

St. James the Apostle

We love our Church and we're glad
to share its beauty and history with you.

Our church building - A Self-guided Tour

Introduction

St James the Apostle is much more than the church building but this built heritage is an important gift that tells our story. It reflects the life and evolution of our church. And, today because of its location surrounded as it is by Concordia and in the heart of Montreal's most commercial centre and because of the beauty of the building and the gardens we are called to respond to our mission daily.

Our Mission. As a community of Anglican Christians set in the heart of Montreal, we are called to nurture our common faith and life through prayer, sacraments, Christian teaching, and fellowship, and to relate to the wider community by sharing faith and responding to needs.

A Self-guided Tour¹

From the outside

The building

The Church of St James the Apostle's charming Gothic Revival grey limestone structure sits on the edge of our garden surrounded by Concordia University on three-sides and facing one of the busiest commercial streets in Montreal on the fourth.

It's hard to tell from the outside, but originally the church was a much smaller, square structure, consisting essentially of what is now the nave. It was designed by the architects Lawford and Nelson² and opened for worship on May 1, 1864. Over the next 50 years as additions to the church were made, the building grew in size and took on a more cross-like shape. The nave extended toward St. Catherine St in 1877. The West Transept added in 1895 and the new chancel in 1899. The East Transept (toward Bishop Street) was designed by architects Saxe and Archibald and added in 1914.

All of this growth and change was made under the direction of St James' first two rectors, the Rev. Canon Jacob Ellegood (1864 – 1911) and the Rev. Canon James Shatford (1912-1935). On a typical Sunday in the 1930s over 1,200 people would regularly gather to worship at the 11 am service.

Today our congregation is much smaller. In 2005, under the leadership of Rev Linda Borden Taylor, our current rector, and with the help of David Wigglesworth, Architect for the Diocese we began a project to recreate our space. Our objective was to create a more flexible worship space that would accommodate fewer parishioners while maintaining the volume and beauty of the church space and visible access to our windows.

¹ This tour guide (written by Deborah Hinton, completed in the Spring 2007 and revised in November 2008) is inspired from notes written by Irene Nerrie, May 2004 and conversations with her, Howard Nerrie, Barbara Whitley, Leslie West, Honor Barrett, Scott Bradford and other knowledgeable members of the congregation as well as David Wigglesworth, Diocesan Architect

² The firm also designed the Mount Royal Cemetery gates

Our building is the result of change. Change in congregation size. Change in the way we worship. Change in the way we serve.

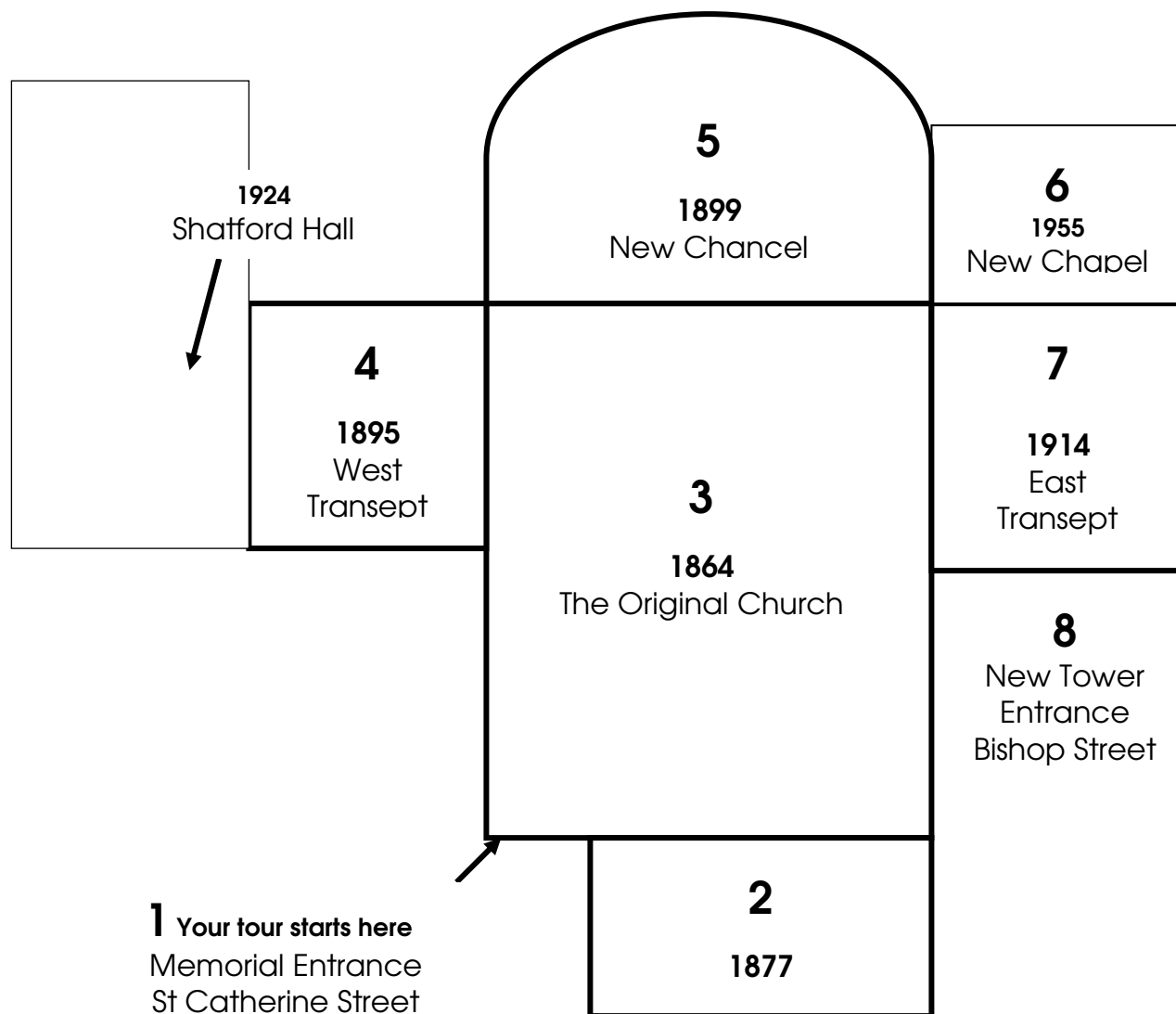
Our garden

We are blessed with a beautiful garden named for David and Ann Harris who passionately cared for the garden until 2007 when Ann passed away. Today, it is the only "green" space on St Catherine Street between Atwater Avenue and Christ Church Cathedral. It's open to the public. And, in the spring, summer and fall it thanks to volunteers who continue David and Ann's work it provides a welcome and peaceful relief to visitors in the busy downtown.

Our disabled access through the garden was installed in 2008 thanks to a generous bequest by a parishioner.

The sound of our bells

If you are visiting on a Sunday or mid-week at noon you may be lucky enough to hear our bells. They were another generous gift of the Phillips family. They're rung before every service as they have been rung since Easter Day, 1889 when they were rung for the first time. First played from a clavier, they're now played from an electronic key board. There are ten bells. The smallest weighs 200 lbs, the largest 20,000 lbs. Each bell is inscribed. One reads "May God bless all whom we call" and another reads "Come let us join our joyful voices".



On the inside

1 Memorial Entrance

As you enter the Memorial Entrance doors of St James the Apostle on St Catherine Street you'll find yourself standing under the bell tower in the main entrance to St James the Apostle.

This is part of the original church that was built in 1864. The three windows remind us of three important ministries: visiting the sick, clothing the naked and feeding the hungry – ministries to the Lord who meets us here in Word and Sacrament, and who will meet us again in the needy beyond our doors.

The Memorial Entrance took four years to complete. The design is arts and crafts.

Notice the nail heads that decorate the panelling and the details including two carved symbols above the memorial – a bird and chicks (love) and peacock (pride).

At an impressive and moving service in April of 1949 the Honour Roll was unveiled by Mr. W. A. Campbell a member of our congregation who'd lost two sons during the war. The dedication was performed by the Rt. Rev. John Dixon, Lord Bishop of Montreal.

The names on the white oak walls of the entrance honour the many parishioners who served in the armed forces in World War II and the memory of those who did not return.

Take the time to read the names of those from our Parish who served and died.

Now, as you continue toward the stairs into the church, notice the beautiful stained glass windows on your right.

There are three panels, one for each of the forces who fought for Canada in World War II - army, navy and air force.

*Go through the doors and into the main part of the Church.
Step up to the top of the stairs to your right.*

2 Raised space

You're now standing in a relatively new part of the church.

By the late 1870s, due to overcrowding at Sunday services St James the Apostle needed more space. The solution was to lengthen the nave toward St. Catherine Street. In 2006 this space was transformed again to better meet the needs of our Community. This time from pews to office, child's play area and a raised open space. The open space is used to gather the processional every Sunday morning for 11am service.

From here, you can look out on the full length of our beautiful church. The wood vaulting and pews create a warm and inviting space. Though you are inside a Gothic Revival church, the ceiling and some of the woodwork give it a more Arts and Crafts feel.

Our windows

And, by now you've probably noticed our Victorian stained glass windows.

There are thirty-one altogether. All of them donated by members of the congregation and their families. You'll find their names in the windows themselves or on plaques next to them. And, thanks the generosity of many parishioners and the Quebec Religious Heritage Foundation and the skill of Detlef Gotsens every stained glass window has been cleaned or cleaned and restored. This work was completed in 2005.

Of particular interest from here:

- Directly in front of you, over the altar is The Ascension window with the figure of Christ in crimson and gold with soft colours in the background. It is dedicated to the Glory of God and in the memory of the late Canon Allan P. Shatford, the second Rector (1911-1935)

- And, directly behind you is a large three-panelled window. The centre panel shows our patron, St. James. This window was presented to the Church in memory of Charles Watson Phillips who died in 1853 and whose family donated the original property on which the church was built. The panel on the left represents the Centurion with the quotation, "He loveth our nation and hath built us a synagogue". It was given by the congregation in memory of Charles Watson Phillips' brother who died in 1872. And, on the far right you'll see the figure of Christ as he appeared to Mary and is in memory of Dame Ann Bain, widow of Charles Phillips who died in 1891.
- Above this three-paneled window you'll see a magnificent Rose Window. It replaced a simple circular window with panes of pale glass that everyone agreed was very unattractive and clashed with the windows below. So, Barbara Whitley worked with Detlef Gotsens to design a new window. And, if you look carefully you'll see the result of her vision: flowers from the Bible including myrrh and "lilies of the field" (anemones).

Before you leave this space look on the wall to your left to find our Cross of Nails.

Cross of Nails

On Sunday May 1, 1964 the Very Rev. H.C.N Williams, Provost of Coventry in England preached at our 100th Anniversary service and presented the Church of St. James the Apostle with our Cross of Nails. The Cross of Nails is a powerful ecumenical symbol of reconciliation and an active Community of the Cross of Nails has grown. Today there are more than 160 centres around the world – churches, hospitals, prisons, schools, etc - that have been called on a journey of 'forgiveness, peace and reconciliation'.

Our Cross was rededicated in a special service (fall 2004) by The Rev'd Dr. Oliver Schuefrac, Coordinator of the Community of the Cross of Nails, International Centre for Reconciliation, Coventry Cathedral. At that time The Coventry Cathedral Litany of Reconciliation was read for the first time in our Church:

All have sinned and fallen short of the Glory of God.

The hatred which divides nation from nation, race from race, class from class.

Father Forgive

The covetous desires of people and nations to possess what is not their own.

Father forgive

The greed which exploits the work of human hands and lays waste the earth.

Father Forgive

Our envy of the welfare and happiness of others.

Father Forgive

Our indifference to the plight of the imprisoned, the homeless, the refugee.

Father Forgive

The lust which dishonours the bodies of men, women, and children.

Father Forgive

The pride which leads us to trust in ourselves, and not in God.

Father Forgive

Be kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

Now, walk down the stairs to the centre of the church.

3 The Original Church

You're now back in the original part of the church which was built in 1864.

Take a seat in one of the pews at the front of the Church and look up.

The ceiling

The ceiling of St James the Apostle is very Arts and Crafts in style. And, you'll find two chubby carved Angels up in the rafters watching over you. They've been guarding us for nearly 145 years – may they continue to do so for many more years to come.

The Apostle's Creed

Looking up let your eyes travel up to the upper outside edge of the East Transept on your right where the ceiling meets the wall. Here you'll notice some text. It is the Apostle's Creed. Beginning here and flowing around the church it ends at the West Transept with the final AMEN.

The pews

Our pews are typical of the period. They're made of pine and trimmed with black walnut. There was a time when demand for pews was so high at St James the Apostle that parishioners paid rent for their pews. This practice continued until quite recently. At least one parishioner remembers paying rent until about the turn of the last century.

Interestingly you can still find private locked boxes in some of the pews. Here parishioners kept their bibles, prayer books and cough drops.

Look toward the front of the church

The Chancel arch

What you may notice at first is the broad chancel. This is unusual in a Gothic Revival church. The stone on either side is also quite unusual and does not appear in early photos and was probably added at the time the pulpit was installed in 1902. We know from photographic evidence and the memories of some parishioners that the chancel was enclosed behind a carved wooden rood screen until the 1940s. It was removed to create a more open atmosphere. It is now in the Church of St John the Divine in Verdun.

There are two significant memorial plaques on either side of the Chancel Arch:

- On the right behind the pulpit is one dedicated to the memory of Canon Allen Pearson Shatford, the second rector of St. James the Apostle: "His splendid gifts of mind, heart, and speech were freely given in the service of God and his fellow men."
- On the left is one dedicated to the memory of Rev Canon Jacob Ellegood founder and first rector of St James the Apostle and Chaplain to the Victoria Rifles of Canada

Our pulpit

On the right toward the front you'll notice our pulpit. Stone pulpits are very unusual in Gothic Revival churches. And ours is especially interesting. Take a closer look and you'll find faux marble pillars. Though the origins are not particularly English little else is currently known about our pulpit. It was given to the glory of God and in memory of William Workman (who was Mayor of Montreal from 1868-1871) in 1902.

The lectern

Our lectern stands on the left side of the chancel. It can be seen in photos of the church dating back to 1868. The brass eagle and lion's at the feet is a typically British style of the mid-1800s.

Walk to the left and into the West Transept.

4 West Transept

The West Transept was built in 1895.

It contains a memorial to Albert, the Prince Consort. *Can you find it?*

On the wall on the right hand side you'll find a large plaque in bronze and marble dedicated to the Glory of God and in memory of the many members of the congregation who fought with the Victoria Rifles. On April 23, 1932 an impressive ceremony took place when the King's Colours, previously presented by His Majesty King George V to the 60th Battalion Victoria Rifles of Canada were deposited in the Church. They hung on either side of our chancel until Remembrance Day 2008 when they were placed next to additional Colours that had been deposited in a case in the West Transept. These powerful symbols attest to the long association of the Victoria Rifles with St. James the Apostle. Though the regiment was disbanded in November 1995, the last surviving member of the regiment participated in our Remembrance Day into the early part of this century.

By now you've probably already noticed that our connections to the military are an important part of our history. In addition to the Victoria Rifles, many of the memorial plaques that you'll find on our wall are for parishioners who were members of the military including: Canadian Field Artillery, Royal Highlanders, Royal Montreal Regiment, Canadian Grenadier Guards, Hastings and Prince Edward Regiment, and Canadian Expeditionary Forces.

Between the Canadian and Quebec flags on the wall is an Honour Roll of parish members who served during World War I.

Pews were removed in 2006 to create a more open and flexible space for the Community.

Baptismal font

By now you'll have noticed our baptismal font. Originally our font was placed in front of the West Transept. This placement was quite unusual for an Anglican Gothic Revival Church. So, as part of the transformation of our space in 2006 we moved the font here to more traditional placement near the front door. Once the new disabled access was complete in 2008 it was returned to this space.

Interestingly though it looks like stone, it is made of plaster.

The font at St. James has eight sides which symbolizes new creation and regeneration. On By now you've probably noticed what looks like the Star of David. In the Christian tradition it's called the Creator's Star: It's created by superimposing two equilateral triangles that doubly emphasize the Holy Trinity in the process of creation. There are some other interesting Christian symbols on our font including the rose, a symbol of messianic hope, love, paradise, and beauty.

Walk back across the church and enter the Chancel on your left.

5 Chancel and Sanctuary

The original chancel was much smaller in scale. Our current chancel was added in 1899. And, renovated and renewed in the early 1950s, when white oak panels in the sanctuary were completed (1952) and new lighting was installed in the Chancel (1954).

Choir stalls

Our choir stalls are on either side of the Chancel and on Sunday's through the fall, winter and spring you'll see our choir in their red robes and white surplices singing like so many other choirs around the world. But, it was a controversial decision in 1874 that started this tradition. St James the Apostle was the first pewed³ church in Canada to have a vested choir. And, not all parishioners at the time were convinced that good music required a vested choir: "The feeling was somewhat tense over the innovation and Canon Ellegood was roundly criticized... But he held on manfully and lived to see surpliced choirs the universal custom... Choral litanies on Sunday afternoons drew enormous crowds..."

Sit in one of the front row choir stalls. What do you notice?

³ A pew is enclosed wooden bench seating usually intended for a family.

The first row choir stalls were built for the boys' choir of the 19th century.

Look up and notice the ceiling over the Sanctuary

Ceiling

Although you may think the ceiling over the Sanctuary looks like brown paper it is actually made of "cloth of gold". The cloth is made with real filaments of gold sewn with silk. Sadly this unique feature of our church which should have gleamed with gold wasn't that successful.

*Stand near the organ and look to the right of the chancel
to see there's a piece of cloth missing.*

This was intentional. By leaving something unfinished when building a church, we are reminded to remain humble before God and recognise that even the best work of man is imperfect. Ironic given that the ceiling as a whole didn't turn out as planned.

*Walk toward the communion rail and notice our organ console on your left and pipes on
both sides of the Chancel.*

Organ

The first organ was built by Samuel Warren Co. in 1868 and rebuilt in 1900 by Karn-Warren. In 1902 the young, and soon to become internationally famous Canadian Organist, Lynnwood Farnum began his two year tenure at St. James and complained about a "particular" echo division above the Bishop Street Entrance which was then dismantled.

Since then the organ has been rebuilt three more times, most recently by Casavant in 1944, Opus 1800. The Service of Dedication of the present organ took place Sunday, February 24, 1946.

The several thousand pipes in our organ continue to be played regularly.

*Look over the top of the Organist's console to see some of the 100 or so pipes that date
back to the original organ.*

Ecclesiastical needlework

Depending on the time of year, you'll notice splendid ecclesiastical needlework on our altar and at the communion rail our three beautiful kneelers. The kneelers were designed and made by a member of our congregation, Helena Hart in the 1950's. Each cushion is decorated with different Christian symbols. Can you find the alpha and omega?

Leave the Chancel and Sanctuary and go to our Chapel.

6 New Chapel

The original Memorial Chapel was built in 1898.

The current chapel was opened in 1956 after the original had become unsafe due to shift earth. The new Chapel is a perfect gem in the Arts and Crafts style with its open archways, its roof timber trusses, its glorious stained windows, its beautiful panelling and its atmosphere of quiet meditation. Notice the stencil work between the ceiling and the walls.

Christians from the earliest times have buried their dead in consecrated areas in close proximity to their place of worship and we at St James are no different. If you look closely you'll notice our Columbarium on either side of the altar. It's a place for the interment of the cremated remains of those St. James the Apostle members, former members, and their immediate families who want to stay close. It was constructed in 1986.

When you leave the Chapel you'll find yourself in the East Transept.

7 East Transept

The East Transept was built in 1914. In November 1939 on our 75th Anniversary the present east window was unveiled and dedicated to the glory of God and in loving memory of the members of the congregation who died in the Great War (1914-1919). You'll find their names on a plaque on the wall in front of the window.

This window celebrates the "...angels and archangels and all the company of heaven" referred to by St John the Divine speaks in the Book of Revelation. Depicted here are our patron, St James the Apostle, St Michael the Archangel, captain of the hosts of heaven, St George the Martyr, defender of the helpless and patron saint of soldiers, St Stephen, the first martyr, and over all the Lord of Glory presides, over his church and his world.

In 2006, as part of our renewal of this space, pews were removed from the East Transept to create more flexible worship space, a kitchen, cloak room and washrooms built in the adjacent spaces.

Walk from the East Transept through the new cloakroom toward the New Tower.

In the cloakroom are three windows which remind us of another dimension of what it means to be saints. They depict the Good Samaritan, Jesus and the Woman at the Well, and Jesus welcoming the children. Thus we are reminded of the corporal works of mercy to which Christians are called, and of our vocation to slake the spiritual and intellectual thirst of a parched and hungry world. Like these windows, our works of mercy are often hidden and unseen... but they are known to God.

8 New Tower - Bishop Street Entrance

The new tower was built in 1914 at the same time as the East Transept.

This space is dedicated to those who've played important formal leadership roles within our church community. Here you'll find the names of all the former rectors, curates, and organists, Wardens, Wardens and Lay Delegates to Synod.

Notice the Arts and Crafts style detailing in the woodwork and nails.

Your short self-guided tour of St James the Apostle has come to an end. We welcome you to sign our guest book at the back of the church.

Thank you for taking time to explore our Church. If you'd like more information on the building or our community please ask in the office in Shatford Hall.