

## WELCOME TO ST MARTIN'S

Welcome to the Church of St Martin of Tours. We hope you enjoy the beauty, peace and wonder of this special place. St Martin's is a Christian church serving the whole community. It has been a place of worship for almost 700 years.

The Hidden Treasures Project at St Martin's Church began in 2014. Since then the medieval church and the Annunciation mural have been restored, and an exciting programme of events and activities has begun. All of us have skills and talents that we could make more of – hidden treasures that are waiting to be discovered. Come and find yours at St Martin's.



St Martin's is a Grade 2\* listed building, because it's important to the nation.



The east window lights up the Annunciation mural.

## THE STORY OF ST MARTIN'S

St Martin's was built between around 1350 and 1400. Bilborough remained a small village until well into the 20th century, and the church was large enough to accommodate its congregation without difficulty.

St Martin's was renovated in 1833 and 1887 – '89. The later work saw beautiful floral motifs used throughout the church. This suggests that the architect, J. E. Newbury, may have been influenced by the Arts and Crafts Movement.

In the 20th century Bilborough grew rapidly. The medieval church became too small for its congregation, so a modern extension was built in 1972.



Harvest Festival at St Martin's, 1952.



Four heritage trainees carried out much of the recent stonemasonry work.

## WHO WAS ST MARTIN?

St Martin lived between around AD 316 and 397. He began his career as a Roman soldier, but one day he cut his cloak in two and gave half to a freezing beggar. Afterwards he dreamed that the beggar was actually Jesus, and his life changed.

Martin left the army, and later became Bishop of Tours. He is the patron saint of soldiers, beggars and France. His feast day is November 11th – Armistice Day.



A banner in the church depicts St Martin as Bishop of Tours.

## THE ANNUNCIATION MURAL

The Annunciation mural is one of the most beautiful and unusual works of art in the region. It shows the Angel Gabriel telling Mary that she will give birth to Jesus, the Son of God.

Remarkably, the scene is set in Bilborough. In the background you can see local landmarks, including St Martin's Church. It was painted in 1946 by Evelyn Gibbs, one of the most talented and influential British artists of her generation.

For many years the mural was thought to have been destroyed in 1972. In fact the top two thirds had been covered up, and the bottom third had been painted over.

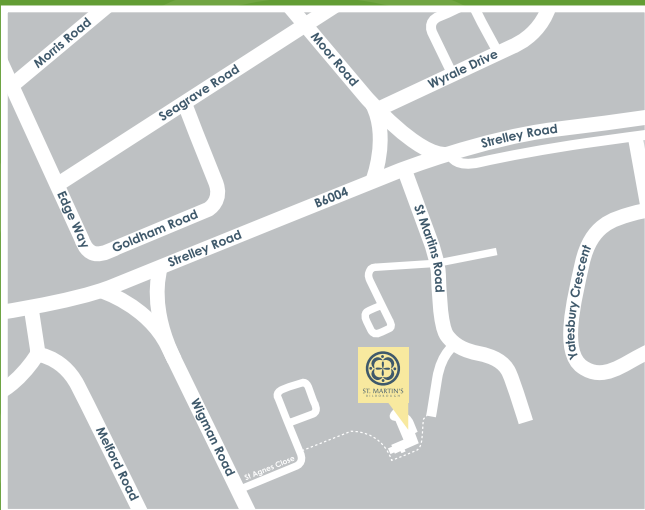


Evelyn Gibbs and her assistant Claude Price painting the Annunciation mural © Nottingham Post.



Restoring the mural.

## TO THE PARISH CHURCH



**P** Car parking is available at St Martin's

**Bus** The church is a short walk from a bus stop. Catch bus number 77 or 35, and get off at The Rose pub

**f** Find us on Facebook [www.facebook.com/stmartinsbilborough](http://www.facebook.com/stmartinsbilborough)

**Twitter** Follow us on Twitter @StMartinsBilb

**Location** St Martin's Church  
St Martin's Road, Bilborough  
Nottingham NG8 3BH

[www.stmartinsbilborough.org.uk](http://www.stmartinsbilborough.org.uk) LOTTERY FUNDED

## CARING FOR THE COMMUNITY

St Martin's has cared for people through all the ups and downs of life for centuries. The church helps people to mark some of the most important events in their lives, including baptisms, marriages and funerals.

- **Worship**  
10.30am Sunday. Other services as advertised.
- **Messy Church** 3.30pm – 5.30pm  
1st Weds of every month
- **Baby & Toddler Group** 9.30am – 11.30am  
every Monday during term time
- **Gardening Group** 2pm – 4pm Monday  
March – October (not bank holidays)
- **Crafty Ladies** 11am – 2pm every Wednesday
- **Local History Group**  
Evening Speakers: 7.30pm 2nd Weds of each month  
Reminiscence & Research: 2.30pm – 4.30pm  
4th Weds of each month

Church open:

- Wednesday 11am – 3pm (all year)
- Friday and Saturdays 11am – 3pm (March – October)
- Access at other times by appointment



## GET INVOLVED

As part of the Hidden Treasures Project there are lots of events and activities happening at St Martin's. These include family, craft, art and history activities.

## VOLUNTEERING

We're looking for lots of keen volunteers to get involved in the Hidden Treasures project. You can decide how little or how much you do.

There are many different ways to get involved. You can help open the church to visitors, make refreshments, help run events, assist with church maintenance or become a Friend of St Martin's Church.

Check out our website, find us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter or email us at [info@stmartinsbilborough.org.uk](mailto:info@stmartinsbilborough.org.uk)



ST MARTIN'S  
BILBOROUGH

DISCOVER  
HIDDEN  
TREASURES AT  
ST MARTIN'S  
CHURCH  
BILBOROUGH





### PLUMBERS' AND LOVERS' MARKS

are unique pieces of graffiti carved into the roof lead. They were left by 19th-century plumbers, and later by visiting couples who climbed the tower for the view.



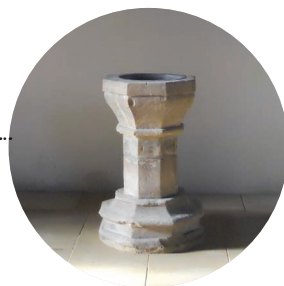
**THE TOWER** is about 40 feet high and was refaced with Derbyshire gritstone in around 1450. It houses a single bell fitted in 1888 and weighing 224 kilograms.



**THE TOWER WINDOW** dates from 1833. The window frame was deliberately built wider on the right, allowing golden light to flood into the church on bright evenings.

### THE ROLL OF HONOUR

commemorates Bilborough men who served in World War I. Those whose names are in gold died for their country, and are buried abroad near where they fell.



**THE FONT** is where people are baptised with water, signifying their welcome into Christian life. The base probably dates from around 1400; the bowl perhaps from around 1661.

**THE HARDBOARD CRUCIFIX** is a mystery. It has the name Frances Caryll Houselander on the back in pencil and bears a quote from the French writer Victor Hugo.



**THE 1970s CHURCH** was built in 1972. The congregation had grown rapidly after World War II, and this extension provided much-needed space and warmth.



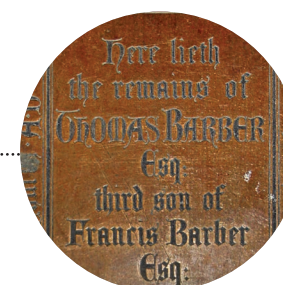
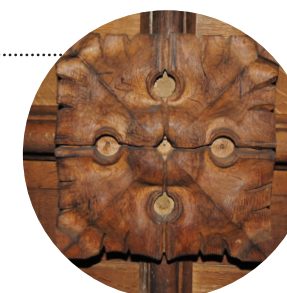
**THE ANNUNCIATION MURAL** shows the Angel Gabriel telling Mary that she will give birth to Jesus, the Son of God. In the background you can see local landmarks, including St Martin's Church.

### THE EAST WINDOW

was bricked up in 1972, but has recently been restored. It floods the church with light every morning, symbolising new life with God.



**THE CHANCEL CEILING** dates from 1887 – '89. It's off-centre, but this is part of the church's character and charm. Every one of the floral oak ceiling bosses was skilfully carved by hand.



**THE BRASS PLAQUES** in the church remember different people including a small child, a doctor and the Barber mining family. Research is being carried out to find out more about these people and their connection with the church.



**THE HELWYS MEMORIAL** commemorates Sir Edmund Helwys and his daughter. Sir Edmund's son, Thomas Helwys, worshipped at St Martin's, and later founded England's first Baptist Church in London in 1612.



**THE NAVE** has Victorian oak pews and an oak pulpit. Analysis of the soil below the nave floor suggests there were many burials here, but the grave slabs were removed in the 19th century.



**THE SOUTH PORCH** is decorated with carved heads of a king and queen, as well as delicate floral motifs. It was built slightly later than the rest of the church.



**THE CHURCHYARD** retains its village atmosphere, despite the nearby housing estates. It's a haven for wildlife, too. Burials here go back to the Middle Ages, but the oldest identifiable gravestone dates from 1736.

