St Peter & St Paul Kedington

Explore this ancient church and discover the treasures within



Take a look inside!



❶ Head east to the holy sanctuary



When you enter the church, you'll see lots of seats in different shapes and sizes. These are for the people who gather in church to worship Jesus Christ.
Start by walking east towards the altar, the holy place where the priest blesses the bread and wine given to members of the congregation in memory of Jesus.
Look at the picture in front of you showing the Holy Mother Mary with the baby Jesus. Find out at ❷ below how Jesus died and ❸, inside this guide, how he rose again.

❷ An ancient stone cross



In the big east window of the sanctuary is a stone cross dating back to Anglo Saxon times over 1,000 years ago!
Discovered in the church in 1860 it shows how Jesus died on the cross more than 2,000 years ago. He rose again as the window in the Lady Chapel at ❸ shows you.



The 'Westminster Abbey' of Suffolk

Have you been to Westminster Abbey in London? There are monuments galore. That's because it's the place where many important people are buried, including kings, queens and prime ministers.
Sixty-five miles north, in Suffolk, is the church of St Peter and St Paul at Kedington. It is also full of monuments, mostly for a powerful and important family called Barnardiston who helped build and improve the church over 27 generations. There is so much to discover, outside and in!

What's the time?



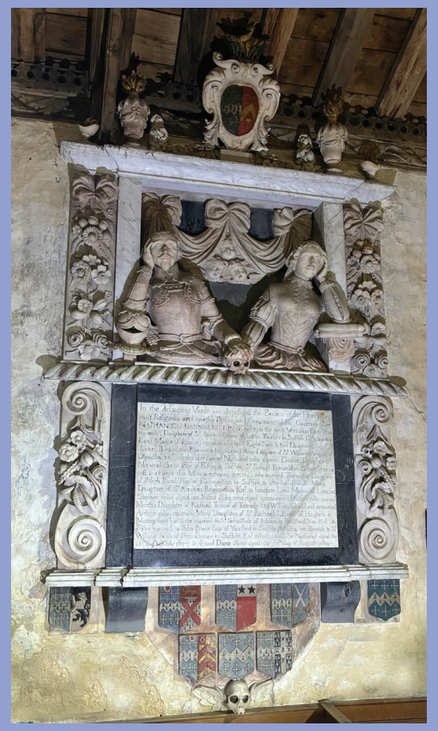
How did people tell the time before they had clocks? The church would have used a sundial to make sure the bell was rung at the correct time for prayer. Can you find it on the outside walls? Six ancient bells are now hung in the lofty tower that are rung regularly. On the tower is a blue clock with only one hand, made in 1729 and restored in 2010. Can you find it?
This is a very old church with some paving going right back to Roman times. See the little alcoves on the corner of the tower? One has the words Dame Av iz above. This refers to 'Dame Amicia', wife of John de Novo Mercato, who built the tower around 1300.

A church for all

This guide is aimed at helping schoolchildren to understand what they discover but St Peter and St Paul warmly welcomes all visitors. There is a further guide in the church to learn more about this rare and ancient building. The church is open daily and maintained and cared for entirely by volunteers. We are always grateful for support and you can scan the QR code to find out how to donate.

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5 Skulls and cherubs



Here is a monument to remember Sir Nathaniel Barnardiston and his wife Dame Jane Soame.You can see the monument for her father, Sir Stephen Soame, Lord Mayor of London, in Little Thurlow church.
See how their hands are resting on a skull . What can it mean?



Further down the skull has wings like these two skulls. Skulls show us that flesh must die but the wings mean the soul rises to the sky. See how many skulls you can count in the church and how many have wings?

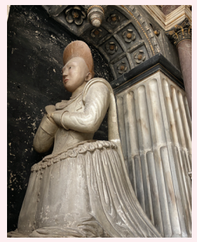
Triumph over death



Look closely to see the faces of three cherubs between Nathaniel and his wife. They can stand for the triumph of the soul over death just as Jesus showed us over 2,000 years ago. Here's two more. How many cherubs can you find in the church?

6 Beloved daughter

There are 20 Barnardiston monuments in this church, many with life-sized figures. This is Grisel, the much-loved daughter of Sir Thomas Barnardiston and his second wife Anne Bygrave. Grisel sadly died at the age of 16. You can see her father's tomb with his first wife Elizabeth nearby.



7 Hatchments

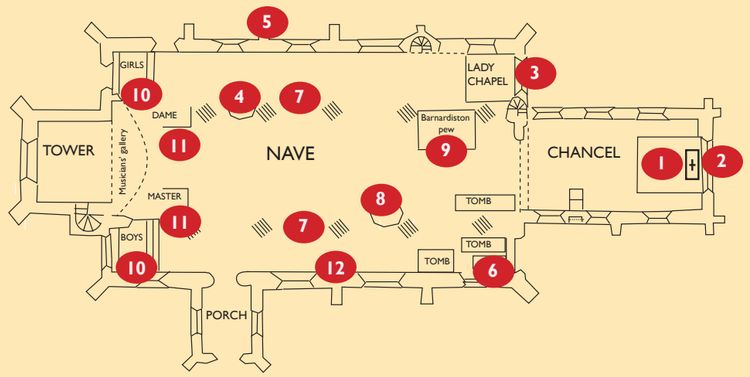


Hatchment comes from the historic word for 'achievement'. This is one of 10 Barnardiston hatchments high up in the nave dated 1699-1837. When someone died, a hatchment with their coat of arms or family emblem would be placed at their house. After 6-12 months it would be removed to the church.



3 Jesus Christ rises again

You are now in the Lady Chapel. The Lady is the Holy Mother of Jesus Christ called Mary. This beautiful window shows Jesus rising from his death on the cross, watched by two other Marys at the tomb and the angel who brought them the glad news on the right. This is what we celebrate in church at Easter time.





4 Centuries of baptisms

When you entered the church, you may have noticed a stone basin on a stem across the aisle. This is the font, dating back to the C15th, so for hundreds of years, children and sometimes grown-ups, have been baptised with sacred water and welcomed into the church family.

8 Leading and teaching

The church leader is the priest who helps people in church understand the Bible. He explains the meaning of stories about Jesus Christ and his followers from the pulpit. This three-decker pulpit, dates back to 1610.
The sounding board above, called a tester, helps the priest's voice to carry. The hourglass, left, made sure that, in days gone by, he did not speak for too long! There's also a box for the parish clerk and a pole for a wig. Can you see it?





9 Know your place

The nave is for all the people. They can sit where they like today but centuries ago there were special seats or pews for families like the Barnardistons. A private pew was reserved for them with its own hat pegs. Why do you think it was divided into two? The carved screen guarded the holy sanctuary in the C15th. Painted with dragons and scary faces, it was meant to stop evil spirits entering the sacred space where the priest would pray.



10 Boys and girls



Childrens' pews, dating back to 1750, are on either side of the round-fronted musicians' gallery. One set was for boys and the other for girls, each with a Master or Dame sitting opposite to make sure they behaved! 11
In earlier days, many people couldn't read or write so church walls would have been covered in colourful pictures telling stories of the Bible. Traces remain today. 12

A step in the right direction

The dipped step shows that thousands of worshippers and visitors, including schoolchildren, have entered this church over the centuries.

