

St. Andrew's
Church
Layham

Guide



WELCOME TO:
THE PARISH CHURCH OF LAYHAM

*Walk about Sion, and go round about her:
And tell the towers thereof,
Mark well her bulwarks, set up her houses:
That ye may tell them that come after.*

Psalm XLVIII.

Layham village lies on both sides of the river Brett just south of Hadleigh in Suffolk. The place name comes from Anglo-Saxon: HLY - sheltered ham-home or village.

It was described in the Domesday Book as Leiham, a fairly prosperous village, with the larger part, now called Lower Layham on the west side of the river and including the church and the water mill. In the valuation of every church in England in 1288-91, Layham was assessed at £16.

Exterior

The church dates from the late C13 or early C14. In 1742 a new Georgian red brick tower was built, one of only two in Suffolk. The West door, belfry window, and bell openings are outlined in yellow brick, and the top stage was rebuilt in 1861 when there was a general restoration. The yew tree on the south side of the tower was probably planted to commemorate Queen Victoria's coronation. The small 14th C north door is blocked and all the windows were renewed as part of the 1860s restoration or

during another in the 1880s. At that time a vestry was added on the north side. The priest's door in the chancel south wall has rather nice little male and female head-stops. When the SW nave buttress was rebuilt a scratch dial was moved down almost to ground level. Just round the corner there was quite a large window in the west wall which may have been blocked when the tower was rebuilt.

Interior

We enter the church through the 19th C porch. The wide nave is spanned by a new roof 1861 with scissors bracing. The original W arch was filled in and a 18th C door inserted at the time the tower was built.

The nave is furnished with a superb set of Victorian oak benches, amongst the finest in Suffolk. The splendid Poppy-heads are all individually carved. The 13th C Purbeck marble font is unusual in being hexagonal; it has a shallow bowl with canted sides. The pairs of arches in the ~~porch~~ ^{PANELS} have lost some of their detail and it rests on a centre column and six small detached columns.

A print of Layham church dated 1846 by Henry Davy hangs on the north wall.

The list of rectors dating from 1247 hangs on the south wall.

The pulpit and lectern are both Victorian.

A simple piscina under a trefoil arch can be seen in the S wall.

Beyond the pulpit on the S side of the nave there are four tall panels which were once part of the base of the 16th C rood screen.

The tablet above commemorates members of the Norman family and was the work of Edward J. Phyrick, a London sculptor and Royal Academy gold medallist.

Chancel

Like the benches in the nave, the chancel stalls are Victorian. They have very elaborate Poppy-heads carved with vines, holly leaves, and thistles for the Patron Saint. The oak-framed organ made by Bishop and Sons of London and Ipswich in 1903 at a cost of £250, was given by the Rev. Henry Russell, rector 1885-1903.

Anne Roane's memorial on the S wall is most unusual because it is in the form of a canvas hatchment, her coat of arms has flourishing yellow and red mantling, the epitaph is painted on a simulated drape.

The early 14th C piscina in the sanctuary is partly obscured by the end buttress of the stone reredos.

The Edwardian Reredos.

This dates from 1904 and is quite elaborate with gabled and pinnacled niches each side containing roundels against a deep blue background, the centre panels have Christ in Majesty flanked by censing angels, St Andrew and St John, all in mosaic.

The reredos was given in memory of the Rev. Henry Russell by parishioners and friends.

Stained glass

The 1880s East Window was designed and made by Daniel Bell (younger brother of Alfred Bell) This important window has four lights: The baptism, crucifixion and deposition of Christ and the martyrdom of St. Andrew. It has rich glass, in which the influence of Clayton and Bell is clear.

The window was given in memory of the Rev. Henry Hunter Hughes BD, who died Sept. 1884 aged 87. (The design was sold in London in 1978.)

Chancel Window - N.Side.

Rare early work. Not many in Suffolk of that period. Very good interesting window. (Possibly by Ward Nixon) Strong colours. Baptism, Last Supper, Crucifixion and Ascension. Given in memory of Louise Hughes, died Sept. 1844.

There are only 6 Ward Nixon stained glass windows in Suffolk.

Window centre Nave - N. side.

Plain leaded window. Inscription in stained glass in memory of Major and Mrs.H.D.T. Miller of Water house Farm, 1958-1989.

Wall Tablets.

Sanctuary

Mary Pritchett 1791, and the Rev. Richard Pritchett BD 1811.
Rector 1781-1811.

The Rev. William Walker BD 1835
Rector 1812-1835
Harry Butler Smith 1928 Rector 1919-1928
The Rev Henry Hunter Hughes BD
Rector 1836-1884

Chancel

Jane Minney Roxburgh d. 27 Sept.1960 (Brass plate on organ)
Margery Lady Rowley 1894-1974. Churchwarden 1933-1974) (Brass plate on organ)
Agatha Durrant. Organist 1922- 1959.

Nave

George Partridge 1922. Churchwarden 26 years.
Phoebe Elizabeth Seaman 1921.

The Baker Bread Charity Tablet on N. wall.

William Baker late Rector of Layham in 1727 left £30 to be laid out in bread and distributed to such of the poor of the said parish as commonly keep to their own Parish church.

The above was laid out in the purchase of the field called the Town Meadow lying to the East of Wilkinson's Meadow.

Church Lads and Church Girls Brigade.

(Now disbanded.) Brigade trophies, Shield and Banner can be seen on the W. wall.

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The Rev. Henry Hunter Hughes died in 1886 and his legacy was used to provide oak pews, a new floor in wooden blocks, (red deal) and tiles, new pulpit and the stained glass East window.

The Parish of Layham lay within the diocese of Norwich until 1837. From 1837 to 1914 it formed part of the Diocese of Ely, and since 1914 it has been part of the Diocese of St. Edmundsbury and Ipswich.

The Patrons of the living since 1725 have been the Master and Fellows of St. John's college, Cambridge. The benefice is now united with Hadleigh and Shelley and the Patronage is shared with the Archbishop of Canterbury. The rector of the benefice also holds the title of "Dean of Bocking" in Essex. (The Dean's residence is The Deanery, Hadleigh.)

The registers of baptisms and burials date from 1538, marriages from 1544.

William Dowsing wrote in his diary Layham February 2nd 1643: "We brake down six Superstitious Pictures and take down a cross off the steeple".

An extension to the burial ground on the other side of the road was consecrated in 1911. The gates were given in 1984 in memory of Thomas Herbert Leach.

Saint Andrew

The Saltire (X- shaped cross; Scotland's part of the Union Flag) and fishing net are his symbols.

One of the twelve disciples, he was a fisherman before he became a disciple. Legends of his later life are legion, including one that he visited Scotland, thus becoming its

Patron Saint. He was martyred by crucifixion, it is said upon an X-shaped cross. There is a 19th C mosaic of his martyrdom here at Layham.

It has been most truly said
That these old buildings do not
belong to us only.
They belong to our forefathers
and they will belong to our
descendants unless we play them false.
They are not in any sense
our property to do with them
as we like; we are only
trustees for those that
come after us.

William Morris.

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This building stands here in this community as a sign of our belief in God and of his Son, Jesus Christ and of the power of the Holy' Spirit.

The building becomes a focus for our awareness of the presence of God in our lives. To this building we come to wonder the mystery of our creation, to find stillness and silence, to find inner peace, to be enabled by the Holy Spirit. We come sometimes in turmoil bringing our anxieties, our sorrows. We come with joyful hearts and to celebrate. We come to make heartfelt prayer. to ask for guidance and to give thanks for blessings received.

It is to this building that we bring our children to baptism. and to find for themselves the things that we treasure.

Many couples have come to make the promises of marriage to each other; and those who have died are brought here for Christian burial. Sunday by Sunday the great prayer of thanksgiving is made at the Eucharist offering all that we are to God and receiving from him the sacrament of communion.

This building is here to help us in our spiritual pilgrimage and to enable us to worship and glorify' God. It is for all of this that we give thanks, recognising the skills and talents of those craftsmen who have gone before us, and giving us a legacy' rich in meaning. For our part we too give it our best, continuing to preserve the building not for its own sake alone but as a means of our coming to receive the grace of God in our own lives.

We welcome you to come and share with us in our worship at any of our services.

The Very Revd. Canon David Stranack : Rector; Dean of Bocking and the Rev. Joyce Willis.



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