

Trips Out with a Religious Connection

Churches around the periphery of Worcester

Day 2: Churches to the east and south east of Worcester



The exterior of St Peter's Church, Flyford Flavell.

The first church we visited on **Day 2** of our short tour of churches around the periphery of Worcester was to the east of the city – **St Peter’s Flyford Flavell**, a medieval parish church rebuilt in 1883 by W.J. Hopkins. It has a 15th century west tower. In 2016 the church received a Faculty enabling it to convert the interior into a community space. The church has no churchwarden and is run by the PCC and volunteers from the village.



We began Day 2 of the Worcester ‘periphery’ tour at Flyford Flavell; continuing to Bishampton, then Fladbury, then Wyre Piddle, and concluding at the Spetchley Park Gardens visitor attraction close to the M5.



The beautifully crafted wooden church porch at St Peter's, Flyford Flavell.



The main door and ornamental ironwork door fittings at St Peter's, Flyford Flavell; an unusual star shaped door fitting, and door handle.



A novel solution to church reordering seen at St Peter's, Flyford Flavell: the pews have been retained but are now fitted with casters, enabling them to be moved out of the way easily.



The Rood Screen and Chancel at St Peter's, Flyford Flavell. The freestanding chairs will provide flexible seating for a variety of village meetings and community use.



Rare medieval floor tiles; and post-church restoration tiles at St Peter's Flyford Flavell.



The black and gold carved lectern; and the pulpit at St Peter's, Flyford Flavell.

After Flyford Flavell, we visited the church of **St James, at Bishampton.**



St James at Bishampton.

Bishampton has parts that were built in the 12th and 15th centuries, but all except the tower were rebuilt by Frederick Preedy 1869-70.



A beautiful Millennium needlework in Bishampton church depicting scenes from the Bishampton area.



The altar and chancel at St James, Bishampton, featuring a colourful Eastertide altar frontal.



An unusually angled arrangement of pews in the nave at St James, Bishampton.



An Easter lilies flower arrangement; with an egg timer by the carved stone pulpit – presumably to ensure the vicar doesn't 'ramble'!



Another stunning flower arrangement featuring lilies at the foot of the font at St James, Bishampton.

Our next church on Day Two of the tour of Worcester's periphery was **St Peter's, Rous Lench**. St Peter's is an unusually designed church and has two pulpits. There are no pews in the church, which offers the advantage of the space being flexibly used. The manor of Rous Lench, together with land in the surrounding villages of Church Lench and Radford, was owned by the Rous family or their distant relatives the Boughton (later Rouse Boughton) family, from the late 14th century.



St Peter's Rous Lench.



St Peter's Rous Lench has a very elaborate font cover that is lowered by pulleys from the ceiling.



A very elaborate intricately carved rood screen divides the nave from the chancel at St Peter's, Rous Lench.



The altar cross and east window at Rous Lench.

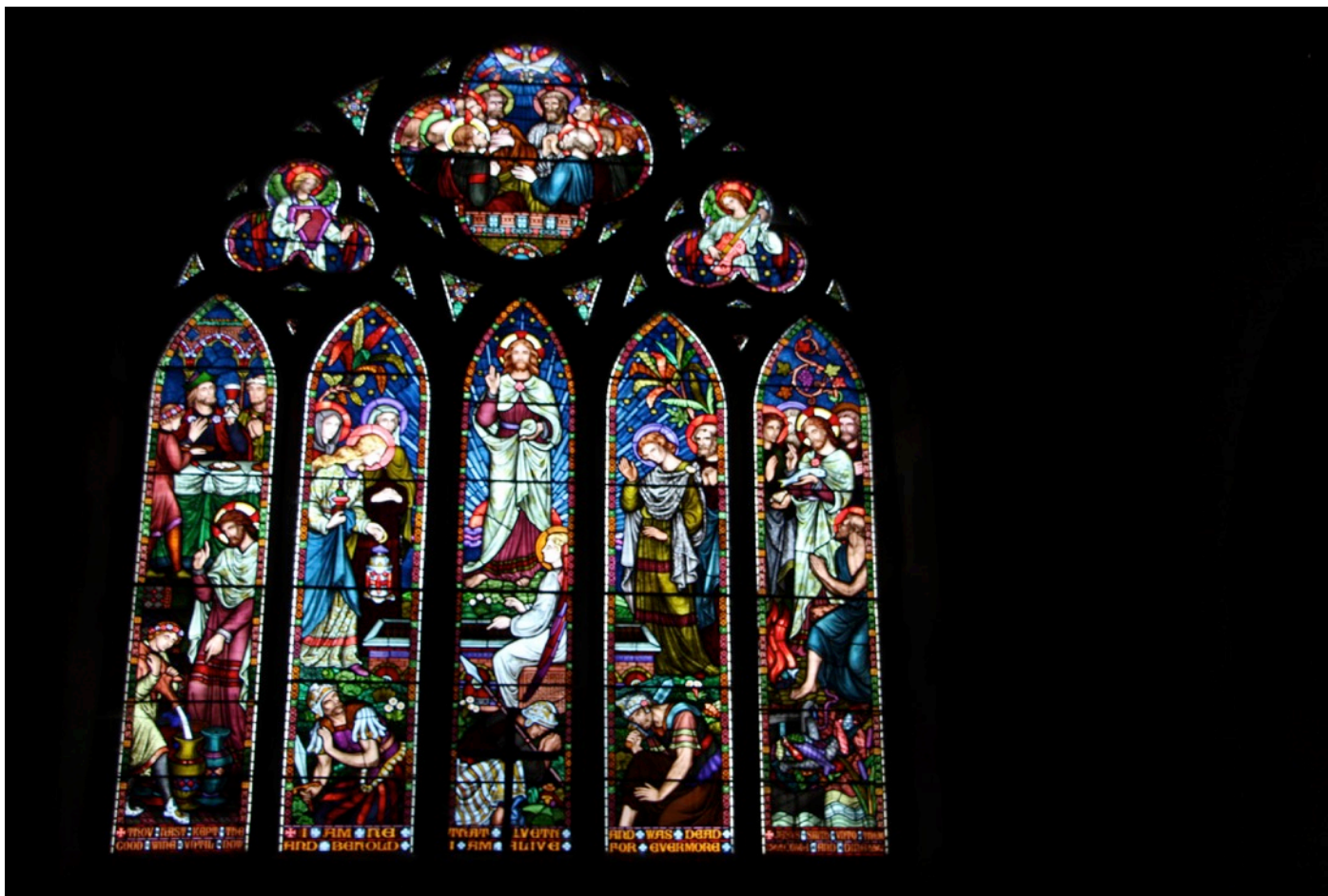


Members of the Rouse Boughton family are buried and represented in effigy in a side chapel at Rous Lench.

Our next church was **St John the Baptist at Fladbury**. A particular source of interest is the work of **Frederick Preedy**. An able artist who combined the profession of architecture with the design, painting and manufacture of stained glass, he is responsible for ten windows in the church including the splendid East Window, installed in 1864.



St John the Baptist, Fladbury.



The wonderful colourful East Window at St John the Baptist, Fladbury, by Frederick Preedy.

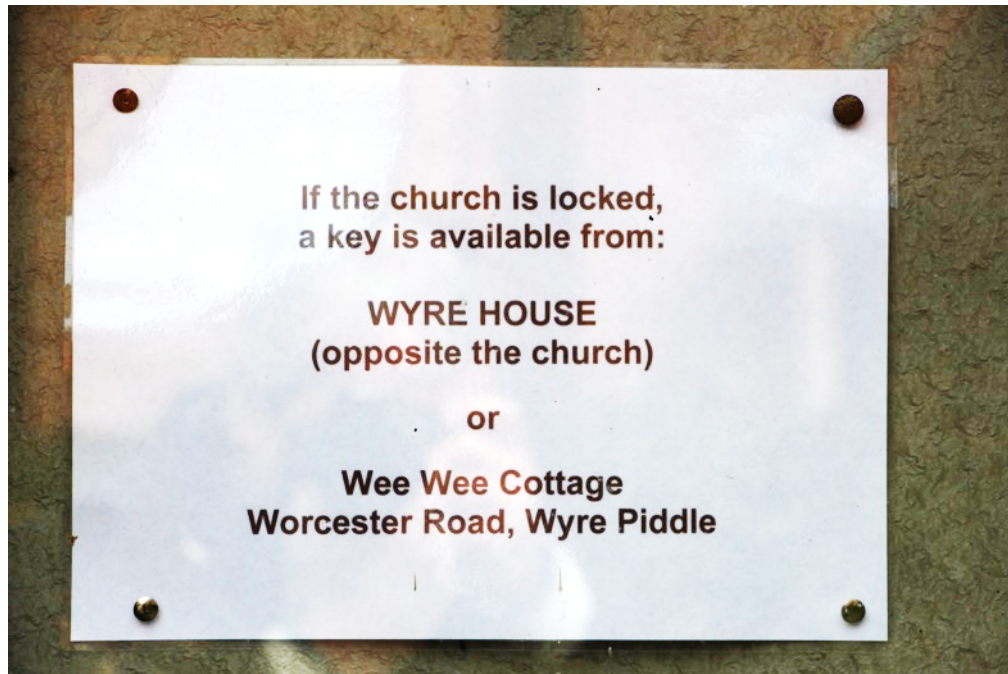


The stunningly ornate reredos at St John the Baptist, Fladbury, seen here with a bright colourful altar frontal.



The beautiful village of Fladbury.

The penultimate church on our tour was **St Anne's Wyre Piddle**. The present church was originally built in the Norman period. The font dating from circa 1140 AD fell into disrepair and was replaced in 1986 with an exact replica of the original. A visitor will see the handsome Norman arch, the medieval altar slab, medieval encaustic tiles, windows dating from the restoration, except the west window which contains some fine pieces of 15th century glass.



An unusual sign at St Anne's Wyre Piddle, directing visitors to 'Wee Wee Cottage' for a key should the church be locked!



St Anne's Church, Wyre Piddle.



The nave at St Anne's Wyre Piddle. It's unusual to find a stone arch between nave and chancel.



The stone font at St Anne's Wyre Piddle.



The pulpit at St Anne's Wyre piddle, decorated for Eastertide.

We concluded our tour of churches around the periphery of the city of Worcester with a visit to **Spetchley Park Gardens**. The church of **All Saints' Spetchley** stands in the grounds.



The privately run park and gardens at Spetchley.

Although the church has a 13th-century origin, the oldest fabric still surviving in it is from the 14th century, namely the nave and the chancel. In 1614 the south chapel was added by Rowland Berkeley, a Worcester wool merchant and the owner of the nearby hall. The tower probably dates from the 17th century, and the porch was added during the following century. In 1857 a restoration was carried out by Henry Rowe.

The church is no longer used but is accessible to visitors - it has been vested with the Churches Conservation Trust since 1987.



While no longer used for worship, the church of All Saints' Spetchley is accessible from Spetchley Park and Gardens.



Giant gravestones by the porch entrance to All Saints' Spetchley.



The nave and chancel at All Saints' Spetchley.

The most interesting feature of **All Saints** is the early 17th century embattled chapel to members of the **Berkeley** family. The chapel was built in 1614 and is crammed with interesting monuments. The earliest is that of **Sir Rowland Berkeley** (d. 1611) and his wife Katherine (d. 1656).



The south chapel houses the memorials to the Berkeley family at All Saints' Spetchley. This memorial is to Sir Rowland Berkeley and his wife Katherine.



An ancient weather-worn parish chest at All Saints' Spetchley.



The altar at All Saints' Spetchley decorated for Eastertide.



The gardens at Spetchley are a delight. This classical Doric columned feature overlooks the Fountain Gardens.



The gardens are full of quirky features such as this statue of a stag in the middle of the Kitchen Garden.



Elegant statuary is a feature of the gardens at Spetchley Park.

Martin and Magda Jones

April 2018

Version 1 – more detailed information on the churches covered to follow.