



HOLY TRINITY CHURCH

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON



Welcome to this historic church, the heart of Stratford-upon-Avon

This leaflet will help you to understand
and enjoy this holy place.
Please feel free to ask any questions.

Loving God, we pray for everyone
who comes into this church today:
that all who seek you here may find you;
and all who find you may serve you day by day.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Lives changed through God's love



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

**Welcome to Holy Trinity Church,
Stratford-upon-Avon, one of England's
most beautiful parish churches.**

Holy Trinity is the church where William Shakespeare was baptised, where he worshipped and where he is buried. We are delighted to welcome the thousands of visitors who come each year to view his final resting place. We are also an active parish church serving the needs of local people. In fact, Christians have been worshipping God on this site for over 1,000 years.

Whether you live locally or are visit us from far away, you are assured of a warm welcome! Our aim is that all who come to this beautiful and holy place will be moved by the atmosphere of prayer and praise, an echo of the millions of prayers offered here over the centuries. We hope that you will encounter the transforming love of God in this special place.

The Rev'd Patrick Taylor, Vicar.

There has been a church on this site since at least 713 when a Saxon monastery was built here, although, a church on the banks of the Avon in Stratford is first mentioned in the charter of 845, signed by Beorhtwulf (Bertulf), King of Mercia. This would have been a wooden construction. It is very likely that the Normans replaced this with a stone building but no trace of either remains.

The present building dates from 1210, with the oldest sections being the North and South Transepts. The North and South aisles were added in the 1300s and the Chancel in the late 15th century.

1. Crossing

Parts of the four massive arches which support the tower and spire may date to 1210. The facsimile copies of the Church Registers record Shakespeare's Baptism and Burial.

2. Misericords and Font

There are 26 of these carved, wooden seats found on each side of the chancel. When upright, they allowed Priests to appear standing at Mass whilst actually resting. They date from the 1400s and some depict life in those times, often in lurid detail! The old Font was used to Baptise Shakespeare, his children and grandchildren.

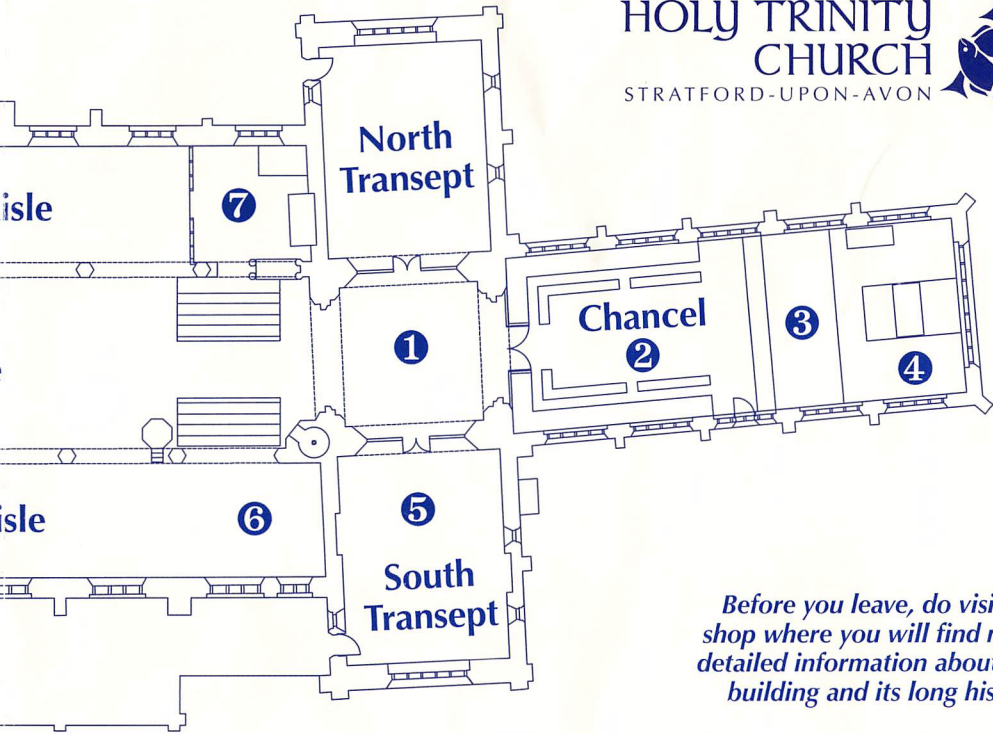
3. Chancel

William Shakespeare and his wife Anne are buried here along with members of his family. He was buried here in 1616. The funerary monument of Shakespeare is thought to have been ordered by him before his death.

4. High Altar

One of the very few pre-reformation stone altars still in use in England today. The altar top was found buried in the Church, likely hidden during a phase of the Reformation when many statues, carvings and other Church treasures were lost.





Before you leave, do visit the shop where you will find more detailed information about this building and its long history.

5. St. Peter's Chapel

This chapel is open for private prayer. You will find the American window here, unveiled in 1896 by the American ambassador and is inscribed 'The Gift of America to Shakespeare's Church'.

Affectionately known as the "Chained Bible", it is a King James Version Bible dating to 1613. It is thought Shakespeare would have heard lessons read from it.

6. Chapel of Thomas Becket

This chapel was dedicated by John de Stratford, Archbishop of Canterbury, in 1331. The

window above depicts how it may have looked during a medieval mass.

7. Clopton Chapel

Directly ahead is the grand tomb of Joyce Clopton (d 1635) and her husband George Carew Earl of Totnes (d 1629). Lord Totnes was master of Ordnance to James I of England. To the left are the effigies of William Clopton (d 1592) and his wife Anne.

8. The Font

This is near the door as it is the 'spiritual door' to the church through baptism. Face the

high altar from this point and you will notice that the central line deviates to the left. In churches like this some consider it represents the head of the crucified Lord and gives rise to the term "weeping chancel".

9. Sanctuary Knocker

This is on the inner porch door that you came through and dates from the mid-13th Century. Anyone touching the ring could claim sanctuary in the church for 37 days.



**By contributing today you will help
to keep this church open to all.**

**Holy Trinity Church is part-way through a multi-million pound
restoration programme. As there is no state funding for churches,
every penny spent has to be raised locally.**

**The Friends of Shakespeare's Church, a registered charity,
makes a major contribution to this work.
To find out more, to join, or to assist us further, please visit:
www.stratford-upon-avon.org/about-the-friends**

People have been worshipping on this site since 713
and in this building since 1210.

We are a living church holding services every
Sunday and during the week.

Please visit our website for the up-to-date times.

www.stratford-upon-avon.org

You are most welcome to join us.

*The church is sometimes closed to visitors when special services are taking place.
If you would like any further information please call 01789 266316.*

Lives changed through God's love

