

Churchyard

The church and churchyard sit in a beautiful location, surrounded on three sides by the narrow lanes of the village, with hedges enclosing it. There are many old and fine trees in the churchyard, notably a *Sequoiadendron giganteum* (Wellingtonia), a Blue Atlantic Cedar and two magnificent Copper Beeches.

The oldest existing gravestone dates from 1752, although one from 1744 was excavated during remedial work and is now propped up near the church door. The earliest marked graves are to be found on the south side of



the church, this being the side nearest the gate.

There are three box or chest tombs, dedicated to members of the Keyworth family, now in very poor

condition, on this side of the church, but others are known to have been located near the door until the early 1900s when a new path was constructed.



The information in this leaflet is taken from comprehensive historical research, which may be found in full at <http://southwellchurches.history.nottingham.ac.uk>
Many thanks to Jo Blaney for her extensive research, and to Dr Chris Brooke for photographs.

Welcome to the church of St Denis, Morton

The tiny village of Morton lies secluded, a short distance from the River Trent between Southwell and Fiskerton. In 1938, Arthur Mee wrote that: 'quiet little Morton has an ivied brick church'. Although the ivy has now long since gone, the little brick church sits proudly amidst the narrow lanes of the village.

There is likely to have been a chapel-of-ease to Southwell Minster here since before Norman times, as Morton was one of the villages given by King Edwy to Oscytel, Archbishop of York, in 956 and was also probably one of the 'outliers' mentioned in Domesday Book. There are several documentary references to a church here in the medieval period.

The present building dates from around 1756-8 by an unknown architect and the first curate appointed, William Leybourne, had a reputation for absenteeism, perhaps not surprising given Morton's remote location and William's numerous other appointments!

In 1841, the parish of St Denis was united with the nearby church of St Mary the Virgin at Bleasby, and in 1886 was joined in a United Benefice with Holy Trinity, Rolleston-with-Fiskerton. At about this time many alterations were made to the interior of the church, new pews were inserted, a former west gallery was removed and new windows were put in place.

It is thought that there were probably stairs at one end



of the gallery giving access from the Nave. A blocked doorway still exists (not accessible to the visitor) inside the tower which would have given access from the gallery for maintenance of the bells.

The former wooden bellframe, which dated from before the building of this church, is now on display in Saundby church in the north of the county.

Today the simple interior still reflects the austerity of 18th century church building. A small entrance lobby under the tower gives into a plain, rectangular nave, light and airy, with a flat plaster ceiling so typical of this period. At the east end, a small apsidal projection serves as the chancel, large enough only to house the altar, framed by a lovely stained glass window in a small lunette opening.



1 Bells

Two bells hang in the small brick tower, since 1990 within a modern, steel frame, but prior to this within a short-headed wooden frame of possible medieval date.

The bells themselves date from the 15th century and the seventeenth century, both being possible survivals, along with the frame, from the earlier church



The old bell frame in 1982



2 Font

The font has a plain circular bowl on a plain octagonal column, with a small circular base placed on a square plinth. There is an octagonal oak cover with a wrought iron handle, the cover sitting loosely on the top of the bowl.



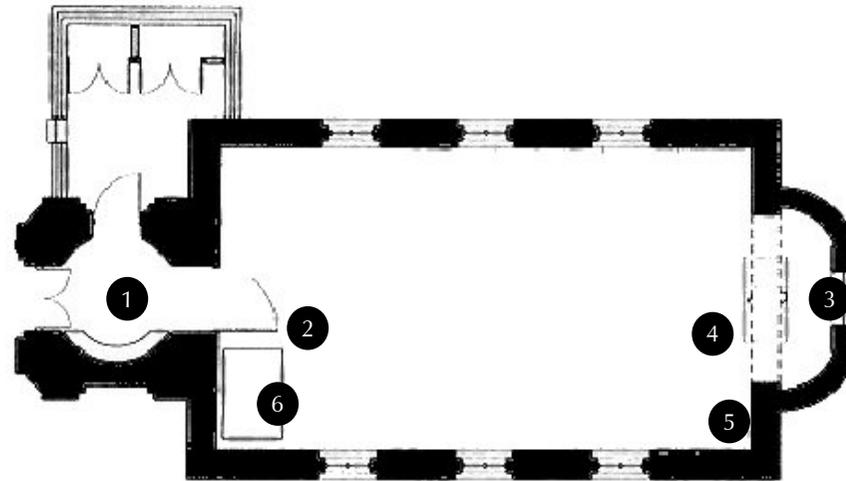
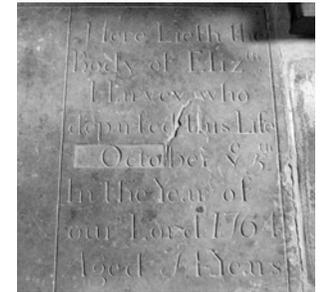
6 Organ

The organ was installed in 1967 but came from a Methodist church of much the same size and period. It has been modified to take a 30 note pedal board rather than the original 18.

4 Monuments

There are few monuments inside the church, but one notable example, dating from the very early years of the present church, is on a stone in the centre of the aisle floor at the east end of the nave, and is to Elizabeth Harvey, who died in 1764 aged 74 years.

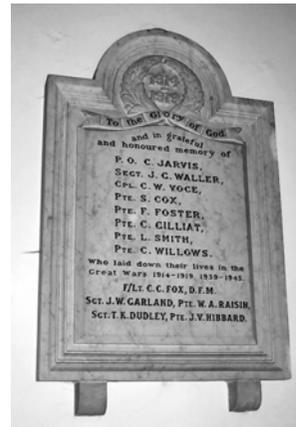
The lettering around the word 'October' has been cut-out and re-inscribed, indicating that a mistake was made by the mason when originally cutting the stone.



3 Windows

The windows are glazed with multi-coloured glass - green, amber, clear and violet - in a diagonal pattern with a rectangular border of rose, installed in December 1893 replacing earlier plain glass windows.

The glass in the apse depicts "The Supper at Emmaus" made by Heaton, Butler and Bayne, London, in 1934.



5 War Memorial

On the south side of the east wall is the war memorial plaque, unveiled on 16 December 1920. It details eight names from the Great War and five from World War II. Private William Arthur Raisin, a Morton man who died in November 1939, is buried in the churchyard as is Private J V Hibbard, also from Morton, who was member of the Home Guard and who died in 1941.