



About St Michael's

Nestling in the rolling Lincolnshire Wolds, this delightful church houses many notable historic features, including wall paintings and decorative wood carvings.

The name Burwell derives from the Old English words 'Burh' and 'wella' which mean 'spring by the fort'. The settlement appears in the Domesday Book as 'Burwelle', with a church and mill listed as present in the town.

Records show the current church was built during the Middle Ages on the site of a Benedictine priory founded between 1100 and 1107 by Ansgot of Burwell.

Ansgot granted the church to the monks of Sauve-Majeure Abbey in Aquitaine, Southern France, in return for hospitality he received there. Some sources say the original founder of the church was John de Hay, a local baron.

Although Norman features can be seen throughout the church, most of the fabric dates from the late-15th and early-16th centuries. Various repairs and restorations were also carried out during the 18th century.

St. Michael's was vested with the Churches Conservation Trust in 1982.

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We've saved over 340 beautiful buildings which attract more than a million visitors a year. With our help and with your support they are kept open and in use – living once again at the heart of their communities.



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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Church of St Michael

Burwell



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The historic church of St Michael

10 things to see before you leave...

- 1 Under the tower roof are three carved **angels**, all dating from the medieval period.
- 2 The **font** is octagonal and decorated in the Perpendicular style, with shields in quatrefoils. The inscription states it was given to the church by Thomas Fitzwilliam in 1468.
- 3 The **pulpit** dates to the Jacobean period and carries a design of blank arches and panelling.
- 4 On the north wall of the chancel arch is a fragment of a **wall painting**. This depicts a crowned head which may date to the 12th or 13th century and is marked with an M, possibly for Maria.
- 5 This architectural feature, possibly a stave base is highly decorative and dates from the later Middle Ages.
- 6 The early 12th-century **chancel arch** is richly decorated. Outer roll and billet mouldings feature prominently.
- 7 The rustic oak **communion rails** were carved in 1910 and are decorated with bunches of grapes draping down from scrolling vines.
- 8 The **east window** contains stained glass dating from 1934 and depicts St Michael.
- 9 The elaborately carved oak **reading desk** was constructed using panels from the backboard of the Jacobean pulpit and stands on a pedestal of c. 1880.
- 10 Blocked arches on the **external south wall** indicate the church once had a south aisle.

