

St Thomas Gristhorpe

The church of St Thomas, Gristhorpe, was built in the year 1897 by William Myers-Beswick. It was dedicated to the glory of God and in memory of William's son Brian who died of dyptheria in 1896.

An extract from a newspaper at that time gives some details of the building: "The Lord of the Manor of Gristhorpe has recently erected a building in memory of his son, Mr Brian Myers-Beswick who died a year ago and was buried in the family vault at Filey. The edifice, which stands at the top end of the village, is built entirely of fir wood, with an outer covering of galvanised iron. It was licensed by the Archbishop of York this month and will now be available for all religious ceremonies, with the exception of Holy Matrimony and the publishing of Banns."

The newspaper article continues to mention a harmonium, a small font and lighting from two swinging lamps, before continuing:

"It is licensed, not consecrated; that is to say it will not have the sacredness of a Church which can be used only for devotional purposes, but will allow for it to be used as a school, as a reading room or for any seemly purpose. It can hold over 100 people."

The Bishop of Hull dedicated the Church with a crowded congregation present, assisted by the then vicar of Filey, Canon Cooper, the vicar of Hunmanby and the vicar of Folkton. The Bishop took as his text, "I was glad when they said unto me, we will go into the house of the Lord" (Psalm 122). The stained glass window came from St Paul's Avenue Road, close to the London home of the Beswicks and was a gift. It shows Mary presenting the infant Christ to Simeon in the Temple at Jerusalem with the text "Lord, now lettest Thy servant depart in peace". Mr Beswick departed this life peacefully only seven years later, aged 54.

Gristhorpe Infant School was opened in 1899 in the church building. In all its 72 years in existence, it had only four regular teachers. It started with around twenty nine pupils but by the end this reduced to just ten and so was no longer viable to be kept open as a school.

Over the years various additions were made to the church furnishings including

the lectern and hymn board (1904) the altar rail (1909) and the War Memorial (1918). In 1913 Mrs Agnes Beswick had the church building extended along the north side. From the mid 1930's for some years the church services were held on Sunday afternoons.

Today a Family Service is held at 11.00am every Sunday morning with Communion on the Third Sunday each month. The congregation is warm and

friendly and includes Pam Mawson (church warden, pictured), former church warden Viv Allen and Anne Mead (church treasurer and recently “Recognised Parish Assistant” for worship).