



WELCOME TO

CHRIST CHURCH UNITED REFORMED CHURCH
SCHOOL STREET SUDBURY

There has been a place of worship on this site since 1838, the year after Emily Gainsborough (the artist's great niece) had led a secession of 15 members from the Great Meeting House in Friars Street. The new church was named Trinity.

Trinity Congregational Church was built on the site of a mediaeval tenter-yard. Immediately to the north had been the chapel of St Sepulchre (12th to 16th C). This might have been built on the model of the Holy Sepulchre copied in the round church at Little Maplestead and erected by the Knights Hospitallers. It is thought to have been pulled down during the Reformation. There are subterranean remains of the building. The present Gainsborough Street was formally Sepulchre Street, named after the church. When the foundations of Trinity Church were being dug, several human skeletons were found, no doubt from the mediaeval burial ground. Human remains were also found in the 19th century in other locations nearby.

The church and site in Friars Street, which became Friars Street Congregational Church, were sold and later demolished in 1966. The font became a birdbath in the grounds of a house in Great Waldingfield and the organ was rebuilt at Ipswich School. However, thanks to the curiosity of a young man, later to become Lord Phillips of Sudbury, who lived opposite, and to other researchers, Christ Church now have on display.....

*A memorial plaque recording the deaths of John Gainsborough, who died in 1791 aged 39 and Susanna Gainsborough who died in 1826 aged 74.

*The Great Pulpit Bible.

*Inscribed stones from the occasion of the foundation stone laying in 1822, at Friars Street, recording the names of the dignitaries present. These include the minister the Revd John Mead Ray, minister 1774 to 1837 and two trustees, Edward and John Burkett.

*An inscribed memorial stone commemorating the life and 63 years of ministry of the Revd John Mead Ray. (This stone had been shattered by the demolishers of Friars Street Church)

An actual size photocopy of Baird's Historical Map of the Marian Persecutions, dated 1841. The map depicts all the sites where Protestant martyrs were burnt at the stake during Mary's reign (1553-58). The first martyr at Smithfield was John Rogers, who had translated the Bible into English. Rogers' granddaughter married William Jenkyn (died 1616) who had been the first minister of the Separated Congregation of Sudbury.

* These items were deposited in the church by Lord Phillips of Sudbury.

Visitors can also see.

A copy of the Baptismal Register with the entry for Thomas Gainsborough.

| Child's Name | Parents Name | Surname | Born | Registered |
|--------------|--------------------|---------------------|--|------------|
| Thomas | Thomas & Sarah | Horsner | | Mar 3 1727 |
| Elizabeth | Robert & Joan | Wiley | | Apr 17 " |
| Mary | Daniel & Margant | Porter | | May 8 " |
| James | Samuel & " | Harborough | | " 12 " |
| Thomas | John & " | Gainsborough | {The Illustrations Portrait and Landscape Painted by Mrs. Buckley } | " 14 " |
| John | John & Mary | Griggs | | " 14 " |
| Living | Joseph & " | Green | | " 14 " |
| Anne | " & Anne | Wood | | " 16 " |
| Jonathan | Thomas & Elizabeth | Howards | | 21 " |
| Susanne | Thomas & " | Garwood | | June 19 " |
| Mary | Robert & " | Edis | | Oct 10 " |
| Sarah | Jacob & Mary | Dancie | | Nov 5 " |
| Elizabeth | John & Elizabeth | Longley | | Nov 18 " |
| John | John & Anne | Swell | | Jan 6 1728 |
| George | James & Mary | Furry & Briers | | 26 " |
| James | " & Elizabeth | Rightt | | Mar 6 " |
| Elizabeth | Tho & Elizabeth | Godfrey | | Apr 27 " |
| Mary | John & Mary | Parish | | May 21 " |
| James | James & Abigail | Stort | | July 10 " |
| Jamima | John & " | Minden | | " 11 " |
| Mary | William & Frances | Holman | | Aug 11 " |
| Mary | John & Mary | Griggs | | Sep 8 " |
| | John Abbot | An adult person was | | 8 " |
| | Joseph Parmenter | An adult person was | | Nov 6 " |
| John | Samuel & " | Jones | | " 17 " |
| Sarah | Joseph & Susanna | Vincent | | " 18 " |

A photographic record of some pages from a historic Ledger from Friars Street Congregational Church on which one can see the quarterly payments made by church members as pew rents. Later pages list some of the outgoings made to ministers and preachers. These include, between 1785 and 1788, the purchase of many bottles of wine, rum, port and liquor. Such expenditure ceases in 1789 when presumably sobriety returned.

For a more detailed account of the history of two Sudbury churches you can purchase a copy of the 8 page illustrated booklet 'Two into One' from the Church Secretary.

5 Subscriptions ^{1/4} 5. Oct. 1794. ^{1/4} 20 Dec. 1794. ^{1/4} 22 Mar. 1795. ^{1/4} 27 June 1795.

| | | | | |
|---|-------------|-------------|------------|------------|
| Parsonson Henry | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Parsonson Rob ^t . | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| Palmer Miss | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| Powder M ^r Ship ^r | | | | |
| Scott Will ^m | 53 | 53 | 53 | 53 |
| Scott Edw ^d | | | | |
| Stanford Philip | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| Stammers John | 106 | 106 | 106 | 106 |
| Slipper M ^r | 3 | | | |
| Soger M ^r | 53 | 53 | 53 | 53 |
| Woolley J ^r | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 |
| Watts M ^r | | | | |
| | <u>340</u> | <u>310</u> | <u>310</u> | <u>310</u> |
| | 5110 | 5110 | 506 | 506 |
| | <u>8150</u> | <u>8120</u> | <u>896</u> | <u>896</u> |

to 4/20 ended -

THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH IN SUDBURY

There is evidence of Free Church activity here in the late 14th Century, and records show that worship in the congregational tradition was known before 1616 based on All Saints Church. The hymn-writer Samuel Crossman ("My Song is Love Unknown"), vicar of All Saints, was also minister of the Separated Congregation from 1647 to 1665, going on to become Dean of Bristol.

Friars Street Congregational Church began its independent life in 1707 on the site where the Social Services building now stands. The artist Thomas Gainsborough was baptised there in 1727. A split developed in that church, and members of the Gainsborough family led the secession to the present site, founding Trinity Congregational Church in 1837. The building was extended in 1891 during the ministry of the Revd Charles Henry Vine. Until recently members of his family were still part of our congregation.

The following notes are from a description of church buildings subsequent upon complete refurbishment and restoration 1991-2 and from a report made in 1994 by the Suffolk County Council officer responsible for the 46 listed non-conformist places of worship in the county.

HISTORY

Christ Church Congregational Church was formed in 1956 by the amalgamation of Friars Street and Trinity Congregational Churches. Trinity had been formed in 1837 after a secession from the Friars Street church, and it was this congregation which built the present chapel in School Street in 1838-9.

Galleries were added in 1856. Further work was necessary after the ceiling collapsed in August 1856. The box pews were replaced by open benches, and a platform erected, as early as 1865. The front, incorporating new staircases and an enlarged rear gallery for choir and organ, was added in 1891 at a cost of £1,000. It was designed by the minister, the Revd. Charles Henry Vine, and became the model for his church in Ilford. The side windows were altered in 1902 to be more in keeping with the front, and a new organ, pulpit and choir stalls were installed in the front of the sanctuary in 1911. The only significant

changes in recent years have been the widening of the entrance vestibule and removal of the communion rails, both in c. 1960.

EXTERIOR

The original building is in red brick, 5 bays long, with pilaster strips between each bay. A small section of the 1838 facade which is visible shows that it was in white brick and tuck pointed. The side windows, confined to the 3 centre bays, were sashed before 1902. Each has 2 arched timber lights. The white brick reveals and first floor arches are original. The Gothic Front, in gault brick with stone dressings, survives unaltered. It is symmetrical, apart from a gabled tower to the left, from which rises a louvered bell turret with slate-clad spire.

Against the rear wall is a large lean-to, rebuilt in 1966; this is now linked to a mid 19th century former school room to form a large hall.

INTERIOR

The restored interior is an impressive space. The 3-sided gallery is carried on fluted iron columns with stylised leaf capitals. The gallery seating of 1856 is of stained pine with mahogany cappings to the upright panelled backs and partitions. This seating is fairly similar in style to the ground floor benches fitted 9 years later. The bench seats of the pre-1911 choir are still in place in the rear gallery. Dominating the interior are the organ and rostrum pulpit, painted in matching colours. The 1911 choir stalls survive on one side only.

THE CONACHER ORGAN OF 1911

The two-manual Conacher organ which dominates the front of the Church was installed in 1911 by the Huddersfield firm of Peter Conacher, using a then recently invented system of blowing air known as tubular- pneumatic action. In this system, each possible combination of note and stop has a feeder-pipe leading from the blowing system up to the relevant pipe. As the player chooses a particular note on the keyboard from a particular rank, air is directed through the relevant feederpipe to the organ pipe in the case above which sounds the note. In recent years many of these had sagged and become distorted, causing some obstruction to the flow of air and thus to the effectiveness of the instrument.

The organ also displays one of the earliest examples of the use of stop-keys rather than draw-stops for selecting the registration, invented by Joseph Conacher in 1908. He died in 1910 so this is one of his last designs. Thanks to the grant

from the National Heritage Memorial Fund, the old system was fully restored during the winter of 1997-98. We have thus been able to preserve the historic integrity of the instrument as a significant landmark in the development of the English organ.



Over the years the organ has given excellent service, having been used extensively for public worship, concerts and recitals. Its scope is perfect for its setting, and it complements perfectly the acoustic in which it is set. It was cleaned in the mid-1950s, and some builder's dirt had to be removed after structural alterations in 1991-2. No previous restoration had been necessary other than day-to-day minor repairs to motors etc as the leather has perished. The result of this is the survival of a substantial inheritance of the original material, which enhances the value and authenticity of the instrument, hence our interest in having preserved it in its original form.

Restoration work was carried out by the Ipswich firm of Bishop & Son at a cost of £26,000 , over half of which was met by the National Heritage Memorial Fund. Since the work was completed it has attracted the attention of several leading organists who have been pleased to play for us.

TECHNICAL DETAILS OF THE ORGAN

Current Specification

| <u>Great</u> | <u>Swell</u> | <u>Pedal</u> |
|--------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| | | Grand Boudon |
| Open Diapason 8' | Violin Diapason 8 | 16' |
| Dulciana 8' | Rhor Flote 8' | Flute Bass 8' |
| Lieblich gedakt 8' | Salicional 8' | |
| Hamonic Flute 4' | Voix Celestes 8' | <u>Couplers</u> |
| Principal 4' | Gemshorn 4' | Swell to Great |
| Fifteenth 2' | Piccolo 2' | Swell to Pedal |
| | Cornupaeon 8' | Great to Pedal |
| | Oboe 8' | Swell Octave |
| | | Swell sub-Octave |

Accessories

3 thumb pistons to Swell duplicated by toe pistons. Balanced Swell pedal.
3 thumb pistons to Great duplicated by toe pistons.

Compass

Manual CC A58 notes

Pedal CCC F30 notes