

Easthampstead becomes a Diocesan Pilgrimage Church!

Our Parish Church has become one of 15 Pilgrimage churches in the Diocese of Oxford as part of an initiative to encourage pilgrimage. Pilgrimage is a spiritual journey to a sacred site and the Pilgrimage Churches were chosen for their outstanding spiritual and artistic heritage.

On 7th May a map of the Diocese of Oxford depicting the 15 Pilgrimage Churches was presented to the Archbishop of Canterbury. At 10.30am on 9th August the Bishop of Oxford will visit Easthampstead as part of his pilgrimage around the Diocese.

Below is the text of the leaflet which has been prepared to support those who make a pilgrimage to this Church.

1. St Birinus' Spring, 635.

The spring was close to the War Memorial, designed by the Arts and Crafts architect, Temple-Moore. By tradition St Birinus baptised King Cyngils of Wessex here in the presence of St Oswald.

Give thanks for the saints who established the faith in our land and pray that we too may draw others to Christ.

2. Font, c1160.

The Font links us with the first stone Church. It has eight sides; seven for the days of Creation, and an eighth for our re-creation through the Resurrection of Jesus.

Give thanks for our own baptism and for the new creation we have become in Christ.

3. Royal Arms, 1625.

Easthampstead was a Royal Manor from the Saxon kings to the reign of Charles I. The Royal Arms are those of Charles I, reused for Charles II.

Pray for all in authority that they may rule justly and seek the common good.

4. Epitaph by Alexander Pope, 1730.

Pope was a friend of Elijah Fenton, poet and tutor to the Trumbull family who leased Easthampstead Park. Better known in his own day, the epitaph extols Fenton's virtues.

Give thanks for those who have formed and fostered Christian qualities in us.

5. Resurrection Window, 1878.

Revd Osborne Gordon, Ruskin's tutor at Christ Church and friend of the Pre-Raphaelites, rebuilt the Church 1865-7. Burne-Jones, following *St John 20:11-18*, shows St Mary Magdalene on the left looking for the dead Christ, and on the right she finds new life in our risen Lord.

Pray that we may always move from our old ways to grow in the image of Christ.

6. Pulpit, 1631.

The front is carved with flourishing plants. In the inscription on the left William Aylward compares his gift of the Pulpit to the generosity of the Widow's mite *St Luke 21:2-3*.

Pray that we may be generous with our time, talents and money in Christ's service.

7. Last Judgement Window, 1876.

A collaboration by Burne-Jones and William Morris. At the top is Christ in Glory. Below are twelve Elders who will judge God's people. In the centre is St Michael with the Book of Life below. To either side angels' trumpets raise the dead.

Pray that we may have the courage and wisdom to change our lives in Christ's love.

8. High Altar Reredos, 1873-77.

The Reredos is made of Opus Sectile. The outer panels depict the four Evangelists with their symbols. The centre panel depicts the Crucifixion with Jesus reigning from the Cross with compassion.

Give thanks that in Communion we share in Jesus' death and resurrection.

9. Thomas Berwyk's brass, 1443.

Berwyk, a clerk at Eton Chapel, asks in the Latin inscription that we pray for his soul.

Pray for those whom we love but see no longer.

10. Rood Screen, 15th century.

The Screen, with the Rood (Cross) above, stood between the Nave and Chancel representing the Gate of Heaven.

Pray that our pilgrimage on earth may help us grow closer to God in heaven.

