

***ALL SAINTS, WESTON***



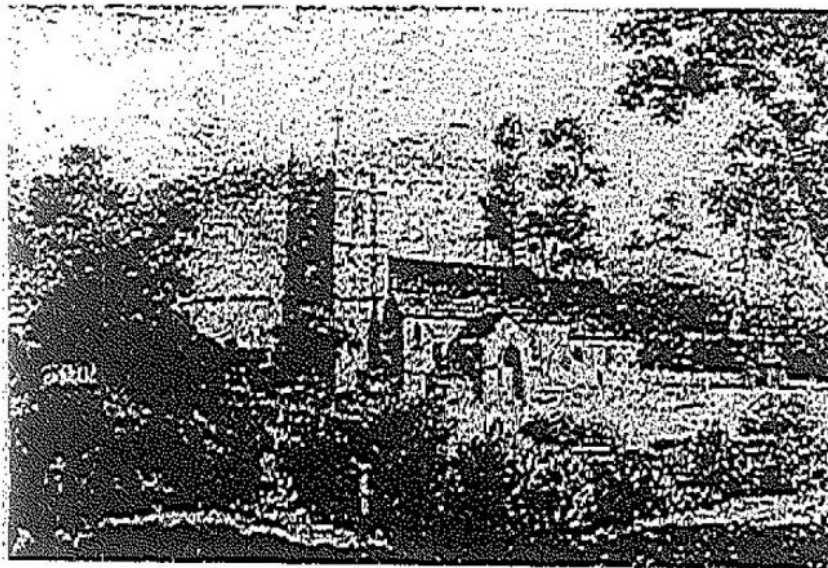
***A SHORT HISTORY OF  
THE CHURCH***

## All Saints Weston

### A Short History of the Church

**Welcome to Weston All Saints Church** (the Church on the hill). The village of Weston is ancient and the church has been for many years at the heart of the community. It is believed that a church building has occupied this hillside for over 800 years.

The first vicar was Jordanus who started his ministry here in 1297, but there is a record of a church in Weston in a Bull of Pope Adrian dated 1156, however nothing remains of that early building. A later medieval church known as "All Hallows" was built in the 15<sup>th</sup> Century.



(pictured in engraving by T Bonner circa 1782)

The main body of this church was demolished in 1830 leaving only the tower standing. A larger building was needed for the growing community. This new church was consecrated on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of June 1832. The Architect was John Pinch who built St Saviour's, Larkhall and St Mary's Bathwick.

By 1880 the growing parish needed more seating, and the transepts and the chancel were added. This work was consecrated in 1839, and the clergy and

choir vestries were added in 1909. By using this brief guide we hope you will be able to discover some of the more interesting features of our church building:-

Commence your tour in the south aisle, where you will find the St Alphege window (1). This commemorates the famous saint whom tradition says was born in Weston (St Alphege became the Abbot of Bath Abbey and then Archbishop of Canterbury). Also depicted is Guthram, King of the Danes, submitting to King Alfred and accepting Christianity.

In the south transept (2) is found the monument to Alderman Sherston dated 1641. He was Mayor of Bath in 1632.

The war memorial chapel (3) was originally part of the south aisle and was set apart after the 1914-18 war. The men who gave their lives in the WW2 and the Korean War are also remembered there.

From the war memorial chapel enter the Chancel (4), and high on the south wall can be seen a fine monument of the Macie family, who feature prominently in the history of Weston.

On the Reredos behind the Communion table you will find the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer and the Creed. Mrs Fraser, widow of the second Bishop of Manchester, who lived in this parish, gave the carved figure of Christ above the Communion table. The oak communion rails were given in memory of Mr H Trickey, churchwarden for 48 years, who died in 1909.

In a niche in the north wall of the Chancel (5) is found the oldest monument in the church from the 12-13<sup>th</sup> century. This is a stone coffin lid that was found under the south porch during the rebuilding of the church in 1830.

One of the features of the church is the number of mural tablets (between 90-100). Many record the deaths of people who have no connection with Weston beyond the fact that they were buried in the churchyard. Being a quiet and picturesque village churchyard, cut off from the city of Bath, it was a desirable burial ground for more than 200 years.

Above the Choir Vestry door (6) a tablet commemorating the gift of a Rectory to the parish in 1699 by John Harrington of Kelston. High on the north aisle (7) near the north transept is the monument to Dr William Oliver (of biscuit fame) whose family owned Weston Manor for many years. He is buried in the churchyard near the entrance to the choir vestry.

At the west end of the church (8) near the tower door is the 19<sup>th</sup> century font, and above this is found the list of Vicars of Weston.

On the front of the west gallery is the royal coat of arms of William and Mary.

The oak doors to the south porch and the tower were erected by the congregation in memory of Mr W.S.M. Goodenough, who was church warden for 37 years who died in 1913. Note also the Vergers stave, made in 19<sup>th</sup> Century as a beadle's stave.

The church bells have played a great part in the history of the parish. We do not know when they were originally cast but in 1739 the churchwarden's accounts tell us of their recasting in that year by Thomas Belbie at Chewstoke. These bells rang for more than 200 years with only minor repairs. In 1952 it became necessary for the bells to be retuned and rehung and two new bells were added to make the octave. These were dedicated in March 1953.

In more recent years a complete restoration of the tower has been carried out, the interior of the church has been remodelled to accommodate changing styles of worship and the building has been carpeted. We are at present working to make the building accessible to those with mobility problems and provide better cloakroom facilities for worshippers of all ages, abled and disabled. As the church has changed with the community it serves over the centuries so it will continue to change to meet the needs of the worshipping community and the parish they serve.

Before you leave, please remember those who serve and worship here. This is a building that is still used for the worship and life of the All Saints Weston church family. We meet every week throughout the year and would be

delighted to welcome any who need a listening ear, a supportive community and a caring family. For more details do contact either the Vicar or the curate, whose details are in the programme or come to any of the services.

We hope you have enjoyed your visit to All Saints.

Summary compiled by Michael Messer, revised by Val Cliff 2002.

