



## About Withcote Chapel

The history of the chapel is closely linked to the manor of Withcote, where William Smith established himself as lord of the manor, obtaining a coat of arms for the family in 1499. The foundation of the church can only be dated to the early 16th century. Work may have begun during the tenure of William and Catherine Smith, but was probably completed after William's death in 1506 by Catherine and her second husband, Roger Ratcliffe, who died in about 1537. The Palmer family, who later held the manor, were patrons of the chapel, as were their neighbours the Johnson family, with whom they became connected by marriage in the 18th century. It is not certain when this private chapel superseded the existing parish church, possibly as a result of population depletion, but it acquired a font during the 19th century and has a small churchyard.

The building shows features characteristic of the early 16th century, such as square-headed windows. The rainwater heads, battlements and corner pinnacles were added during 18th-century renovation, whilst much of the interior furnishing and decoration is from the 19th century. The chapel's early history is reflected in a monument to Ambrose Smith dated 1584, two 16th-century wall paintings and well-preserved stained glass, which may have been part of the original design.

Although sale of the estate in 1926 put the chapel at risk of demolition, it survived and was placed in the care of The Churches Conservation Trust in 1979.

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### 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.

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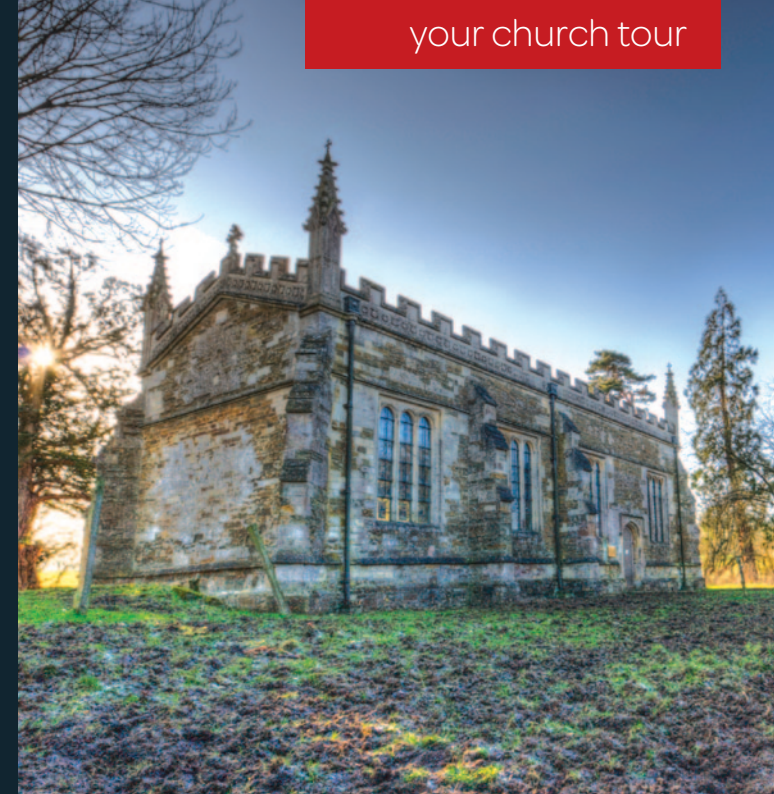
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# Withcote Chapel

Withcote



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## The historic Withcote Chapel

### 10 things to see before you leave...

- 1 The **font** dates to 1865. Although the body is a plain box shape with pillars, the lid has an intricate design with a leaf pattern around it.
- 2 According to church records, the **organ**, which originally came from Hull, was given to the church by Mary Palmer. It has an imposing battlemented design.
- 3 There are two **paintings** on the west side of the chapel. One depicts 'Christ in the House of Simon the Leper' and is believed to be a 16th-century Venetian design. The other is 'Lamentation over the dead Christ' and is thought to be of late 16th-century Mannerist design. Again, the artists are unknown.
- 4 Fine examples of Victorian **Commandment tablets** are placed above the north door. They are made of zinc, with beautiful lettering and an intricate gold and blue border.
- 5 It is believed that the **stained glass** was part of the original design of the church and possibly installed around 1530 and designed by the King's Glazier, Galyon Hone. Eight of the original twelve Apostle images survive on the north side and eight of the twelve Prophets on the south, with a ninth Prophet now moved to the north.
- 6 The **pulpit** is one of the Victorian additions to the chapel. It is typically neo-Gothic, octagonal in shape, with carved panels and pointed tracery. It sits on a stone base.
- 7 Tucked away behind the pulpit, the **Smith monument** commemorates the death of Ambrose Smith, grandson of William Smith. The tablet depicts an angel bearing the family coat of arms with the family motto, 'LYVE TO DYE, DYE TO LYVE', inscribed above.
- 8 The exquisitely-wrought **communion rail**, decorated with delicate painted iron scrollwork, is probably one of the Victorian additions to the chapel. The **lectern** is of the same workmanship.
- 9 The **reredos** is an impressive neo-classical design, installed during Elizabeth Johnson's refurbishment of 1744. The central painting is a copy of Murillo's 'The Two Trinities'. The reredos was installed during the chapel's refurbishment in 1744, undertaken by Elizabeth Johnson, who lived at the neighbouring hall.

- 10 The white marble **Johnson family monuments** commemorate Matthew Johnson (d. 1723) and his son Geoffrey (d. 1742). They were probably commissioned by Matthew's daughter, Elizabeth.

