

# Welcome to St Nicholas Church Pinvin Worcestershire



A short history of this beautiful, ancient, yet very modern Parish Church.

[www.pinvin.org.uk/nicholas](http://www.pinvin.org.uk/nicholas)

## A Brief History and Description of St Nicholas Church

The Chapel of Pinvin, or Pendefene as Walter the Prior called it in 1289, is a chapelry of Pershore Abbey and dates from the 11th century with additions and restorations over the years. The Chancel and Nave are 12th century.

Although for many years it has operated as a separate parish it is still linked with Pershore and forms part of the benefice of Pershore, Wick and Birlingham, in the deanery of Pershore and the Diocese of Worcester.

It is a small building consisting of a nave, with small porch, chancel, and a belfry and vestry (1884-5). The dedication is uncertain but an old will makes reference to the altar of St Nicolas in Pinvin Chapel it is probable that St Nicholas was its patron saint.



The walls, with the exception of the porch, which are of stone, are built of rubble and coated with plaster. They vary from 2 feet to 3 feet in thickness.

### The Chancel .



There are two small square windows, deeply splayed. The one in the south wall depicts The Lamb, whilst the one in the north wall shows a Pelican feeding its young. Below these windows are two triangular recesses.

The Communion Table is made of plain wood and on the front panels are painted the emblems of the Four Evangelists.



The east window is relatively modern being installed in memory of Miss May Harriss, who was organist and a teacher in the Sunday school.

### The East Window



A magnificent stained glass window depicting (left) Christ as a baby and (right) St Nicholas with children with the inscriptions:

“Oh come let us adore Him”  
and “Christ the Lord”

*The stained-glass cross on the lower left was presented to the church in April 2009 by Pinvin CofE First School. This was part of a larger project which installed a large stained glass window in the school hall to establish a focal point for Worship. Governors, parents, children, staff and the local church community contributed to the window by creating the individual pieces of glass. The cross was made up as part of this and presented to this church, where the children enjoy regular visits.*

It has been suggested that an aumbrey occupied an oblong recess in the south wall, near the vicar's stall. The recess is now covered with plaster.

A tie-beam with ornamental chamfer divides the roof of the chancel into two equal parts.

The chancel arch is now completely opened up. This was done during the renovation work of the last century. It was previously a round headed arch with a hagioscope on either side.

### Nave.

The nave pews and wood panelling date from the same renovation.



Two of the four windows in the nave are of interest. In the north wall approximately a quarter of the way down the nave from the chancel step is a slit window deeply splayed and this seems to have been one of the original 11th century windows. On the south side is a perpendicular square headed window of three lights.



The west window which appears circular headed on close inspection from the inside, has been adapted into a square headed more modern window.



The pulpit incorporates the legs of a Jacobean communion table.

The font is late Norman (12 century). It has an octagonal bowl, with a chamfered base. Each side has two very elongated round arched blank panels.

### Commemorations.

In the north wall has been set a tablet commemorating those from the village who died in the 1914-18 War. Those from the Second World War are remembered by inscription on the lectern.





## Wall Paintings.

The greatest historical interest within the building probably relates to the wall paintings. The paintings visible were uncovered in 1855 by Canon Wickenden. They are part of "two major schemes of the 14th and 15th century covering the nave walls, areas of which probably still exist under the limewash. Both were painted in fresco secco technique, a method of painting employed at that time using pigment bound with skimmed milk or glue size applied to a dry limewash ground." (The Perry Lithgow Partnership).



The east section is 6ft by 7ft Within this work two distinct levels of painting can be seen, dating from the 14th and 15th centuries. This fresco had a border composed of red dragons and below this a double row of compartments. The upper level has the Annunciation and Salutation, whilst below from east to west there is the Adoration of the Magi, the Crucifixion, Resurrection and the Ascension. The layer of painting above is thought to contain a representation of St Roch with a plague spot on his thigh.

The west section is 8ft by 7ft and contains at least 3 levels of painting dating from 14th, 15th and 17th centuries (the last probably dated as 1630). This last layer bears text - apart from which little is presently discernible.

The eastern section was preserved by work done in 1992 following a grant from the Pilgrim's Trust.



5

## Bellcote.

The belfry is described by Pevsner as "a funny bellcote (of 1884-5) triangular in plan". The bell has an inscription "Come away, make no delay" T.R., 1768.

It is believed that there were once two bells, as appears in an inventory taken in the 6th year of Edward VI:-

"Pinveyn C. - Pynven. Aug. 8. - a chales with a cover parcell gylte, ij smal belles in the stepull, j koope of rede demaske ij payre of vestments very worne, a crosse of bras, a pyxe of brass, jo. Mosse, curett"



The church still possesses the silver Cup and Cover Paten by H.W., 1571.

## Porch.

The porch is entered from the church and church-yard by plain Norman round headed doorways. The porch contains two small square windows of ancient appearance, and the remains of the holy water stoup, part of which was broken off, probably during the Reformation. Over the porch is an Early English stiff-leaf capital.



6

## Present Day.

The building is only a tool for the Christian witness in Pinvin. An obvious one, which has been there for centuries but still only a tool. The witness of the church in Pinvin is done through the people who worship here. Take time to look around and then take a moment or two to sit quietly and appreciate that God's free gift of love to us through His Son, Jesus is available today as it was to those who built the "chapel of Pendefene" over 700 years ago.

David C Owen  
(November 1997)

### Sources:

Berrows 'Worcester Journal' 1884  
Perry Lithgow Partnership  
Pevsner, 'The Buildings of England -  
Worcestershire'

## Recent Improvements

Since The Reverend David Owen wrote the above our facilities have been brought right up to date with easy access all on one level.

We have a toilet with access for disabled and baby changing facilities too.



We have microphones, a CD player and an electric organ all of which feed into an induction loop for the hard of hearing.

You're welcome to attend any service

For various reasons we are, at present, no longer able to offer a weekly church service.

Our services will be held on the 1st and 3rd Sundays thus:

~ 1st Sunday ~  
10.30 am Holy Communion

~ 3rd Sunday ~  
10.30 am Sunday Praise  
*A service for all ages and stages of life*

~ 5th Sunday ~

We are part of the Benefice of Pershore, Pinvin, Wick and Birlingham. When a month has a 5th Sunday, as happens 4 times a year, there will be a 10:30 service at the Abbey for all 4 churches.

At Pinvin there may also be an informal service at 4.30 pm but these arrangements may vary (See Pinpoint, Abbey Bulletin or Village Website or ring the Abbey Office (552071) for details)

Please come and join us at one of our services.

We use modern and understandable language and we sing hymns ancient and modern.

At the end of each service we enjoy coffee and biscuits and a chat.