

St Cuthbert's Memorial Chapel



As you enter the Memorial chapel, you are stepping out of the current building, which was completed in 1894, and into the base of the tower of the previous church built in 1775. (The steeple was added to the top of the tower in 1789).

The entrance to the church was originally through a doorway in the wall that faces you as you enter the chapel. After new doorways in the north and south

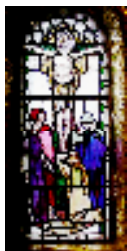
walls of the new church were created, this space fell into disuse. It was subsequently remodelled to the design of Macgregor Chalmers, as a memorial to those who died in the First World War. The space was consecrated as a chapel in 1921, dedication :
“To the Glory of God and in memory of the men of St Cuthbert's who fell in the War 1914 – 1918 this Chapel is dedicated. Greater love hath no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friends.”

It is thought that this is on, or very near, the original site on which St Cuthbert, a 7th century monk, built his original hut on a journey from Melrose. This marked the beginning of Christian worship on this site.

The curved apse walls around the communion table are inlaid with beautiful gilt mosaic. If you are fortunate enough to be in the chapel when the candles are lit, you will see the mosaic almost come to life, as the reflected candlelight seems to dance around the walls.



The other walls of the chapel are covered with Swedish green marble slab panels. In total there are 155 names inscribed on the panels. One of those named, is a nurse, Helena Bennet, who died on duty at a camp of German prisoners in Oswestry during an epidemic of influenza. All of the other names are men. A small encased sloping support on the east wall bears the Roll of Honour.



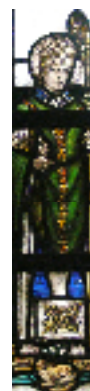
The window in the north wall, behind the communion table, depicts Christ's crucifixion, which we remember on Good Friday each year. Gathered around his cross are shown his mother Mary, dressed in blue, and some of the other women who followed Jesus. Also the disciple John, recorded by the bible writers as the only one of Jesus' disciples with the courage to be present at Jesus' crucifixion.

You may notice that the cross in this window does not rise as high out of the ground as in many depictions. This may be so that Christ can be seen to be suffering alongside his people, rather than at a distance from them.

The window in the south wall, opposite the communion table, shows scenes from the life of St Cuthbert. The left panel of the window, shows the child Cuthbert watching sheep in the Lammermuir Hills of southern Scotland.



The right of the window shows Cuthbert the monk, landing at the Holy Island of Lindisfarne.



The central panel of the window shows St Cuthbert as Bishop of Lindisfarne. He is standing with his crosier in his left hand, and is holding the head of St Oswald, King of Northumbria in the crook of his right arm. This is because Oswald's head was buried in Cuthbert's coffin.

You may be interested to know, that Agatha Christie married her second husband, the archaeologist Max Mallowan, in here on 11 September 1930.

While you are here, take time to also look up and enjoy the beautiful plasterwork of the ceiling, and each of the small, beautifully decorated tiles that are inlaid into the marble below each list of names.

As you sit and enjoy the peace of this special place, the names around you are a reminder of those who have died protecting their country in the past. Please take a moment to remember those who continue to fight in the defence of others around the world. Particularly those who have been injured, and the families who have lost loved ones, on both sides of the conflicts, and also the innocents – civilians and children – who suffer in these conflicts through no fault of their own.

Prayer for Peace

The Peace Prayer was adopted by the Prayer for Peace Movement in 1981. It is perhaps unique in being used by people of different faiths across the world. Many people pause to focus upon the prayer at noon each day.

Lead us from Death to Life, from Falsehood to Truth.
 Lead us from Despair to Hope, from Fear to Trust.
 Lead us from Hate to Love, from War to Peace.
 Let Peace fill our hearts, our world, our universe. Amen