

History of Holy Trinity Church, Hartshill, Nuneaton

By Nick Blamire Brown

On 30th March 1841 the new Church in Hartshill was born out of a vestry meeting in the parish of Mancetter which Hartshill was part of.

The Church was to contain 600 seats- 400 of which were to be free. Considering the population of Hartshill at that time was not much more than a 1000 such provision would seem to represent a spirit of optimism which would surely be recognised as a giant leap of faith by the present-day Church family.

The Church was designed by Thomas Larkins Walker (c.1811–1860) who was a Scottish architect.

He was a pupil of Augustus Charles Pugin, and an executor of his will. Augustus Charles Pugin was an architectural draughtman with the famous architect John Nash (who designed Buckingham Palace and Royal Pavilion, Brighton).

Augustus Charles's son was the famous architect Augustus Welby Pugin who was the leading advocate of Gothic architecture in the 19th century and designed the Houses of Parliament.

Thomas Larkins was also a writer on gothic architecture and contributed to the text for the 3rd series of Pugin's *Examples of Gothic Architecture* (1836-38).

In practice initially with Benjamin Ferrey 1833–8, he lived in Nuneaton, and then in Leicester was in practice with Robert Johnson Goodacre to 1856. Emigrating to China, he died in Hong Kong on 10 October 1860.

Thomas Larkins designed a number of significant buildings in the Nuneaton area including in 1839 Camp Hill House (which was later demolished) and significantly Holy Trinity Church at Attleborough, Nuneaton which is so similar in design to Holy Trinity Church in Hartshill. He designed Holy Trinity, Attleborough in 1842/43. He also designed Nicholas Chamberlaine Almshouses (Grade 2* Listed Building in Bedworth).



Holy Trinity Church, Attleborough.

The side and rear elevations are so similar to our Church.

Lambeth Palace Library contains a record of the original internal plans drawn up by TL Walker and signed by him.

The cost of the new Church was estimated at £2,500, and a subscription list was opened- 10 people immediately subscribed a total of £640.

The stone for the building of the new Church was donated free of charge by Mr Richard Jee, a local quarry owner.

By the winter of 1843 the framework was almost complete. Unfortunately, possibly due to high winds, the east end and southeast corner collapsed.

The Diocesan Society gave £400 towards the building. Although there were further individual subscriptions, it fell well short of the required amount and lack of funds prevented further progress.

Then, due to the kindness and concern of a clergyman who happened to see the unrepaired ruin while visiting relatives in Atherstone, he donated £1000 and building was able to recommence.

The Church was dedicated as Holy Trinity and was consecrated by the Lord Bishop of Worcester at a service on 26th April 1848.

A note in the churchwarden's diary in 1855 identified that the living is a perpetual curacy rated at £60 in the patronage of the vicar of Mancetter and the incumbency of Revd. John Edge M.A.

The word "curate" had two principal designations in the Victorian period. The first applied to so-called "perpetual curates" who had basically the same responsibilities as a vicar or rector within a parish but who received a cash stipend rather, as with a vicar or rector, an allotment tied directly to the parish's tithes. The perpetual curate often suffered from insufficient wages and the temporary nature of employment. The incumbent would also determine what the curate was able to do.

Perpetual curates disappeared from view in 1868, after which they could legally call themselves vicars, but perpetual curacies remained in law until the distinct status of perpetual curate was abolished by the Pastoral Measure 1968.

In 1909 a Vestry room was added to the Church Building and was used by the choir and for church meetings and social functions. The vestry was designed to reflect the character of the church. It was built in brick and granite stone with small clay tiles with a gable front.

Windows match the character of those in the Church. The vestry is now the home of the Hartshill Community Library but is also used for church meetings.

Prior to some major restoration works to the interior of the Church Building a new Church Hall was built and opened in 1937 following public subscriptions under the inspiring leadership of Reverend W.A Richards who was vicar from 1933 to 1948.

There is a photo of him in Church.

In a minute of the Parochial Church Council meeting on 12th September 1935 the Vicar said that the Church Hall was the means of bringing the younger people nearer to the Church.

On 21st July 2005 the patronage of the Church was transferred from the Vicar of Mancetter to the Church Patronage Trust.

Planning Permission was granted on 24th October 2008 for the existing flat roofed extensions of the Church Hall to be demolished and replaced with new pitched roofed facilities, new entrance area to be formed and existing facilities to be extended in size. This development was to turn the Church Hall into a Community Centre.

The Community Centre was completed in June 2012 after a significant National Lottery Grant. The main part of the old hall has been retained but was refurbished by taking out the stage, installing a new floor, new lighting and heating, new windows and new plaster boards on the walls and ceiling.

The new build is between the vestry and the existing main hall and contains a new entrance, lobby, new toilets, new kitchen and a new meeting room. There is also a conservatory which was added later.



The Old Vicarage and Community Centre Entrance (on right).

Features of the exterior of Church Building.

The Church Building is a Grade 2 Listed Building.

The front of the Church has a very impressive, deeply recessed west doorway with a Norman style arch over a bank of six columns and a large spoke (Rose) window, above which is another smaller window to the bell chamber (there is just one tolling bell) and then there is a small tower and spire. The entrance feature is thought to be one of the largest of its kind seen on a Parish Church in England.



The windows to the side of the large entrance have blue brick decorative arches, some with an additional line of decorative bricks. There are also brick quoins/piers and stone infill and the areas in between with local quarry stone.???

The north, south and east walls are plainer, constructed of brick quoins/piers and stone infill and the areas in between with local quarry stone. The walls have a plinth of blue bricks and blue brick string courses and corbelling. The tall but narrow lead windows have a blue brick arch course over the windows. There are two bricked up doors in the south and north elevations at the eastern end (These were bricked up in the renovation of the Church in 1838/39). Above those are smaller windows.

In front of the bricked-up door on the southern elevation is a wooden sided porch in front of the boiler house which is below ground level.



South elevation.

The north elevation of the Church has the same design and architectural features as the south elevation. The rear of view of the Vestry is also visible and is in character with the Church.



North Elevation

The exterior of the church building has not changed much from when it was built in 1848 apart from the bricked-up doors and timber structure in front of the steps down to the boiler house.

In 1992, the Quinquennial report identified the roof and the Rose Window as being in urgent need of repair. In response, English Heritage provided substantial grant funding to support the replacement of the roof, along with essential restoration work on both the Bell Tower and the Rose Window.

A Faculty was approved on 25th April 2006 for the following works:

Consolidation of Tower and stone roof, structural repairs to purlins, retiling of nave and apse roof, replacement of lead flashing and flaunching and replacement of rainwater goods.

A faculty was granted on 7th June 2006 to install a library facility for Warwickshire County Council in the clubroom of the church Hall. Also to allow BT access through the grounds from the road to the buildings for an underground digital cable. A legal agreement was signed on 3rd August 2006 between the PCC and Warwickshire County Council for the use of the clubroom for a county library.

A Faculty was approved on 8th April 2008 for 'Repairs to the west circular window.'

Features within the interior of the Church.

The Church interior is large and functional with a very wide nave with no pillars. This was the trend for Victorian churches.

The Grade 2 listing commentary makes reference to:

Semi-circular apse has 3 windows.

Interior is plastered with moulded cornice and false ceiling.

Arch to apse is unmoulded.

West gallery on 4 shafts with scalloped capitals.

There are some old photographs stored in the Church which showed the interior as it looked when built in 1848. One of the clearer photographs dated 1913 is titled 'Holy Trinity in the days of oil lamps.'



'Holy Trinity in the days of oil lamps. 1913'

There is also a floor plan which showed the original layout and position of pews. Interestingly, the font was in the central aisle soon after entering the church.

All the original pews were of white pine. Some of the centre seats had panels as they were rented seats.

The roof space was open, supported by heavy beams from which hung chains with the paraffin lamps and their ruby-glass vessels. In the northeast corner stood a pipe organ. Choir stalls were of a bench type.

Some alterations were carried out in 1884, although these mainly involved redecorations. This included revarnishing the pews and painting of all the walls, the iron columns supporting the gallery, and the pulpit.

The main change was the organ was removed from the gallery to the northeast corner (later it was moved back again!) and there were new seats for the choir. The woodwork in front of the gallery was renewed.

To commemorate the Jubilee of the church in 1898 a pulpit of red pine complete with brass candle holders and glasses was placed against the southeast wall and was entered by a short flight of steps.

There are three beautiful stained-glass windows in the apse.



Central Window

The inscription reads 'To the glory of God and in loving memory of Joshua Fielding Matthews for several years churchwarden of this parish. Also of Maria, his wife to whose united zeal, devotion and energy of raising funds for the completion of this Church was in great part. This window was placed by their daughters AD 1895.'

The figure of Jesus has the words 'I am the Way, the Truth and the Life' above.

This comes from John Chapter 14 verse 6 in the Bible- '⁶ *Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.* The other figure appears to be Mary, his mother.

Joshua was a schoolmaster who lived in Hartshill, although he later moved to Leamington and died there on 11th January 1865. He and his wife had 2 daughters, Catherine and Agnes.



South Window

This was the next stained glass window to be fitted.

The window depicts Christ ascending into Heaven and has the words 'I ascend up to my Father and your Father.'

The ascension of Christ is described in Luke Chapter 24 verses 50 to 52.

The ascension of Jesus

⁵⁰ When he had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed them. ⁵¹ While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven. ⁵² Then they worshipped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy.

And in Acts Chapter 1 verses 9 to 11

⁹ After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

***10** They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them.*

***11** 'Men of Galilee,' they said, 'why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.'*

It is not clear who were the two men beneath Jesus- it does not seem to be the two men dressed in white as the clothes are in different colours- could they be two of the disciples?

The inscription is 'To the Glory of God. This window is erected in loving memory of Charles Abell by this devoted wife and four children 1905.'

Charles Abell was a quarry owner. He was born in Worcestershire but must have moved to Hartshill for work. He married Laura Dawson who came from Yorkshire. The marriage took place in York but the place of residence for Charles was given as Hartshill and his occupation as merchant. They went on to have 4 children- George Henry, Charles Francis, Annie Madeline and Helen.

Charles died on 7th September 1904 and is buried in Hartshill Cemetery. His wife moved to Leamington, but she too is buried in Hartshill Cemetery in the same grave.



North Window

The inscription reads 'Dedicated to the Glory of God in the Church of the native place by Catherine Matthews and Agnes Matthews 1907.

This is the second window that Catherine and Agnes had placed in the Church. The main figure has the words Saint Agnes.

Saint Agnes was a young Christian martyr who lived during the early days of the Church. She was born around 291 AD and is celebrated for her purity and commitment to her faith. The name Agnes is derived from the Greek word 'hagnos' meaning pure or chaste. According to tradition, Agnes was a beautiful girl, about 12 or 13 years old, who refused marriage, stating that she could have no spouse but Jesus Christ. Her suitors revealed her Christianity which was then condemned as a cult, and in punishment she was exposed in a brothel.

Awed by her purity and presence, all but one of the Roman youths left her untouched; in his attempt to violate her, the sole attacker was miraculously struck blind, whereupon Agnes healed him with prayer.

Later, after refusing to renounce her faith, she was murdered during the persecution of the Christians by the Roman emperor Diocletian and was buried beside the Via Nomentana.

She is remembered for her bravery and purity with her feast day celebrated on January 21st.

In the stained glass window Saint Agnes is shown holding a lamb.

Since the 4th century, artwork has shown St. Agnes either standing by a lamb or holding a lamb.

The primary connection between St. Agnes of Rome and lambs is her name, "Agnes."

The Latin word for lamb is agnus, and as a result, her name means, "lamb."

Furthermore, there is a medieval story from the Golden Legend that reinforces this connection, recalling an event that happened after her death.

It happened when the friends of Saint Agnes watched at her sepulchre on a night, they saw a great multitude of virgins clad in vestments of gold and silver, and a great light shone before them, and on the right side was a lamb more white than snow, and they saw also Saint Agnes among the virgins which said to her parents: "Take heed and see that ye bewail me no more as dead, but be ye joyful with me, for with all these virgins Jesus Christ hath given me most brightest habitation and dwelling, and am with him joined in heaven whom in earth I loved with I my thought."

In this story the presence of a lamb symbolized purity and refers to the purity of her life. Ever since, St. Agnes has almost always been depicted with a lamb, and lambs continue to be blessed on her feast day.

It is not known who the second figure is in the window, but it could be Saint Catherine of which there are several saints with that name.

Catherine Matthews was the older of the two sisters who placed the window and was baptised at Mancetter Church on 17th October 1840. The parents were living in Hartshill. Agnes was also baptised at Mancetter on 4th October 1846 and again the parents were living in Hartshill. Her father was a schoolmaster.

In this window there is the word Hardman which shows that the windows were designed and installed by a company called Hardman & Co.

As the other two earlier windows are so similar in design it seems probable that all 3 windows were installed by Hardman and Co.

Hardman & Co, otherwise John Hardman Trading Co, was founded in 1838 and began manufacturing stained glass in 1844 and became one of the world's leading manufacturers of stained glass and ecclesiastical fittings.

The firm continued producing stained glass into the 20th century until 1970s, and had premises at 26 Frederick Street in the Jewellery Quarter, Birmingham, Newhall Hill and Lightwoods House. Hardman windows are in some of the most important churches in the country including the Cathedrals of Birmingham, Gloucester, Norwich and Worcester.



Apse

Below the stained-glass windows is the curved painted wall with decorative panels containing 3 prayers/inscriptions which provide a prominent and attractive feature in the semi-circular apse.

The curved wall is painted a deep blue topped by a golden painted cornice. Within this blue wall are the 3 insert panels containing decorative inscriptions- prominent letters are painted in red, blue and gold with the majority of the other letters in black. The inscriptions relate to prayers/verses.

The northern panel has the prayer 'I believe in God the Father', the middle panel has the wording of 'This is in remembrance of Me' and the southern panel has the 'Lord's Prayer'.

It is clear from the old photo earlier that some of these panels were there prior to the restoration works in 1938/39 but the wall around them was changed in the 1938/39 restoration.

The roof of the apse is coloured dark blue in keeping with the colour of the wall with the panels.

Along with the large oak altar on the raised wooden floor with oak wooden railings, the Sanctuary provides a striking and attractive east end when viewed from the west doors to the Church along the whole length of the Nave.

Electric Lighting was installed in 1926. Large white opal bowls with canopies hung by chains from the beam. The light from them was relatively poor.

A minute of the Parochial Church Council (PCC) meeting on 12th September 1935 recorded that the Church Architect visited and recommended that the organ be moved to the Gallery and the font be moved to near the rear door of the gallery.

A minute of the PCC meeting on 10th October 1935 recorded that the bishop had visited and approved the schemes for the restoration.

A faculty was granted on 28th August 1936 for 'various alterations and minor additions for the beautifying of the interior of the Parish Church' They were specified as:

Removal of the organ to the gallery and making a small extension to the middle portion of the gallery to make room for the organ.

The addition of a new false ceiling under the beams instead of spending unnecessarily on the present ceiling.

Making alterations in the arch of the apse.

Providing proper seats and space for the choir.

Adjusting the position of the font and widening of central aisle.

A further faculty was granted on 12th January 1937 for-

Austrian Oak seats to replace present white pine seats to bring them in conformity with the additions and alterations agreed by the faculty obtained and dated 28th August 1936.

Replacing red pine pulpit and a brass lectern with a pair of Ambos of Austrian Oak.

Install new heating system.

Flooring and filling in preparation for works.

The significance noted in the English Heritage listing is that '*the interior was redecorated in 1939 and 1948 by N.F. Cachemaille-Day. (Buildings of England: Warwickshire; p307).*'

Nugent Frances Cachemaille Day (1896 to 1976) was an important English architect who designed some of the most significant new 20th Century churches in the country.

From the 1930s he was most associated for his work on churches- some of which are regarded as the most innovative ecclesiastical buildings of their time. Between 1931 and 1963 he designed at least 61 churches, many of which are now listed buildings.

The minutes of PCC meetings in 1935 record that following a recommendation from a friend the Vicar went down to London to meet Mr Cachemaille Day at his offices and came back with a picture of the inside.

Warwickshire County Records Office has plans drawn up by N.F Cachemaille Day with the address 26 Dorset Street, London. Those plans include survey drawings, plan of new choir stalls (3 rows), plan of new pews and fronts, ground floor plan, gallery plan, cross and long sections.

The Records Office also has an estimate from George Cooper and Sons, Builders and Contractors, Nuneaton as follows:

Apse- Studding and plastering of wall of Apse.

New Arch and piers.

Build-up 2 windows.

Form coves in two corners.

Nave- Form new ceiling to level of underside of beams, panelling and plastering.

Organ and West Gallery- Alterations of existing seating, new position of font and new communion rails.

New grano floors over the whole area of the gangways where not covered by wooden platforms.

Decoration.

Heating.

Total Cost of £836. 12s.

Importantly there is a note on the estimate to say that details of the estimate were submitted to N.F Cachemaille Day Esq.

The Records Office contains records of N.F Cachemaille Day invoices for professional fees and certificates signed by him for payment for the works done by the builders which date from September 1937 to October 1938. There is also a letter from Cachemaille Day saying his quantity surveyor has agreed accounts with Mr Cooper (The builder).

It is evident that Mr. Cachemaille Day played a key role not only in the design but also in overseeing the implementation of the restoration works undertaken in 1938–39.

The Church was closed from September 1938 to June 1939 while the restoration works were carried out.

During the closure of the Church, services were held in the Church Hall which now forms part of the Community Centre.

A Bishop's license was granted for the hall to be used for divine services but not marriages which were to take place at other churches.

In relation to the disposal of the old brass communion rails a letter from the Vicar retained at the Records Office says 'The donor Mrs Matthews the wife of one of my predecessors has given her consent to the disposal of the rails for war supplies and proceeds to be used to purchase new hymn books or psalters for the Church.' Permission was granted on 27th April 1939.

The Listing description indicates that N.F Cachemaille Day also contributed to the subsequent works carried out in 1949.

Pevsner Architectural Guide- The Buildings of England, Warwickshire identified that the interior was redecorated by Cachemaille Day in 1939 and 1948.

A faculty was approved on 10th June 1949 for:

The laying of Terrazzo flooring to the Apse.

Placing of Oak Altar in place of present wood table.

Soft flooring (possibly rubber) in aisles and redecorating of interior.

New outside chimney for heating system.

What is clear is that the change from what existed up to 1938 was very significant in providing a contemporary feel to the Church. The furniture was of far better quality and richness of colour.

There are a number of architectural features which were almost certainly down to N.F Cachemaille-Day.

These being:

1. A new arch into the Sanctuary was installed. This created a narrower width than the original arch and without the decorative features that existed in the old arch. It was installed to enable the further work below. It was also plainer in design.

2. New oak Altar railings were installed further forward than the original flat rail across the width of the sanctuary as a semi-circle into the Nave giving more room in the Sanctuary.



Current view down the Nave, 2025

3. The smooth white and curved corner coves at the end of the Nave on the eastern walls were installed. This feature is in front of the blocked-up doorways and windows above (which can be seen externally).

These coves are raised away from the rest of the wall by about a depth of 10cm to make them distinct and prominent.

This gives a sense of fluidity to the feeling of the front of the nave and would have definitely been seen as a modern feature at that time.

4. Close to the coves and either side of the archway into the sanctuary are two false white pilasters which run up the walls either side of the arch and continue back along the whole length of the ceiling. They are about 1.25metres wide and like the coves extend forward of the eastern walls by about 10 cm.

These are a really clever design element and architectural feature as they complement the coves and then split the ceiling into three parts reducing its visual bulk.

5. The two side areas of the ceiling are coloured a deep blue echoing the blue used in the curved wall and ceiling in the Apse.

The larger central part of the ceiling has been divided into yard squares in a dark green/grey colour which are framed by slightly elevated white edges.

The edges are triangular in shape and have the effect of making the appearance of the edging look thinner- again another very clever architectural feature.

It is striking and at the time a very modern treatment of a church ceiling. It is clever because it makes a feature of the ceiling instead of a white traditional flat plastered ceiling.

6. Double moulded cornice detail at the top of north and south walls adds to the decoration and character of the wall.

7. A window expert considers that the tall leaded windows in the north and side walls were installed in the 1930s so it seems probable that these too were part of the restoration design by N.F Cachemaille-Day. The windows have gold and red edges which

again would have been a modern addition and echo the colours that were used in the Apse inscription panels. It would appear from old photos in the Church that these windows were installed into the existing window openings.

The false ceiling must have completely altered the look and feel of the interior and the modern design and colours would definitely have helped to give a more contemporary and warmer feel to the interior of the Church along with the warmer oak colours of the furniture.

It is clear that Mr Cachemaille-Day's design was a holistic one involving the look of the whole interior of the church. It follows on from the Art Deco period and is a much more stripped back appearance than in the Art Deco period.

It also added much more symmetry into the appearance of the Church. It could perhaps be described as early modern.

He clearly had a role in the type and design of the furniture which all have a similar style- the pews, pulpits and the clergy chairs.

As was said in Section 1.5 a faculty approval for the restoration was '*for the beautifying of the interior of the Parish Church*'.

Assessment of beauty is a subjective matter. It would have been great to have known what church members entering the Church thought of the changes the first time after the renovations. Like all contemporary architecture/design there would no doubt have been mixed views.

However, now there is little doubt that the restoration did considerably improve the appearance and character of the interior and Mr Cachemaille Day's design has definitely stood the test of time.

Looking back to the western doors you can see the continuation of Cachemaille Day's design and influence.



Western aspect of Church Interior

At the western end there is a gallery which originally had seating which contributed to the capacity of the church. On the front part of the gallery the seating is still in place. A partition separates the front part of the gallery from an area in front of the large Rose window. This sealed off area also has some of the original steps (but not the seats). The organ pipes are centrally placed and are a prominent feature. The organ was moved into the gallery in the major restoration in 1938/39, but the organ was rebuilt in 1971 (see contents of Church in the Church below).

The appearance of the Church has not significantly changed since Mr Cachemaille Day's involvement.

In 1963 the church heating boiler was converted from coke fired to gas.

A faculty was granted on 5th July 1991 for installation of new central heating boiler, alterations to central heating pipework and installation of radiators with fans (blowers) at back of church.

A faculty was granted on 13th April 1996 for the rewiring and replacement of switchgear and light fittings plus two additional lights within the sanctuary reveal

A faculty was granted on 5th January 1998 for the retiling church floor and re-surfacing the church drive.

A minor works authorised on 20th February 2008 to move OHP screen and a banner.

A minor works authorised on 1st November 2010 for various changes to lighting.

A minor works was authorised on 16th December 2010 for repairs to the parquet flooring in the chancel.

A Faculty was approved on 3rd February 2011 for the repair of the bell-
'Replacement of headstocks and rope wheels.
Installation of electro-magnetic clapper.'

The Bell was restored 'in memory of Roy Beebe 1930 to 2010. Also remembered, his wife Dorothy Margaret Beebe 1931-2022. Loyal Servants of the Church.'

Roy and Dorothy were very faithful members of the Church and Roy served as churchwarden and did a great deal towards maintaining the Church.

In 2012 to enable the new community centre to be constructed some rear pews were removed or relocated to the Choir Stalls where further pews were removed.

This was done to enable a space to accommodate some of the groups which were using the hall but needed an alternative venue while the works to create the Community Centre were taking place.

A faculty was approved on 22nd March 2013 'to make permanent the removal of 5 rows under Archdeacon's license, make good the wooden tiled area and on the condition that the pews be recycled by either turning them into furniture such as bookcases or disposal by an appropriate sale'.

Most of the choir pews were given to church members or residents of the parish. 2 of the larger pews were placed against the southern and northern walls in place of the rear choir pews.

Before the pews were removed there was little room between the entrance porch and the first pew, so the character of the church was dominated by the rows of pews which filled the nave. With the pews removed it has opened up the back of the church considerably and, although there is a mixture of materials on the floor, it still provides a pleasant open feel.

There is a porch/lobby behind the main external west doors. It is made up of 2 side doors and 2 opening doors facing down the central aisle. Above the 2 central doors are 5 small panes of glass.

The doors contain some interesting panes which are glass in decorative wooden frames which are thought to be from the former altar railings. It is possible this porch/lobby was built at the same time as the restoration works in 1938/39.

There is a blue carpet going up the central aisle. There is wooden block floor where the removed pews were and vinyl tiles in the original circulation area at the back of the church and down the side aisles

The balcony is supported by 4 blue painted round pillars and comes out about 3.4 metres into the Nave.

Contents of the Church

In the nave there are large oak pews either side of the central carpeted aisle. There are 11 rows of these pews which can each accommodate 6 people comfortably.

There are two side aisles, each of which have smaller pews adjacent the north and south walls of the Nave. There are 8 rows which can accommodate up to 3 people in each.

The total capacity of these pews is about 180 people.

Near the south entrance door is a modern designed (and handmade) bookcase containing hymn and other worship books.

This was dedicated to the memory of Ronald Kinston Taylor, Chorister and Deputy Warden who died 17th December 1981. Ron Taylor was a faithful member of Holy Trinity. His sister Rhyllis Griffiths was another long serving member

Also, at the south-west end of the Nave is the large stone font is which is hexagonal with carved symbols and figures in the 8 sides. It sits on a stone plinth and is definitely gothic in style. This was very much the type and design of fonts in the 19th century and it almost certainly dates from the building of the Church.



Font circa 1840

At the top of Nave against north and south walls are two large oak pulpits (Ambos). They are semi-circular in shape and in the style that matches the oak pews. A small reading desk is mounted in the centre on which rests a large bible.

To the east of the front central pews are two matching oak clergy chairs with prayer desk (prie-dieu) either side of the central carpet. These are in the same style as the pews.

In the northern area to the side of the central carpet are a smaller modern wood lectern of good quality (given in memory of Frank Henry Goodyear 1971) and an electric piano. Frank was a newsagent and was married to Edith. They lived in Oldbury Road. He was born in 1914 and died in 1970.

In the northeast corner is an oak organ console with a bench type oak seat.

A faculty was granted on 10th January 1973 to 'rebuild the present organ in a slightly lower position in the Church Gallery and to place a detached console (at present as part of the Organ Gallery) adjacent to the Choir Stalls in the Chancel'.

The Records Office has a quote from Wincott Galliford Ltd dated 28th February 1973 to construct the organ console at a cost of £220.

It also has an invoice dated 9th March 1973 from F.W Burns and Son Ltd for £1500 for work in the rebuilding of the organ.

F.W Burns and Sons Ltd were church organ builders and repairers located in Nuneaton. The firm was established by Federick William Burns (1883 to 1970) and then carried on by his son John. They built and maintained church organs all over the UK and did a yearly tune and service on our organ.

There is a brass plate on the side of the organ console with the following inscription- *'This organ was redesigned and rebuilt in 1973 mainly through the generosity of Mr F.E Wincott, Churchwarden, to commemorate the 125th anniversary of the building of the Church. It was dedicated by the Lord Bishop of Coventry on Sunday 27th January 1974'.* Francis Edward Wincott was a director of the construction company, Wincott Galliford. He was born in 1885 and died in 1975. He did a great deal for the Church. He was married to Doris who was a faithful member of Holy Trinity. They lived at 83 Oldbury Road.

In the Sanctuary is the large Oak Altar with carved Christian symbols on the front. It is large being 2.3 metres long and 80cm wide.

The faculty approved on 10th June 1949 referred to earlier included the 'Placing of Oak Altar in place of present wood table.'

On the Altar is a brass cross and either side of the cross are two brass candle holders *One was given in memory of John and Kate Emery and the other by Mr and Mrs W.E Dennant-Newall.* Unfortunately, there is no information on the people that these holders are dedicated to.

A faculty was approved on 29th July 1963 to place lights upon the altar in the form of two brass candlesticks in accordance with design supplied by Vanpoules Limited.

Vanpoules is a long-established family business which was founded in 1908 to supply the Church with all types of ecclesiastical items including furniture and furnishings. They still exist today.

Behind the Altar are 2 ornate Bishop chairs which are in dark wood and are clearly old- they almost certainly predate the restoration works in 1938/39 and may have been original when the Church was built.

There is a tall bishop chair more modern in design.

There are also two matching tall and square console tables.

To the northern side of the Altar is a small Altar table.

Also, to the northern side of the Altar is stored a smart modern wooden hexagonal shaped font (1 metre high) which is the one used now for baptisms. During the service it is placed in the centre in front of the central pews. This font was given in memory of *'our Mum and Dad- Reginald Hornsby- Born 7th May 1913- Died 1st December 1980 and Dora Lilian Hornsby- Born 29th May 1914- Died 18th October 2002 remembered by Cynthia, John, Colin and Families'.* So it is likely that the font was given and dedicated after 2002.

Reginald was a housepainter and decorator. Reginald and Dora lived in Camp Hill Road. On the southern side of the Altar is a tall candle stick (1.35 metres high) which is lit during services.

Just behind the altar rails in front of the Altar is a large black metal candle holder with 2 tiers of cups containing tea lights which are lit after services by members of the congregation who wish to remember someone who has died or is in need. This candle holder was given *'in memory of Betty Percival 1927-2019 who loved and served this Church.'*

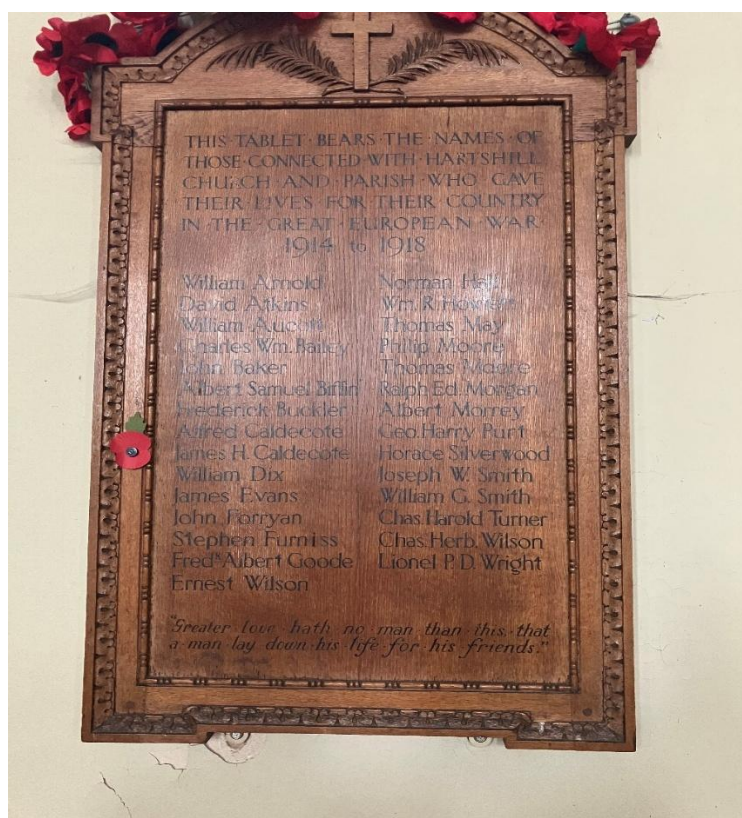
Betty was a very faithful member of Holy Trinity for a great number of years, as was her daughter Dawn and son-in-law Bob Cretney. Bob served as Churchwarden and was the author of a booklet, called "Whay House Will Ye Build Me" on the history of the church which was sold in aid of Church funds. He also wrote some other booklets which included poems and amusing random rhymes about the Church and some of its members.

In the southeast corner of the Nave is a table on which there is a photo frame containing individual photos of 12 servicemen who were killed in the First World War.

It is titled 'The Great Sacrifice Hartshill Parish' and on the bottom of the frame are the words 'Dulce et Decorum est Pro Patria Mori' which translated means 'How sweet and honourable it is to die for one's country'.

To commemorate the 100th anniversary of the end of the war a project was set up to research details of those men. In doing so it was discovered that at least 51 men associated with Hartshill died in the First World War.

The names of the 51 soldiers associated with Hartshill who were killed or died during the First World War come from a number of different sources. There is a memorial oak tablet on the south wall of Holy Trinity Church which contains 29 names. This tablet was dedicated in 1920 and there is an entry in the Church Services Register to the money raised to pay for it.



Memorial to Hartshill Soldiers killed in the First World War

There is a war memorial on Church Road in front of the Hartshill Academy on Church Road which contains 34 names.

Some of the names on the Church Tablet do not appear on the War Memorial and vice versa. It must have been a very confusing time, and it is not clear how names appeared on particular memorials.

Hartshill Cemetery contains 3 Commonwealth War Graves for men who died as a result of wounds or illness during the First World War. One of those is for a person who is not on either the Church Tablet or War Memorial.

Other graves in the Cemetery also commemorate other men who were killed. One of those is for a son, also not on either the Church Tablet or War Memorial.

At the Warwickshire County Record Office there is the Holy Trinity Church Burial Register covering the period of the First World War and in it is a special Roll of Honour. There are two names on that Roll that are not on either the Church Tablet or War Memorial.

The results of the project are included in a special remembrance folder on the table in front of the photo frame of 12 of those who died.

Following that project a further one was done was done for the Second World War in 2019 to mark the 80th anniversary of the start of the Second World War,

Sadly, there is no record of those killed in the Second World War.

On the War Memorial in Church Road, Hartshill, there is a brass plaque which says: 'To commemorate those who gave their lives in the 1939 to 1945 War - we will remember them', but there are no names.

But there are some graves in Hartshill cemetery which include inscriptions for those who were killed and also the Holy Trinity Burial Register has a record of the death of some civilians with a simple note: 'Victim'.

The research identified 6 servicemen and 6 civilians who were killed. A remembrance folder, as for the 1st World War, is on the table in front of the photo frame.