

FOST news

Friends of St Thomas' Church Northlew

A happy new year to you all! Thank you for supporting major church events during 2025 - the Art & photography exhibition, the annual Open Day and the Nativity display. These raised funds for the church, the local Hospices and Devon Historic Churches.

FOST website

Most funders now expect applicants to have an active online presence to find out more about them and their work before issuing grants. So FOST is building a website - with the help of Pynto in Hatherleigh - to promote the Friends and their role in the care of the church building and churchyard.

The website will record the history of the church and users will be able to access past copies of FOST news, join as Members and make donations via a secure link.

Plans are also afoot to establish a permanent archive of our church history and preserve crucial documents for future generations. If you hold any items you think should be included please contact Val Welsh valofgreen@gmail.com

The bells, the bells

FOST has granted the funding for a new set of bell ropes. All six are now badly worn so it's time for replacements which will be hand made by Avon Ropes from 100% British wool.

At the same time, the fourth bell (B#, dated 1772) has cracked and needs specialist welding. A Faculty has been submitted to the Diocesan Advisory Committee in Exeter, and once permission for the repair is granted the project can begin.

The bell will be manouvred from the upper level of the tower, through the clock chamber to the ground and then transported to Bridport. From there to Newmarket for specialist repairs - quite a challenge given the bell weighs in at about 200kg (3cwt, 3qr and 21lb in old money).

Mercifully the work will be supervised by Nicholson Engineering who are very experienced bellfounders. We look forward to hearing all six bells in harmony once more.



Supporting FOST

FOST news is an occasional newsletter with information about our church building and fund raising events. If you would prefer an electronic copy, just let us have your email address.

You can support the Friends' work by taking part in fund raising events but if you would like to get more actively involved and/or become a member, please contact Jackie Ellis jackie.ann.ellis@btinternet.com 01837 658750 .

Secure donations can be made using our QR code - and you can Gift Aid your contribution at the same time.



FOST is a Registered Charity
No 1070123

FOST facts

The bible is almost as long as the Harry Potter series which has over one million words in its seven books. Most King James versions today have between 750,000 and 800,000 words.

Coming up

Services are held on Sundays at 09:30. Communion is generally on the second Sunday of the month.

Saturday 17 January

Burns' Night, Northlew Church Room

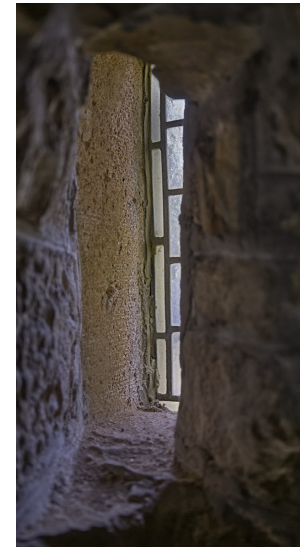
Sunday 25 January

09:00 Bacon baps at Church Gate Farm followed by the annual Plough Service celebrating farmers and farming at the beginning of the year

Sunday 22 February

13:00 Steak pie lunch, Victory Hall

FOST finds



Any idea where you can find this window in the church?

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Spotlight on...

In 1604 King James I of England ordered scholars to make an accurate translation of the Bible to become the only version to be read in church. He did not want any commentary in the margins. The work was published in 1611 and revised in 1769.

Our copy of the *King James' Bible* displayed on the old oak chest is inscribed Christmas 1902. It may have been a gift to mark the coronation of Edward VII and Alexandra or given by a benefactor.

Apart from its weight, it has two distinctive features. Firstly, it contains the fourteen books of the Apocrypha inserted between the Old and New Testaments. This is a collection of ancient books, believed by some to be of doubtful origin, and probably written some time between 200 BC and 100 AD.

The second is the use of the long s.

The long s

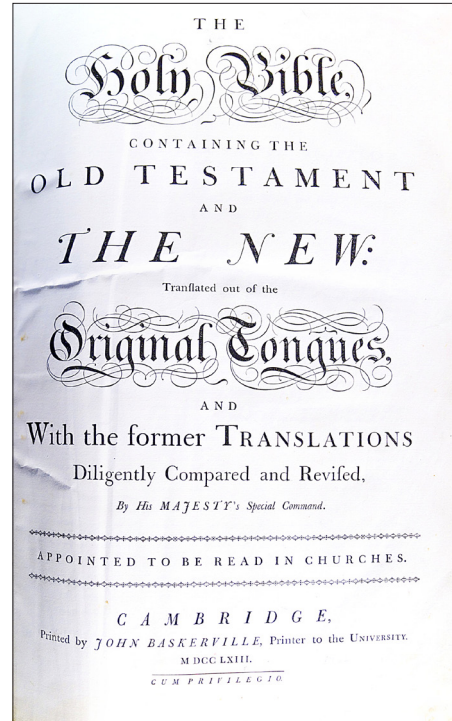
The long s is an s and never was an f. Look closely and you'll see that this mysterious character has a short line through its vertical but only on its left side.

It does not go all the way through, as with a proper f.

ſf

3 Therefore ^b shall the land mourn, and every one that dwelleth therein shall languish, with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven; yea, the fishes of the sea also shall be taken away.

Hosea chapter 4 verse 3 is a good illustration of the long



There were strict rules for the use of the long s in print:

- It was only applied to lowercase s, not uppercase S.
- If an s was at the beginning or in the middle of a word, the long s was used (eg *ſurprife* for surprise).
- The long s was not used when s was the last letter of the word.
- If a word included ss, a double long s was used unless the letters were at the end of a word; if so it was finished with a regular s, as in *poſſeſs* (possess), not *poſſeff*.

Question: How would the words *Sausages* and *sassiness* be written?

Brown's Self-Interpreting Bible

Another gem we have at Northlew is the Self-interpreting Bible produced by Rev John Brown in 1778, a Scottish preacher and theologian. It belonged to the Davy family and includes part of their family register.

This is a commentary-filled Bible with an introduction, extensive marginal notes, cross-references, and summaries to help readers understand the text. This popular and influential work was aimed at the average reader and was printed in many editions, often including full page engravings and maps.

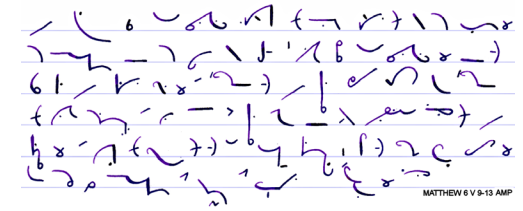
There are over five thousand critical and explanatory notes, and concluding remarks on each book of scripture.



Some alternative versions

At St Thomas' we use the *New International Version* - which was originally published in 1973 and revised in 1978 and 1984. It provides a contemporary English translation by using more modern language.

There are some other interesting translations, including one in Pitman shorthand.



The Lord's Prayer in Pitman

The *Bible in Cockney* was produced by Mike Coles in 2001 for his pupils in East London using slang to help them understand the meaning. Here is the start of the Lord's Prayer.

Hello, Dad, up there in good ol' Heaven, Your name is well great and holy, and we respect you, Guv. We hope we can all 'ave a butcher's at Heaven and be there as soon as possible: and we want to make you happy, Guv, and do what you want 'ere on earth, just like what you do in Heaven.

The *Condensed Reader's Digest Bible* was published in 1982. Although the 'regular' Bible is a best-seller, it's one of the least read because of its length and sometimes repetitious style. So in this version the Old Testament is reduced by 50% and the New by 25%.