

St Mary's is the sister church of St Luke's in Chiddingstone Causeway.

As a rule of thumb we have our main service at 10am here at St Mary's, between Easter and Harvest Festival after which we move lock, stock, cassocks and hymn books to St Luke's.

On alternate weeks there is an 8am said Communion or a service of Compline at 6pm in the church that is not being used for the main service. If this is all too complicated details are posted on the notice boards at both churches.

We have a flourishing Sunday School, Choir, Sunday Youth Group, Mothers' & Toddlers' Group, a Team of Bell Ringers and a Youth Club.

The C of E Primary School, now with Academy status, is ably supported by a Nursery School in Chiddingstone Castle.

Our Rector is Martin Beaumont on 01892 870478 and he in turn is supported by Carol Benton, Pastoral Assistant, on 01892 870483.

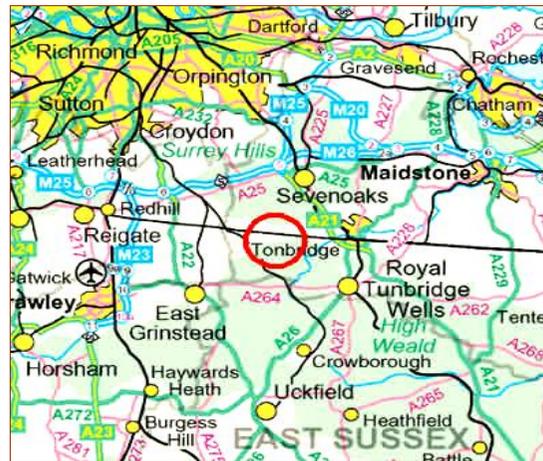


## ST MARY THE VIRGIN ~ CHIDDINGSTONE



More in-depth information is available  
in the Guide Book

[www.chiddingstonechurches.org](http://www.chiddingstonechurches.org)  
 ChiddChurches



What we know as St Mary's is either the third or fourth church on this site.

The Earliest written evidence of a church here was 1086AD.

The plan of the building, as it appears today, is of the 14<sup>th</sup> century. It is likely that this was when the walls of the earlier building were removed and replaced with arcades and aisles north and south. You can still see the early fourteenth century windows at the western end of each aisle, and the east window of the south aisle. The Chancel window is also of this period.

The fine Perpendicular style west tower was built in the fifteenth century.

An interesting feature near the top of the tower is the collection of stone faces. One is double headed; another has two noses, two mouths, and three

eyes, and many are putting out their tongues in a derisory manner towards the village.

Also from the fifteenth century are windows in the sidewall of the North aisle.

In 1516 the chapel, beyond the present organ, was enlarged to its present size.

On 17<sup>th</sup> July 1624 the church was struck by lightning and caught fire. The damage was extensive, leaving only the tower standing, and it was not until 1629 that the repairs were sufficient for the Bishop to re-consecrate the building.

The bible displayed in the glass case is one of the few remaining "vinegar" bibles. The left hand page heading should, of course, read "the parable of the vineyard". The Font, dated 1628 and costing £3.10s, has been called the finest of its period in Kent.

The iron grave slabs in the floor of the south aisle were made locally when iron making was an important industry in the Weald. The slab in the nave is one of the earliest known, dating from 1601, and is to Richard Streatfeild, an ironmaster.

At the same time as holding the living of Chiddingstone, in plurality with Sundridge, Edward Tenison gave the magnificent brass chandelier to the church in 1726, and a similar one to Sundridge.

The Tower contains a peel of eight bells, the earliest of which dates from 1753.

At the same time as other major repairs were carried out in 1991, all the bells were retuned, and No 6 was recast and inscribed "To the memory of Philip Everest and Jane Streatfeild", the late Churchwardens of the parish.