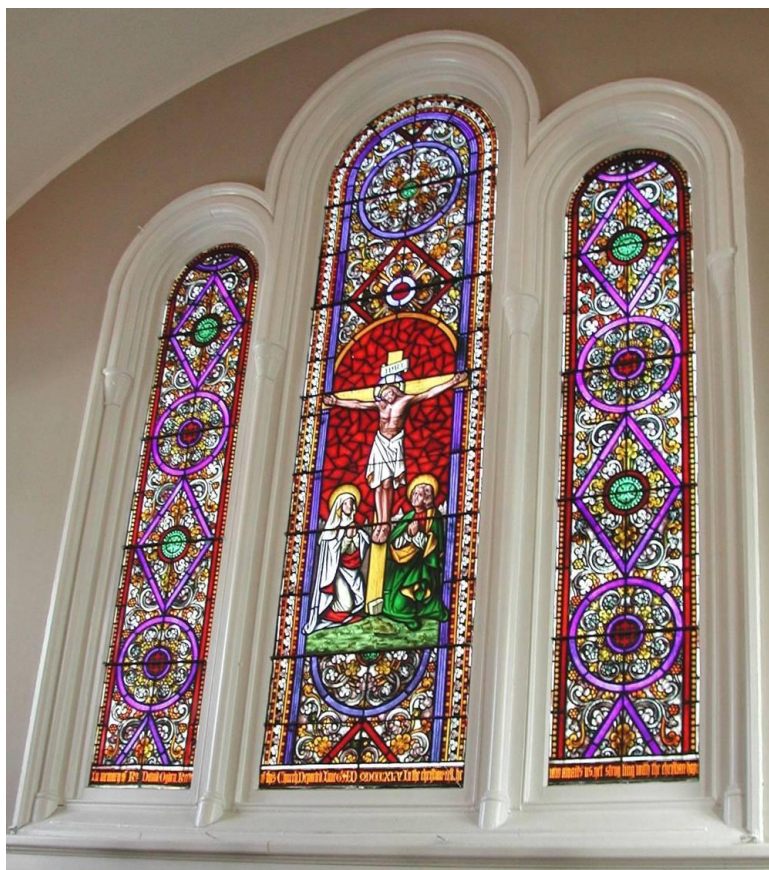


The Windows of St. Michael's

*New Canaan's oldest sanctuary
Erected 1833*



"All are Welcome in this Place"

The Windows of St. Michael's

As was common practice in the 1800s, the original windows of our historic sanctuary were simple, square cornered with comparatively small glass panes. Over the years, the windows were altered to include circular tops. As the 1800s drew to a close, and the Victorian influence increased, stained glass windows grew in popularity. The majority of stained glass windows of St. Michael's were added to the church façade around the turn of the century when the building was occupied by St. Mark's Episcopal congregation.

Upon entering the nave, the viewer is struck by the extraordinary beauty of eight pairs of stained glass windows that run along the side walls. The windows depict common symbols of the Christian faith. Most of these were given as memorials to such established New Canaan families as the Weeds and Hoyts, and all are believed to have been donated in the year 1902. Their soft, diffused colors and graceful, curving designs are indicative of stained glass artistry of the Victorian period.



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From a vantage point at the rear of the church, proceeding forward toward the chancel, you will see on the left side:

- An equilateral triangle with trefoil, a symbol of the Holy Trinity
- A Star of David, the symbol for the creator God
- An open book, symbolizing the Holy Scriptures
- A dove, the symbol of the Holy Spirit descending at Christ's baptism
- The letters IHS, the capital Greek letters iota-eta-sigma, a monogram for Jesus, the first three letters of "Jesus" in Greek
- A Greek Chi and Rho superimposed, a symbol for the Christ (first two letters of "Christ" in Greek)
- A pelican pierces its breast to feed its offspring with its own blood, symbolizing Christ's sacrifice on the cross
- A chalice or cup, symbolic of the Last Supper

On the right side of the hall, from rear to front you will see:

- A cross represented as an anchor, the cross of hope
- A Celtic cross with a superimposed crown, signifying our risen Lord and King
- A crown, signifying Christ's kingship
- A lamb, signifying Christ's sacrifice, the Lamb of God
- The Greek letters Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end of the alphabet; in Revelation Christ is described as the Alpha and Omega, the first and last
- Wheat and Grapes, symbols of Christ's body and blood we share in the Eucharist as bread and wine

During a period of growth and expansion, the lower half of one of these pairs of windows was removed in order to facilitate a door leading to the hallway and Fellowship Hall.

The Windows of St. Michael's

Moving forward in the hall to the chancel, take note of the small window to the left. Believed to be of the Tiffany School, this window depicts a 12-year-old Jesus in the temple of Jerusalem. Luke 2:41-52 tells the story of young Jesus lingering behind in Jerusalem following a Passover celebration. Jesus is found in the temple sitting among teachers, listening to them and asking questions. This passage is known to illustrate the transition from childhood, as Jesus increases in stature and wisdom and in favor with God and men. Prominently positioned above the font where we welcome all into our faith through baptism, the window shows Jesus pointing to the 4th commandment, "Honor thy father and thy mother".



The diminutive window was presented to honor the memory of Miss Katherine Bright, an innovative figure in developing the "Children's Guild" of St. Mark's in the late 1880s.

The Windows of St. Michael's

The stunning and inspirational window overlooking the altar (depicted on the cover of this bulletin) was a memorial to Rev. David Ogden, first full-time rector of St. Mark's, who died in 1845, presented by his son, Captain Sereno Ogden. The window itself depicts the crucified Christ with His mother, Mary, and St. John, the beloved disciple, at his feet. The dedicatory inscription on the window moves us past the crucifixion to the resurrection. The inscription reads:

In memory of Rev. David Ogden, Rector of this Church, departed June 6th AD MDCCCXLV. In the Christian's rest, he now awaits us yet struggling with the Christian's hope.

Sadly, the original artist is unknown; however, the window was repainted years later by Daniel Putnam Brinley.

Brinley, a resident of New Canaan and artist of international acclaim, designed six additional windows for the sanctuary. A pair of windows on the right wall within the chancel above the altar, entitled "The Good Samaritan," was created in 1928 as a memorial for Mr. Harold Paget. These two windows can now be found in the St. Mark's building on Oenoke Ridge, artistically incorporated into a single window. The pair of windows set in the left wall of the chancel was removed due to their poor condition. Both sets of chancel windows have been replaced by clear glass, providing superior daylight illumination in the chancel. Two other windows designed by Brinley for the narthex in 1922 were also relocated to the modern St. Mark's building.

The Windows of St. Michael's

One of the loveliest windows at St. Michael's is somewhat hidden in the hallway between the nave and the Fellowship Hall. This small window was given in memory of the daughter of the Rev. W. A. DesBrisay in 1873. A colorful depiction of a soaring dove, this window represents the baptism of Jesus, as told in Luke 3:21-22, "And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased."

The final window at St. Michael's, which should not pass unnoticed, is the steeple gallery window overlooking the entrance doors. It had been painted over at some time in the distant past and was rediscovered during extensive renovations to the gallery and tower in 1983. This interesting window, donated by the St. Agnes Guild in 1906, depicts the symbols of the four Evangelists, the Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion, the Holy Spirit, and the Trinity.

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