

# LEICESTERS HISTORIC CHURCHES

# WELCOME TO LEICESTERSHIRE

# DISCOVER LEICESTERS CITY CHURCHES

## KEY

1 St Margaret's Church LE1 3EB

2 All Saints' Church LE1 4PH

3 Great Meeting Unitarian Chapel LE1 4SX

4 Leicester Cathedral LE1 5PZ

5 St Nicholas Church LE1 4LB

6 St Mary de Castro LE1 5WN

7 St Andrew's Church LE2 7DH

8 Holy Cross Priory LE1 6HW

9 Bishop Street Methodist Church LE1 6AF

10 Central Baptist Church LE1 1LA



Leicester has a history that is rich and diverse, but how do we begin to understand it? Our historic Churches can help us. They are important centres of interest, shedding a fascinating light on particular developments and events over the centuries.

These Churches are here for you to visit them. Come as pilgrims, or come with an interest in religion, architecture, art or history. This brochure will help you find their location, and will indicate how you can gain access to them.

You may not be able, perhaps, to visit them all in one day, but keep this brochure to help plan your visit to all of them in due course.

### PAUSE FOR THOUGHT

**R.L.Stevenson:** "I never weary of great churches. It is my favourite type of mountain scenery. Man was never so happily inspired as when he made a cathedral."

**St. Augustine:** "God, you have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless till they find their rest in you."

**Jacob at Bethel:** "Surely the Lord is in this place... This is none other than the House of God, and this is the gate of heaven."

*May all who enter our churches be enriched by the experience, and helped with their needs and questions.*

### FOR YOUR INFORMATION

#### Near the Cathedral

**The Buddhist Centre**, 17 Guildhall Street LE1 5FQ  
Open Tues to Fri, 11.00 to 4.00pm. 0116 262 0317

**Guildhall Museum**, Guildhall Lane, LE1 5FQ  
Open daily, 11.00 – 4.30pm. 0116 253 2569

#### Near St. Nicholas

**Guru Nanak Sikh Gurdwara & Museum**

Holy Bones, LE1 5LJ

Open all year on application. 0116 262 8606

**Jewry Wall Museum**, 156-160 St. Nicholas Circle, LE1 4LB  
Open daily 11.00 to 4.30pm 0116 225 4971

#### Near St. Mary de Castro

**Newarke Houses Museum**, The Newarke, LE2 7BY

Open daily, 11.00 to 4.30pm 0116 225 4980

**Jain Centre**, 32 Oxford Street, LE1 5XU

Open daily 0116 254 1150

#### Near Holy Cross Catholic Church

**New Walk Museum & Art Gallery**, 53 New Walk,

LE1 7EA Open daily 10.00 to 5.00pm.

0116 225 4900

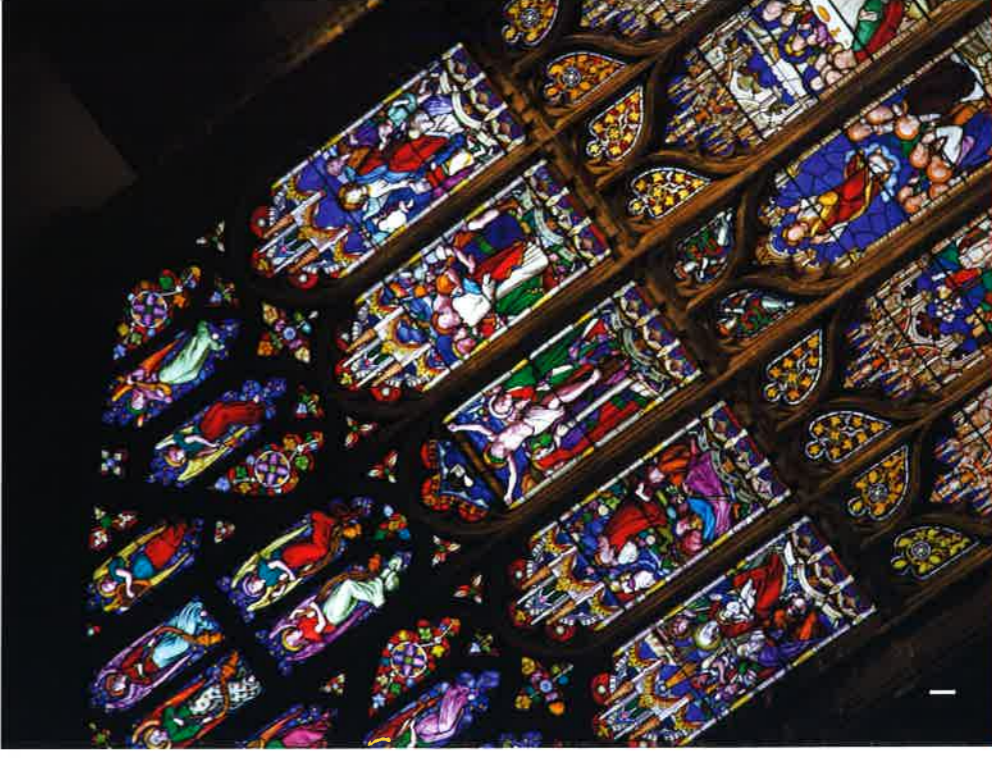
#### Leicester Shire Promotions

The destination management organisation for Leicester and Leicestershire. 0116 225 4000  
[www.goleicestershire.com/historicchurches](http://www.goleicestershire.com/historicchurches)

**Leicestershire**

[www.goleicestershire.com](http://www.goleicestershire.com)

A brief guide to historic churches in our city centre for you to visit



## 1 ST MARGARET'S CHURCH

St Margaret's Street LE1 3EB



The earliest place of Christian worship in Leicester (653) was on this site. The present church was begun in 1110. The chancel and south porch were rebuilt in 1436 and the tower in 1444.

The choir stalls (1926) are in memory of the fallen in the First World War. Robert Grosseteste, Bishop of Lincoln, was Rector here in 1229 and Cardinal Wolsey preached here in 1508.

### OPEN

Every Wednesday

from Easter to end September 11.00-13.45  
in winter 11.45-13.45

1st Saturdays of month coffee morning 10.00-12.00

2nd Thursdays of month organ recital 12.00-14.00

Contact details 0116 224 4307  
or 299 3241 or 266 5446

## 4 LEICESTER CATHEDRAL

Peacock Lane LE1 5PZ



St Martin's Church became a Cathedral in 1927 when a new diocese was carved out of Peterborough Diocese. It is built on the site of a Roman temple, and there was a Saxon church mentioned in 1086.

The spire dates from 1862 when extensive restorations were done. King Richard III has long been especially remembered here, as has the Leicestershire Regiment and the Herrick family. There is provision here for private prayer.

### CAFE

### OPEN

Daily 8.00-18.00

Sundays 07.30-16.30

[www.leicestercathedral.org](http://www.leicestercathedral.org)

Contact details 0116 261 5200

## 6 ST MARY DE CASTRO

Castle Street LE1 5WN



Leicester castle was constructed after the Norman invasion of 1066. St Mary's was built as a chapel for the castle in 1107. As the castle flourished in medieval times, so did the church. Thus in 1250 the South Aisle was added as a Parish Church. Richard III visited St Mary's and prayed here at the time of the Battle of Bosworth in 1485. The Earl of Leicester entertained Queen Elizabeth I here in 1580. The church was Leicester's most important building in the early 1800's.

### OPEN

Daily 12.00-14.00

Saturdays 14.00-16.00

[www.stmarydecastro.org.uk](http://www.stmarydecastro.org.uk)

Contact details 07769 976 151

## 8 HOLY CROSS PRIORY

45 Wellington Street LE1 6HW



A Roman Catholic Church of the Diocese of Nottingham served by priests of the Dominican Order (the 'Order of Preachers'). The first Dominican Priory in Leicester was established in 1247 in the parish of St. Clement between the two arms of the River Soar. This was surrendered in 1538, but Dominicans returned to work in Leicester in the 18th century. In 1817 this site between Wellington Street and New Walk was bought and a church and school were built (now the Church Halls), which also contains the Catholic chaplaincy to the Universities. The original priests' house was enlarged into a Priory by the late 19th century, which is where the current community of six priests lives. The present Church was begun in 1929 and was consecrated in 1938.

### OPEN

Daily 07.30-19.30

[www.holycrossleicester.org](http://www.holycrossleicester.org)

Contact details 0116 255 3856

## 2 ALL SAINTS CHURCH

High Cross Street LE1 4PH



Set on the old Roman High Street, this was a parish church for 900 years but is currently used for an Outreach project. In 1418 the mystic Margery Kempe was tried for heresy here, but acquitted. A 'Leper's Squint' in the West (street) wall shows the care given in the Middle Ages. A Jacobean clock with striking figures (c1610) is one of the oldest working parish clocks in the country. The red-brick chancel, now closed off, was re-built in 1825 on the medieval foundations.

### OPEN

Keys available from West End Gallery next to the church on the North side:

Monday-Friday 9.00-17.00

Saturdays 9.00-15.00

Or contact 0116 271 6086  
for further information

## 3 GREAT MEETING CHAPEL

45 East Bond Street LE1 4SX



The congregation dates from 1672 after 'nonconformists' were outlawed in 1662. The Act of Toleration (1689) enabled the construction of the Chapel in 1708 (oldest domestic brick building in Leicester) by two groups, Independent and Presbyterians – hence 'Great Meeting'. The Independents left to form their own congregation, the Presbyterians adopted Unitarian principles in the early 1800s. Nonconformists were free to take political office after 1835 and the first 7 Mayors of Leicester were members here. In 1859 porch and chancel were added and the building took pretty much its present form.

### OPEN

On application

[www.leicesterunitarians.co.uk](http://www.leicesterunitarians.co.uk)

Contact details 01509 812236  
or 07736 772381

## 5 ST NICHOLAS CHURCH

St Nicholas Circle LE1 4LB



This was possibly the site of the Saxon Cathedral of Leicester. The building shows the earliest architectural features seen in a Leicester church, incorporating a Saxon wall and window openings – and uses Roman bricks from the neighbouring Jewry Wall. One of these includes a Roman dog's paw print!

The tower is Norman. Despite a mixture of later architectural styles, the atmosphere is intimate and peaceful. Grade I listed.

### OPEN

Saturdays volunteers permitting 14.00-16.00

Contact details Canon Barry Naylor on  
0116 255 0031

[www.stnicholasleicester.com](http://www.stnicholasleicester.com)

## 7 ST ANDREWS CHURCH

Jarrom Street LE2 7DH



Consecrated in 1862 and listed grade II\*. A High Victorian masterpiece by George Gilbert Scott, it displays bold brick patterning both inside and out. The nave roof encloses a huge space and allows clear views of the altar. Two chapels were created in the 1920s and a striking rood cross hung in 1997. Its hall has been refurbished for community use. Also home to the Church of the Good Shepherd (for deaf people).

### OPEN

Mondays 12.00-14.00

Contact details Canon Barry Naylor on  
0116 255 0031

## 1 CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH

Charles Street LE1 1LA



Designed in the classical style by the architect William Flint and built in 1831, the Chapel houses the nationally important William Carey Museum. Carey, a shoemaker before becoming a minister at Harvey Lane Baptist Church, was inspired by the journals of Captain Cook and wrote "Enquiry", a study of the world's religions, published in Leicester in 1792. In 1793 Carey left Leicester to spend the rest of his life in India. He translated and printed the Bible into many languages and founded Serampore College (now a University) for students of all races, classes and religions.

### OPEN

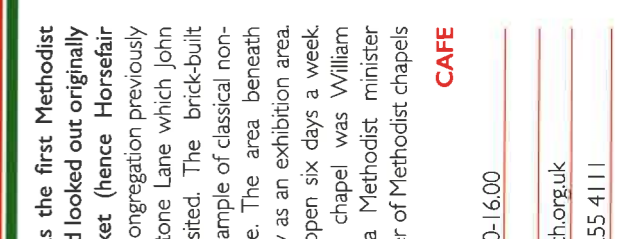
Open by appointment: Mr. Keith Harrison  
(Archivist)

[www.centralbaptist.org.uk](http://www.centralbaptist.org.uk)

Contact details 0116 255 2520

## 9 METHODIST CHURCH

10A Bishop Street, Town Hall Square LE1 6AF



Built in 1815, this was the first Methodist church in Leicester and looked out originally over the cattle market (hence Horsefair Street opposite). The congregation previously met in a barn in Millstone Lane which John Wesley frequently visited. The brick-built church is a beautiful example of classical non-conformist architecture. The area beneath the gallery is used now as an exhibition area. There is a café here open six days a week. The architect of the chapel was William Jenkins (1763-1844) a Methodist minister who designed a number of Methodist chapels across the British Isles.

### CAFE

### OPEN

Monday to Friday 10.00-16.00

Saturdays 10.30-14.30

[www.bishopstreetchurch.org.uk](http://www.bishopstreetchurch.org.uk)

Contact details 0116 255 4111