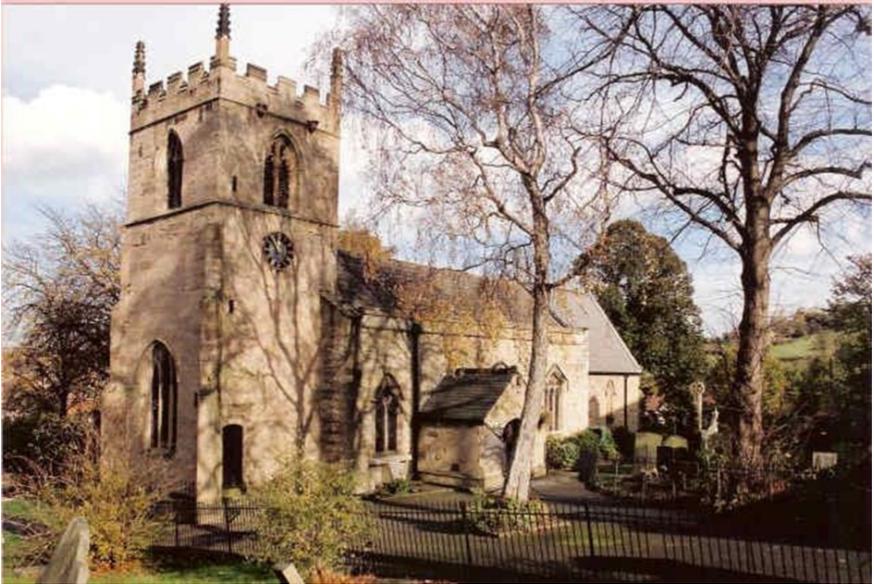


The Parish Church of St Giles

Killamarsh



An introduction and guide



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WELCOME to the Parish Church of

St Giles, Killamarsh

Welcome to St Giles Church, a Grade II* listed building. We look forward to showing you around our lovely church, which was refurbished in 2018 with support from the Heritage Lottery Fund, and hope you will enjoy your visit.

Killamarsh is mentioned in the Domesday Book. It was called 'Chinewoldmaresc', which means a marshy settlement belonging to Chinewold. There is no mention of a church at this time but there is evidence that this was a Christian community well before the Norman Conquest, as we have an earlier stone preaching cross just outside the present building.

The present church was started in the 12th century, probably on the site of an earlier wooden building. Originally, it was an oblong building with a flat lead roof. The tower was added in the 15th century and various alterations were made in the 19th century. These included the rebuilding of the chancel in the 1840s, a new high pitched roof for the nave and the addition of the north aisle and vestry in 1895, leaving us with the building we have today.

Killamarsh has only been an independent parish since 1843. Prior to this, it was a parochial chapelry to the Parish of Eckington. One of our former incumbents, Revd Francis Metcalfe, left a remarkable history of life in this mining community. He wrote a book called "Colliers and I". It was published in 1903 and gives a fascinating account of life in the parish and the social conditions at that time.

Canals, coal, railways and the first transatlantic telegraph cable all have connections with industry in Killamarsh. The Chesterfield canal, which was routed through Killamarsh, boasted the longest tunnel in the country, accessed via a flight of 13 locks. Sadly, the canal closed in 1907 and the last colliery closed in the late 1980s, although there are plans to restore the former for leisure use. Railways are still evident but we no longer have the three stations we used to have. Our industrial heritage still continues, with Ross & Catherall, the successors to the company who made the armouring wire for the transatlantic cable, still operating and several new industrial estates provide employment for many people from our community. We are a community with a strong sense of our heritage, but one which is embracing our future.

South Doorway (1)

The south wall is the oldest part of the present church, dating back to the 12th century. Norman chevron carving can be seen around the archway.

The Font (2)

As you enter the church, you will see a wooden table on your left hand side. This is believed to have been a Jacobean altar, used for some time before the present stone altar was installed in the 19th century.

Behind this is the font which has a unique history. It is of Norman origin but was removed at some time in the mid 19th century, when a new font was installed. The old font was found being used by a cobbler for soaking leather. It was re-purchased for the sum of 30 shillings (£1.50) and set up in the churchyard. It remained there until 1944 when it was restored to its rightful place in the church. Indentations in the rim of the font where the cobbler sharpened his knives can be clearly seen.

Memorial Window (3)

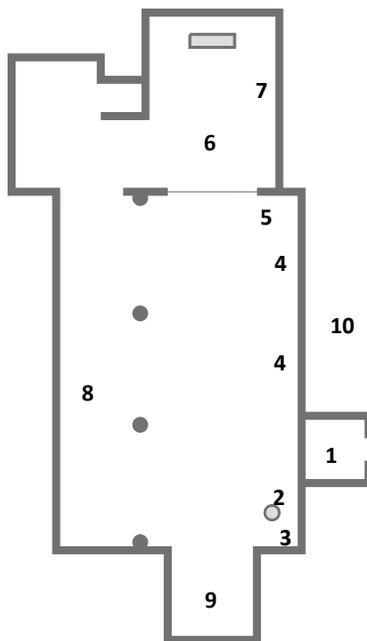
Behind the font is the memorial window to those who died in the two world wars. It has the names of the fallen on tablets in the window reveals. It is a feature of our Remembrance Service each year.

Stained Glass Windows (4)

Now make your way down the nave towards the chancel. As you do so, please admire the various stained glass windows to your right in the south wall. They were donated by prominent local families. Among them, notice the window depicting Faith, Hope and Charity.

Crucifix (5)

As you walk down the nave, look upwards, above the pulpit which is dedicated



to Revd Edward H Smith, the first Rector of Killamarsh. Here you will see a Crucifix brought to Killamarsh from Oberammergau in remembrance of a mission there in 1900. Imagine what it is like preaching from the pulpit knowing you are under the gaze of Jesus Christ.

Chancel (6)

When the chancel was rebuilt in the 19 century, its ceiling was painted blue and had gold stars depicting the heavens. In a subsequent redecoration, the ceiling was painted white and the stars were painted in many different colours.

The chancel was restored with the help of English Heritage in 1997 and returned to its original colour scheme. Members of the congregation gave donations to pay for the new stars. As you lower your gaze, take in the magnificent east window, dating from 1845, and the altar reredos with its reverential figures and intricately detailed carving.

Madonna & Child Window (7)

In the south wall of the chancel we have something very special. This is a beautiful stained glass window depicting the Madonna and Child, dating from the 15th century. Look closely and you will see that our Lord is shown as a child with a man's head, hands and feet to symbolise wisdom and age. It is believed to be one of the finest examples of medieval stained glass in the Diocese of Derby.

North Aisle (8)

The north aisle and vestry are the most recent additions to the church building we have today. There were originally plans for a similar addition to the south aisle of the building, to accommodate the large numbers of people attending services, but they were not implemented. At the west end of the aisle, you can see the trowel used in laying the foundation stone of the extension, together with a report of the day's events - quite a wet day, according to the account.

Bell Tower (9)

The tower houses a peal of six bells, originally installed in 1845 and most recently refurbished and re-hung in the late 1980s. Bellringers worldwide will know of Killamarsh's long-standing bellringing tradition as one of the standard methods of change ringing, Killamarsh Treble Bob, was composed here.

The Churchyard (10)

As you leave the church turn left and spare a few moments to look at the memorial on the south wall to John Wright. The inscription reads: *To the memory of John Wright, a pauper of this parish, who died May 4 , 1797, in the hundred and third year of his age. He was of middle size, temperate and cheerful, and in the trying situation of darkness, poverty and old age, bore his infirmities with such Christian meekness as excited the benevolence of good men, and is here recorded as an instructive lesson to others.*

Revd Christopher Alderson. B.D. P.P.P. Anno Dni. 1797.

If you then continue along the path, you will see the village stocks, which have not been used for their original purpose for many years. Turning back to take your leave of our church, you will pass the preaching cross mentioned earlier, a reminder that the Christian faith has been proclaimed here for centuries and will continue to be proclaimed for generations to come.

We hope you have enjoyed your visit and that we will have the opportunity to welcome you back again.

Who Was St. Giles ?



St Giles is reputedly of Athenian origin. Around the 8th century he fled to France from his countrymen and built a hermitage in a forest near the mouth of the Rhone, where he lived on herbs and the milk of a hind.

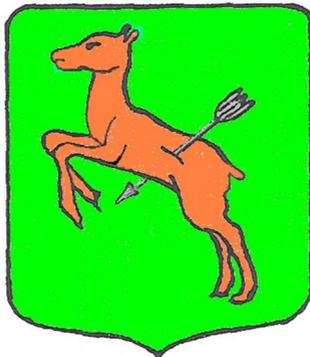
When the king of the region was hunting in the forest, the monarch chased the hind to the abode of the hermit. St Giles defended the hind against the hunters and was hit by an arrow intended for the hind. The King was so impressed by Giles' holiness that he spared the hind and gave St Giles some land on which to build a monastery.

The town of St. Giles, which grew up near his grave, later became a famous place of pilgrimage.

He was one of the most popular medieval saints and in England alone there were 160 churches dedicated to him.

He was invoked by cripples, beggars and blacksmiths as their Patron Saint. His feast day is 1st September.

His insignia is a golden doe, pierced by a silver arrow, on a green shield.



St Giles Church, Killamarsh

Services

Sunday 10.00 am Service of the Word
(Morning Prayer)
1st Sunday each month

Sunday 10.00 am Parish Eucharist
2nd & remaining Sundays

Wednesday 9.30 am Holy Communion

Other Services by arrangement with the Rector

Our Mission Statement

To be Christ in Church and Community

For further information please contact:

Rector: Revd Canon Helen Guest 0114 248 2769

Priest: Revd Michael Guest 0114 248 2769

Reader: Mr John Hall 0114 248 4531

Or visit our website: www.StGiles-Killamarsh.org

Text: John L Hall

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