

St Mary's Church, Beverley

Then

&

Now

By Jack Lawrence

INTRODUCTION

The following pages will give you an overview of the historic St Mary's Church in Beverley.

2020 marks an important milestone in the restoration works of this 900 year old Parish Church. This presentation will look into five important areas that have made St Mary's what it is today as it looks to an exciting new future:

- **Building**
- **Vicar**
- **Features**
- **Important events**
- **How it is used**

“One of the most beautiful Parish Churches in England.” Sir Nikolaus Pevsner

The Building

Then

- St Mary's church was built in 1120.
- The historic church is a grade one listed building.
- In 1530 the Font was gifted to St Mary's.
- The stained glass windows are from the 19th century.
- Building work at St Mary's ceased because of the black death in 1436.

Now

- The church is going through the first phase of restoration in 2020.
- The church needs over £5,000,000 to be restored.
- The restoration is part of a ten year program to restore the whole church.
- The church won National Lottery funding to support the initial work in 2018.
- 14 new characters from the Chronicles of Narnia are to be carved into the exterior of the church.

Then



Now



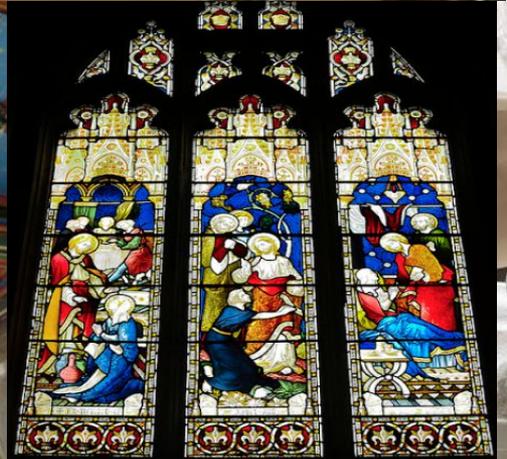
The Vicar – Reverend Becky Lumley



- The current Vicar, Reverend Becky Lumley, is the first female Vicar at St Mary's Church.
- She is very friendly & welcoming and takes care of the church incredibly well.
- She visits the local school, St Mary's CofE Primary School, often to teach the children about many different stories from the Bible and messages they are trying to spread.
- She also holds regular online church services on the St Mary's Church facebook page.
- The Church believes that the younger generation have an important place in the life of the church and Reverend Lumley does all she can to encourage young people to engage with the church.

Key Features

- **The Pilgrim Hare** carving can be found in the north choir aisle and is said to date from around 1330–1340. Lewis Carroll is thought to have seen the Hare on a visit to St Mary's Church and instructed his illustrator, John Tenniel, to base the drawings for the White Rabbit in *Alice in Wonderland* on the design.
- **The Golden Eagle** is an eagle because it is St John's emblem and it represents him.
- **The Ceiling of Kings** was painted in 1445 and displays the portraits of 40 Kings of England. There is nowhere else in England that has a feature like this.
- **The Minstrels' Pillar** displays five colourful figures of musicians. When the church tower fell in 1520, this pillar was repaired due to the sponsorship of the Northern Guild of Minstrels. It is one of many carvings in St Mary's Church that shows the building's strong ties to music.
- **The stained glass windows** were made between 1500–1517.
- **600 magical and mythical carvings** can be found in St Mary's church including ones of mermaids, dragons, lions and unicorns.
- **The Memorial Door** is located near the Font and is a memorial to the 35 men from St Mary's Parish who died in World War II. It was carved by Robert Thompson of Kilburn and features his signature carved mouse.



Important Events

Then

- On 29 April 1520 the central tower collapsed - 55 people were killed in this tragic event.
- The people of Beverley helped to rebuild the church.
- The Nave ceiling was also redesigned.
- A decade later, the restoration was complete.
- In 1689, two Danish soldiers quarrelled which led to a duel to the death of one. The winner was executed because sword fighting was illegal. The two soldiers were buried under the church and have a plaque to remember them.

Now

- March 2020 a pandemic has closed the church.
- Narnia comes to St Mary's Church as stone carvings.
- Currently half way through Phase One of the restoration - repairs are being made to the crumbling stone work of the north nave clerestory.
- The plaque of the two Danish soldiers is being restored.
- First ever video podcast exploring the rich history of the church and its people told through the Tudor and Medieval bosses on the ceiling of St Mary's Church

Nave Ceiling



Danish Soldier Plaque



Video Podcast



How the Church has Been Used

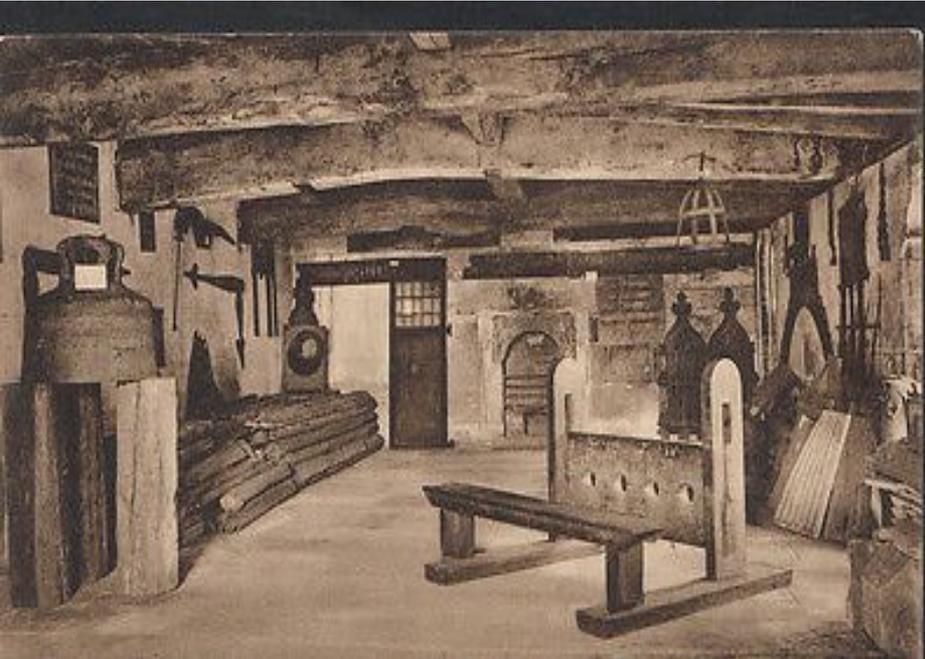
Then

- **For traditional church services** including Holy Communion, Easter & Christmas services, Christingle services, Harvest Festival, Midnight Mass.
- **Christenings**
- **Weddings**
- **Funerals**
- **Bellringing**

Now

- **Online services** - There are online services held on the St Mary's Facebook page.
- **Video podcasts** - there are video podcasts about the church on instagram.
- **Concerts** - A band plays every Sunday at 11.15am.
- **Bellringing** - The bells are rung frequently during the day.
- **Children and young people** - There are a number of activities attracting young children such as Messy Church, Allsorts playgroup and the Church Brigade.

Then



Now



St Mary's Church Beverley

Yesterday at 10:00 · 🌐



Sunday service 28th June 2020

**ST MARY'S
CHURCH**
BEVERLEY

Sunday 28th June 2020

Rev. Becky Lumley



0:00 / 30:40



Emoji Quiz – Features in St Mary’s Church



Quiz Answers

1. The Pilgrim Hare (White Rabbit)
2. Golden Eagle
3. Ceiling of Kings
4. Font
5. Pews
6. Stained glass window

The Future...

It is essential that the restoration work carries on at St Mary's Church because it is a vital part of our community and Beverley would not be Beverley without it.

For further information, please visit the St Mary's Church website at:

<https://stmarysbeverley.org>

Thank you for reading my presentation.

I hope you learned a thing or two about this beautiful and historic church.