

People at St Anne's

Edward Rhys Jones was rector of St Anne's from 1850–1870. Here is part of a sermon preached by him in 1860, reflecting the same message that the church family at St Anne's proclaims today:

Above all, let us seek, each in our own experience, to realize the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour. Let us carry to Him all our sins, all our wants, all our doubts, all our difficulties. He will make all needful things plain to us, and give us grace to wait patiently, until increased light shall clear up the difficulties which may still remain, "until the day break, and the shadows flee away," and then in His light we shall see light.

Samuel Charlesworth was another rector of St Anne's (1870–1882). His relative Maria Charlesworth is commemorated in a **monument** of Hope with her anchor, high up in the west porch. He comments on the work of his contemporary, Dr Barnardo, in converting the nearby 'Edinburgh Castle' pub into a mission centre:

"I am utterly astonished at what has been accomplished. It is a most grand idea, a most sublime scheme. In this history of Christianity in England there is hardly a fact to be compared with it – I had no hand in it"

Quoted Gillian Wagner, Barnardo

Christopher Idle was rector of St Anne's from 1976–1989. A hymn writer, here are some verses from one of his hymns inspired by the church building and God's faithfulness to his people that have met in it through the centuries:

Towering over road and river
stands this house of prayer,
witnessing to God the Giver
who in Christ draws near:
Lord, you plan our history's pages
through all ages bless us here!

If these stones could tell the story
of our joys and tears
they would sing 'To God be glory!'
till the Lord appears:
walls and pillars, bell and tower,
tell your power through the years.

So your church shall praise for ever
our Redeemer's fame,
Jesus Christ, our risen Saviour
glory to his name!
Songs of worship and thanksgiving
shall our living Lord proclaim.

The church family today

Please join us any Sunday at 10.30am or 6pm. You will also see that we are in the process of restoring our beautiful building. For more details of church activities, and how to give to the restoration fund, please visit our web site:

www.stanneslimehouse.org

St Anne's Limehouse



Welcome to St Anne's!

The church family here at St Anne's is privileged to be able meet in this remarkable Grade I listed building. Commissioned during the reign of Queen Anne as part of the Fifty New Churches Act (1711), it was designed by Nicholas Hawksmoor. Construction began in 1714 and the building began to be used in 1730.



Interior

The building was gutted by fire in 1850 but reconstructed and restored largely as it was previously. The **north-east vestry** and the **south porch and staircase** are the only original parts of the interior.

Restoration and future maintenance of the building is overseen by the charity, '**Care for St Anne's**'. Recent development includes the construction of a parish room (1980) in the **crypt**.

Unusually, the **east window** (Charles Clutterbuck – 1851) depicts the crucifixion of Jesus Christ in enamelled rather than stained glass. The Bible teaches that the crucifixion was the central event of history. The Apostle Paul explains its significance:

For our sake he [God] made him [Jesus] to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

2 Corinthians 5:21

You might be surprised by some of the features of our interior:

The front of the church has been re-configured with flexible seating in a horseshoe shape. The Bible uses the language of family – brothers and sisters – to describe church. So we want to be as warm and friendly a gathering as possible within this grand and somewhat imposing building.

There is no altar in the church. Jesus told his followers to remember his death by sharing bread and wine together. When we do this we are not sacrificing his body and blood, but rather remembering and proclaiming his death as the once-for-all means by which we can be forgiven by God. An 18th century **communion table** is brought forward from the chancel into the centre of the horseshoe for this purpose.

The focal point of the church is the lectern. This is because the Bible is read and preached from the lectern. The **pulpit** (1856), now to one side, would previously have been used for this purpose. The one tradition we all share at St Anne's is to learn more about knowing God and his Son Jesus Christ through straightforward Bible teaching for all ages

Film and television

St Anne's has often been used as a setting for film and television, including **28 Days Later**, **Legend**, and **Call the Midwife**.

Other features of the interior may be more familiar from other churches:

The font (1853) at the west end of the church. Jesus and his Apostles said that Christians and their children should be baptised, and the font was designed to hold water for this purpose. Today the church family uses a bowl at the front of church – or, for adults, a baptism pool – so that everyone can gather round and see.

The organ (1851) won the gold prize at the Great Exhibition before being moved to St Anne's. It was fully restored a few years ago and is used regularly to accompany our singing of songs and hymns to praise God and encourage each other to live for him.

Exterior and churchyard

We are frequently asked why St Anne's flies a **white ensign**. St Dunstan's Stepney flew a naval flag to help naval officers find it to register births, deaths and marriages that occurred at sea. St Anne's took over these responsibilities when it was built much closer to the river. We continue to have the rare privilege of flying the white ensign today.

The unusual **pyramid** in the churchyard dates from the time of the church's construction and was probably one of a pair to be mounted on the eastern towers of the church.

