the Herefordshire Regiment, many of whom enlisted at the Harold Street Barracks, a stone's throw from this church

6



The Lansdell Chapel (Side Chapel)

The Lansdell chapel commemorates Rev. Frederick John Lansdell, vicar from 1910 to 1933. The window is a fine example of The Bromsgrove Guild of Applied Arts 1898 –1966 and one of the last works of Archibald Davies 1877–1953, who also designed the windows in the Stanbury Chapel in Hereford Cathedral.

This window, which illustrates the parable of the sower, is characteristic of his use of colour, design and attention to detail: note the thrush, poppies and even Hereford cattle. Can you see the artist's signature?

7

The Godwin Tiles

The tiles on the nave and chancel floor, forming the floor around the altar, are by local manufacturer Godwin of Lugwardine and reflect the late 19th century revival of Gothic art. William Godwin began making ornamental, encaustic tiles in 1853. After the fire of 1901, his son, William Henry Godwin, supplied the St James' tiles at half price, to replace those supplied by his father for the original building.

Godwin produced tiles for many local churches; All Saints', St Peter's, Hereford Cathedral, Malvern Priory; nationally for St David's in Pembrokeshire and Rochester in Kent and for many church restorers, including George Gilbert Scott. The tiles are based on medieval designs depicting a range of motifs with line mirror or rotational symmetry, including kissing doves,



fleurs-de-lys, lions rampant and couchant and Tudor roses.



Rtn to Church plan

The Church Organ

8

A plaque on the chancel wall to George Workman is the sole memorial to one of St James' Church many organists and choir masters. The Nicholson and Company organ was installed following the fire. The organist also led the choir who sang at weddings, funerals and the twice-daily Sunday services until the 1980s.

Rtn to Church plan

9

The Main Window

The focal point of the church is the window above the communion table, commissioned in 1934 to honour the 51 men who sacrificed their lives in World War One. The theme of sacrifice is depicted in Abraham's planned sacrifice of Isaac (left), the execution of St. James (right) and in central place Christ's sacrifice on the cross, further reinforced to the left and right by the symbols of the pelican and the Lamb of God (Agnus Dei). Above the suffering world is the risen Christ, triumphant over all.

At the base of the window are the Greek alphabetic signs of Alpha and Omega, symbolizing God as the beginning and the end of all things. At the top are three emblems: St James's scallop shell (top); the coat of arms of the diocese of Hereford (left); and the coat of arms of the city of Hereford (right) The last was conferred on the city by King Charles 1 in 1645 following the defeat of the Scottish Parliamentarian forces by Royalists in the civil war, led by Barnabas Scudamore.

This window was designed and painted by A. F. Eridge and James Hogan from Powell of Whitefriars. Powell windows were often signed off with the figure of a white friar. Can you see it?.



Bartonsham Timeline

1074 St Peter's begun.

1086 Following the Norman conquest, Bartonsham formed part of the manor of Bertune.

1291 The prebend of Berchomesham is assessed at £19.19s in the taxation of Pope Nicholas.

1645 During the Civil War the church of St Owen, built outside the town gate, is destroyed. The St Owen's parish was taken on by the Vicar of St Peter's.

1827 The patronage of St Peter's is bought by Cambridge clergyman Charles Simeon 1759–1836, leading evangelical priest.

1833 Charles Simeon appoints John Venn as Incumbent of St Peter's and St Owen's, and as his successor on the Simeon Trust, John Venn proposes the new parish church of St James.

1869 The ecclesiastical parish of St James, Bartonsham is formed out of St Owen's parish on 14 December 1869.

1869 St James church, built in the Early Geometric style from designs by Hereford architect Thomas Nicholson, is erected at a cost of £3,930. The planned tower and spire were not added due to funding restrictions.

1870 Rev. Joseph Partridge begins construction of vicarage. Vicarage opened and occupied by Revd. Richard Powell 1871.

1887 Rev. Preb Henry Askwith serves as vicar until 1899.

1896 St James School, proposed by Henry Askwith, is built.

1901 St James' church fire - roof and all wood burned.

1903 St James' re-opens.

1983 St James' parish re-united with St Peter's, with an unusual structure of being a single parish with two co-equal parish churches.

*This leaflet was compiled by members of:
Bartonsham History Group and St James' Church,
www.bartonshamhistory.org.uk, www.spsj.org.uk,*