

A Self-guided tour of the Cathedral Church of St. George, Kingston, Ontario

This self-guided tour will take you to five places in the Cathedral, and invites you to look at points of interest. However, please feel free to walk wherever you want. Donations may be put in the jar at stop #1, left in the Office (see stop #4), or mailed to Box 475, Kingston, Ontario, K7M 7K8

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#1

You are standing inside the King Street door, on the red carpet, looking to the High Altar with its large cross. You are standing by the exterior wall of the church built in 1825. Its altar was just beyond the third set of columns. There were galleries on either side, and the organ and choir were over your head. You can see a photograph of the interior on the display to your left. There are three plaques of note to see from here.

On your left is one dedicated to the first minister of St. George's. John Stuart came to what is now Kingston in 1784. He held services in Fort Frontenac until the first church was built in 1791.

On your right, underneath the Mohawk powwow flag, is a plaque dedicated to the only female founder of St. George's. Molly Brant, like John Stuart, was a refugee from the newly independent United States. She was given land in Kingston for her devoted work as consort to Sir William Johnson in Fort Hunter, New York.

Above your head is a plaque memorializing Lord Sydenham, the first Governor General of the United Provinces. He died in 1841, when Kingston was the capital of the United Provinces. He was buried to the left of the marker in the aisle at what was then the front of the church.

You can see six large stained glass windows, three on each side. The first pair date from 1902 and are in the style made popular by Louis Tiffany. On the left is 'Christ in the Temple' showing Mary and Joseph's happiness on finding their lost 12-year-old son, and on the right is the 'Mary and Martha' window. Jesus visits the sisters of Lazarus and comments that you should only worry about one thing at a time. You can read more about all of the windows in the booklet **The Stained Glass Windows of St. George's**.

The second pair of windows are traditional in style. Saints Peter and Paul are on the left (1910) and another 'Christ in the Temple' (1924) is on the right. St. Peter was one of the 12 apostles. St. Paul was an early convert to Christianity who wrote many of the letters included in the New Testament.

The third pair are of 'Christ walking on the water' (1906) on the left and the Angel Gabriel (1911) on the right. Peter is trying to walk to Jesus, but sinks because of his lack of faith. Jesus reaches out to save him. Gabriel is one of the chief angels in both Christianity and Islam. Both these windows memorialize members of the Gildersleeve family who lived in the limestone house on the corner of Johnson and King, opposite the Cathedral.

To your left you can also see the Second World War Roll of Honour. Included is author Farley Mowat, who attended St. George's when stationed at Fort Frontenac. To your right on the far wall, is a plaque commemorating all the parishioners who served in the First World War.

#2 Walk down the centre aisle and stop under the dome.

You are standing under the dome. The High Altar is in front of you. In 1892, the Cathedral was expanded. The galleries, the altar and the front wall was demolished. A new chancel and transepts with new galleries were built, and a dome was added to hold it all together. This building burned on January 1st 1899, but was rebuilt to the same design and reopened on July 1st 1900. Again, there are photographs on the display inside the west door.

On your left is the Artillery Gallery. The door on the left leads up to the gallery. The Royal Canadian Horse Artillery was stationed in Kingston for many years. The three windows are King David with singers and instrumentalists—he wrote the musical psalms (1980); St. Cecilia, the patron saint of music (2002); and Christ and the Centurion, whose servant Jesus is healing (1910).

There are three flags. The left hand flag is a flag of the Royal Canadian Horse Artillery from the Korean conflict. The centre flag belonged to the 22nd Battery, Canadian Field Artillery, formed in Kingston in 1914. It hung on Wolfe's Monument in Westminster Abbey during the Great War. The Blue Ensign (on the right) was flown at the Royal Dockyards on Point Frederick (now the Royal Military College—RMC) before its closure in 1870.

You can see the 1825 and the 1891 Foundation Stones in the exterior wall to the left of the entrance (which is wheelchair accessible), below the Artillery Gallery.

On your right is the RMC gallery. The door on the right leads up to the gallery. Gentlemen Cadets would march over the causeway (or over the ice in winter) each Sunday and sit there. You can see their College numbers carved in the wood. At the last service of the year, the first Sunday in May, they would bring their once-a-year collection of pennies and, it is said, throw them down at collection time! The two flags are the Regimental Colours and the King's Colours of RMC, presented by Edward, Prince of Wales in 1919 and laid up in 1942 when the College was closed for cadet training during the Second World War.

The windows are St. George on the left, the Cathedral's patron saint and one of the Church's soldier saints (1979); St. Margaret, a Scottish saint who reorganized the church there and built the church in Iona, (2003); and St. Michael, another soldier saint who rescues the souls of the faithful from the devil and takes them to Paradise (1979).

In 1975, there were major renovations to the Cathedral's interior. A new nave altar (immediately in front of you), the altar rail, the font (in the Lady Chapel, see below) and a credence table (on the right inside the altar rail) were crafted from the same piece of 300-year-old oak.

In front of the altar rail is a set of 16 kneelers which tell the history of Kingston from 1673 when Fort Frontenac was founded, until 1986 when the kneelers were made. Details of each kneeler can be found in **The Nave Kneelers of the Cathedral Church of St. George**, on the display table by the main door. They were each worked in wool by a different member of the congregation.

#3 Go up the steps on your right into the Lady Chapel

You are standing in the Lady Chapel dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Traditionally, Anglican cathedrals have a Lady Chapel behind or to one side of the main altar. As you stand looking at the altar, you will see the set of 12 kneelers each with a different cross. These also were each made by a member of the congregation. To the right of the altar is the Presence Light, which reminds us that we are in the presence of God.

Above your head is the chandelier, installed in 1975. It was designed by

Neil MacLennon (who designed and oversaw all the 1975 renovations). The glass is Czechoslovakian, blown in West Virginia. There are over 2000 parts. The blue crown is in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The windows celebrate The Institution of Holy Communion, with Jesus offering the chalice to St. John (round window, 1910); The Road to Emmaeus' where two of Jesus' followers did not recognize him after his resurrection (1905); and Mary Magdalene meeting the risen Jesus in front of the empty tomb (1934).

To your left is the organ console, installed in 2009. Beyond it, across the chancel you can see the organ pipes originally installed in 1929 by the Woodstock Organ Company of Woodstock, Ontario and restored several times, most recently in 2012.

Go to the right of the organ console into the chancel and face the high altar. The wooden reredos behind the altar was carved by Quebec craftsmen. The cross survived the 1899 fire and is an assembly of 39 pieces. On the right is the wooden cathedra, the Bishop's chair, with a carved mitre on top. On your left are the processional banners. These, and all the kneelers and cushions have been made by members of the Cathedral's Artisan Guild. The tile floor was probably installed in 1892 and shows signs of damage from burning timbers falling during the fire.

The seven windows are of three distinct styles. If you count from the left, numbers 3, 5 and 6 are a set, installed before 1913, to replace ones lost in the fire, memorializing John Watkins. Originally, #6 was in the centre, and they show the visit of the Three Wise Men, the Crucifixion and the Empty Tomb.

In 1913 they were flanked by #1, the Annunciation, when Mary was told she would be the mother of Jesus, and by #7, the Transfiguration, when Jesus

ascended to heaven. The window at each end was empty, and the set showed five scenes from Christ's life, in chronological order.

But in 1942 the Dean announced his dislike of some of these, and, since the congregation would not allow him to get rid of any, he rearranged them. Two new windows, #2 (the empty tomb) and #4 (Christ in Majesty) were designed by Peter Haworth and the other windows were rearranged to accommodate them. In 1990, when they were repaired, their order was again changed, probably for symmetry! There are three Haworth windows in the Cathedral, and all have his trademark: a green frame, with red crosses on gold and gold crosses on red in the corners.

#4 Go down the steps from the Lady Chapel or the Chancel and turn left into the Stuart Room

The Stuart Room was part of the 1891 enlargement of the Cathedral, and was refurbished in 1996. The golden yellow of the walls reflects the gold background of the Stuart crest. The displays in this room do change, but usually you can see the portraits of John Stuart, the first rector; George Stuart, his son, the second rector and first Dean; John Power, the architect who designed St. George's Hall and the 1892 Cathedral addition; and Richard Gornall, the first salaried organist.

The books include a 1787 Mohawk Prayer Book, Exposition of the Creed (1741) and The Evangelical History and Harmony (1747). All were owned by John Stuart, as was the clock in the large display case. In the display cases you can also see other books, silverware associated with the Cathedral, Bishop Lewis' diocesan staff and Bishop Bidwell's cope from 1913.

If you continue through the east door, you will find a hallway through St. George's Hall with photographs of many of the churches of the Diocese, wash-rooms, and the Cathedral's offices. There is a wheelchair accessible entrance at the end of this hall.

#5 Return to the West entrance, stop #1

You will now be going outside through the main entrance of the Cathedral. Firstly you go into the narthex, below the bell and clock tower. This, and the portico and steps, were added in 1843 after the first entrance collapsed in 1837. On the right as you exit is the bride's room where many nervous brides have waited before their entrance.

Stand on the steps outside, with the Cathedral behind you. On the right is the Gildersleeve House mentioned in stop #1. To your left is the Custom House and beyond it, over Clarence Street is the site of the original St. George's, 1791 to 1825. In that new church in 1791, John Simcoe proclaimed Upper Canada to be a new jurisdiction, and took his oath of office. That is where Ontario officially started!

If you walk around to your right onto Johnson Street, you will see the cross above the dome; it is two metres high, and its top is about 38 metres above the sidewalk. Beyond the Cathedral you will see St. George's Hall designed by John Power in 1865 to look like an English gothic parish church, in contrast to the Classical style of the Cathedral. Until 1891, it was separated from the Cathedral. On the other side of Johnson Street is the Diocesan Office, Archives and Bookstore.