

St. Mary Magdalene Church is renowned as the last resting place of Lord Byron and it holds a collection of Victorian stained glass from the Kempe studios of national significance. But Christians have been worshipping on the site for well over a thousand years. In that time it has accumulated many stories and holds many memories about those people. This is a guide to some of the other stories which have left their mark on our church.

St Mary Magdalene Church, Hucknall



You can download a free QR Code reader from the App Store or Google Play.

At each location on the pilgrimage, there is a sign like this with its number and a QR code. Scan the codes to find out more.



St Mary Magdalene Church Pilgrimage, an interactive tour.



The High Altar Reredos



Explore the church and discover more of its thousand year history. Follow the route, find the numbered locations, scan the QR codes. www.hucknallparishchurch.org.uk



4. Vestry Door
In the 19th and 20th centuries this is where the choir emerged to process down to choir stalls which once occupied the chancel near the altar. Today, it is still used as the start point for the procession, which signals the start of a church service.



3. Medieval Coffin Lid
(Set into the wall to the right of the entrance to the Tower).
This is a fine survival from the medieval period, it was uncovered when the chancel was moved east during the 1887/8 extension and placed in its present position. The interpretation of the carved symbols to the right and left of the cross is a matter of dispute, although the symbol on the right clearly represents shears of some kind.



2. The Tower
The Tower is the oldest surviving part of the church, the lower half is thought to date from the 11th century. The window to the left which opens into the old Baptistry looked out onto the churchyard for 800 years until the 1872/3 extension.



1. Baptistry
This area was built during the church extension of 1882/3 as a Baptistry. The font once stood directly under the window which shows Jesus with little children. It is easy to work out the font's original position from the tiles on the floor. The painted, biblical quotation above the window is all that remains of the elaborate Victorian murals which once covered the entire church interior, but were whitewashed over in the modernist style of the 1960s.



The first panel Godber commissioned features angels; his favourite theme. It is thought that this was a stock design modified to include musical instruments. They were produced by James Powell & Sons, a London glass-making company also known as Whitefriars Glass, which had existed since the 17th century.



B. OPUS SECTILE, 1897
Angels playing Musical Instruments



A. OPUS SECTILE, 1898
The Return of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32)
Our church's wealthy Victorian benefactor, Canon John Godber, who had paid for large extensions to the church and filled it with Kempe stained glass, ran out of windows in 1894. He then turned his attention to decorating the walls and chose to use Opus Sectile, which is similar to stained glass. It is made from pieces of coloured glass cut into tiles. Much of it is gilded and shimmers bright with gold on sunny days. This is the only panel to tell a biblical story. The penitent younger son kneels before his father saying the words on the scroll at the bottom (Luke 15:21), while the two servants have brought the 'best robe' to dress him in and the 'fattened calf' for a celebratory feast ordered by his father (Luke 15:22-23).



A. OPUS SECTILE, 1898
The Return of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32)



5. 'One-way door'
Where the opus sectile of the Prodigal Son is fixed to the wall there was once a door. It was blocked off in 1888. There is no trace of it now on this side but the doorway is still visible from the outside in the churchyard. It is said that at a funeral, the coffin used to enter through the porch for the service and exit straight out into the churchyard through this door.



24. List of Incumbents
This panel records the names of all the people who have served the church as priest over the centuries. It is possible to follow changes in church practice simply by looking at trends in their names.



From 1324 to 1532 they all have the title 'Bro' (Brother) denoting that they were canons (a monk who was also a priest) attached to a monastery; likely to have been Augustinian Canons from Newstead Abbey. This came to an end in the reign of Henry VIII when he separated the English Church from Rome and abolished the monasteries.

Until 2003 all the incumbents were men because women were not allowed to become priests of the Church of England until 1993.

C. OPUS SECTILE, 1905.
Guardian Angels (Psalm 91:11-12).

Shortly before he died John Godber returned to his favourite subject. He made sure that his last gift would be three guardian angels to keep a constant watch over the church and congregation of St. Mary Magdalene, with a suitable farewell message from the bible.

25. First Angel
This impressive sculpture of an angel on the last pillar of the south aisle was installed at the time of the church extension, 1872/3. It is likely to be the first angel to be commissioned by John Godber. Over the next 35 years he would leave the church covered with them.



26. Pulpit
Dates from 1906, and deeply carved with an image of Jesus surrounded by his disciples. Children are encouraged to shake the hand of Jesus.



27. Plaque recording burials under the South Transept
The names and dates of those whose graves were covered up by the south transept were inscribed on a stone tablet and placed on the wall, as you leave by the south door. But you will have to enter the visitors' washroom to find it!

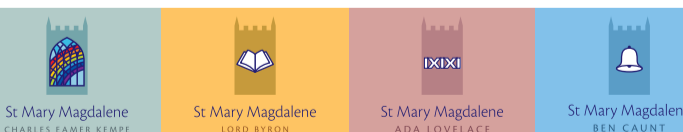


Now your pilgrimage has ended, you can find out more about St Mary Magdalene church and its stories, by accessing the QR codes on the tables in the refreshments area.

Scan this QR code to view a souvenir of your visit to St Mary Magdalene Church.



There is more to discover about St Mary Magdalene Church and its people. There are two other pilgrimage trail leaflets to follow around the church. There are two souvenir leaflets for the two other most famous burials here.



Plus a host of other Hucknall characters and significant aspects of Hucknall's story.



Special thanks to all at St Mary Magdalene Church for help in the preparation of this material and especially to: Richard Jackson, Ray Watson, Ken Holdsworth, Malcolm and Beryl Handley, Imelda Johnson, Keith Towers, Pat Rose, Jean Rowe, Ian and Ann Wells, Brian Hinsley, Jane Haywood.



For up to date information on our church's activities, please visit www.hucknallparishchurch.org.uk Ask a steward for a large print version of this guide.



6. Torkard Head

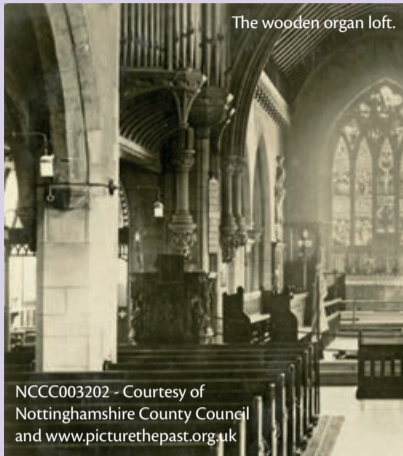
Here on a pillar is the oldest sculpture in situ in the church. The head dates from the first extension of the church in the 13th century. It is thought to be a representation of Geoffrey Torkard himself.



7. Eric Morley Plaque

This wall plaque remembers the life of Eric Morley, the founder of local newspaper, the *Dispatch*.

NORTH TRANSEPT: Completed in 1888. Along with the South Transept and the South Aisle, two Victorian extensions doubled the size of the church. At that time a large wooden organ loft was installed above the entrance to the North Transept. Both loft and organ were removed after they were severely damaged in a fire in 1972. Although a free-standing organ replaced the original, it was sold in 1992 to Sedbergh School in Cumbria, opening up this area of the church.



8. North Transept Screen

Placed there in 1888, it was damaged in the 1972 fire and repaired using panels rescued from St. Ann's Church, Nottingham which was demolished in 1971.



9. Jackson Monuments

High on the wall these stone monuments record the long association of the Jackson family with the church. They record the lives of some of the relatives of Rev Curtis Jackson incumbent here 1848-1862.



10. The Book of Remembrance

This records the anniversary of the passing of members of the congregation; the page is turned every four days.



18. The Reredos

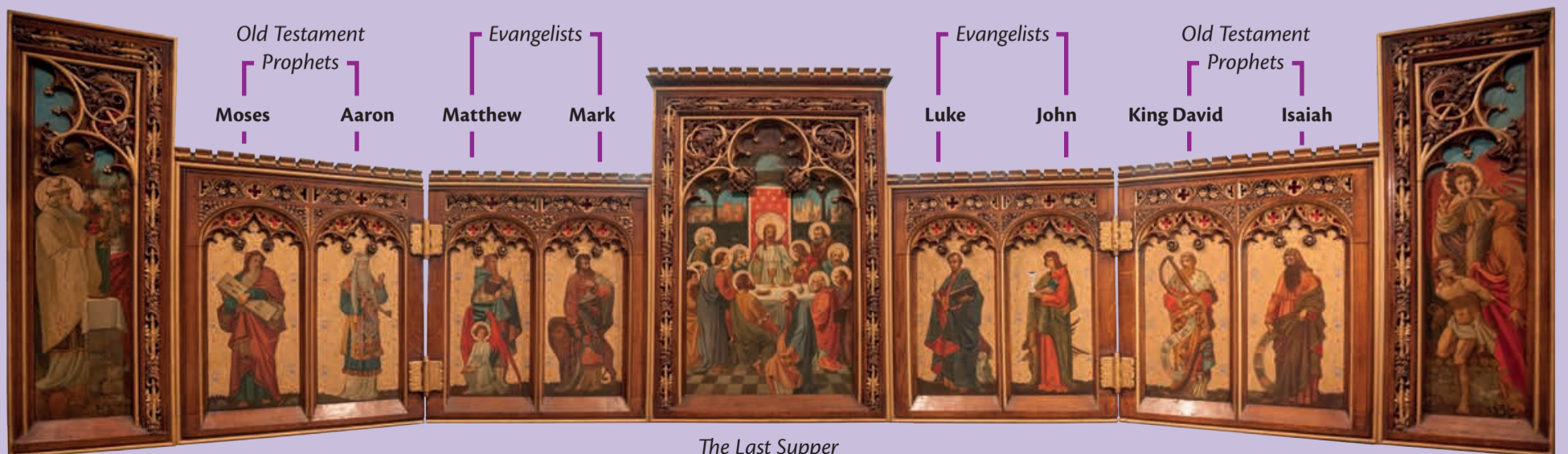
The Reredos: The wooden reredos which stands on the altar table is an ornately carved and painted triptych. It is Victorian Gothic in style but the artist and maker is unknown.

Hinges enable it to stand either open or closed. It stays open for most of the year but it is closed during the seasons of Lent (six weeks before Easter Day) and Advent (beginning on the fourth Sunday before Christmas Day).

The Reredos closed



The Reredos open



Old Testament Prophets

Moses Aaron

Evangelists

Matthew Mark

Evangelists

Luke John

Old Testament Prophets

King David Isaiah

The Last Supper

The conversion of Constantine, the first Christian Roman Emperor by Pope St. Sylvester I.

Abraham and Isaac: An angel stops the sacrifice of Isaac.

LADY CHAPEL: Built in the 13th century and dedicated to the Virgin Mary, hence 'Lady Chapel'. The chapel was taken down and rebuilt stone by stone several metres to the east to make way for the transepts during the 1887/8 church extension. In 1919, in the great outpouring of national grief which followed the losses of the First World War, the Lady Chapel was re-modelled as a chapel of remembrance for the fallen of the parish.



11. Lady Chapel Screen

This beautifully carved screen was placed here as part of the series of remembrance monuments to those parishioners who fell in the First World War. The lower half of the screen is a continuation of the wainscot panelling around the chapel walls which includes tributes to the fallen; each name in gold within a carved wooden wreath.



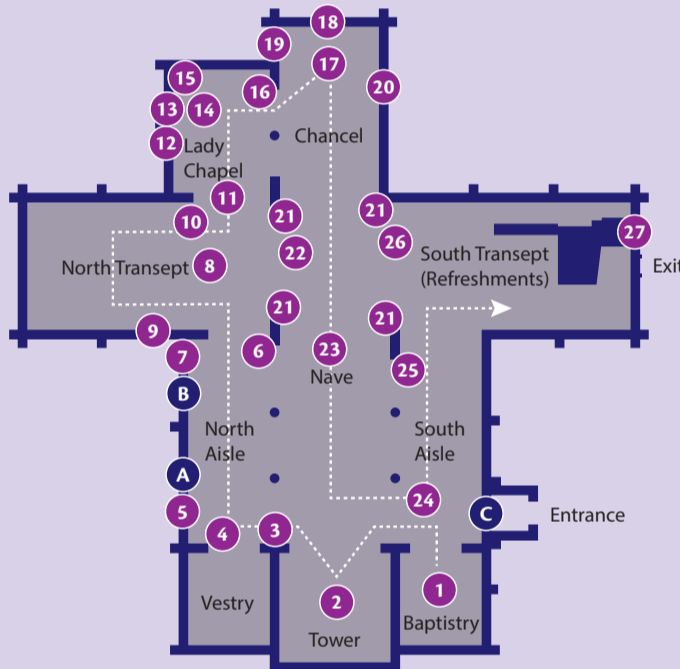
12. Alabaster First World War Memorial Panel

This tasteful panel to Hucknall's fallen is carved from soft alabaster which is not cold to the touch.



13. Memorial to Paul Sandford

A brass plaque in memory of a Lance Corporal who died in the Afghanistan conflict in 2007.



19. Lord Richard Byron's Monument

On the wall to the left of the High Altar is a monument to the second Lord Byron, buried here in 1679. It records his service to the Royalist cause during the Civil War. He was the first Byron to be interred in the family vault.



20. Sedilia

This is an original medieval feature and takes the form of three seats set in the wall to the right of the altar. This is where the priest, deacon and sub-deacon would have sat when officiating at mass. The seat on the right uses another medieval grave slab at the back; its decoration includes a rare triquetra ('trinity knot'), usually associated with Celtic art.



14. Lady Chapel Altar Rail

Placed here in memory of Dr. Zachariah Green, one of a family of herbalists, folk medics and formal medical practitioners who were highly regarded by the townsfolk. You will find Dr Green's name carved along the top of the rail.



15. The Diocesan Chair

This fine wooden chair is used by visiting dignitaries of the Diocese, including the archdeacon and bishop. The back of the chair is burnt and blackened; a relic of the 1972 fire.



16. Piscina

In the wall to the right of the Lady Chapel altar is a small niche. This is a medieval feature which once contained holy water. The back of the piscina is decorated with the base of an incised cross; it is a reused medieval grave slab, similar to others found in the church.



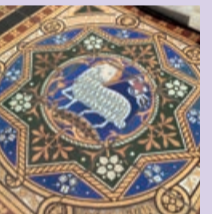
CHANCEL: This is the most holy place and holds the high altar, which is always at the east end of a church. It is an original, medieval part of the church which may be as early as the 11th century. Like the Lady Chapel, it was moved stone by stone eastward in order to make room for the transepts in 1887/8. Its walls are covered in memorials to the Byron family including the poet himself and his daughter Ada Lovelace, the mathematician. The Byron vault lies beneath the chancel.



17. The Sanctuary

The area behind the altar rail contains the altar table. The cloth which is draped over it changes colour depending on the Christian calendar.
Purple: Advent and Lent
White: Christmas and Easter
Red: Holy Week
Green: The rest of the year

The decoration of this area, including the early 20th century floor tiles, the altar rail and marble steps were given in memory of Emmeline Ball, whose memorial plaque is fixed on the wall, nearby.



NAVE: An original medieval section of the church, possibly 11th century. Originally, it had walls on either side before the aisles were added. In 1887/8, it was extended eastward to where the transepts meet and the roof heightened.



21. The Four Evangelists

Here, at the crossing of the transepts, the pillars at each corner have ornately carved corbels. Each sculpture includes a symbol of one of the four writers of the Gospels; Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.



22. The Font

It dates to the 14th century. Across the centuries it has been placed in different parts of the church. The font was removed from the old baptistry when it was turned into a visitor centre in 1999.



23. Blind Window

From the Chancel steps you can see a window on the tower wall. This used to be outside until the roof was heightened in 1887/8.