

How did All Saints grow?

This church mostly developed during the 1100s to 1400s. York's population was growing and All Saints North Street expanded to meet their needs.

How did it expand in the 1100s?

The original church building was quite small and had no side aisles. It was extended to the east (towards today's High Altar) in stages, reaching the current east end around 1150. In 1180, the church floor was raised and the North Aisle built. The South Nave Aisle was added about 1190 and the building expanded to the west in stages. Two doors either side of the church replaced the original west door.

When did building stop?

The Lady Chapel was added around 1200 – 1210. The whole west wall was rebuilt with the current tower, octagon and spire in 1394. The angel ceiling in the Chancel was added in 1472. Very little changed until the 1800s when the south wall was rebuilt, widening the South Chancel Aisle. In 1910 the Anchorhold was built. More recently the Vestry was extended and a medieval-style tile pavement laid in the Lady Chapel.

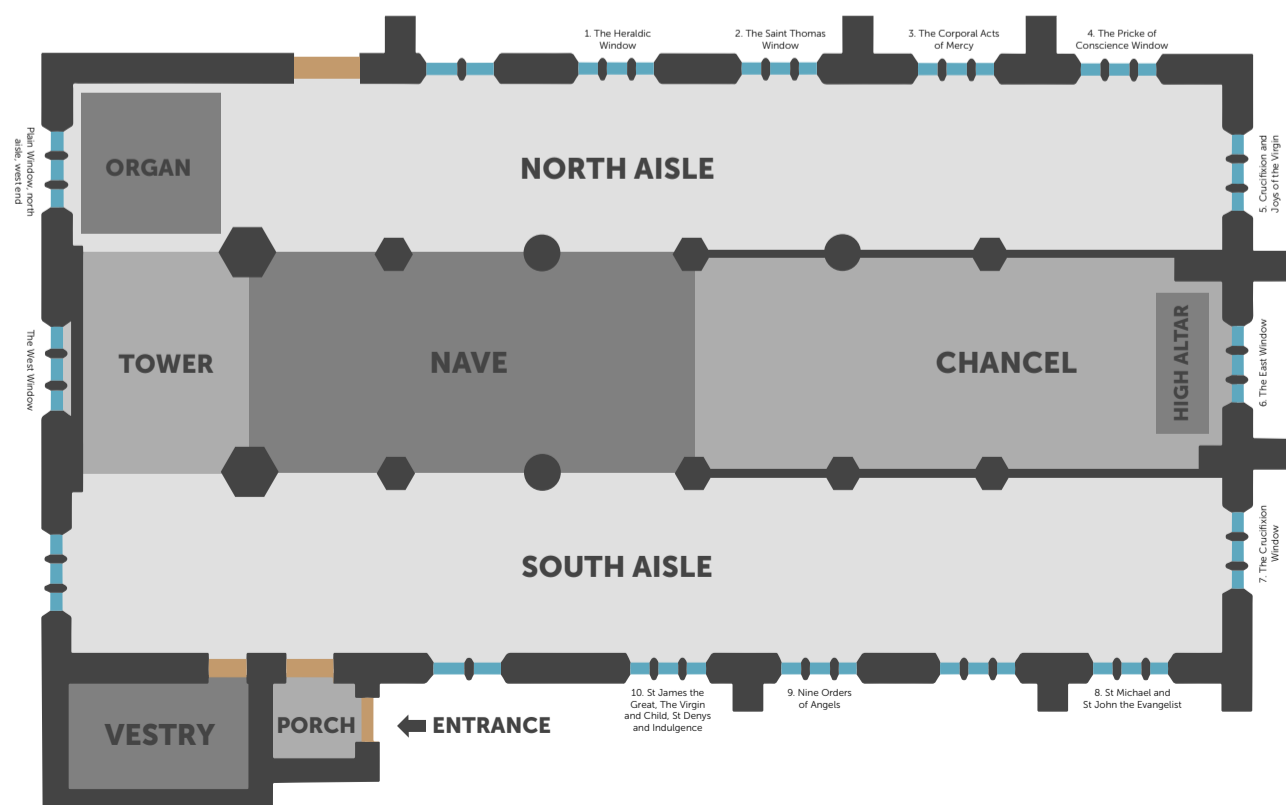
Look for... the half-burnt angel in the ceiling, a reminder of when the church was set on fire in 1997.



View of the Chancel from outside the screen, looking east towards the High Altar (the Roman column is beyond the screen on the left, several feet away behind the pink flowers)



This was the church in about 1800



The Lady Chapel at Christmas

Beyond the building

All Saints North Street was more than just this building. It played an important role in the lives of people who lived and worked in this part of York city centre.

Where was the parish?

Today the parish of All Saints still covers the same small area. It extends to the river where, in the church's earlier years, trading vessels from Ireland and Europe loaded and unloaded goods. It was a parish of ordinary working people with a mix of small tenements and wealthy merchant's houses. Some parishioners became rich through trading, giving donations to this church in thanks and to save their souls.

What was outside the church?

The Rectory was to the west of the church. The Church Ale House was built near it. An anchorhold (a house for an anchorite or hermit) was built soon after 1394. The cottages built to the north of the church in 1396 were for the Chantry priests. Wealthy people paid for these priests to sing masses (services) to save their souls.



The cottages today



About 1900 the corner cottage was a sweet shop



The church in the 19th century – note that the cottages are still plastered on the outside