

## **Welcome to Tewkesbury Methodist Church**

Entrance to the church is through the gates on Church Street, which lead into a small garden area. During the summer months this is often the venue for coffee mornings and teas – a service to people of the town and many tourists, as well as fund raising for various charities.

The frontage of the church is in Cotswold stone, quarried at Stanway Hill, about 12 miles away, and this is complemented by Bath stone dressings around the windows and door arch. The stonework was cleaned and restored in 1993.

The vestibule of the church is entered through glazed doors and one can immediately see the interior of the church through a glass screen. On the right is a well-equipped kitchen and on the left a toilet for the disabled and stairs to the gallery.

### **Memorials and Organ**

Entering the church, there are three memorials on each of the side walls. On the left-hand side, the first memorial is to Francis Godfrey, the nephew and business partner of Thomas Collins, who built the church in 1878.

The second is to William Allen, an office holder in the church in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The third commemorates the soldiers killed in the First World War, who had connections with the church. One soldier, Sergeant Albert

Coopey, was awarded the Military Medal for his gallantry in action.

Just before the housing for the screen used for PowerPoint projections, is a colourful patch-work cross made up of 125 squares, the work of Junior Church members. The cross was prepared for the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations of the church in 2003.

On the right-hand side, two of the memorials were transferred to the church when the United Reformed congregation joined with the Methodists in 1977. They commemorate that church's fallen soldiers, and the long pastorate of the Rev Henry Welsford. The central memorial is to William Rice, a long-serving member of the church.

The organ, which is located on the right hand side, was built by Sweetlands of Bath in 1881. It is a fine instrument and was completely rebuilt in 1989.

### **Stained Glass Windows**

The stained glass of the three central windows was made by Swaine Bourne of Birmingham and is contemporary with the building of the church in 1878.

*From the left the windows portray:*

- The Wise Men offering their gifts to the infant Jesus.
- Jesus teaching his disciples.

- Jesus entering Jerusalem, riding on a donkey.
- Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane.
- The Resurrection of Jesus.
  
- The Ascension of Jesus into heaven.

The outer windows were added in 1881 and were gifts. The one on the left was given by the builder of the church, Thomas Collins, in memory of Samuel Collins (one of the earliest members of the Wesleyan Society in Tewkesbury) and family. This window depicts the women weeping for Jesus on his way to the cross. The window on the right was given by Ruscombe Washer Ashley, who was secretary of the committee which guided the building of the church. It was given in memory of his wife, Susan, and depicts the story of the death of Lazarus and Jesus meeting with the sisters, who are mourning their brother.

### **The Stone Carved Angels**

Worthy of note are the stone carved angels depicting 'Prayer' and 'Praise', the latter wearing a ribbon inscribed 'We praise Thee, O God'. These wonderful carvings were the work of H H Martyn, the founder in the late 1800's of the company bearing his name in Cheltenham. The company specialised in all manner of decorative work and was responsible for the refurbishment of the House of Commons following its destruction by enemy action during the Second World War. The company also made the pulpit in St Paul's Cathedral and fitted out ocean liners such as the Queen Elizabeth and Queen Mary, as well as the ill-fated Titanic. It is good for the church to have work personally executed by

such a craftsman. There are other carvings around the apse and over the arch enclosing the organ, which no doubt have a similar provenance.

### **The Apse**

The apse is enclosed by a removable communion rail made from American oak. The decorative iron work has been re-used from the original rail which was installed in 1878. The apse furniture is completed by two lecterns, communion table and font.

### **The Link**

Leaving the church by the door to the left, we enter the Link. Originally this area was an open courtyard between the church and the hall. A ramp provides easy access to the whole complex for wheelchair users. The Link contains toilets and storage cupboards. The roof is glazed, creating a light and airy atmosphere.

Memorial bricks, inscribed with a number and the letters TWSS, standing for Tewkesbury Wesleyan Sunday School, commemorate their efforts in raising funds for the church and hall buildings. On the same wall are plaques erected in thanks to the Joseph Rank Benevolent Trust and the Gloucestershire Environmental Trust for their generous support of the refurbishment of the premises. The Link has doors leading to Church Street at the front and Swilgate Road to the rear of the premises.

### **The Hall and Guild Room**

The hall, which is entered from the Link, is a large room with a fully equipped kitchen. The hall is used by many church and community

groups, such as Brownies and U3A (The University of the Third Age). Both the hall and Guild room are available for lettings by outside organisations.

*The vision of the church, when they embarked upon major refurbishment, was to make the premises flexible, comfortable and capable of all manner of uses to meet the needs of the church and the community of Tewkesbury. We hope that this has been achieved.*



*We hope you have enjoyed your visit to  
Tewkesbury Methodist Church,  
the church  
at The Cross,  
in the very heart of the town.*

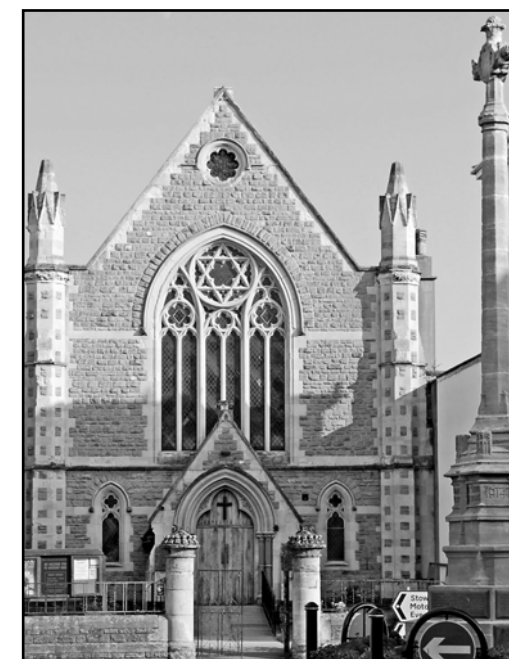
Details of Sunday Services and other events are displayed on the notice boards. Please ask a steward if you need any other information.

Tewkesbury Methodist Church  
The Cross  
Tewkesbury  
Gloucestershire  
GL20 5PA  
[www.tewkesburymethodistchurch.org.uk](http://www.tewkesburymethodistchurch.org.uk)  
06/14

## **A WALK AROUND**

## **TEWKESBURY**

## **METHODIST CHURCH**



Tewkesbury Methodist Church, Gloucestershire, stands on a very prominent site right in the heart of the ancient town. It was built in 1878 and was substantially refurbished in 1999-2000.