

GUIDE TO THE CHURCH OF ST JOHN THE DIVINE, PATCHING

Please take this with you round the church and replace at the end of your visit
Numbered paragraphs relate to the numbers on the plan of the church inside.



The first record of Patching church was in the year 947 when it was gifted by Wulfric to the prior and monks of Christ Church Canterbury. The present structure built circa 1200 was made over to the Ecclesiastical (later the Church) Commissioners in 1859.

Asymmetry of the church

In the late 17th century the church was badly decayed and in danger of falling down. In 1703 after the roof collapsed parishioners demolished the decayed west and north walls. The north wall was rebuilt 4½ ft. to the south. This is why the pews on the north of the nave (main church area) are shorter than those on the south and the aisle is not central. The cost and poor availability of timber was the reason for moving the church wall, thus undamaged sections of the original roof timbers could be trimmed and re-used.

The south door through which you entered the church, would have intersected the south wall but the rebuilding of the west wall in the present position shortened the nave and left the door in the south west corner.

1. THE SUN CLOCK

There is evidence of a sun clock outside the porch through which you entered the church. To the right of the entrance, on a stone to the right of the top of the pillar that supports the stone arch, a hole approximately 1cm in diameter can be seen. This is where the gnomon would have been secured.



Careful inspection below will reveal a semi circle of smaller indentations which would have depicted the time of day as the shadow of the gnomon moved. Such a sun clock is very rare. Unfortunately it would not function today as it is shaded by trees.

2. THE FONT

According to the Diocesan Kalendar of 1890 this 15th century font which was described as being of 'a very poor and common type' was discarded and replaced by one which was 'modern'.

In the early 19th century, having reputedly been used as a feeding trough for farm animals, this old font was restored and replaced in the present position.



3. LANCETS (WINDOWS) - WEST WALL

The lancet on the right shows a figure of St John with a pen in his hand and an eagle which is a symbol of St John, holding an inkwell in its beak. The words are from

the revelation of St John the Divine, Revelation Chapter 14 verse 13,

'Then I heard a voice from heaven say, "Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.'

The war memorial, placed below the west windows names those parishioners that died in the Great War.



4. COLLAGES

The collages on the north wall depicting Christmas, Easter and the Ascension were made by the Clapham and Patching Women's Institute sewing group and were presented to the church in 2006.



5. LANCETS - SOUTH WALL

From the west, going towards the front of the church the lancets depict Jesus and the disciples at the Transfiguration, the Passover supper and Jesus with fishermen.

Paintings

The painting on the south wall was donated by a Mr. Noel of Dulaney House, according to whom the copy of Rubens 'Descent from the Cross' is by a Belgian artist.



Opposite on the north wall is a painting in the style of Murillo, believed to be of Saint Paul. However the cat like figure in the picture may represent the winged lion which is the symbol of St Mark. This painting was loaned



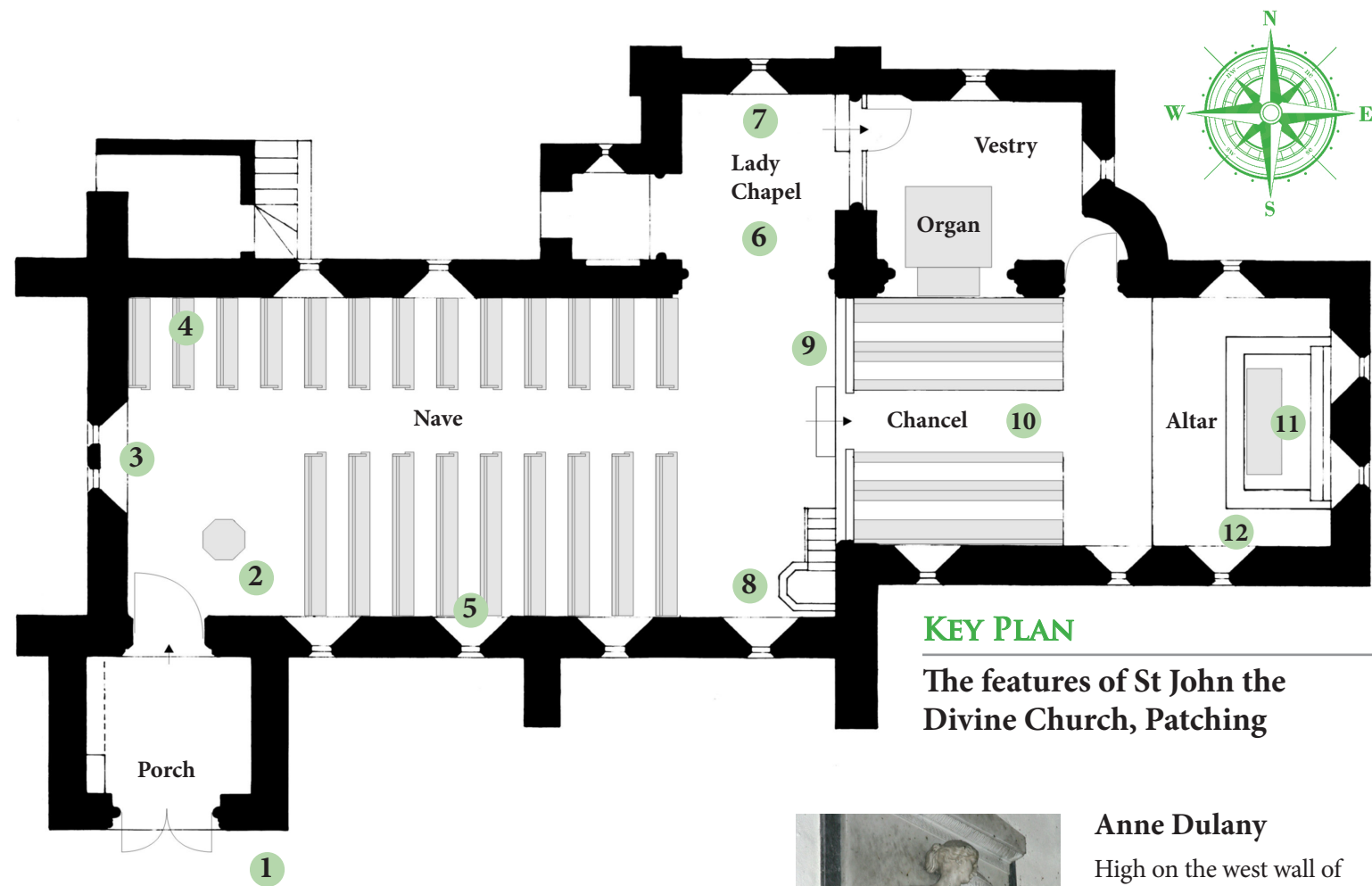
to the church in 1971 by Mr. H Williams of Seldon Court. It was later restored and presented to the church by his son.

The painting in the Lady Chapel which is a copy of Murillo's Madonna and Child, reputedly came from Florence. The lancet above also depicts Mary and baby Jesus.

6. THE BELL TOWER

There is a single bell which is rung before some services. The south tower arch at the entrance to the bell tower is of 13th century origin but appears to have been repaired at a later date. The east and west arches had at some stage been blocked up, presumably when the structures into which they led were demolished. They were re-opened in the 1889 restoration.

The eastern arch now leads into the 19th century vestry and organ chamber. The west arch is smaller and leads to a Victorian porch but the original purpose of the west arch is a mystery. A faculty (permission to undertake work)



KEY PLAN

The features of St John the Divine Church, Patching

application in 1888 referred to plans 'to build an entrance porch or to restore the former aisle to the west of the tower'.

Strangely the faculty wording indicated that there was evidence of a former aisle, a side aisle, to the west of the tower. Did the west arch lead into that aisle? With an internal dimension of 5' 8" wide it is larger than any aisle would have been, given that the north wall was only 4' 6" further out before 1730. This remains a mystery.

The Spire

More easily seen from outside, this was part of the 1889 restoration. This broach spire is a design that allows an eight sided spire to stand on a square tower.

7. THE LADY CHAPEL

Situated at the base of the tower the altar in the Lady Chapel is an ancient wooden table. Could this be the wooden Communion Table that was introduced when stone altars had to be discarded after the Reformation of 1547?

The moon and stars painted on the Lady Chapel ceiling are believed to have been there since medieval times.



Anne Dulany

High on the west wall of the tower is a carving of Ann Dulany of Dulaney House, known for her works of 'charity and mercy': in 1835 she died at the age of 42. The memorial was provided by her daughter Ann Dulany Hunter whose husband Sir Richard Hunter generously contributed to the restoration of the church and the building of the Patching rectory in the same year, 1835. A tablet commemorating these events and dated 1835 was found under the choir stalls. Further work was done in 1856 by Sir Richard's kinsman, Sir John Kirkland.

The memorial inscription on Anne Dulany's carving, 'Deeply imbued with the principles of Christian truth, and resting in humble thankfulness on the supports and consolations of the Gospel, She resigned her soul in peace in the steadfast hope of blessed resurrection through the merits of Christ her Saviour'.

8. THE PULPIT

The pulpit dates from the 1889 restoration. It incorporates three Renaissance arabesque panels of 16th century origin.



Little is known about the large wooden cabinet in the south transept.

It appears to have been constructed incorporating earlier carvings.



9. CHANCEL SCREEN AND ARCH

The wooden screen added in 1889 is in the style of the 15th century screen which it replaced. There are four panels each side of the door. Each solid panel and open bay has a cinquefoil head, a design of five converging arcs. The cornice and cross have gilded flower ornamentation.

When viewed from the altar the scalloped stone work that supports each base of the chamfered chancel



arch is visible. This is considered to be a very fine example of what is often referred to as 'Clymping corbels'.

(A corbel is a protrusion from a wall that supports an architectural feature).

10. THE CHANCEL

The pointed arch on the north side of the chancel is in 13th century style but must be part of the 19th century restoration at which time the organ was moved here. The doorway leads to the vestry. There is one lancet on the north wall bearing the inscription:

'An angel strengthening Him'.

The lancets on the south wall from the east are inscribed,

1. 'Behold the man,' the words of Pilate as he brought Jesus before the crowds
2. 'He that saw it bare record,' soldiers casting lots below the cross
3. 'He came and took the body of Jesus'

At one time there was a priest's door between the second and third of these lancets.





Floor Tiles

The distinctive tiles in different patterns for the chancel, sanctuary and altar step are identified as Minton tiles in an account of the 1889 restoration.

The Minton Company of Stoke on Trent existed from the late 18th century until the 1990s when it became part of the Royal Doulton company.

Choir stalls

From the chancel screen the Latin words *cantares* and *cantant* are carved, one at each end of the choir stall on the left. Similarly the words *domini* and *domino* appear on the stall to the right. The translation is, 'sing to the Lord' in which we are very pleased to be led by our choir at Sung Eucharist.

11. EAST LANCETS AND CROSS

Of the large lancets behind the altar the one on the left depicts an Angel and Mary Magdelene and is inscribed, 'He is risen'. The inscription on the lancet to the right is: 'My Lord and my God.'

Between the lancets are symbols of the crucifixion; wooden cross, nails, crown, sponge on a reed and spear. Below the canopy are the letters INRI, the initials of the Latin words written on the cross, Iesus Nazarenus Rex Iudaeorum, (Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews).



Stone Carvings

The impressive Victorian reredos which is situated behind the altar has a central angel. To the left is the triumphant procession towards Jerusalem showing Jesus and disciples with supportive crowds waving palms. On the right is a very different picture of Jesus carrying the cross towards Calvary with soldiers ahead, one kneeling woman and others following.



12. THE PISCINA AND SEDILIA

The trefoil headed recess to the right of the altar must at one time have been a piscina which is a water-drain in the form of a shallow basin to drain the water in which the priest washed his hands, as well as that with which the chalice was rinsed at Communion.

Close inspection suggests that the basin was filled in to make a stone shelf which is now used as a credence table. The recess also houses the aumbry where consecrated communion wafers are stored.



To the right of the piscina is a stone 'shelf' or sedilia, from the Latin *sedile* which is a single seat, sedilia being plural. This double seat was for the use of officiating priests. An entry in the Diocesan

Kalendar for 1890 says, 'A very beautiful and nearly perfect piscina discovered in the wall was restored and sedilia in consonance with it built.'



Bats

There are bats resident in the church. Though rarely seen their presence can be obvious around the church at times!



We hope that you enjoyed your visit.

We would be pleased to receive your comments in the visitor's book on the rear table. There is also information about the church and the village. There is a wall safe for purchases and donations.

If you enjoyed this visit why not visit our 'sister' church at Clapham (below) which has some very fine William Morris tiles and brasses including memorials to the Shelley family? It is open daily during British summer time.

Thank you.

Kath Hutchinson
Church Warden

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