

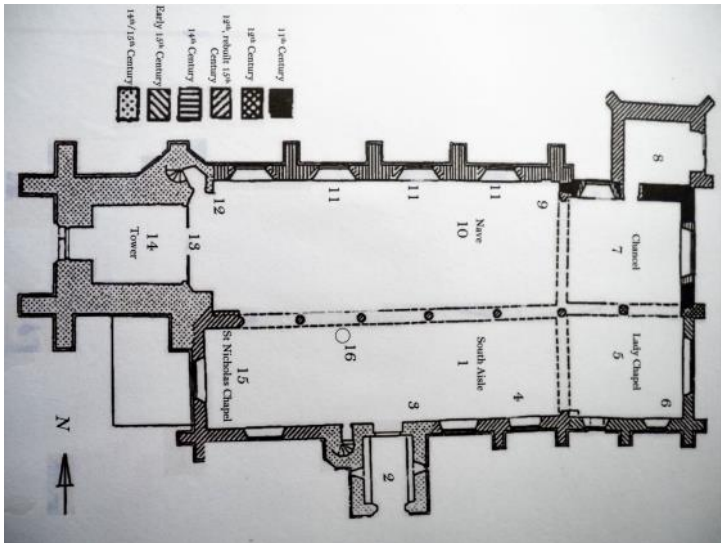
A guide to
The church of Saint Peter and Saint Paul.
Headcorn's parish church.



*Welcome to our church, there has been Christian worship
here for more than a thousand years.*

Please start your tour outside in the porch.

If you step back and look at the building you will see that it is built from East to West and when you go inside you will see that the seats all face East. Nearly all churches are like this. There are two reasons for this. By looking East we are looking towards Jerusalem, which is the most holy city for all Christians. Also, we are looking towards the sun rising each morning, this reminds us that Jesus rose from the dead on Easter morning.



Come into the porch and through a pointed archway. Can you see the tiny shells that make up the local ragstone that the builders chose to use for their church?





Step inside through the modern glass doors, they were installed in 2014. You will see they have pictures of crossed keys over a sword—these are the symbols of our patron saints—St Peter & St Paul

Ahead of you is the font. Here we welcome those who are joining our community in baptism. Can you see the angels carved on it? There is also a rose. We think it is the symbol of the king who reigned when the font was made 600 years ago. We also think that at that time it would have been brightly coloured. The shape is like the pillars which hold up the roof of the **Nave**, that is just ahead of you. How many sides have they got?



Walk into the Nave, this is where most people sit when they come to church services. The word “Nave” comes from the old latin word for ship and makes us think of the passage of Christian people through the stormy waters of life. It also reminds us of Noah’s Ark which was used to save humans and animals from the great flood.

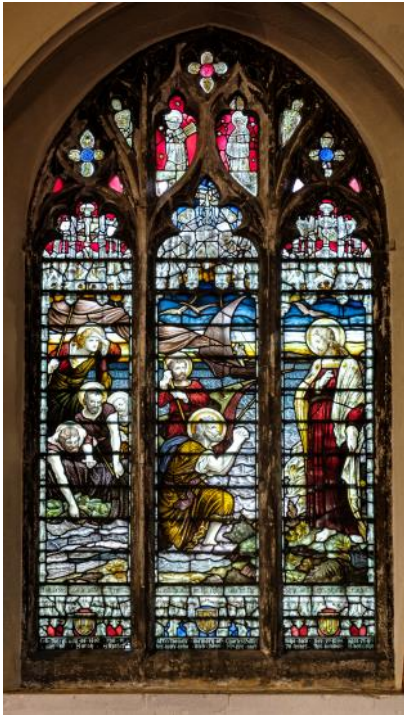
If you look up to the ceiling, you might even notice that it looks a bit like an upturned boat. Our roof was a gift from the Culpeper family who lived around here about 600 years ago. It is made from oak, great forests of which were found all around Headcorn at the time.



There is a tomb to the Culpeper family on the south side of the church.

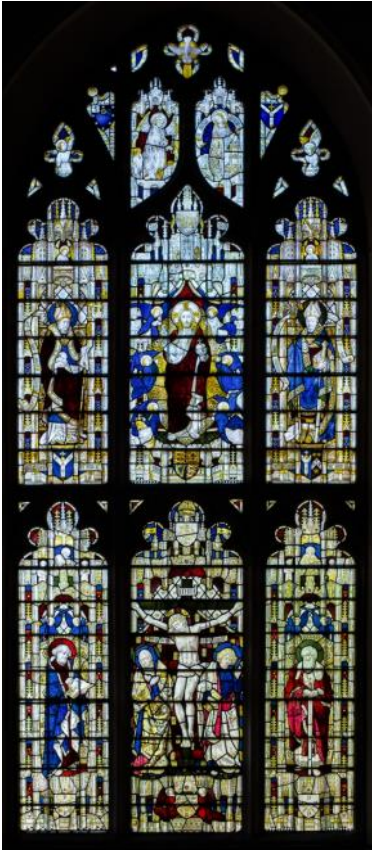
The long bench like seats that people sit on are called pews and these were probably first put here about 150 years ago.

Look at the windows to your left on the north wall. Each tells a story from the life of Jesus Christ. Do you know what stories they are?



Let's walk down the Nave aisle to the **Chancel**. This is where the choir and vicar sit during services. It is higher than the nave. This is because we are walking towards the altar, which is holiest part of the church and reminds us that we are walking up towards God.

We shall pass the **Pulpit** on the left. Here the vicar traditionally would talk to the congregation (people who had come to worship in the church) about their faith and about Jesus and the Bible. Why do you think it is so high?



Step up into the **Chancel**. We are now at the east end of the church. In front of you is the **Sanctuary**, this is where we find the **Altar** . The **Altar** is a very special table where the vicar says the service of Holy communion which is when the bread and wine is blessed and shared with the congregation. it is separated from the rest of the building by a special rail as it is the holiest part of the church. Once upon a time only Priests were allowed to go into the sanctuary. The window above has a very important message in the pictures. Jesus is shown dying on the cross and then, above is resurrected and in Heaven. Christians believe that all of them will be resurrected after we die.

Can you see the door into the vicar's **vestry** (the place where the vicar keeps their robes)? The door has a different shape to the other doors, we think it was made later than the rest of the doorways. Can you also see the crossed keys and swords to remind us of our special patron saints again?



Turn right through the wooden arch, into the Lady chapel. This was built to respect Mary the mother of Jesus. The window shows her surrounded by Angels, Bishops and important people in the Bible. This area was redecorated a 100 years ago and is now used for smaller and more peaceful services, or some people just like to sit in here to be quiet.



Now we will return towards the back of the church, through the wooden screen and along the south aisle and past the Culpepper tomb. Just here is a place for private prayer. you might like to use the pebbles or candles to help you think about Jesus and people you love.



The Culpeper Tomb which reminds us of the family who helped to build this church many years ago.

Just beside the Culpeper tomb is our “Roll of Honour” this is where we name and remember all the men of Headcorn who fought and died during the first and second world wars.



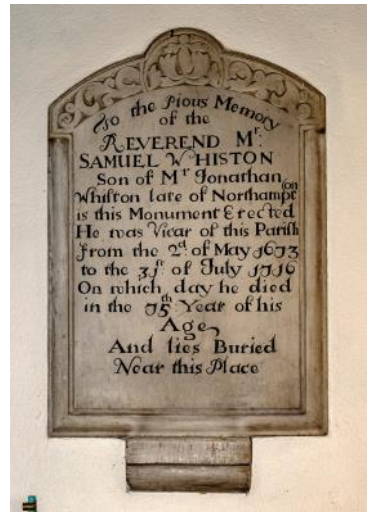
At the end of this aisle is the chapel of saint Nicholas (the patron saint of children). Here we have toys, story books and pictures to colour for all the children to use when they visit our church. that's you, so do stop a while and try them out.

If you look towards the other back corner of the church you will see our organ. This has been used to accompany the singing of hymns and playing other music in our church for nearly 100 years. Before that musicians played other instruments such as flutes and clarinets. If you look carefully at the organ you will see that it is a very difficult instrument to play. Unlike a piano it has more than one keyboard, also if you look at the bottom you will see there are 30 pedals, each one plays another different note, while at either side of the keyboard there are also some special buttons, these are called **stops** and the organist uses these to make the music coming from the organ sound different.

Can you count how many stops there are? Our organ has 668 pipes, each one is a slightly different size to the others and therefore plays a slightly different note.



If you would like to have another walk around the church, why not have a look at the walls. You will see that there are quite a few stone and brass plaques or **memorials** which have been put there over the centuries by people who wanted everyone to remember their loved ones who had died. Some of these memorials tell us quite a lot about these people. What is the oldest memorial that you can find? Which one do you think is most interesting?



There are also other paintings and notices, including two very old paintings near the door, these are of Moses and Aaron who were very important characters in the old testament.



On the other side of the door you will see some black wooden boards, the ten commandments are written on these. High up on the wall near the organ you will also see a special painting showing a Lion and a unicorn. This was the crest of King George 3rd Who lived over 200 years ago.



Near there is another notice, you can hardly read it now as it is very faint, but it has all the details of the people who helped build the church—they are called benefactors.

On the wall in the St Nicholas Chapel you will also see a list of all the people who have been incumbents, which means the vicar, here—can you count how many there are and spot who was the first one? I wonder what life was like in Headcorn then?



We hope you have found your tour of the church interesting, we would love to welcome you into our community and at our services.