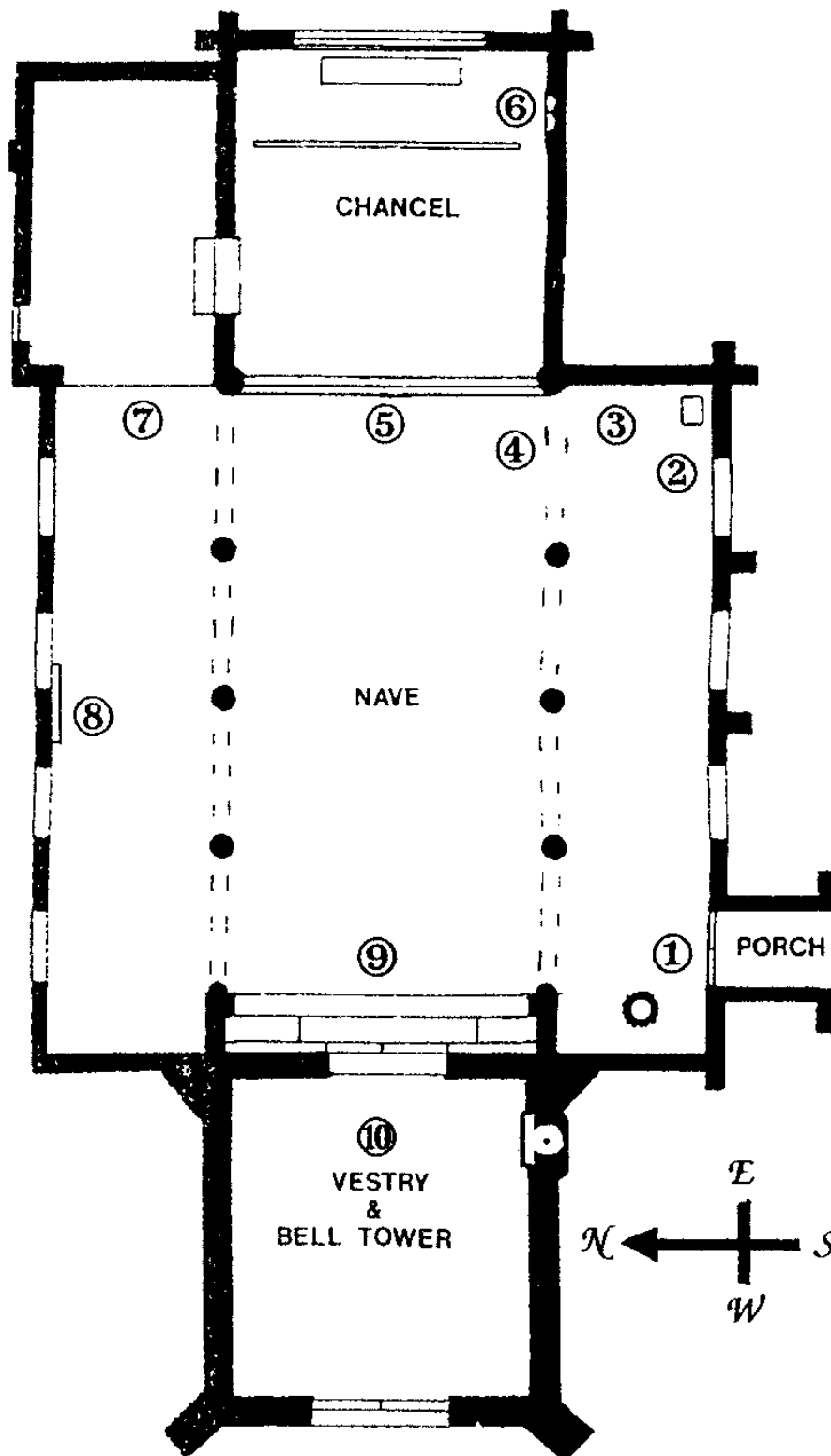


# A Short Guide to the Parish Church of St. John the Evangelist WASHINGBOROUGH



**WELCOME TO ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, which is a Grade 2\* listed building, parts of which date back to the 13th Century - though the main body of the building was erected between 1380 and 1450.**

The 8-pinnacle tower can be seen for miles, while closer inspection will bring into view eight imps looking out from below the battlements; the clock was built by W. Thomas of Lincoln and installed in 1842, and the tower contains a ring of eight bells, the oldest of which are three installed in 1589. The bells were re-hung in a steel frame in 1998, and ring for Sunday services and other special occasions.

① (see numbers on floor plan for location)

As you enter the South Porch you will see stone seats which were created to allow those awaiting baptism to sit. As you come into the Church, on your left you will see the Norman font, which dates from around 1170 and which is still used today. Most Sundays during the year this font is used for baptisms as we welcome children - and sometimes adults - into the family of God.

Above the font is the old Mothers' Union banner which reminds those being baptised of the care by the Church for the newly baptised.

② Turn right, and walk along the South Aisle, and at the end you will see a 15th Century chest (circa 1459) with its traditional three locks. The chest contains many old books and Bibles donated to the Church.

③ You are now in the area which by the end of 2000 will form a Lady Chapel, to be used for private prayer and midweek services. Votive candles may also be lit here. In the pillar, you will see what is claimed locally to be a 'lepers' squint' - a window, now blocked, through which those suffering from incurable and infectious diseases could observe the Church services. Whether this was ever used is unknown.

④ The organ is new, installed in early 2000. It is a digital computerised organ (see the loudspeakers high on the back - west - wall of the Church) with 37 speaking stops and a library of 64 extra stops. Music is important to the Church, and we have a large choir which sings at Family Communion Services and Weddings.

Beside the organ you will find the lectern which holds the Holy Bible - the basis of our faith - and nearby the Paschal Candle which is lit for baptisms, and represents Jesus, The Light of the World.

⑤ Before you walk up the steps into the Chancel, look up at the Rood Beam, decorated with carved grapes and sheaves of corn. The Latin inscription translates as: *'You pass by the effigy of Christ our Lord, with head bowed: honour him, but worship not the effigy, but him whom it represents'*.

On many Saturdays during the year, the Chancel steps are the central point in the Church where weddings are celebrated. Some 30 weddings take place each year in St. John's, which is the Parish Church of Washingborough and Heighington.

As you walk towards the Sanctuary - the eastern end of the Chancel, housing the Altar - look up again and observe the 18th Century Georgian chandelier adorned with cherub heads. This is believed to have belonged to King George IV, and to have come from Brighton Pavilion. A similar chandelier hangs in Belton House, near Grantham.

Back at ground level, don't miss the Altar rail kneelers made by the ladies of Heighington Church to match the designs of the Rood Beam .

⑥ In the Sanctuary you will see built into the wall the 14th Century sedilia, where clergy used to sit; and piscena, where communion cups were washed. Now these alcoves are used by the Church Servers.

On the floor, at the foot of the wall opposite, you will find a memorial to a medieval knight who fought in the Crusades.

The High Altar is used every Sunday for Communion Services, and its height was accentuated in the Victorian age, when the floor of the Nave (the body of the Church) was lowered.

The East Window, above the Altar, is the oldest stained glass window in the Church: whilst here, take the opportunity to view the West Window at the extreme far end of the Church. The glazed screen into the bell-ringing chamber was erected to replace a solid wood screen in the early 1990s, to open up the view to this beautiful St. John's window.

Now walk out of the Chancel, and turn right past the pulpit, from where Sunday sermons are delivered, and enter the North Aisle.

⑦ Behind the velvet curtain is the main works of the old Church Organ - you will have seen the console in the Chancel. This area is to become a Sunday School and Youth Room to provide facilities for the growing numbers of children in our Church. At the far end of this area, beyond the organ, are the kitchen and toilet facilities which have been installed so that the Church can be used for all manner of functions and events.

⑧ As you walk along the North Aisle, look at the variety of the stone pillars which support the Church roof. Clearly, some have been replaced over the years, and others have been decorated - they are still a remarkable sight.

Pause and look at the War Memorial on the north wall; this features a model of a soldier and a sailor made out of Lincolnshire alabaster. The Church has a close relationship with the Royal British Legion, and each year, in November, a special Remembrance Service takes place.

Also in this area is the Garrett Trustee chest, which (like the other chest) also has three locks. This belongs to St. Thomas' Church in Heighington, then called the Chapel of Ease, which was restored in the 17th Century by local landowner and benefactor Thomas Garrett.

⑨ Now head to the rear of the Church, by the steps leading to the tower doorway. Look up to the highest windows on both sides of the Nave. These are the Zeppelin Windows, installed by the (then) Rector, William Burland, to mark a bombing raid by German Zeppelins on 23 September 1916, and as a lasting thanksgiving that no-one was hurt.

Now turn around and look at the Royal Coat of Arms, high on the wall above the door into the tower area. This dates from the reign of George 111, and most likely came from a barn or country house, and probably paid for by a parishioner. As the established Church, the Anglican Church prays for the monarch each day, and clergy swear an Oath of Allegiance at their ordination, and every time they take up a new post.

⑩ Access to the tower is limited, as it is best to explore this area with a guide. The upper levels are reached by a stone spiral staircase in the south wall. The ground floor is used as the Choir Vestry; the first floor is the Ringing Chamber - you can see the bell ropes through the glazed screen from the Nave; the second floor houses the Clock, where regular visits for winding and maintenance are made; the third floor is the Bell Chamber, level with the wooden louvres you can see from the outside.

The bells are important to the life of the Church, and call the faithful to prayer. They are also rung to mark events both happy (including weddings) and sad - for example, the death of Diana, Princess of Wales, when the bells were rung 'half-muffled' to give a muted, sombre, echoing tone. They are also rung to welcome in each New Year, and they rang to herald in the new Millennium.

The tower roof gives access to the flagpole, where a flag flies on special days during the year: from here also you can enjoy spectacular views.

*St. John's Church contains a mixture of architectural styles, and it continues to change and adapt to accommodate the needs of each successive generation. With its glorious windows and stonework, we must always remember that it was built several hundred years ago as a place of worship - so before you leave, please find time to sit or kneel in peace and contemplate, or give thanks to God for his many blessings.*

*"In this Church, and in all your Churches throughout the world,  
we praise and bless your glorious name,  
because by your precious Cross you have redeemed the world. Amen."*

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