

Welcome to St Michael and All Angels



'Seeing lives transformed through encounter with Jesus.'

This leaflet will help you discover different parts of this church building and its history.

You might like to think of it as a ‘Pilgrim Trail.’

From the exterior

A chapel on this site in Hartlip is included in a list of Saxon churches compiled by Canterbury Cathedral in around 1070. We can say with some confidence that this has been a place of Christian worship and prayer for over one thousand years.

The present church was constructed in the 13th century and extended in the 14th and 15th centuries, with a substantial Victorian ‘facelift’ in 1865. It is Grade I Listed and is of national, architectural and historical importance, as well as housing a very early medieval bell.



The **Bell Tower** is at west end of the church. The tower is a handsome feature of the church particularly when seen from a distance. It contains within its fabric some very regular flint work (best seen when you exit the building) and is believed to date from the 14th century when architects were building in an historical division of English Gothic architecture, known as the ‘decorated’ style.

The tower houses six bells. The oldest was cast between 1392 and 1419 and is of national importance. The next oldest bell is dated 1578, while the next two are dated 1628 and 1632. The final two bells were cast in 1893 and 1905. The important external clock was manufactured by Gilletts of Croydon in 1884. Church bells call us to worship.

The Vestry is at the base of the tower. This is believed to have been a cell or dwelling of an anchorite who is recorded to have lived in Hartlip. He never left his cell but could receive food and other gifts through a barred window. An anchorite is a person who for religious reasons has withdrawn from secular society so as to be able to lead an intensely prayer-orientated life.

In 2018, an extension was constructed outside the existing north door to create storage and more importantly, a toilet. Some of the pews were removed to create a flexible space at the rear of the Nave together with the installation of a kitchenette in response to the growing usage of the building. The Lady Chapel (in the south aisle) was also glazed. External flint-work, floor tiles and other materials sympathetic to the existing building were used.



Opposite the south door where you enter the church, you will notice the school immediately opposite. This was founded and endowed by **Mary Gibbon** in 1678 and is believed to be one of the oldest primary schools in the country. There is a large wooden memorial commemorating Mary's life and generosity placed high on the left-hand inside wall of the bell tower. Mary Gibbon's tomb is to the left of the church path as you walk back to the main road. It is set back in the corner formed between the Lady Chapel and the Chancel close to the outside wall of the church.

A good place to start a tour around the interior of this ancient church is just inside the south door by which you will have most likely entered. The ample porch, which you have just passed through, has served many purposes in the past, at least from the 15th century, and currently is the place where information about services and other parochial activities is to be found. It also includes important World War I and II memorials. Before you move on, please pause here and ask yourself:

“How will I hear God's call to me?”

Loving God, open my ears to hear your call, open my eyes to see your love and open my heart to welcome you into my life. Amen.

*A pilgrimage is a special kind of journey.
As you walk you can think about what really matters in your life
and hope to draw closer to God.*

St Michael and All Angels Pilgrim Trail....

1 Nave If you stand as if you have just entered the church, look over to the beautiful arcade of three stone arches on the far side of the church, matched by a similar set of arches close to where you are standing. These are in the perpendicular style dating from the 15th century. The 'perpendicular' style is a historical division of English Gothic architecture characterised by an emphasis on vertical lines. It is reflected elsewhere, for example in the windows to the left of where you are standing. You will see how the mullions (the vertical bars of stone which divide the window into sections) run perpendicularly from the base to the very top of the window.

The **Font** is at the rear of the Nave within the bell tower. It is a comparatively modern copy of an old font in a church in Lincolnshire. A font is used for baptism, the ritual act of cleansing by which the Christian Church receives a new member into the Christian family. Fonts were originally large enough to allow the infant to be fully immersed in the holy water, but in the middle ages it became the practice to baptise by partial immersion or pouring water over the head. Our font is 'octagonal' in shape. Eight sided fonts recall the eighth day, the first day of resurrection and a reminder of our spiritual future; 'an everlasting eighth day.'



Now move to the centre of the Nave.

The walls, windows and perpendicular arches that surround you proclaim that it is all one piece of work from the 15th century. The high stone arches of the Nave and the ceiling above speak of the greatness of God. People have prayed and sought solace here for many centuries. Today it remains a place of peace and safety for all who enter.

Please pause and think of the person you are and the person God wants you to be.

Loving God, forgive what I have been, help me to amend what I am and direct what I shall be. Amen.



2 Glass

Most of the church's glazing is Victorian. You may already have noticed the west window in the tower, which depicts Saints Michael and George (circa 1882).

As you pass down the Nave towards the front of the church, take a look up at the first window to your left (above the kitchenette). It includes the image of a pelican, which we'll come back to later. Continuing on that left (north) aisle of the church are windows depicting:

The Annunciation. The announcement by the angel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary that she would conceive a son by the power of the Holy Spirit, to be called Jesus.

The Baptism of Christ and **'Noli me tangere'** Latin for 'touch me not' spoken, according to John 20:17, by Jesus to Mary Magdalene when she recognised him after his resurrection.

Meanwhile, on the other (south) aisle the windows depict the crucified Christ and Saints (circa 1872). Directly ahead of you is the big east window, by Clayton & Bell circa 1869, which depicts Christ's Ascension.

Here you may wish to pause to pray; that you may enter more deeply into the mystery of Jesus' suffering, death and resurrection.



*Jesus, lamb of God, have mercy on me. Jesus, bearer of our sins, have mercy on me.
Jesus, redeemer of the world, give me your peace. Amen.*



3 Chancel

As you pass between the lectern on the left and the pulpit on the right, step up into the Chancel. Here, the intricate carving on the clergy and choir stalls and side screens date from 1899.

The fine carvings at the ends of the clergy and choir stalls are known as ‘**poppyheads**,’ a name derived from the Latin ‘puppis’ meaning the poop or figurehead of a ship. In this church they include carvings of a bishop, a child, a woman and a man. Leaves, acorns and flowers occur in various forms on the other poppyheads.

If you lift the wooden seat on the left-hand priest’s stall, you see a carved shelf designed to partially support a person in a semi-standing position during long periods of prayer, known as a **misericord** or mercy seat. It includes a carved rooster between roses and leaves. Meanwhile, the misericord underneath the right-hand priest stall depicts the pelican in her piety (‘devotion’). This image is also reflected in the window in the north-west corner of the Nave (above the kitchenette). The pelican was believed to revive its dead chicks by spilling its own blood for them. This is an allusion to our belief as Christians that Christ was crucified, shed his own blood and died to save mankind.

From the **lectern** and the **pulpit** we hear and reflect on the scriptures; God’s written word which still speaks to us today. Please pause and ask to be more ready to hear God’s word for you in your life.



Almighty God, thank you for the gift of your holy word. May it be a lantern to my feet, a light upon my path and a strength to my life. Amen.

4 Altar As you approach the Altar you are standing in part of the building with the two side chapels constructed in the early 13th century. One chapel is now occupied by the organ, installed in 1901, whilst the other, the **Lady Chapel**, is dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Although they have been significantly rebuilt, important fabric remains visible.

Note, for example, the remarkable wall arcading up in the north and south walls including shafts and leaf and scallop capitals dating from 1190-1200 and the remains of lancet (tall narrow) windows.

To the right of the Altar there is also a fine angled **piscina**, being a shallow basin designed to be used for washing communion vessels.

The ornamental stone **reredos** behind the **Altar** depicts Leonardo da Vinci's 'The Last Supper.' It was given to the church in 1908 in memory of Rev. Henry Godfrey Faussett-Osborne who lived at Hartlip Place and lies buried in the churchyard. The reredos is a reminder that Holy Communion has been celebrated here for many centuries.



Here Christians continue to share bread and wine as Jesus commanded us to do.

Ordinary bread and wine become spiritual food and drink when consecrated, to transform us into his likeness and strengthen us to live lives dedicated to him.

In the right hand wall of the Lady Chapel you can see a brass '**aumbry**.' This is a locked

recess for storing consecrated sacraments for Holy Communion.

Please pause and ask for strength to live your life in the way God wants you to.

Lord, fill my hunger for you with the spiritual food that lasts, the bread of God which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world, Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.

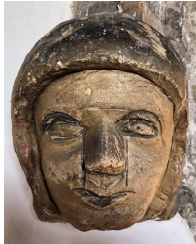
For the Final Pause ...

It is time to give thanks for those whose generosity and foresight has benefitted so many others in generations that have followed and are yet to come.

May we be grateful each morning for the gift of the new day, each evening for the good we have received during the day, and for the good we have been able to do. May we praise God through our giving thanks for his abundant love. May we show that love to one another. Amen.

Although the building has changed over the centuries, it continues to make a substantial contribution to both the architecture and life of the village. It is at the heart of the community of Hartlip.

Thank you for spending time here.
We hope you have felt welcome and blessed from your visit.



Please stay in touch

The church is open daily during daylight hours for a time of quiet, a place to rest or to light a candle for a loved one.

Services are held regularly at 10.30 am on Sundays but do check the notice boards or our website and facebook page for more information about who we are and what is happening. All are most welcome.

St Michael and All Angels Church
The Street, Hartlip, Sittingbourne, Kent. ME9 7TL.



www.thesix.org.uk/hartlip.htm



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