About St Michael's Church

Built during the high Middle Ages with later modifications, the church of St Michael and All Angels is a treasure trove of fascinating monuments and intriguing architectural features.

Like most medieval churches, Edmondthorpe expanded over the centuries to serve a growing population and to reflect the wealth of the village. The clearest evidence for local patronage is the magnificent series of monuments within the church, dedicated to the Smith family, dating from the 17th and 18th centuries.

As with many rural churches, the congregation decreased in size during the 19th and 20th centuries until the church was finally placed in the care of The Churches Conservation Trust in 1999.

A thousand years of English history awaits you

The Churches Conservation Trust is the national charity protecting historic churches at risk.

We've saved over 340 beautiful buildings which attract more than a million visitors a year. With our help and with your support they are kept open and in use – living once again at the heart of their communities.

Access

Due to their age, historic church floors can be uneven and worn and lighting can be low level. Please take care, especially in wet weather when floors can be slippery.
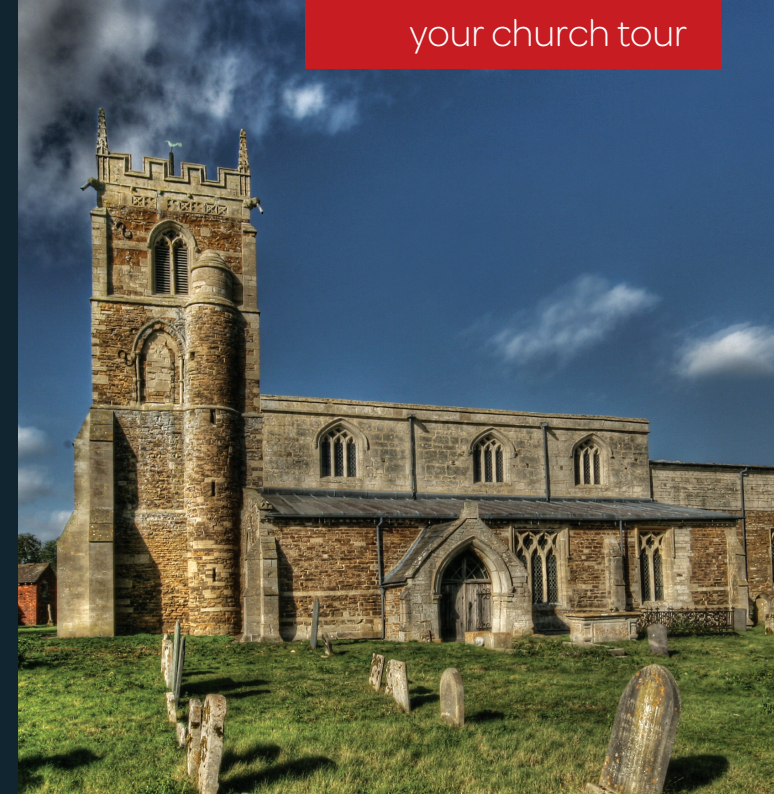
Help us do more

To protect these churches, and others like them, we need your help. If you enjoy your visit please give generously or if you would like to become a CCT supporter and join in our exclusive 'behind-the-scenes' visits please go to our website.

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Church of St Michael

Edmondthorpe

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The historic church of St Michael

10 things to see before you leave...

1 The **benefaction board** records the donations of two Edward Smiths. The first, dated 1687 provided for £10 to be donated yearly to the poor. The second, dated 1720, granted two hundred pounds for the poor and towards repairs to the church. If you look closely, you can see that the board has been repainted at least once.

2 In front of the font lies the **oldest grave slab** in the church. Decorated with a cross on a stepped base, it was made for a William Sharpe who died in 1521. It is alongside two other faded slabs, which date from the same period.

3 The west wall bears the **royal arms of George III** from 1777. George III reigned from 1760 until the Regency Act was passed in 1811, after which his son ruled in his stead. Royal arms were first installed in churches during the reign of Henry VIII.

4 This plain but attractive **font** was carved in the 13th century and is supported by four pillars. The elegant wooden cover dates to the 18th century.

5 The church has **two stoves**, one in the chancel and the other in the nave, installed in the 18th and 19th centuries. These stoves were used to heat an otherwise draughty and cold church during the winter months.

6 This corbel, supporting the chancel arch, is carved in the form of a **grimacing face**. Grotesques such as this were a common feature of medieval churches.

7 This **rood screen** dates to the 15th century and is one of the few screens to survive the Reformation. The screen separated the congregation in the nave from the priests in the chancel.

8 The church houses several outstanding **monuments**, the finest being that of Sir Roger Smith, who died in 1655. He is depicted on the alabaster memorial with his two wives, Jane Heron and Anne Goodman, who died in 1599 and 1652 respectively. The three reclining figures are flanked by busts of Smith's son and grandson, who died during Sir Roger's lifetime.

9 Sedilia (seats used by priests) were a common feature of medieval chancels. This 13th-century example is reused in this 18th-century **monument** made for Peter Boundy, rector of this church from 1709 to 1730.

10 The **piscina**, such as this one in the east end of the north aisle, would have been used by the priest to wash the chalice and plate. **Aumbries** were used to store the sacred vessels.