

4 – Three healing miracles

The stained-glass windows mostly date from 1880-1900. This window shows Jesus performing three miracles – healing the leper, the blind man and a sick man of the palsy.

3 – The oldest wall memorial

There are many wall memorials – several were moved from the earlier church. They were last cleaned and restored in 2007-08, and some are very fine. High on the left is a very large wall tablet for Sir Henry Hungerford, who died in 1673. It is the earliest memorial tablet in the church today.

2 – The Effigy of Sir Robert de Hungerford

Local tradition has it that the stone effigy was that of Sir Robert de Hungerford who, in 1325, founded the Chantry Chapel of the Holy Trinity in the south aisle of the early English church. Sir Robert had extensive estates across southern England, including Hopgrass in Hungerford, just across Freeman's Marsh. He died childless in 1352.

However, recent expert opinion suggests that the effigy dates to 1300-1330, casting doubt on it being of Sir Robert.

The effigy is defaced and very weather-worn, making definitive identification even harder.

On the wall behind the effigy is an inscribed stone tablet. This is the **Indulgence Tablet** from the same Chantry of Holy Trinity (which Robert de Hungerford founded in 1325). It is therefore about 700 years old (and was restored in 2009). It is a very rare survivor, and one of the most important treasures of the church. There is a translation of the inscription nearby.

1 - The font

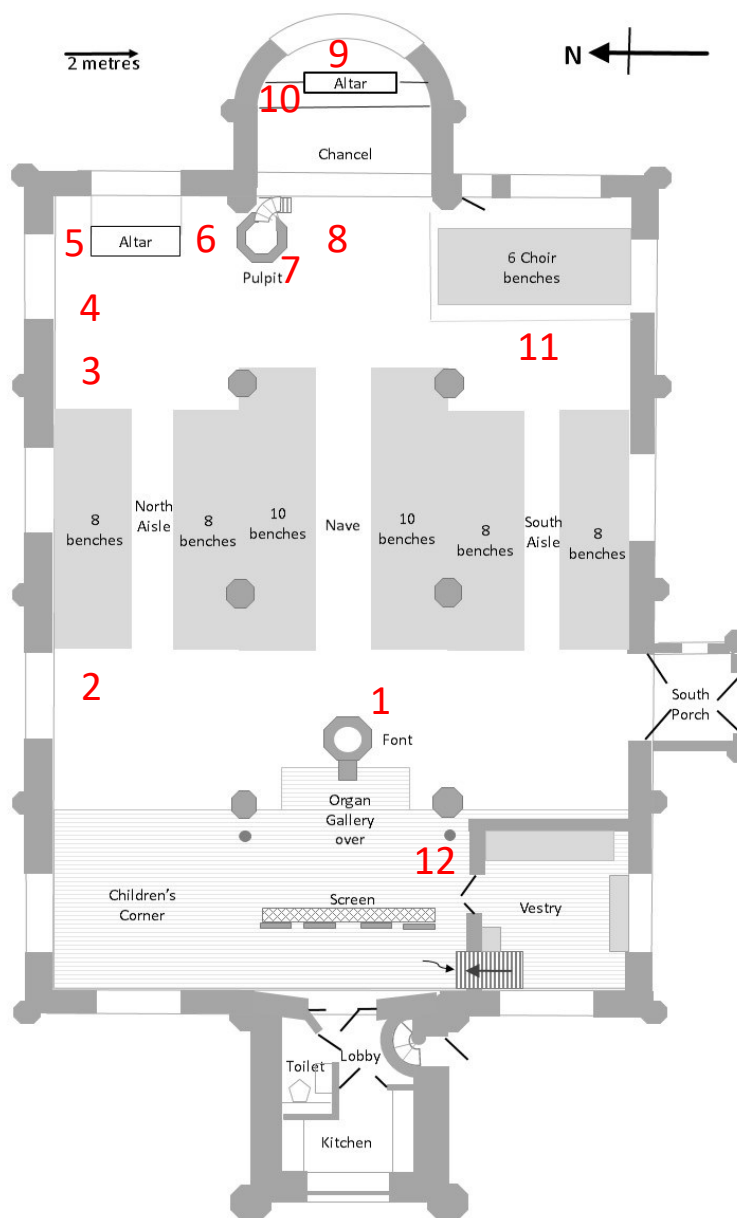
After entering the church you will see the beautiful font, octagonal, with panelled bowl and shaft. The bowl is carved on each face with a quatrefoil within a circle.

Look east towards the altar. The arcade of stone pillars was created in the 1880 restoration. Previously there were cast iron pillars. There are some splendid carved details – the foliated capitals; the corbels that carry the main supports of the roof; angel figures bearing shields changing alternately with the arms of the town and the grid iron badge of St. Lawrence; all were individually carved by M. Devine - a French artist living at Reading. Looking further, admire the beautiful east window. We will study this more closely later, but for now walk on north, away from the porch.

Start here!

**Find the numbers
Follow the trail...**

HUNGERFORD ST. LAWRENCE



5 – A sailor and doctor

High on the wall is a memorial to the Major family, who were doctors in Hungerford for three generations. The oldest of the three had previously served in the Royal Navy. Note the anchor.

6 – Struck by lightning!

Just to the left of the pulpit is a memorial to Henry Cundell, who was unlucky enough to have been struck by lightning!

7 – The pulpit

The beautiful carved pulpit is made of Caen stone with alabaster. It was donated in 1891.

8 – Look at the organ

Stand near the chancel steps, and enjoy the view of the organ, built by Forster & Andrews of Hull in 1880. The third Choir manual was added in 1990 by Foster-Waite.

9 – The east window

This is the biggest and most important window in the church. The scene reminds us that St Peter was given the task to feed his sheep.

10 – The carved head

Look at the stonework just to the left near the top of the window. You may be able to see a stone carved (rather badly!) in the shape of a face. This may be a “green man” added by the stonemasons to bring good fortune to the church.

11 – The floor memorial to John Sherwood

Many of the big stone floor memorials are covered by carpets, but one is open for us all to see. He was a doctor in Hungerford.

12 – The “breeches” bible

This rare bible, in which Adam and Eve are said to have covered themselves with leaves made into “breeches”, dates from 1578. It was found and restored in 1980

Time for reflection

Pause a moment in this lovely calming church. Perhaps you will feel able to give a small donation to help with the costs of running the church, currently over £1,500 a week.

Who was St Lawrence?

He was the Archdeacon of Rome in the middle of the third century, when Christians were being persecuted. He was especially responsible for the treasures of the churches in Rome.

When he was asked to give up the treasures, he asked for three days grace. He then distributed the gold and silver in his care to the needy of the City, and on the third day he collected together all the poorest Christians, including the ill, frail and blind, and presented them to the Prefect, said, "Here are the treasures of the Church of Christ".

For this he was condemned to death on 10 August 258.

St Lawrence's Church key dates

1147 – First written record of a church at Hungerford.

1148 – The first vicar was Ralph.

1300 – Approximate date of the second church.

1325 – Chantry of the Holy Trinity was established by Sir Robert de Hungerford. He died in 1352.

1811 – The old church started to fall down.

1814 – The present church was built (opened 1816).

1880 – Many changes were made to the church (including the stone arches, new pews and the new organ).

For more information

About the church:

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About the history and contents:

www.hungerfordvirtualmuseum.co.uk

Things to find outside the church:



The tower

Walk along the path towards the canal, as far as the first seat, and look up at the tower. Spot the date of the building.

The tumble stile

Walk back along the path bearing right towards the corner of the churchyard. Find the wooden four-bar tumble stile. There are very few of these anywhere in the country. If you press down the bars and climb carefully over and back again you will hear the sound it makes – some people call this the "clapper" gate.

The memorial to James Dean

Walk back towards church. You pass the memorial to James Dean. He was a coachman on the busy London to Bath road, but was sadly killed in an accident in Hungerford in 1836.

Welcome to St Lawrence's Church



This fine church was built just over 200 years ago, and was consecrated on 30 Aug 1816. There has been a church on this site for about 900 years, but by the early 1800s the medieval Early English church had fallen into poor condition. It was rebuilt in 1814-16.

The architect was John Pinch of Bath and the church was built of Bath Stone, brought along the nearby Kennet & Avon canal which had been completed in 1810. The style is "Georgian Gothic". It cost £30,000. A major restoration took place in 1880-89.

The original village of Hungerford was in the area of The Croft, which explains why the church is on this site. The present town was laid out as a planned town in the 13th century.

We hope you enjoy your visit to the church. We highlight here twelve special features inside the church, and three outside.