



**CHURCHES VISITED AND REVISITED  
(17/12/16 TO DATE) – BOOK 4**



And more views of Norwich Cathedral .....







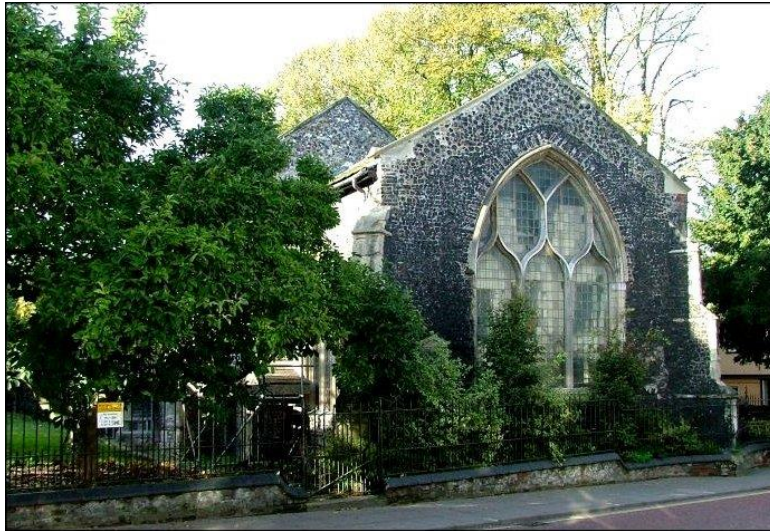






**St George's, Tombland, Norwich**





### **St Simon and St Jude, Colegate, Norwich**

An attempt was made in 2013 to take a picture of St Simon and St Jude but this did not come out too well, so the internet was sought for a better image of that. This poor, battered little church has played an important part in modern Norwich history, because it was its projected demolition in the 1920s that galvanised the Norwich Society into action. After a fierce battle against the City Council, they saved St Simon and St Jude along with the rest of Elm Hill. After the war, their reputation made them a powerful voice against the lunatic policies of Norwich planning officer Herbert Rowley and his attempts to turn the centre of the city into some kind of soviet-inspired industrial zone.

St Simon and St Jude had been declared redundant in the 1890s; small wonder, as it is within 200 metres of five other churches, not to mention the Cathedral just across the road. It was neglected, and in 1911 the tower collapsed. Shortly afterwards, the building seems to have been pressed into use as a Sunday school by the neighbouring churches; but by the 1930s it had been abandoned, and was an ivy covered- runi, rapidly returning to earth.











**St Clement's, Colegate, Norwich**

The Church of St Clement the Martyr is a powerful element of the townscape of 'Norwich Over the Water'. Its *chancel* stands hard by Fye Bridge Street and its elegant tower dominates the eastern end of Colegate. Since becoming redundant in the 1960's the church has been used for counselling and pastoral work, and is open every day for anyone wanting to pray, to have peace and quiet or to appreciate the interior. This use has enabled St Clements's to retain all of its furnishings.

St Clements's was built close to Fye Bridge, the river crossing of the major historic north-south axis of the City (King St / Magdalen St). The church is thought to be Saxon in origin and to have been one of the first in the City erected on the north side of the river. It probably dated from around 1040, although no evidence from this period is visible.





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### **The Octagon Chapel, Colegate, Norwich**

Amid this metropolitan culture the city burghers had built a sophisticated political structure. Freemen, who not only had the right to trade but to vote at elections, numbered about 2,000 in 1690, rising to over 3,300 by the mid-1730s. With growth partly the result of political manipulation, their numbers did at one point reach one third of the adult male population.

This was notoriously the age of "rotten" and "pocket" boroughs, and Norwich was unusual in having such a high proportion of its citizens able to vote. "Of the political centres where the Jacobin propaganda had penetrated most deeply", says E. P. Thompson, "only Norwich and Nottingham had a franchise deep enough to allow radicals to make use of the electoral process." "Apart from London, Norwich was probably still the largest of those boroughs which were democratically governed", says Jewson, describing other towns under the control of a single fiefdom.

In Norwich, he says, a powerful Anglican Establishment, symbolised by the Cathedral and the great church of St Peter Mancroft was matched by scarcely less powerful congeries of Dissenters headed by the wealthy literate body [of Unitarians] worshipping at the Octagon Chapel.'

In the middle of political disorders of the late 18th century, Norwich intellectual life flourished. And it contained one, so far unmentioned, characteristic. Harriet Martineau wrote of the city's *literati* of the period, which included such people as William Taylor, one of the first German scholars in England. The city "boasted of her intellectual supper-parties, where, amidst a pedantry which would now make laughter hold both his sides, there was much that was pleasant and salutary: and finally she called herself *The Athens of England*."

**Personal view 2013** – feeling pretty wet now, I still had lots of time in hand so it was just a slow walk back to Thorpe Station and it was an only an unintentional stop off to the Cathedral and a view of St George's Tombland.





### St Georges Tombland, Princes Street, Norwich

This is one of two mediæval churches dedicated to St George in Norwich, which may indicate a late foundation date. The 'surname' Tombland is from Old English words meaning 'empty land or space', referring to the site of the late Saxon market.

**Exterior** - The church is built of flint rubble, but the nave **clerestorey** stands out as it is of brick, a high-status material when it was built in the C17. The tower is made prominent by the large blue clock-face. The front of the south porch was put there in the 1880s, and bears no relation to its original appearance. Its interior **vault** has some fine **bosses** – possibly carved by the same people who were working at the Cathedral.

The organic growth of the building is easy to see: originally just a *nave* and *chancel* with west tower, the north porch was added, then the north *aisle*, then the south aisle, and finally the south *porch*.

**interior** - Despite being heavily restored in the 1880s, the church retains a good deal of its Georgian furnishings. Principal among these is the *reredos*, a fine piece of the early C18. The *Decalogue* is unfortunately covered by brocade, and the Lords' Prayer and Creed in the side panels were painted over in 1880. The *altar*, with its *gradines* and *tabernacle*, was set up in the 1890s, although the actual altar table is of C17 date, but much altered. It was further modified in the 1960s to accommodate a mediæval mensa, or stone altar-slab.

The pulpit is C17, and possibly of French workmanship. Note the extremely delicate foliage carving on the front panel. Its *tester* may be older.

Close examination of the staircase will reveal how it was cut down from the original '*three-decker pulpit*'. The aisle benches are made of wood recycled from the old *box pews*.

The *font* is C13, and made of Purbeck marble. Its cover is C17, and very similar to those at the neighbouring churches of St Michael-at-Plea and St Andrew.

Beside the font is a stone bread table, used for giving out bread to the poor. There is a coloured relief carving of St George, which is probably German, of about 1530, in the north aisle. Monuments - The church is extremely rich in monuments. The principal ones are: Mary Gardiner (1748) (north wall of sanctuary), by **Scheemakers**; Thomas Anguish (16..) (beside the organ), by **Nicholas Stone**; John and Olive Symonds (1609) (above the bread table) – now lacking its surround.

There is a good deal of glass. There are two mediæval roundels in the south aisle window; two C17 Flemish panels set high up in the north aisle.

The Magnificat window (east end of south aisle) is by the studio of William Morris.

The extraordinary mosaic windows in the north aisle are of the 1860s, and may be the earliest surviving Victorian coloured glass in Norwich.

William Bridge - In 1633, William Bridge was appointed Vicar. He held very strong Puritan views, and the church became a centre for extreme Protestant preaching. He was ejected in 1638, and went to Rotterdam.

On his return to England in 1642, he ministered at Yarmouth until 1660, and founded what is now the Old Meeting Congregational Chapel. Nineteenth century - The church remained 'unrestored' until the late 1880s, owing to the long incumbency of Kirby Trimmer (1882-87).

The Rev'd Walter Crewe (Vicar 1895-1920) introduced the High Church form of services, which still continues.

<b>SATURDAY 31st DECEMBER 2016</b>
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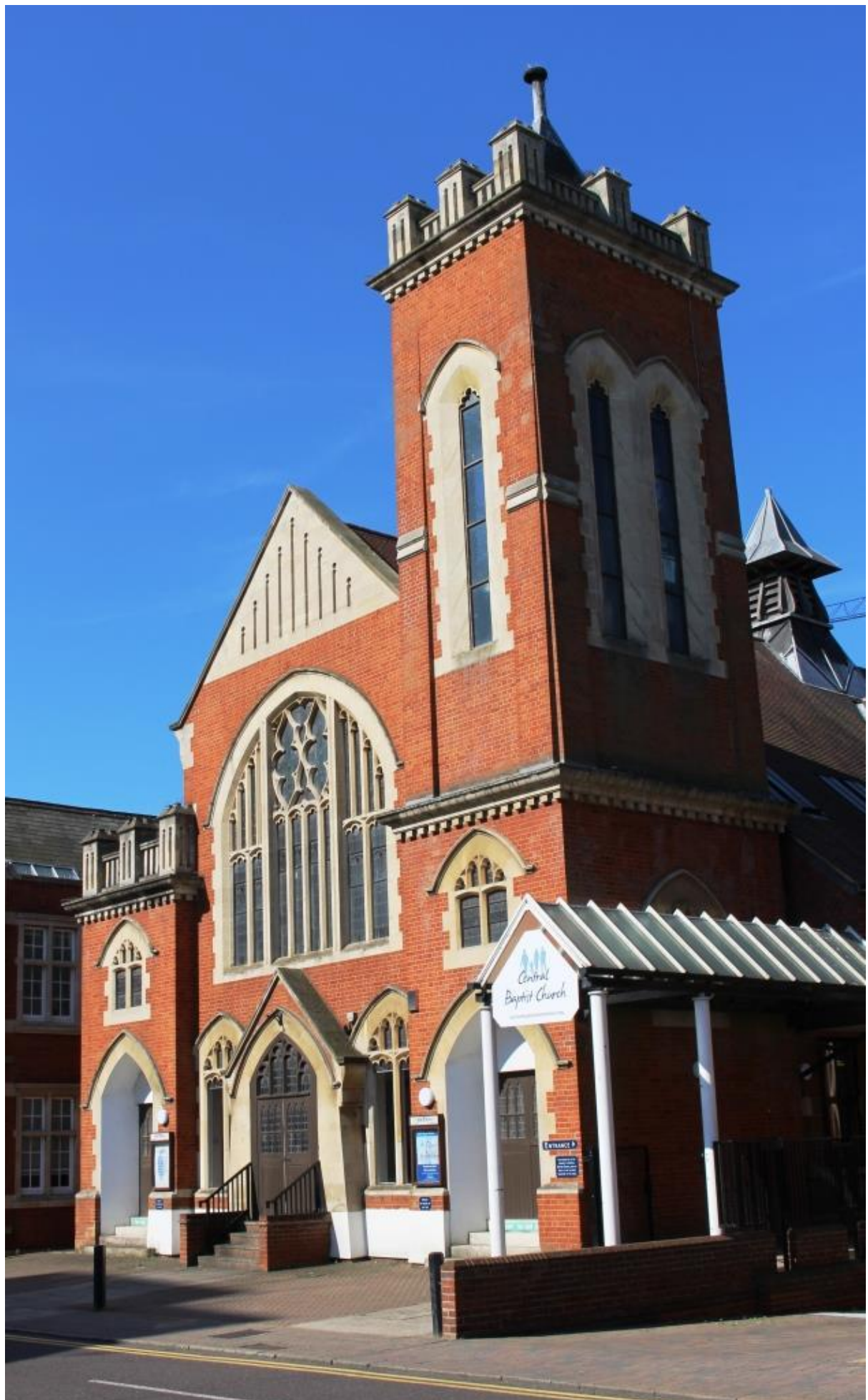






**St Michael's, Braintree**







**Central Baptist Church, Victoria Avenue, Chelmsford**





**Chelmsford Cathedral**





**St Thomas a Becket, Brentwood**



On my 2012 visit after my coffee and biscuit, it was inside the cathedral itself and there was a very impressive view to see, which had a good collection of the stations of the cross.

I gather that these all came from the Cathedral Catholic which was in the next road. It seems that the new modern Catholic cathedral did not think the stations fitted in with their new building.

















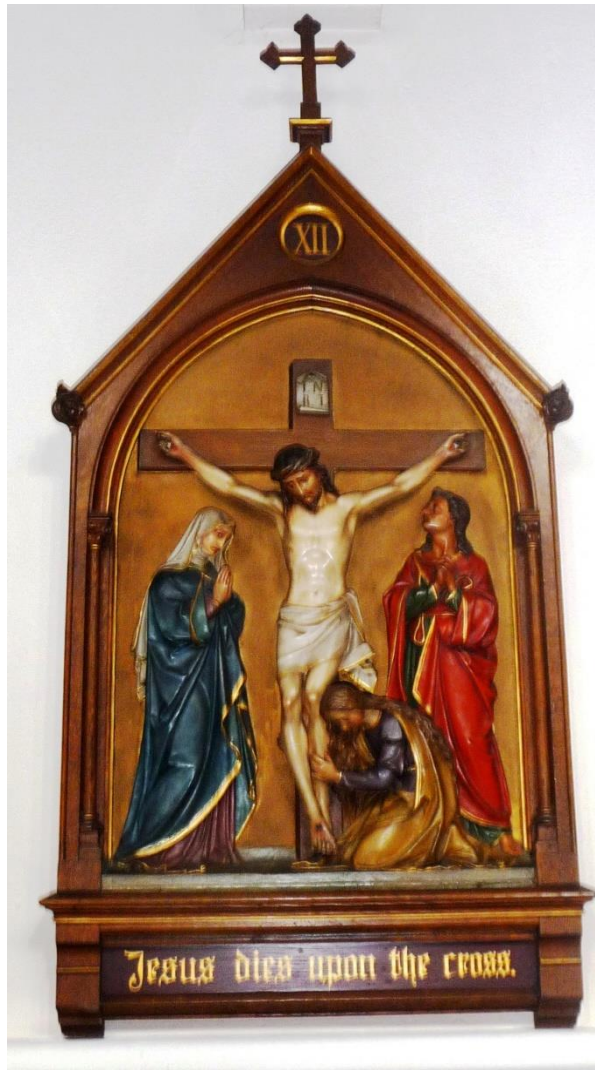
Jesus consoles the women.



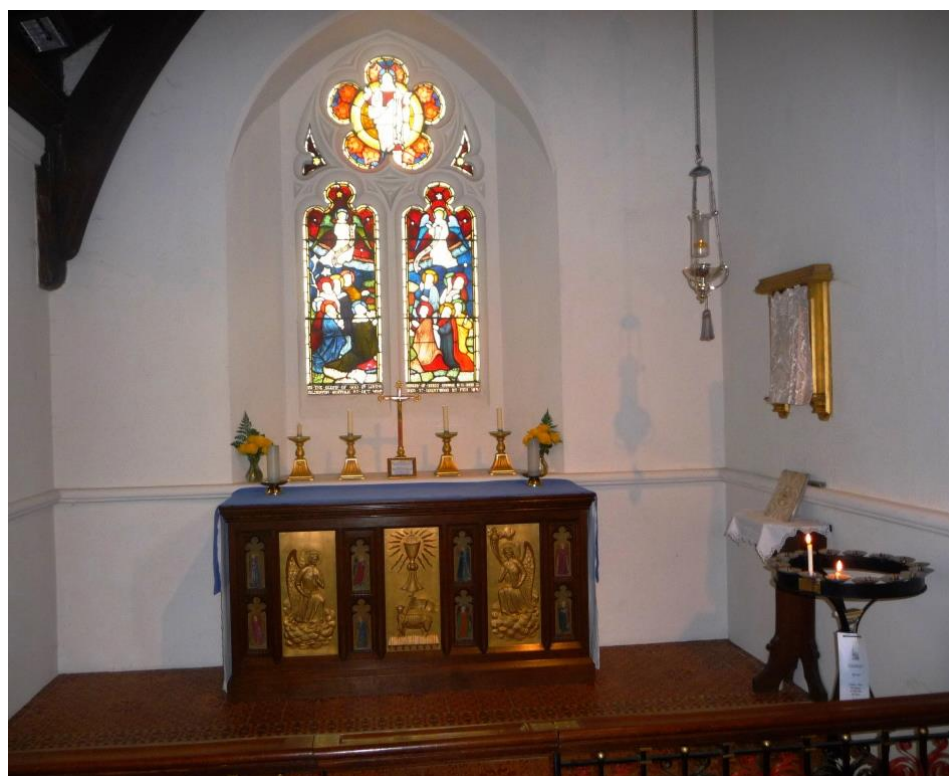
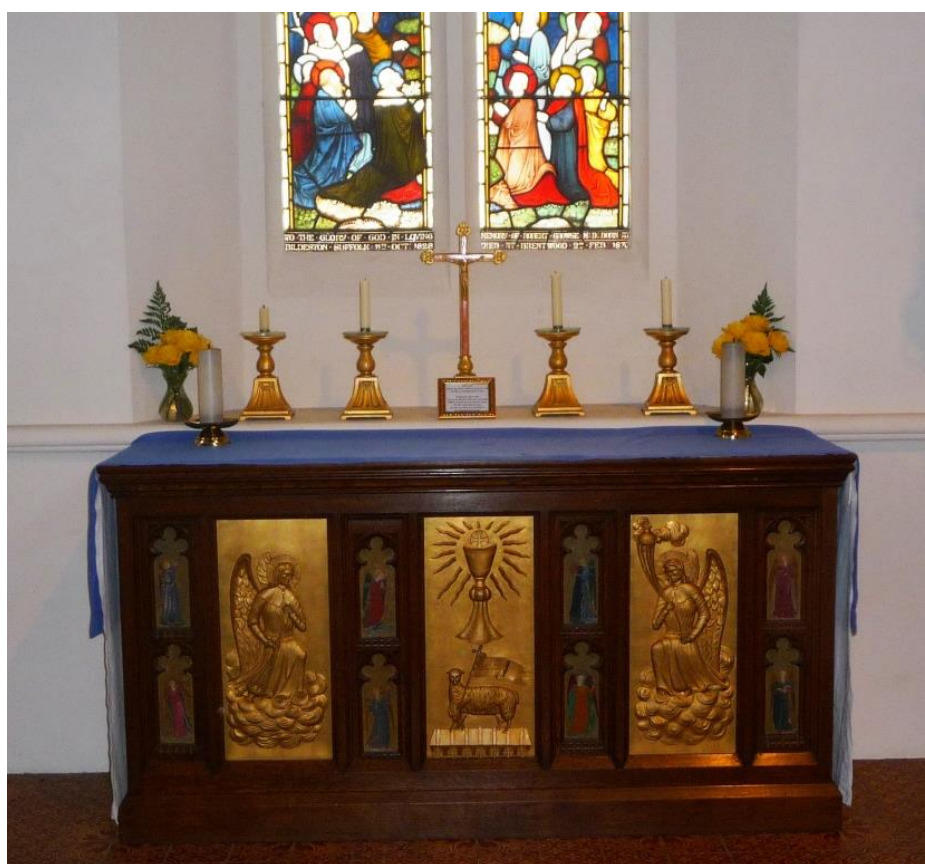
Jesus falls a third time.











To be continued in Book 5 .....