

The Willoughby parish includes the hamlets of Sloothby and, since the closure of St Andrew's church, that of Claxby St Andrew as well as number of adjacent hamlets.

The church was built in the early 14<sup>th</sup> through to the 15<sup>th</sup> century, although there is evidence of an earlier 13<sup>th</sup> century structure in a chancel window, south side doorway and an incised carved tombstone in the South aisle. The interior was much remodelled in 1880 by James Fowler of Louth. It is a Grade 1 listed building.

The organ which was installed in 1856 sits under an unusual double arch in the chancel area.

From the floor of the tower rises a medieval ladder described by Nikolaus Pevsner as being "wonderfully primeval". The tower itself houses six bells that are rung at times of celebration and by visiting bell ringers.

The window facing South by the font depicts the life of Captain John Smith, baptised in this font in 1580. He was notably associated with Pocahontas and as president of the Virginia Colony at the age of 27 led the survival of the first English speaking settlement in North America many years before the Pilgrim Fathers.

The window was paid for by Phillip Barbour of Kentucky, a promoter of John Smith. He also provided for the windows in the chancel showing people associated with the Virginia Company. Near the South door is a commemoration plaque with the Stars & Stripes and flag of Virginia presented by the Jamestown/Yorktown Foundation.

There was recently a severe outbreak of dry rot which invaded the space under the pew platforms necessitating the need to destroy the pews, hence the open space within the nave.

St Helena's Church of England Primary School in the village holds whole school services in the church at times of celebration through the year: e.g. Easter, Harvest, Christingle.

"Normal" services are held twice a month; Morning Prayer on the second Sunday and a Eucharist on the fourth Sunday of the month.

The church remains open during the day for visitors and for private prayer.