

St Ethelbert's Church, Thurton

Visiting : See www.norwich.anglican.org or www.achurchnearyou.com

Address : St Ethelbert's Church, off Loddon Road, Thurton, Norfolk NR14 6AN

General Information

The current church was built in the 12th century. Its simple floor plan is typical of a Norman church as are its corner stones (quoins) and arched doorways . One of the most outstanding features of the church is its collection of glass. Some of this (like neighbouring Chedgrave & Langley) originated in Rouen in the 16th/17th century and following its importation by JC Hampp was brought here by the Dowager Lady Beauchamp where it was installed by S C Yarrington, supplementing it with his own work in the early 19th century . Additional glass includes examples of 15th century work and rare surviving windows produced by Robert Allen of Lowestoft.

East Window

The East window was set by Yarrington c1826. Although it is known to have been restored in both 1898 by W R Weyer & subsequently by George King & Son, it is believed to be substantially original. The window contains and eclectic mixture of glass including :

- Large figure of St Ethelbert (8th century King of East Anglia) believed to be the work of Yarrington
- Painted panels above & below St Ethelbert depicting a figure carrying a satire cross (probably St Andrew) and Christ carrying the crucifix, are by Robert Allen, the Lowestoft porcelain painter.
- The roundels to the left & right of St Ethelbert, depicting a priest celebrating mass and Christ healing the sick, are of foreign origin
- The heraldic panels were probably made up by Yarrington
- The dramatic angels in the tracery lights are believed to date from the 17th/ 18th century and may have originated in Rouen.

West Window

This window is recorded as being designed in 1826 by Yarrington but was probably reset in 1898. It is notable for the eight panels depicting saints which were painted by Robert Allen (1745 – 1835) who was the principal decorator and later manager of the Lowestoft Porcelain Factory until its closure in 1803. All the saints are named and are pictured with their associated symbols.

Left Hand Side (top to bottom): St Paul with a sword, Luke with an Ox, Matthew with the “Divine Man,” Simon with a saw

Right Hand Side (top to bottom) : St Philip with a book & t shaped cross, Mark with a lion, John with an eagle, Peter with keys.

North Chancel Window 2

Late 20th century depiction of the church

South Nave Window 1

Glass in the window includes rectangular panels believed to be 17th century continental in origin, possibly from Rouen Cathedral. They would have originally been set by S C Yarrington, following importation by Christopher Hampp and purchase by Lady Beauchamp Proctor.

The window also contains 15th century English glass including a beautiful depiction of the Trinity (central light, third panel from the top) and six roundels bearing scrolls containing instruction in Latin e.g “Be not too pensive in thy discourse”. The latter are believed to come from the refectory of Langley Abbey.

All other windows

Contains glass set by Yarrington for the Beauchamp Proctor family of Langley Hall in 1826. The majority is a mix of 17th century glass of Continental origin (some of it possibly from Rouen Cathedral) and panels produced by Yarrington’s workshop . Additionally in Chancel North Window 3 is George IV’s coat of arms (3rd from top) and in South Nave Window 2 a demi figure of St Margaret – both designed by Robert Allen best known for his work at the Lowestoft Porcelain Factory.