

THE FRIENDS OF ST LEONARD'S EYNESHAM



Registered Charity No 800164

Who are the Friends?

In the 1980s a substantial sum of money was raised in order to carry out essential renovations to St Leonard's. As the book in the church attests, hundreds of contributions came from individuals within and beyond the village, institutions, organisations and Trusts.

Aware of the difficulties experienced raising such a large sum of money in a short period of time, the Appeal Committee decided to set up a charitable Trust, independent from the Church itself, to allow the steady build-up of funds to meet future major building repair costs. The Friends of St Leonard's Eynsham Trust was set up in 1988 effectively to watch over the historic fabric of the building which forms such an important focal point of our ancient village and its heritage. To date its relatively few members have raised over £84,000.

Why do we need your help now?



With the deaths of several of our members, the number of regular donors has dwindled. Those who remain feel that there may well be many in the wider growing village community, who though they perhaps rarely come to church, would nevertheless be prepared to help us ensure we are able to look on a secure St Leonards at the heart of the village. There is no government or central Church of England fund to support our church, either in its day-to-day operation or in its upkeep and repair. The church congregation look after the former, but will always need considerable support from others to take on the inevitable future building works and fabric of this listed building.

What type of projects will be supported?

The 1980s renovations restored the church to a condition where it was anticipated that no further major work would be required for some time, although it was accepted that the chancel roof as an example would eventually need repair and likely be a six figure sum. Our long term aim is to build up funds for such major projects to serve as seed money allowing us to make a significant contribution and thus help persuade other bodies to provide grants. In the short term we have been prepared to support qualifying repair work identified by the Parochial Church Council by paying up to 50% of costs, as we have done for example in helping with various electrical works, removal of asbestos, a roof alarm system and making provision for new bell ropes. It is also anticipated that the bells themselves will need to be taken down, re-tuned and re-hung in the very near future.

How can you help as a friend?

We ask you all to consider giving as generously as you feel able to the Friends, either as a one-off donation now or ideally on an annual basis.

We are a registered charitable trust in our own right, and donors who are taxpayers can increase the value of their gift at no cost to themselves by Gift Aiding their donation (currently for every £1 donated, the Trust receives an extra 20p).

While we are very happy to receive any donation however small, to become a Friend we ask you to commit to paying a minimum of £25 per year.

A final plea

Please help us to keep St Leonard's Church for future generations to enjoy, whether as their regular place of worship or simply as an essential feature at the heart of the village.

If you wish to help the Friends of St Leonard's, please use the form below - by completing the sections as appropriate.

I enclose £_____

I would like to set up a standing order for £_____ per year (minimum £25 as a Friend)

I am / am not (delete as appropriate) a UK tax-payer and would like the Friends to Gift Aid my donation.

Cheques should be made payable to the Friends of St Leonard's, Eynsham

Direct Bank Transfers, which would be preferable, can be made via

Sort Code 08-92-99 Account No. 65543858

Name: _____

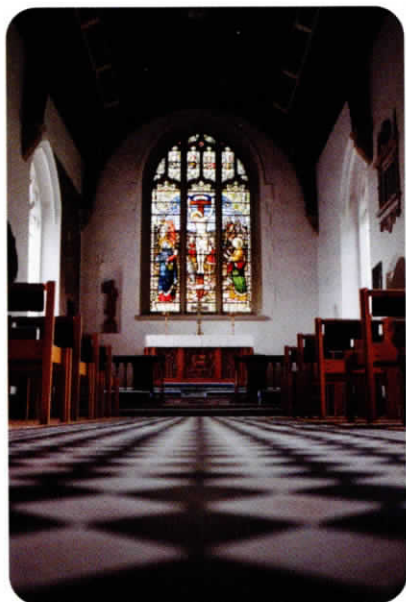
Address: _____

Please send/hand in your return to:

Jennifer Clarke, 22 Falstaff Close, Eynsham, OX29 4QA

jenniferclarke362@gmail.com

A short history of Eynsham parish church



At the very end of the 12th century, Eynsham Abbey decided to build, or possibly rebuild, a small aisleless chapel for the parish to the north of the abbey precinct adjoining the market square. It was dedicated to St Leonard, a saint popular with the Benedictines and patron of pregnant women and prisoners of war. Interestingly, the church follows more closely the orientation of the Saxon abbey church rather than the Norman one. This may be an indication that even in the early 11th century, there was a small chapel on the St Leonard's site.

The oldest part of the present church is the eastern part of the south aisle with its Y tracery windows, piscine and aumbry, followed by the chancel (c 1300) with its 'Decorated' Gothic lights. However, the bulk of the building, including the tower and the porch was built in the late 14th or 15th centuries in the Perpendicular Gothic style although there have been several major restorations since. Of particular note is the 15th century font, carved with small angels and a head with two basilisks emerging from its mouth. The faint remains of medieval wall paintings can be seen on the north east wall of the chancel. There is quite a lot of medieval graffiti too, especially on the tower arch with, for example, a daisy wheel apotropaic design to ward off evil spirits. The only medieval stained glass is a small collection in the window near the south doorway. The stained glass in the chancel dates to the early 20th century.

There are some interesting memorials to distinguished local residents such as the Martin family (North aisle), the Rogers family (South aisle) and to the Stanleys (Chancel) who were lords of the manor in the 16th and 17th centuries. Outside, on the south side of the church are several mass dials. The graveyard covers the remains of the great church of Eynsham Abbey which was dissolved in 1538.