

A GUIDE TO ST. JAMES' CHURCH PAPPLEWICK

We hope you enjoy your visit. The Church is of great interest historically and is a Grade 1 listed building. But having said that it is primarily a place of worship and is maintained to the glory of God. As you will see it is linked with St. Michael's Linby.

Much of the 'guide' is taken from "Linby & Papplewick Notebook" by the late Rev L. Illingworth Butler, a former Rector.

How old is the Church?

Probably, it is of 12th Century origin. In the grant made by Henry 11 to Newstead Priory, part of the endowment was "The Town of Papplewick with the Church of the same name and the Mill." The present tower is 14th century and the nave and chancel were rebuilt by the Hon. Frederick Montagu in 1795 after he had rebuilt the Hall. In 1885, Papplewick was united to the Rectory of Linby. The Parish is now called therefore the Parish of St. Michael, Linby cum St. James, Papplewick.

But to continue about the age of the Church ... the building was further restored and repaired in 1938 in memory of John Chadburn, son of Mr. C.W. Chadburn, the then Patron of the Parish. The organ was moved from the west to the east of the north wall : the staircase used to be where the organ is now. The organ claims to be a Willis, but our tuners are not so sure!

There is a constant repair programme. 1997 saw the restoration and augmentation of the bells and in 1999, the Westmoreland-diminishing slate roof was replaced.

Coal-mining subsidence has caused the church to drop 1.7m! Pre-mining damage-prevention measures seem to have been largely successful, but during the repairs, the opportunity was taken to address the lighting of the church. The path was also renewed, and work done to the east window.

A Tour of the Church

1. The outstanding feature is the East Window by Francis Eginton. It is a copy of Reynold's famous window in the chapel of New College, Oxford – depicting only Faith and Hope! It is signed and dated 1796.
2. In the window west of the porch, there are some fragments of really old stained glass, although obviously wrongly put together.
3. Now look at the floor! The Church is noted for its incised tomb slabs. It would seem that in various alterations of the building, several have been removed from their original positions, while others have been cut to fit as floor stones. They are of varied designs, some dating as early as the 13th Century. Note the Forester's slab marked with bow and arrow, horn and baldric – don't forget this is Robin Hood country! Two slabs in the porch walls bear bellows, the insignia of officials at the Forge Mills.
4. Just inside the door is the old Norman tub font. It was found in the Churchyard, and until its restoration, the tiny marble basin at the back of the Church was used. On the partition is painted the Royal Arms, perhaps placed there when the Church was rebuilt.
5. Another outstanding feature is the musician's gallery. At the east end is the old "Squire's pew". In it was a private fireplace – marked now by a replica sadly. It is said that the Squire rattled the fire-irons to let the preacher know that his sermon was going on too long! (Access is not possible to this area)
6. Over the door is the Hatchment of Miss Catherine Judith Fountayne. She was the daughter of Anne Colladon (who married John Fountayne) and succeeded to the Papplewick

estates after the death of the Hon. Frederick Montagu in 1800. She died in 1822.

7. In the church are memorials to the Montagu and Colladon families, and one to William Howitt, a benefactor of the Parish. More recent are the War Memorials to the memory of John Chadburn and Alan Chadburn.
8. In the belfry, there are five bells. The third bell is simply marked with a cross, and the name ELENA inscribed in old English.. It may date back to about 1520. The fourth bell bears the trademark of the celebrated Nottingham bell-founder, Henry Oldfield, and also the date 1620. The inscription reads : “I sweetly tolling men do call, to feaste on meates that feed the soule.”
9. Moving out of the Church, turn back and look at the figures above the door. The one immediately above the door is late Saxon or early Norman probably representing St. James’. The higher figure used to be set up on the inner side of the archway, but it is uncertain whom it depicts.
10. The Churchyard tells of a story all of its own. There are tombstones of the early 17th Century which is a rarity. One near the path bears the date 17012 which has caused much speculation. From the registers, it is shown that the actual date is 1712.

The Churchyard is still in use but only just. An area for the interment of Cremated Remains has been created at the foot of the tower and a Book of Remembrance relates to this on the chest at the back of the church.

Near the door stands that magnificent yew which some say dates back to the days of the royal decree that yews should be planted in every churchyard to maintain the supply for the

famous English longbow. The tree is probably over 350 years old. The oak seat surrounding it has recently been restored.

As you will have seen, St James' is a fine church in a beautiful setting with its own special tranquillity. As a place of worship it is used each Sunday : full details of services can be found on the notice-board and a 'Welcome' leaflet. Down the ages, St. James' witnesses to Jesus Christ – the same, yesterday and today and forever.

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