

The Places of Worship

Key to facilities:

- Refreshments   Disabled access
- Parking   Partial disabled access



   Parking in Calder-Vale Road is recommended

1 *The Chantry Chapel of St Mary The Virgin, Wakefield Bridge, Wakefield, WFI 5PL*

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The chapel is one of only three surviving medieval bridge chapels in the country. It was built as an integral part of the town's new stone bridge, to which it forms a buttress, and was first licensed in 1356. Its purpose was for the saying of Mass for the souls of the dead to ease their passage through purgatory.

Following the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century it fell into secular hands and was used as a cheesecake shop, a flax-dressers' den, a warehouse, a newsroom, and a cornfactor's office; at one point it was even used to store water which was carried by carts into the town. It was 'rescued' for congregational worship in the 1840s.

The upper part of the chapel, effectively the worship space, was rebuilt to the design of George Gilbert Scott and was reopened in 1848. The ornate front is the third to be erected there: Scott's front, built of soft stone that was unsuited to Wakefield's industrial atmosphere, was so badly eroded that it was replaced in 1939 by one designed by Sir Charles Nicholson and built of more durable stone from Darley Dale.



A restoration undertaken by the Friends in the 1990s and undertaken by William Aneley Ltd has provided six new label stops (the stone heads) on the exterior south side of the chapel: these are of known people – the former bishop of Wakefield the Right Reverend Nigel McCullough, the Dowager Lady St Oswald, the Right Hon Walter Harrison JP, Canon Bryan Ellis, a founder of the Friends Ray Perraudin, and one of Aneley's workmen. Some conservation of the interior label stops has also been undertaken.

The chapel has some fine examples of Victorian stained glass showing scenes from the Gospels and created by Barnett and Son of York and Wailes of Newcastle. In the past the chapel has been the subject of many topographical artists and some of their images will be on display in the Hepworth Wakefield, the nearby art gallery which is to open in 2011. The care of the chapel is vested in the Dean and Chapter of Wakefield Cathedral but its repair and maintenance is financed by The Friends of Wakefield Chantry Chapel.

Eucharist is celebrated on the first Sunday of each month at 4.30pm.

Group visits and talks can be arranged throughout the year by contacting the chair of the Friends, Kate Taylor, 01924 372748 or email kate@airtime.co.uk



Date	Event / activity	Times
Sat 29 May	Open church and Talks	1pm–3pm
Wed 2 June	Open church and Talks	11am–1pm

