

Entrance (1)

The main doorway is Norman and dates from the 12th century, when the church was first built. It is a direct link to the first Christians who entered this church almost nine hundred years ago.

Walk straight ahead from the door until you reach the stone font.

Font (2)

This font has been used to hold water for baptisms since the early 14th century. It is lined with lead and carved with faces which might have been portraits of real people. In mediaeval times, it was brightly painted and had a locked cover, to prevent witches from stealing the holy water.

In this church, when adults are baptised a sheep dip is sometimes used instead. Christians believe that Baptism marks the beginning of life as a Christian. Being lowered under the water and then raised out of it symbolises how Christians are reborn into a new life in Jesus.

Turn right, and walk down the centre of the church, which is called the Nave.

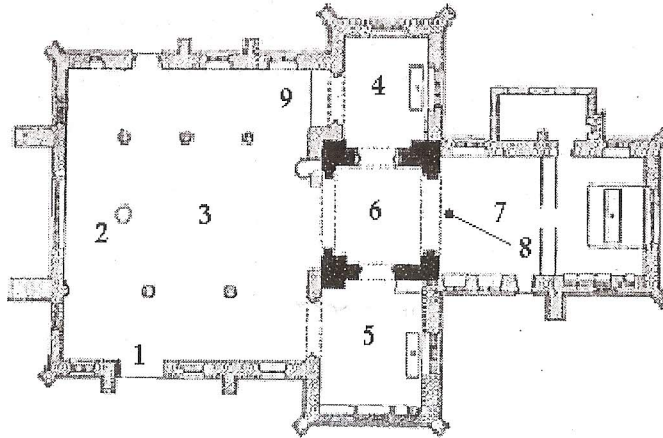
Nave (3)

The original church was also shaped like a cross. In the 14th century, it was expanded in all directions. The pillars are different on each side, because the extensions were made at different times.

At the far end of the nave, to the left, is the pulpit, which was designed to help a speaker's voice reach the whole church. It also allowed the priest to see who was in church and who wasn't!

On the right is the lectern which holds the big bible used for reading aloud.

Turn left and go through the glass door into the Children's Chapel.



Children's Chapel (4)

Since the two chapels were glassed-in, in the late 20th century, this has been used as a crèche during services. In the stained glass window are three saints associated with dragons.

On the left, the window tracery comes from the 16th and 17th centuries - times of argument and struggle in England.

As you leave the Children's Chapel, turn left. Walk straight across the church and into the Prayer Chapel on the other side.

Prayer Chapel (5)

Low down on the right hand wall are two battered stone effigies of a man and woman in 14th century dress. Beyond them, carved into the wall, are a stone seat (*sedilia*) for the priest to sit on, and a basin (*piscina*) which was used for pouring away water from washing the priest's hands in the communion service.

The white platform near the ceiling leads through a (locked) door leading into the bell chamber. Before it was built, in the 20th century, the only way into the bell chamber was by climbing on to the roof!

The window behind the Communion Table shows the story of the Good Samaritan.

Leaving the Prayer Chapel, turn right and then right again. You are now in the centre of the cross, under the bell ropes.

The Centre (6)

This is the oldest surviving part of the church. It is fairly unusual for a village church in this area to be cross-shaped.

St Margaret's has a full peal of eight bells and information about them is displayed on the wall. The ringers stand here to ring.

Walk straight ahead into the chancel.

Chancel (7)

The 12th century chancel was shorter and narrower. The roof (dated 1760) was painted in the late nineteenth century, using traditional mediaeval colours. Fixed to one of the shields are crossed iron keys (symbols of St Peter) made in the 18th century.

At the far end, in the right wall, are a piscina, like the one in the Prayer Chapel, and a sedilia with three seats.

Turn round and face back down the church.

Tower (8)

If you look carefully at this side of the tower, you will see that the lower part is rough masonry but the upper part is smooth. The upper part of the tower collapsed in 1759, destroying the chancel roof. It was rebuilt in 1760, with local stone from a quarry near Bubbenhall.

Walk back through centre and turn right, towards the Children's Chapel.

Memorials (9)

In a glass case outside the Children's Chapel is a memorial book. Its pages are turned regularly. The book behind the case contains details of the soldiers named on the village War Memorial.

There are many other memorials around the church. One of the most eye-catching is the diamond-shaped wooden board carrying the coat of arms of William Wilcox, Lord of the Manor of Wolston. This hatchment would have been fixed to the front of his house when he died in 1853.

We grieve over the death of those we love, but we know that death is not the end of everything, because Christians believe that Jesus rose from the dead.

Walk down the side aisle, towards the back of the church, noticing the faces carved on this side of some of the pillars.

In a North Window of the Church.



*An early picture of Alice le Breton.
She paid for the church to be enlarged in the
fourteenth century.*

We hope you have enjoyed your visit to St. Margaret's. Do join us for worship:

TIMES OF MAIN SERVICES

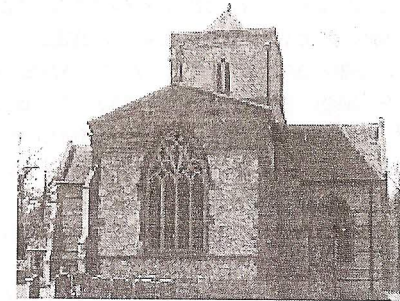
11.00 am Sunday
Morning Worship

with groups for children and young people

10.30 am Thursday
Traditional Holy Communion service

If you have time please stay and enjoy the peace and beauty of the churchyard and explore the village.

WELCOME TO ST MARGARET'S CHURCH WOLSTON



Christians have worshipped God in this place for around a thousand years and we know from The Domesday Book that there was a church here by 1086.

The building you see here was begun about 1140. Since then it has grown in all directions and it is a Grade I listed building.

This leaflet gives you some of the basic facts. If you would like more stories about what has happened here, look out for the wooden boards as you walk around.

We hope you enjoy your visit!