

## Regular Services

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday – Holy Communion 11.30am  
2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday – Matins 11.30am  
3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday – Holy Communion 8.00am  
4<sup>th</sup> Sunday – Family Service 11.30am  
5<sup>th</sup> Sunday – Evensong 4.00pm



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## St. Mildred's Church Nurstead

It was more than 700 years ago, in the time of Edward I, when the Archbishop of Canterbury was Lord of the Hundred of Toltingtrow, that Nurstead – ‘a poor little Parish with a church’ - was part of the Hundred. If you take the road to Ifield, the small green is Toltingtrow.

Notestede is referred to in Norman times and in the Domesday Book (1086). The tenant of Notestede estates was Odo, Bishop of Bayeaux, half-brother to William the Conqueror. The Lord of the Manor had Castleward duties at Dover twice yearly, a big event in the lives of the locals, defending Dover Castle.

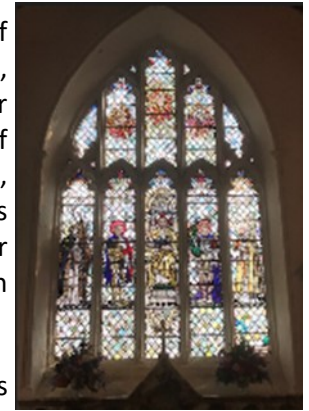
The original Saxon Nurstead Church would have been a wooden building. In its present form the Church has stood since the 14<sup>th</sup> century, with walls of oblong flints, and together with the 14th century Hall of Nurstead Court are the only surviving parts of the Manor as it existed in 1349. Changes in the texture of the stone suggest originally a square building, the door in the North and a Lancet Window opposite with the Chancel on the East, since widened. John Leyston, Yeoman of Nurstead, mentioned the Tower addition in 1588 and John Sedley of Nurstead Hill Farm (later of Southfleet) gave 3 shillings and 4 pence for repair of the bells.

The base of the Tower with the West Door was occupied by a large pipe organ but due to decay it was replaced in 2006 with the current digital organ. There is a small window high at the West end through which a person in the Tower could witness the church ceremony and ring the Bell for the Sanctus.

The Bell at one time was rung from an adjacent tree but now is in the Tower together with the 1837 clock installed by William Edmeades (1766-1852). His son, Rev. Wm. Edmeades (vicar from 1828-1886) had the Vestry and the Porch built. The windows are mainly 15<sup>th</sup> century.

The stone font was presented by Thomas Baker in memory of his wife Maria (née Edmeades) who died in 1847. There are several memorials to Baker family members in the west side of the churchyard.

The East Window (1916 by Whall), in memory of Major General Henry Edmeades who died in 1914, depicts from the North side St. Mildred with her Stag, St. George, Christ, St. Anselm (Patron Saint of Soldiers) and St. Alban (Archbishop of Canterbury, formerly Bishop of Rochester). On the South side is an ancient piscina. Behind the altar is an Alabaster Reredos – an early work of the leading English architect at that time, Sir Herbert Baker.



Records and drawings of St. Mildred's, Nurstead, as well as St. Margaret's, Ifield, can be seen in the British Museum. Early registers of the Church were removed by thieves; one from 1561 was found in a ploughed field but the other was never recovered.

Nurstead has a list of preachers from the 14<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> century although most would have been travelling preachers. The first recorded Rectors were John de Carlion and William Gent, the last in 1672; thereafter the Living was a joint beneficiary with Ifield. The Advowson of the Living has always been attached to the Manor of Nurstead. There are no brasses but several memorial slabs and monuments to members of the Edmeades and Wentworth families and a 17<sup>th</sup> century monument to John Adge of Dodington.



The painting over the north door is a copy of an 18<sup>th</sup> century original, which was stolen on Good Friday 1997, and is of a Royal Coat of Arms depicting the White Horse of Hanover.

Following damage during the Second World War (1939-1945), the roof was completely retiled, and windows repaired or replaced. Atmospheric pollution continues to damage the stonework. More recently the Tower has been repaired at considerable expense and the interior of the Church redecorated and carpeted. The task of raising funds for all this work has been taken on by The Friends of Nurstead, whose object is to maintain the upkeep of this ancient and attractive building.

**'The Little Church in the Field'**

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