

Welcome to St William's Church

The church of St William of York was originally built in 1904 and consecrated in 1905. The Architects were C and CM Hadfield and the building they delivered was a simple stone faced church in the Gothic style with seating for 100.

By the late 1960s the congregation had outgrown this church and the Architects John Rochford and Partners were appointed to redesign the building. The result was a radical remodelling of the church in a modernist style with a copper roof supported by columns outside the existing walls. The new design with its continuous south facing clerestory windows and timber boarded ceiling and restrained interior decoration provides a light and airy space with a calm and prayerful atmosphere.

The church is graced with a number of high quality pieces of church art that are carefully integrated with the architectural form of the church and which 'tell the story' of salvation in a logical and carefully thought out sequence.

The Church is 'read' clockwise; following the Christian year; and the Christian life.

The Icon:

Waiting, The Incarnation

The Way of the Cross:

Jesus' life on earth; the cost of love

The Resurrection Window and the Tabernacle:

New life revealed; Light in Darkness

Christ Ascending and the Altar:

Eternal Priest, Eternal King

Living Water:

The Gift of the Spirit quenches our inner thirst

Saints in Heaven Window (and the Icon):

The hope and promise of everlasting Glory.

Holy Spirit Window: Fire on Earth

The Spirit refines us for our mission

'I have come so that they might have life and have it to the full'

Jn 10:10.

Icon of Our Lady and the Child Jesus



·Η ΠΑΝΤΩΝ ΕΛΠΙΣ The Hope of All

he pantonelpis;

panton = of all, of everything; elpis = hope, expectation

We believe the Icon was obtained in Greece when the Church was reordered.

Mary cooperates in the start of our salvation; her acceptance, her willingness to cooperate, her bearing of the Word, mark the start of the new covenant we celebrate each time we come into Church. She is a model for us all. Her role is always to draw others into the mystery of her Son. She greets us as we enter the Church, and shows the way

Reflection

The Old Testament is permeated with a longing for God to be with his people, for God-with-us, and with a confidence that it will happen. (Is 25:7,9. Is 63:19 Jer 31:31,33)

This longing reaches its peak in Mary. In mystical intimacy, the Hope of All was conceived. (Lk 1:31,35,38. Lk 1:46-49. Jn 1:1,9,14)

Jesus fulfils all hopes, all expectations; it is He who was longed for. (Heb 7:18,19. 1 Pet 1:10)

Mary is the mother of all Hope.

Scripture

The days are coming – it is Yahweh who speaks – when I will make a new covenant with the House of Israel...Deep within them I will plant the Law, writing it on their hearts. Then I will be their God and they shall be my people. Jer 31:31,33

Listen! You are to conceive and bear a son.....the Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will cover you with its shadow and so the child will be holy, and will be called Son of God.....I am the handmaid of the Lord, let what you have said be done to me. Lk 1: 31,35,38

The Word was made flesh, he lived among us,... Jn 1:1,9,14

The Way of the Cross



The Life of Love

The Stations of the Cross are a traditional depiction of the last events of Jesus' life. They have fourteen frames.

Carmel Cauchi was commissioned to design and make these. Each tablet was made of ceramic and the muted colours were painted on with liquid glass which was then fired in a kiln at 900°. They were installed in 1981.

They form a continuous frieze, encouraging us to see the drama as whole and drawing us up the church. The figure of Jesus becomes more and more bowed down as the frieze progresses.

The first seven frames are:

1. Jesus before Pilate (Jn 18:28-19:16). He is condemned.
2. Jesus accepts his cross
3. Jesus falls
4. Jesus meets his mother
5. Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus (Mt 27:32)
6. Jesus face is wiped
7. Jesus falls again

Reflection

The first of the stations shows Jesus before Pilate. Jesus' words then:

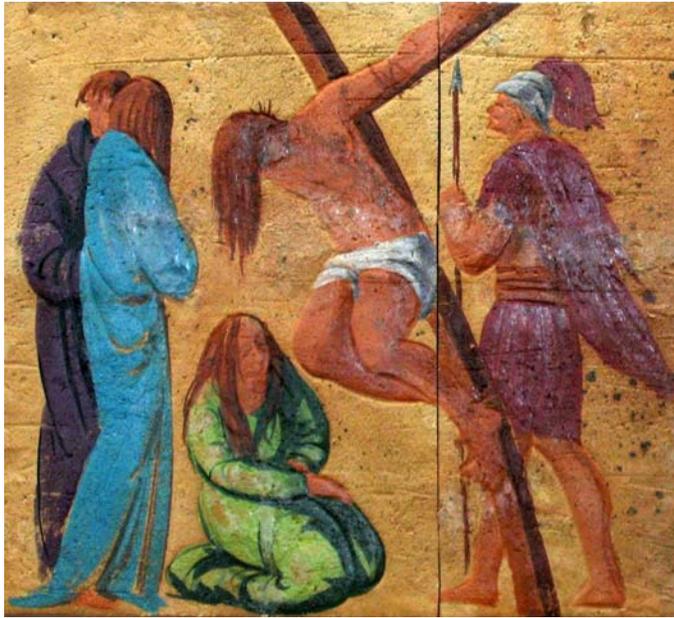
"I was born for this, I came into the world for this: to bear witness to the truth" (Jn 18:38)

link naturally to the Icon recalling His birth and show that His life led inexorably to this. Jesus' whole life was a journey to the cross, made in love.

The first two stations depict His strength of purpose, His resolve.

Our journey in faith starts with the Word born in us and continues as a daily call to sacrifice ourselves for love of others. The journey of life, like these stations, is continuous.

The Way of the Cross



The Life of Love

The second seven frames are:

8. Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem (Lk 23: 27-8)

9. Jesus falls a third time

10. Jesus is stripped of his clothes (Jn 19:23)

11. Jesus is crucified

12. Jesus dies on the cross, with his mother, another Mary, the beloved disciple, and the centurion (Jn 19:25-8, Mt 27:54)

13. Joseph of Arimathaea takes Jesus' body (Mt 27:59)

14 Jesus is laid in the tomb (Mt 27:59)

Words from the Cross

Father, forgive them... Lk 23:34

Today you will be with me in paradise. Lk 23:43

Woman, this is your son...this is your mother Jn 19:27

I am thirsty. Jn 19:28

My God, my God, why have you deserted me? Mk 15:34 (Ps21:2)

Father into your hands I commit my spirit. Lk 23:46

It is accomplished. Jn 19:3

The Resurrection

The final frame is detached.

Jesus rests in death on the Sabbath breaking forth in a new creation early on the Sunday morning.



Resurrection



Designed/made in
1972–3 by James
Atkinson Crombie
(1913–2000)

A fractured blood red cross stretches between earth and heaven and embraces the crosses of the suffering earth.

A dazzling sun scatters the gloomy purple clouds of darkness, parting them as Moses parted the waters of the Red Sea bathing the earth in light, creating a rainbow spectrum of colour.

Reflection

The Sabbath, when Jesus was in the tomb, commemorates God resting after creation. The first act of that creation, on the first day of the week, was *Let there be light*; Jesus' resurrection is the revelation of the new creation; He is the Light, the rising sun. The darkness that came over the earth at the crucifixion is dispelled.

Very early in the morning on the first day of the week they went to the tomb, just as the sun was rising. Mk 16:2

The risen life of Jesus does not remove suffering from the world but transforms and redeems this suffering. Sacrificial love becomes the gateway to eternal life. The blood red cross reminds us that the resurrection came through the suffering and death of Jesus who *made peace by the blood of his cross*. (Col 1:20).

The Tabernacle



The resurrection window is located directly above the tabernacle which contains the reserved sacrament, the risen presence of Christ in the church.

It is the risen Lord who is present in the Tabernacle; it is the risen Lord whom we receive in Holy Communion; it is the risen Lord from whom we draw strength; it is the risen Lord we worship.

The Font



The font marks the start of new life: dying with Christ we rise with him.

The marble plinth on the font links it to the altar and the tabernacle, where the same material is used.

Baptism leads to the Table of the Lord and the Heavenly banquet.

Christ Ascending

The altar is green Swedish marble installed in 1972

Christ Ascending

Made from mild steels rods and strip by the internationally renowned artist John Petts, 1973



From the altar of sacrifice, Christ ascends in glory to His Father's right hand.

He is clothed as Priest.

He is crowned as King.

He links earth and heaven with glorious light.

He bears the marks of the cross.

The material for Christ Ascending is steel, a sign of this place, this city.

Reflection

The Glory of the Cross revealed. With outstretched arms Jesus Christ presents, eternally, His sacrifice on our behalf. We join with His offering at every time we meet for Eucharist around the altar. He is Eternal Priest and Eternal King

Just as the figure is made from the material of this place, so our everyday human nature is, in Christ, transformed.

Scripture

Jesus rose higher than all the heavens to fill all things.....Eph 4:10

...in Jesus, the Son of God, we have the supreme high priest who has gone through to the highest heaven... it is not as if we had a high priest who was incapable of feeling our weakness with us; but we have one who has been tempted in every way that we are, but he is without sin. Let us be confident, then, in approaching the throne of grace, that we shall have mercy from him and find grace when we are in need of help. Heb 4:14-16

Jesus, because he remains forever, can never lose his priesthood. It follows, then, that his power to save is utterly certain, since he is living for ever to intercede for all who come to God through him. Heb 7:25.

The Gift of the Spirit

Water of Life

The blue of the wall and the blue of the carpet signify the water of the Spirit, flowing in torrents from above and then out through the Church.

A vision of Ezekiel (47:1-12) pictures a spring rising in the Temple and flowing out, growing deeper and deeper and nourishing all in its path.

That vision is taken up in the last two chapters of the book of Revelations. God Almighty and the Lamb are now the temple (Rev 21:22) and the river of life flows from the throne of God and of the Lamb (Rev 22:1).

Scripture

Anyone who drinks the water I shall give will never be thirsty again: the water that I shall give will turn into a spring inside him, welling up to eternal life. Jn 4:14

...the One who sits on the throne will spread his tent over them. They will never hunger or thirst again; neither the sun nor scorching wind will ever plague them, because the Lamb who is at the throne will be their shepherd and will lead them to springs of living water; and God will wipe away all tears from their eyes. Rev 7:16,17

Then the One sitting on the throne spoke: 'Now I am making the whole creation new....I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give water from the well of life free to anybody who is thirsty;.... Rev 21:5,6

Then let all who are thirsty come: all who want it may have the water of life, and have it free. Rev 22:17

Saints in Heaven

The Tree of Life



The stained glass panel was painted by the master glass painter, Paul Quail and this was installed in the chancel's south window in 1987 above the benches for musicians and choir.

A rainbow arches over a tree standing at the bottom of a mountain with water running down it; the foreground is filled with people making music.

This vision of heaven draws heavily from the Book of Revelation, which in its turn draws on various Old Testament images – the rainbow (Gn 9:16, Ez 1:28) and the tree of life (Gn 2:9, 3:24).

In the figurative language of the Book of Revelation Mount Zion is the site of the New Jerusalem, the City of God, and is dominated not by a temple but by the throne of God and of the Lamb.

Wonderful light, described through precious stones, radiates from the throne, which is surrounded with a rainbow.

A river (a reference to the Spirit) flowing from the throne of God and the Lamb (Ezk 47:7,12; Rev 21:23) waters the 'tree of life'. The leaves and fruit of the tree of life have curative powers (Rev 22:2). They are the heavenly banquet which sustains the saints in everlasting musical praise.

Reflection

The resurrection of Jesus promises everlasting life, the culmination of God's goodness towards us.

The cross, a tree of death in ordinary terms, is, by the resurrection, revealed as the tree of life, a source of food.

We are reminded of what is promised, of the joy of those who have gone before us, of the communion of saints.

This vision encompasses all the saints: the apostles, martyrs, patron saints, those we have special devotion to, and also all the undeclared saints.

We particularly celebrate the undeclared saints connected with St William's church either through worship here in the past or through connection with its people.

Every time we gather round the Table of the Lord, the saints' heavenly instruments join with ours to the praise of God.

We have a foretaste of the heavenly banquet at each Eucharist.

Scripture: the Rainbow

...the Spirit possessed me and I saw a throne standing in heaven, and the One who was sitting on the throne, and the Person sitting there looked like a diamond and a ruby. There was a rainbow encircling the throne and this looked like an emerald. Rev 4:2-3

When the bow is in the clouds I shall see it and call to mind the everlasting Covenant between God and every living creature of every kind that is found on the earth Gn 9:16

Scripture: the Tree of Life

...in front of the garden of Eden he posted cherubs, and the flame of a flashing sword, to guard the tree of life. Gn 3:24

...those who prove victorious I will feed from the tree of life set in God's paradise. Rev 2:7

Happy are those who will have washed their robes clean, so that they will have the right to feed on the tree of life....Rev 22:14

The angel showed me the river of life, rising from the throne of God and of the Lamb and flowing crystal clear down the middle of the city street. On either side of the river were the trees of life, which bear twelve crops of fruit a year, one in each month, and the leaves of which are the cure for the pagans. The ban will be lifted. The throne of God and the Lamb will be in its proper place in the city; his servants will worship him, they will see him face to face and his name will be written on their foreheads. It will never be night again and they will not need lamplight or sunlight because the Lord God will be shining on them. They will reign for ever and ever. Rev 22:1-5

Scripture: Mount Zion

In the days to come the mountain of the Temple of Yahweh shall tower above the mountains and be lifted higher than the hills. All the nations shall stream to it, peoples without number will come to it; Is 2:2-3

What you have come to is Mount Zion and the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem where the millions of angels have gathered for the festival, with the whole Church in which everyone is a 'first-born son' and a citizen of heaven. Heb 12:22

I saw Mount Zion, and standing on it the Lamb.... There in front of the throne they were singing a new hymn.... Rev 14:1-3



Holy Spirit Window

Fire on the Earth

The window was designed and made by Sally Pollitzer in 2007.

The fire of the Spirit descends. The Spirit is bright light, refining heat, creative power.

In the Old Testament, bright fire is a sign of God's presence and holiness, of 'the glory of the LORD':

- at the covenant sacrifice of Abram when he is given 'the Promised Land';
- at the call of Moses (the burning bush); at the Exodus (the pillar of fire);
- in the giving of the Law (the fiery mountain); with the Ark of the Covenant, which held the tablets of the Law;
- at Elijah's sacrifice; at the inauguration of Temple worship.

All these are brought to fulfilment in, and point towards, the Holy Spirit coming upon Mary and then on the Church.

Reflection

Mary is overshadowed by the Spirit. The start of ‘*making all things new*’ (Rev 21:5), is a quiet moment, easily overlooked.

Mary is ‘the burning bush’ through which God communicates. She is the first to respond to God fully, the first to receive His Son completely, the first to share this gift with others. She is a symbol of, and most perfect realisation of, the Church. Mary conceives and bears Jesus, Emmanuel, the definitive presence of God among us: in Him, all hope is fulfilled.

This is the sense as we come in, when we can see neither icon nor window clearly.

As we go out the window can be seen fully.

The sense is no longer of the Incarnation but of Pentecost – the birth of the Church.

Now, as at the first Pentecost, Mary prays for the Spirit to come down on the assembled people.

...all these joined constantly in prayer, together with some women, including Mary the mother of Jesus...Acts1:14

Like Mary, we are to let the Spirit into our innermost being.

....and there appeared to them tongues as of fire; these separated and came to rest on the head of each of them. They were filled with the Holy Spirit.....Acts 2:3-4

The refining fire of God’s presence enters us:

- we are transformed and purified;
- we know the holiness, the fire, of God within us;
- we conceive; we bear fruit;
- the Word speaks through us.

We have a mission as we go out.

Scripture

John declared 'I baptise you with water....he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and with fire'. Lk 3:16

[Jesus said] I have come to bring fire to the earth, and how I wish it were blazing already. Lk 12:49

In the one Spirit we were all baptised, Jews as well as Greeks, slaves as well as citizens, and one Spirit was given to us all to drink. 1 Cor 12:13.

There are a variety of gifts but always the same Spirit; there are all sorts of service to be done, but always the same Lord; working in all sorts of different ways in different people, it is the same God working in all of them. The particular way the Spirit is given to each person is for a good purpose. 1 Cor 12:4-7

The Icon

Now too, as we leave, Mary's place is seen clearly.

The Icon is clothed in stainless steel, the same material as the Glorified figure of Christ Ascending. Mary is the first to share in His Glory.

She contemplates her Son eternally. The whole Church is held, in love, between Jesus in Glory, *who fills the whole creation**, who is *everything and is in everything*⁺, and Mary.

* Eph 1:23, literally, *who fills all in all* – hope fully realised. ⁺ Eph 3:11

St William of York, Bishop



The statue of St William, our patronal saint is on the corbel by the entrance to our church. It was from the original church and shows him holding the collapsed bridge.

Died 1154 Canonized 1226
Feast Day June 8th

William Fitzherbert, or ‘of Thwayt’ was a nephew of King Stephen and was appointed Archbishop of York in 1142.

Enemies contested the appointment and did not rest till they had him deposed from his see. William went into retirement as a monk at Winchester and lived a very mortified life, giving an heroic example of patience and resignation. In 1153 the chapter at York re-elected him as Archbishop. As his procession was crossing the Ouse for their triumphal entry into the city of York, the wooden bridge gave way and many fell into the river. William was believed to have saved them through a miracle and a chapel dedication to him was built on the stone bridge that was erected in the same place.

William was then only Archbishop for thirty days – he was taken ill whilst celebrating Mass on Trinity Sunday and died on 11th June 1194, perhaps from fever, perhaps from poison. He was buried in York Minster.

Pope Honorius III declared him a saint in 1227.

He reminds us of the deep local roots of the Church.