

CHRIST CHURCH HOLMER GREEN

For many years it was felt that there was a need for a church in Holmer Green and unceasing efforts were made to achieve this objective. The Earl and Countess of Howe were always very interested in the concept, and the Earl gave an acre of land at the top of the recreation ground as a site for the church and burial ground, and promised £100 towards the building funds.



Plans for the Church were designed by Messrs. Glover and Harris, London and built in 1894. The building comprised nave, choir, sanctum, vestry, organ chamber and south porch, with bell tower and one bell. The interior measurements are 55ft by 18ft. The outer walls are of red brick, with slated roof, and the interior is worked in ornamental brickwork patterns with open timber roof.



There are traceried windows at the east and west and the nave is lit with lancet windows set in stone. The choir and sanctum are paved with tiles and the body of the church has a wood floor, with pitch pine pews. The building was erected by Messrs. Thos. Turner of Watford at a contract price of £870, which excluded heating, lighting, pulpit etc.



It has long been thought that Messrs. Biggs of Kinghill built the church. Mr. Harold Biggs, who died only a few years ago, maintained that his grandfather built it and that his father worked on the construction. This may well be true and Turners could have sub-contracted the work. In 1958 Ted King, a local craftsman, made the choir stalls, pulpit and lectern and built the reredos.



In celebration of the Centenary of the Church a banner was designed by Mary Stickley and worked by members of the Church and this is hanging by the altar. There is also a commemorative dish which was turned by Christine Ball and donated by Ron Channon.



The Parish of Penn Street
with Holmer Green

A brief history of

HOLY TRINITY PENN STREET



and

CHRIST CHURCH HOLMER GREEN



HOLY TRINITY PENN STREET

The Church was built in 1849 in the Gothic Revival style. It is cruciform in plan, built of flint and stone with the octagonal tower and oak shingle spire centrally placed, and rising to nearly 150 feet. The style adopted by the architect (Mr. Benjamin Ferrey) is the decorated style of the 14th century



The Church is very closely connected to the family of Howe (Curzon). The Earl and Countess Howe live at Penn House in the village. Lord Howe is Patron of the Living. It is likely that the building of the Church is connected with a suggestion made by Queen Adelaide that this would be an idyllic setting for a Church. The Church has seating for 230 which approximates to the number now living in 94 houses in the village.

It was consecrated on May the 1st 1849 by the Bishop of Oxford. The cost of the original building was £10,000 and was fully restored in 1900 by Earl Howe GCVO in memory of his father at the cost of £1,000. The cost of the restoration of the interior which was borne by the parish was £150.

Chancel: padded pews; right-hand side.

A brass plaque on the wall commemorates the fact that King Edward VII worshipped in this Church and sat in the adjoining stall in 1902. Penn House was enlarged for this Royal visit to accommodate the King's retinue.



In 1908 an organ was presented in memory of Richard William Penn Curzon, third Earl Howe, and dedicated on November 26th 1908 by the Venerable the Archdeacon of Buckingham.

Flag behind glass, left-hand Chancel wall.

This is the flag from Sir William Howe, Commander of the British Army that was defeated by the Americans War of Independence.



The height from the floor to the belfry floor under the spire is 42 feet. Some years ago, to gain access to the belfry, a trapdoor had to be cut in the 2 inch floor boards. There was no other means of entry from inside.



There are a number of brass memorials around the church which make interesting reading. Look out for the decorative cast iron radiators, early 1900, two of which are by the America Radiator Company.

"The Transfiguration" by Raphael.

This large picture at the back of the Church is a copy, which used to hang in the Curzon Street Chapel in London. The original painting is in the Vatican Museum in Rome.



The Tapestry Kneelers were given in memory of Dorothy May Franklin 1903 -1981. Her daughter Mrs Diane Hesford organised the making of them by 96 friends and members of the parish. There is a book at the back of the church showing photographs and lists of all the people who made them.

