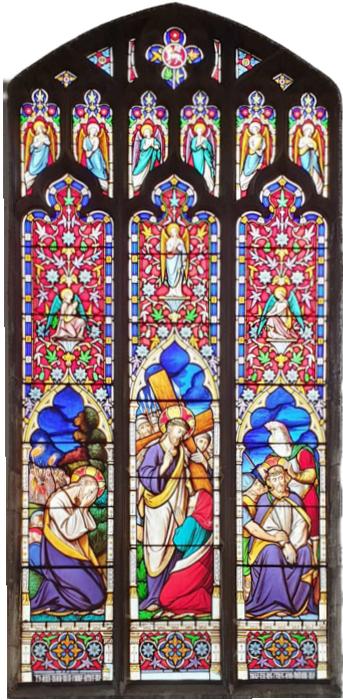




DEDHAM Parish Magazine



March 2024



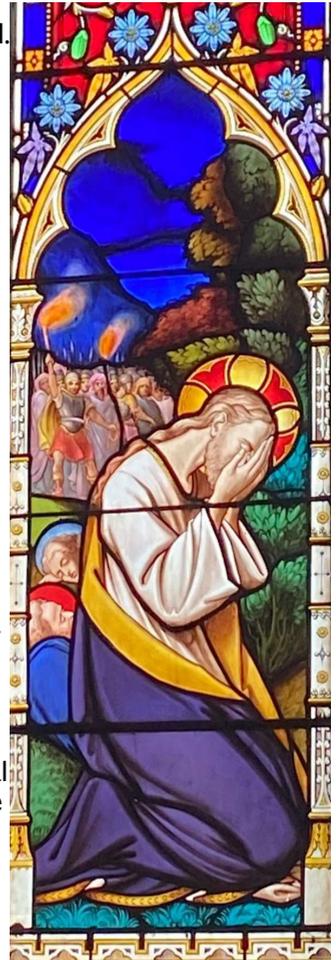
narrative panels are nearly always surrounded by very beautiful depictions of motifs such as stylised flowers and figures of angels. It is, however, worth looking more carefully at these works of art as they also tell in detail important biblical stories, or illustrate quotations nearly always from the gospels.

Over the next few months, we shall look at windows in Dedham and some of our surrounding churches. Let's start with the window pictured on last month's Magazine. Made in 1865, it is found at the east end of the southern aisle.

This window has three panels. In the left hand panel, Jesus is praying on the Mount of Olives in the Garden of Gethsemane struggling with the reality of the awful ordeal which, he knows, imminently awaits him "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done." (Luke 22: 42). He had asked his disciples to keep watch but even these, his most enthusiastic followers, fell asleep, and can be seen on the ground behind Jesus: illustrating man's weakness, "The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Matthew 40: 41). Meanwhile in the background armed soldiers (John 18: 3) are advancing to arrest Jesus, guided by Judas in the pink head-dress coming to betray Jesus with a kiss.

On the cover of the March edition of the Dedham Parish Magazine was one of the wonderful stained-glass windows in Dedham Church. We are fortunate to have so much lovely stained glass in Dedham church and indeed other nearby churches. Decorating churches, not just with stained glass, but with painting of the interiors, was the norm in medieval times but this was almost entirely swept away in the Reformation, so very little stained glass from that period remains. Narrative stained glass was used to illustrate important biblical stories and quotations for worshippers many of whom were unable to read. The majority of stained glass in our churches now is Victorian and was placed as memorials by wealthy parishioners commemorating their loved ones or local vicars.

These windows are beautiful and it is easy to view them as simply decoration, and indeed the



Left hand panel.
The Garden of Gethsemane



Right hand panel.
Crown of Thorns

The scene in the right panel depicts Jesus being held by a soldier, while another places a crown of thorns on his head, before mocking, deriding and hitting him. (Mark 15). (One can only speculate as to why this soldier is depicted without facial features.) Jesus' face however, clearly conveys his sadness at the unfolding events.

The central panel shows Jesus on the way to Calvary; at this stage he is still carrying the cross as in the traditional "Stations of the Cross" which interestingly are not all in the Bible Gospels, but are nevertheless enshrined in Christian tradition. Jesus meets his mother on his way to Golgotha for his crucifixion. One cannot really imagine the sorrow and anguish which Mary must have felt about her son's fate. She is kneeling with her hands raised up in supplication, but she knows that she must be resigned to the fulfilment of Jesus' divine destiny. Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane is documented in all three



Central panel.
Stations of the Cross

Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke) and his arrest in the garden in all four Gospels including John. The mocking of Jesus also appears in all four Gospels though Luke omits the detail of the Crown of Thorns.

Underneath these three panels is a very important quote from Jesus which also appears in all three synoptic Gospels. Unfortunately, the central piece of this inscription has been damaged and lost from the base of the central panel, but the full quote is: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me". (Matthew 16: 24).

Next time you are in Dedham Church or passing by take a moment to look more closely at this amazing and inspiring window.

Adrian Beckingsale

Following on from last month's article on Passiontide and the Road to Calvary we are going to move on to look at depictions of Jesus' Crucifixion, in our local churches. Although crosses in Churches are universal, depictions of the Crucifixion itself are much less frequently seen in Anglican Churches.



Detail from the Faith, Hope and Charity window in Dedham Church

In St. Mary's Church Dedham, the only one to be found, is in a window at the west end of the south aisle, which shows, "Caritas" (Charity), "Fides" (Faith) and "Spes" (Hope). The central figure 'Faith' is holding a small Crucifix. To find larger and more detailed depictions of the Crucifixion, we have to leave Dedham Church.

The charming little Churches of St Mary in Wix and St. Leonard and St. Mary in Beaumont cum Moze, two of our nine associated churches, both have stained-glass windows showing the Crucifixion.

In Wix there are only three panels of stained glass which are situated behind the altar. Seven had been intended but insufficient funds were raised when a major restoration was undertaken in the late 19th century. In the central panel, Christ

hangs on the cross and standing at either side are Mary, his mother, and St. John.

Likewise, behind the altar in Beaumont cum Moze, another window shows the Crucifixion in the central panel. In this a soldier in armour kneels before Jesus possibly representing the moment when the Roman centurion, experiencing the darkness and the earthquake which accompanied Jesus' Crucifixion and death, looks up in awe and realises "Surely He was the Son of God" (Matthew 27: 54).

We are also fortunate to have nearby, the lovely sister church of St. Mary's Ardleigh, which has not a stained-glass window but a mural, depicting the Crucifixion. Here his mother, Mary, and Mary Magdalene, beautifully robed, stand on either side. This striking mural looks down, from above the arched entrance to the nave.

These representations show above Jesus' head the letters INRI, in Latin 'Iesus Nazarenus, Rex Iudaeorum', meaning "Jesus the Nazarene, King of the Jews," which Pontius Pilate had deliberately placed there. (John 19: 19 – 22)



Wix Crucifixion window



Beaumont cum Moze window behind the Altar

Perhaps an acknowledgement that he realised that Jesus really was the new King of the Jews, though failing to realise that Jesus would, through His death and resurrection, become King of all Peoples.

It is very hard to comprehend, let alone convey, in stained glass or paint the suffering of someone undergoing the dreadful death by Crucifixion.

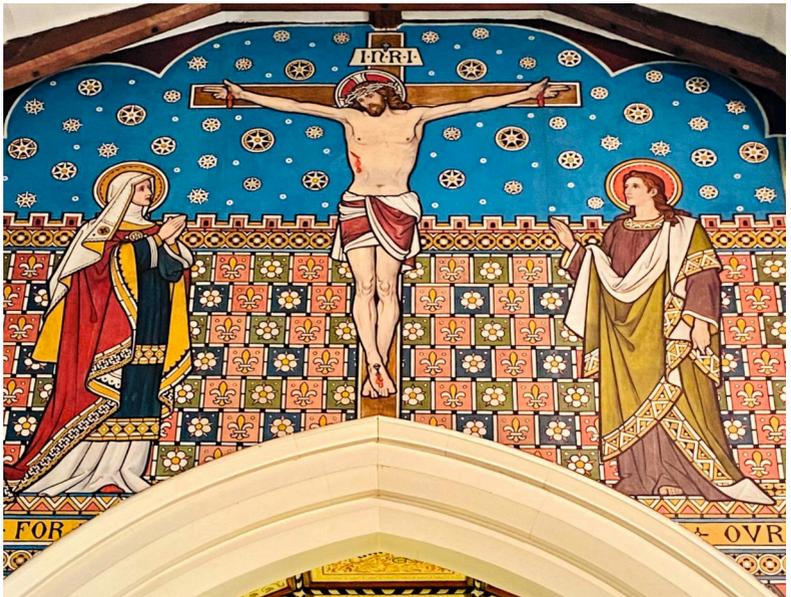
Church depictions often offer a rather sanitised version with beautifully dressed Saints standing on either side of a very “clean” looking Jesus, as exemplified in the Ardleigh mural.

We hear in St. John’s gospel (19:28-30) that Jesus’ lips were moistened with “wine vinegar” because He was thirsty, which might seem like further torture, but was in fact a small act of kindness amidst the cruelty. “Sour wine” (rather than what we think of today as vinegar) was in biblical times taken as a refreshing drink.

In his agony Jesus called out to his Father, “ My God, my God, why have you forsaken me ? “ (Matthew 27:46) but did not spare himself this cruel death. The Bible tells us that it was for us he hung and suffered there.

Next month we shall return to Dedham Church for the depiction of the joyous realisation of Jesus’ triumphant resurrection.

Adrian Beckingsale



St. Mary’s Ardleigh Crucifixion mural



Wix window

white who told them “He (Jesus) is not here, He is risen” and reminding them that Jesus had told them He would rise again. (With slight variations this is recorded in all four Gospels.)

The beautiful narrative stained-glass window shows three women: probably, Mary Magdalene, one of the other Marys, and Salome or Joanna looking distraught and confronted by the angel.

One woman holds a jar of spices while a jar of oil rests on the ground. A little extra detail shows in the distance, above the head of the left-hand woman, “Calvary” with two of the crosses standing there. Below is written “He is not here, He is risen” so that viewers should be in no doubt about Jesus’ resurrection and the story this is depicting.

Last month we looked at depictions of the Crucifixion and Jesus’ death which took place late on a Friday, the eve of the Jewish Sabbath and in this case the Feast of the Passover.

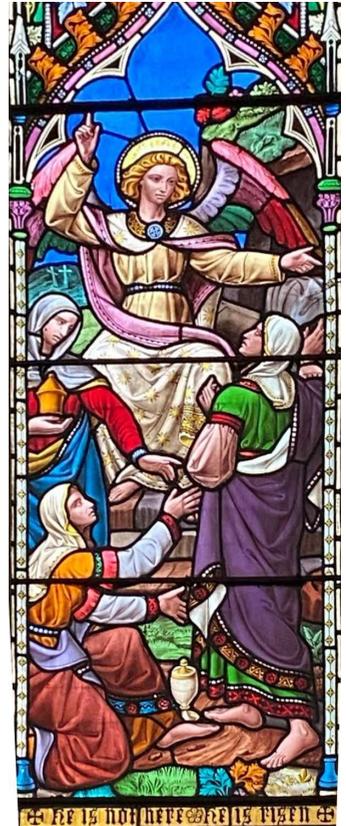
There was therefore, little time to properly prepare Jesus’ body and formally bury Him before the holy rest day. So, Joseph of Arimathea got Pilate’s permission to take the body, and he hastily wrapped it in cloth and laid it in a tomb, which was sealed with a large stone. This can be seen in a stained-glass window in Wix church. (Mark 15: 42 – 47 / Luke 23: 50 – 56)

Now we return to St Mary’s Church, Dedham to see what happened next and look at two testaments to the resurrection depicted in stained-glass windows there.

The first is in the central panel of the furthest side window of the South aisle. As soon as the rest day of the Sabbath, was over, women went to the tomb with oils and spices to anoint Jesus’ body.

When they got there, they were shocked to find the tomb open and only the cloths which Jesus’ had been wrapped in remaining.

However, they were met by a figure dressed in



Dedham Church, central panel of South Aisle window.



Dedham Church, first window on South side of the Chancel

resurrection was not generally understood. These two disciples wrapped in their grief initially failed to recognise Jesus, who as he walked with them, explained these scriptures. When they reached Emmaus they persuaded Jesus to stay and dine, and only when He is breaking bread with them do they realise who He is. (Luke 24: 13 – 35)

This story is shown in the three panels of the first window on the South side of the chancel, best viewed by sitting in the choir stalls opposite. The window shows Jesus in the centre, at the rather lavish dinner table, breaking bread.

One can just make out the 'stigmata' on his hands. At each end of the table Cleopas and his friend have jumped to their feet and their faces clearly show their shock and amazement, as they realise that they are with the "Risen Christ".

Within this main window in the left-hand panel, is a small vignette showing Jesus and the two travellers in their hats and cloaks, (also depicted removed and draped on the bench in front of the dining table,) walking the Road to Emmaus together.

Having started at the end of the Gospel stories of Jesus, next month we shall go back to look at some depictions of Jesus' early life.

After His resurrection Jesus appeared in various places, mainly to his close disciples. However, Jesus also met with Cleopas and his companion as they walked the Road to Emmaus, on their way out of Jerusalem, having witnessed the terrible events of what we now call Good Friday.

They were downcast at the death of Jesus. To Christians the Resurrection is fundamental, but to the Jews of the time the interpretation of the prophecies in the Psalms and Isaiah predicting much of Jesus' life, death and



Detail - on the Road to Emmaus

Adrian Beckingsale



North side chancel window,
left panel



North side chancel window,
centre panel



North side chancel
window, right panel

This month we go back to look at scenes of Jesus' early life as depicted in the stained-glass windows in St Mary's Church, Dedham. We know very little about Jesus' early life as the son of Joseph, a carpenter, and his mother Mary but two important stories are depicted. By Jewish custom and law, babies were circumcised at one week of age, to be followed at 40 days by a ceremony of Purification for the mother and Consecration of the first born male child. Mary and Joseph went with Jesus to the temple in Jerusalem for this ceremony. They were clearly a poor family for they took a pair of doves for sacrifice as allowed for those who could not afford both a lamb and a dove. (Leviticus 12). This event is depicted in the window on the north side of the chancel nearest the altar. In the left-hand panel the Prophet Anna is standing beside Joseph who is holding the two doves and the cage in which he brought them is held by a small boy. In the right-hand panel stands Simeon, whom God had promised would not die until he had seen the Lord's Messiah. In the Bible once Simeon has met Jesus he says "Now Lettest Thy Servant Depart" which in Latin is "Nunc Dimittis Servum Tuum" and is written in a speech ribbon in the window. (Luke 2: 21 – 40).

In stained-glass windows there are often lots of little details, for instance above Joseph's head in this window, on the temple wall is a carved scene of Daniel in the den of lions (Daniel 6). It was probably shortly after this ceremony that Mary and Joseph fled with Jesus to Egypt to escape the slaughter of the infants, ordered by Herod, and only returned to Judea, after Herod's death, when Jesus was about 5 years old. (Matthew 2: 13 – 23).



Detail - Daniel in the
Lions den



Dedham Church, South side of the Chancel nearest the Altar.

It was the custom at that time for Jewish families to make a pilgrimage to the temple in Jerusalem at the feast of the Passover. Jesus and his family along with others went and when it was time to go home his parents thinking that Jesus was with their friends in the pilgrim group set out without Him.

Realising Jesus was not with them, they returned to look for Him and found Him in the temple. (Luke 2: 41 – 52). The window on the South side of the chancel nearest to the altar captures the moment when Joseph and Mary find Jesus in the temple. They are depicted in the left-hand panel peering into the room where we see the young Jesus discussing scripture. The chief priests and teachers are clearly listening intently to the young Jesus and what He has to say and are “amazed at his understanding and his answers”. They are clearly referring to the Scriptures; a scroll lies open at the feet of Jesus and many of the teachers are holding books which they are studying intently.

Medieval and Renaissance artists almost exclusively set their depictions of Biblical scenes in the clothing, buildings and culture of their own period. This tradition was maintained into more modern times and Victorian stained glass continues in this style, and so it is with this depiction of large ornately bound books.

Writings in the codex form, i.e. books as we know them, only appeared in the first century AD as multiple sheets simply sewn together and did not replace scrolls in general usage as bound volumes until around the fourth to sixth century AD, so they would, in fact, in Jesus' times all have been using scrolls.

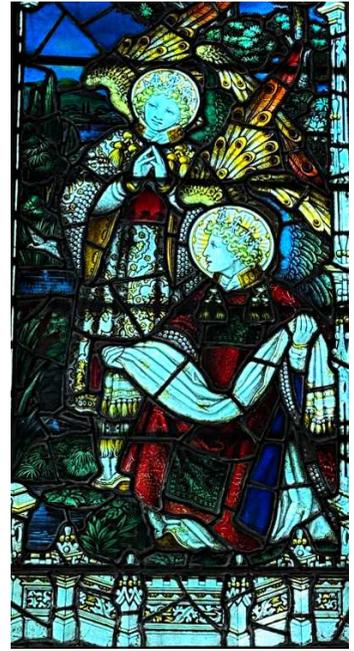
Adrian Beckingsale



First window, North side of the chancel, left panel



First window, North side of the chancel, centre panel



First window, North side of the chancel, right panel

Last month we left Jesus in the Temple discussing scripture with the Chief priests and Teachers at about the age of 12. After this we know little more of His life until He meets with His relative John the Baptist to be baptised. This event is depicted in the three panels of the first window on the North side of the chancel in St Mary's Church, in Dedham. This provides an important message to those who view the window, reminding them of the importance and significance of Baptism within the Christian Faith.

John baptises Jesus in the River Jordan. Whether Baptism at that time was by immersion or the pouring or sprinkling of water over the one being baptised is much debated. In this window it appears as if the interpretation is a combination of the two. In the central panel Jesus is shown standing in the water, his feet still submerged and it looks as if he is emerging from the river and is wrapped in a cloak or towel but otherwise naked. In the left hand panel John the Baptist holds a container, perhaps a shell, for pouring water over Jesus as well.

The Bible tells us that when Jesus emerges from the River Jordan after his baptism, the heavens open and the Holy Spirit descends onto Him in the form of a Dove and a voice from heaven is heard saying "This is my Son, whom I love; with Him I am well pleased". (Matthew 3: 16 – 17). We see all this depicted in the central panel: The dove with wings outstretched, with a halo is emerging in front of the sun and surrounded by its rays, and above Jesus' head we see a speech ribbon in Latin "Hic est filius meus dilectus-" ('This is my beloved Son').

Jesus' baptism

In the right hand panel two beautifully portrayed Angels, their finely embroidered and opulent garments fringed with pearls, look on and one of the Angels holds Jesus' neatly folded robe. As always in stained glass panels of the late Victorian period the Angels are depicted with wonderfully elaborate wings. In this case, the wings are partly made up of peacock feathers, a feature typical of Angel "portraits" from the Studio of Charles Kempe.



Makers mark for Walter Ernest Tower

Often there is no indication of the origin or maker of the Stained Glass Windows but in this window and indeed in the other three narrative windows of the chancel which we have looked at (The road to Emmaus, Jesus presented at the Temple, and, Jesus discovered in the Temple) we have a Maker's Mark.

Charles Eamer Kempe was a celebrated and prolific maker of Stained glass windows in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. His mark was a golden "garb", the heraldic term for a wheatsheaf, which was part of his coat of arms. On Kempe's death, his studio was taken on by a distant cousin Walter Ernest Tower and after this the mark was a black tower superimposed on the wheatsheaf. The best example of this mark can be seen in the bottom left hand corner of the left hand panel of this Baptism window.



The Holy Spirit Descending as a Dove (Detail)

Adrian Beckingsale



Middle window, South side of the chancel, left panel
St. Stephen.



Middle window, South side of the chancel, centre panel
St. Paul.



Middle window, South side of the chancel, right panel
St. Luke.

This month we are going to look at windows depicting Saints. These windows do not show a pictorial narrative but instead show the Saints holding various symbolic items which represent their story. The use of symbolism in art was almost universal in Medieval and Renaissance art and was continued in religious stained glass served as a reminder to worshippers of the lives and deaths of Christian Saints and Martyrs.

Three Saints are depicted in the middle window on the South side of the chancel. In the left hand panel we see the Latin "S'tus Stephanus proto martyr" (Saint Stephen the first martyr). St Stephen was an early member of the Christian Church and one of its first appointed deacons. He enraged many Jews by his teachings and was accused of blasphemy by false witnesses and stoned to death, thus becoming the first Christian Martyr. (Acts 6 and 7).

In this window St Stephen is shown carrying a palm frond in his left hand. A palm frond, from ancient times in Mesopotamia and Egypt, held religious significance as a symbol of victory, triumph and eternal life. This tradition continued with the Jews and Christians. Jesus entered Jerusalem on Palm Sunday along a road strewn with palm leaves, a triumphal entry but also predicting his victory over evil and his promise of eternal life to those that followed him. It became the symbol of Christian martyrdom which is why St Stephen is usually depicted holding such a palm frond. His right hand is obscured by the rocks he is holding, signifying his stoning to death.

In the central panel we see “S’tus Paulus Apostolus” (Saint Paul the Apostle). St Paul is included amongst the Apostles as although he was not one of the original twelve disciples chosen by Jesus, the Bible tells us that he met Jesus on the road to Damascus and was converted by this experience, and then chosen by Jesus to preach His word. St Paul is often depicted with a sword and a scroll or book, as in this case. The sword, because according to tradition, he was beheaded with a sword, and the book, representing Scripture because he is attributed with writing more books of the Bible than any other single author.

The writing picked out on the open book is somewhat obscured by the lead of the window but is probably the Latin phrase, ‘Caritas Christi urget nos’ and translates as ‘the love of Christ compels us’. This phrase is taken from St. Paul’s second letter to the Corinthians (2Cor. 5:14).

In the right hand panel we see “S’tus Lucas evangelista” (Saint Luke the Evangelist). St Luke is shown carrying a pen and a book, signifying that St Luke, of course, wrote one of the four gospels, ostensibly to someone called Theophilus but undoubtedly for more general consumption by both Jews and Gentiles. He set out “to write an orderly account so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught” – “of the things that have been fulfilled” (by Jesus) (Luke. 1: 1 – 4)



St. Patrick

Next month we will look at some more of the bible's inspirational figures. All of the six Saints depicted individually in the Chancel windows of Dedham Church are mentioned in the bible, if only briefly, but later Saints are often depicted, more commonly in Catholic churches but also in Anglican churches.

For example, in the Anglican church in Porto, in Portugal, is a lovely depiction of St Patrick, Patron Saint of Ireland. Here also symbols abound; by his left foot is a toad and wrapped around the base of his shepherd's crook is a snake and in his left hand he carries a bible. Signifying how he brought the Christian Gospel to his “flock” of Christian followers, conquering witchcraft represented by toads, and evil represented by snakes. This harks back to “the serpent” who tempted Eve in the Garden of Eden and thus led to “the fall of Man.” This perpetuates the myth that St Patrick banished both toads and snakes from Ireland.

Adrian Beckingsale

This month we shall look at three more Saints, St James, St Peter and St John depicted in St Mary's Church, Dedham. They appear in the central three panel window on the north side of the chancel and again are shown with symbols representing their lives and ministries. Each are labelled in a text ribbon. This triumvirate of Apostles: St Peter and the two brothers St James and St John who were sons of Zebedee, appear to have been especially favoured and trusted by Jesus. They were the only Apostles to accompany Him at three important events: The Raising of Jairus' Daughter (Mark 5:35-43), The transfiguration of Jesus (Matthew 17: 1-5), and, Jesus' Agony in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26: 36-46).



Middle window, North side of the chancel, left panel
St. James.



Middle window, North side of the chancel, centre panel
St. Peter.



Middle window, North side of the chancel, right panel
St. John

In the left hand panel we see "Stus Jacobus major" (Saint James the Greater). The use of "major" is to distinguish him from the other apostle James and, in this case, signifies he is older rather than necessarily more important. St James is the Patron Saint of Spain and though there is no Biblical reference to his travelling to Spain later historians assert that he did.

The legend says that after his martyrdom his remains were taken to and buried in what is now Santiago de Compostela in Galicia in northern Spain, which is named after him. The journey on foot from the northern Pyrenees along the Camino de Santiago to Santiago de Compostela has become the most popular pilgrimage route in Europe.

Thus St James has become the Patron saint of pilgrims and in this depiction holds a pilgrim's staff in his left hand and a Bible in his right hand signifying his evangelism in Spain. In addition his robes are embroidered with scallop shells, a symbol of the Santiago pilgrimage and pilgrimages in general. This probably arose from the fact that those who completed the Camino de Santiago would collect a scallop shell from the shores of Galicia as a sign that they had made the pilgrimage.

In the central panel we see "Stus Petrus princeps apostaloru" (St Peter foremost of the Apostles). He was also known as Simon Peter. The foremost because the Bible tells us that Jesus singled him out and said "*you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church*" (Matthew 16: 18). St Peter also holds a Bible not only signifying his evangelism across the Roman Empire and into Rome, but also that the New testament includes two of his epistles.

In his right hand he holds two overlapping keys: one gold and one silver, and these represent Jesus' promise to give Peter "*the keys of the kingdom of Heaven*" (Matthew 16: 19). This suggest that through his faithful teaching of the Gospel Peter will open the door to the kingdom of heaven to those who respond in faith. Peter is regarded as the first Pope and the Papal seal of the Holy See has had the symbol of the crossed keys on it since the 14th century, and the Vatican has had them on its flag since the early 19th century.

In the right hand panel we see "Stus Johannes discipulus dilectus" (St John the beloved disciple). St John the brother of St James wrote one of the New Testament Gospels. In it are several references to "the disciple Jesus loved" (John 13: 23; 19: 26; 20: 2; 21: 7; 21: 20) and it seems likely that this is John describing himself as such. St. John also holds a Bible, but in this case it is open, and one can read "In principio erat verbu" the opening line of his gospel, "*In the beginning was the Word*" (John 1: 1.) In his right hand he holds a quill signifying his authorship of the Gospel. At his feet stands an eagle carrying a text ribbon "*Verbu caro facti es*" (The Word became flesh) (John 1: 14) another line from St John's Gospel.

Adrian Beckingsale

The Camino de Santiago, or in English, the Way of St. James, is a network of pilgrims' ways or pilgrimages leading to the shrine of the apostle James in the cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in Galicia in northwestern Spain, where tradition holds that the remains of the apostle are buried.

Created and established after the discovery of the relics of Saint James the Great at the beginning of the 9th century, the Way of St. James became a major pilgrimage route of medieval Christianity from the 10th century onwards. But it was only after the end of the Granada War in 1492, under the reign of the Catholic Monarchs Ferdinand II of Aragon and Isabella I of Castile, that Pope Alexander VI officially declared the Camino de Santiago to be one of the "three great pilgrimages of Christendom," along with Jerusalem and the Via Francigena to Rome.

Editor



The centre three panels of the East window

The stable is represented by wooden slats and woven hazel screens with a thatched canopy. Above Mary there are five Angels. Two of these Angels hold a banner on which is inscribed “Gloria in excelsis Deo, in terra pax” (Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth).

We have not spoken previously of the amazing designs which surround the main panels of the windows of the Church, but they are certainly worth looking at. Here amongst the architectural stonework, depicted above and below the main scene, we can see if we look carefully, no less than 25 Angels of different sizes, dressed in white, some with partly gilded wings and all with golden halos.

In the panel on the right hand side we see Jesus’ father, Joseph, holding a lantern to illuminate the scene. In front of Joseph are two shepherds both kneeling and one with his hands clasped in prayer. One carries a shepherd’s crook and the other a set of bagpipes. There is some controversy as to where bagpipes originated but they were certainly around in Egypt as long as 400 years BC. It is not unreasonable, therefore, to imagine that they were used in Israel at this time.

In the left hand panel there are three more shepherds, the two in the background are removing their hats in respect. The shepherd in front has a shepherd’s crook and a horn hung at his waist. This “instrument”, known as a “shofar” in Hebrew, was the nearest thing to a trumpet at the time. Made of ram’s horn and with an integral mouthpiece, it had no mechanical means of altering the pitch. The trumpet is often referred to in the Bible and it is this type of horn that is being referred to, not the modern day valved instrument.

As we head towards Christmas it is appropriate to look at the largest window in St Mary’s Church, Dedham. The East window, behind the altar, depicts the Nativity. This is one of the windows from C. E. Kempe’s studio and is in the typical renaissance revival style he used.

In the central of five panels we see the Virgin Mary with elaborate gold halo and clad in luxurious satins and embroidered silk. She is holding the Baby Jesus also with gold halo and partly swaddled in a beautiful wrap.

The Nativity

There are no donkeys or cows and the stable is spotlessly clean as are the shepherds. Our image of this scene is moulded by the school Nativity play, all kinds of animals have been introduced and the Magi also appear on the scene.

However, although the shepherds came on the night Jesus was born the “three wise men” did not visit Jesus until later though exactly when is a matter of some debate. Traditionally 13 days after the birth, now the Feast of Epiphany (6th January), but possibly as long as two years later.



The far left panel of the East window, St. Alban

Higher still in the window angels carry a banner proclaiming “Gloria tibi D’ne (for Domine) qui natus est de virgine”: Glory be to you O Lord who art born of a virgin. A very concise description of the scene depicted in this window.

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The two outer panels depict Saints. In the one on the left a banner proclaims “S’tus Albanus proto martyr”: St Alban the first martyr. We have already seen that St Stephen was the first Christian martyr, but this title of St Alban refers to the fact that he was the first British Christian martyr. He has a sword in his right hand signifying that he was beheaded, when a persecution of Christians took place around 3rd century AD.

In the far right panel we see S’tus Augustinus: Saint Augustine of Canterbury (453 – 604 AD). In 597 AD he was sent to England, which was then still a mainly pagan country, by Pope Gregory 1st as the leader of a group of missionaries. King Aethelberht of Kent welcomed them and accommodated them in Canterbury. Augustine converted thousands who were baptised on Christmas day and subsequently the King was also converted. Augustine was made the first Archbishop of Canterbury and is depicted here with a bishop’s mitre as well as a halo. He is signing a blessing with his right hand, and in his left hand he carries a long staff in the form of a cross, from which hangs a pennant embroidered with the crucifixion.

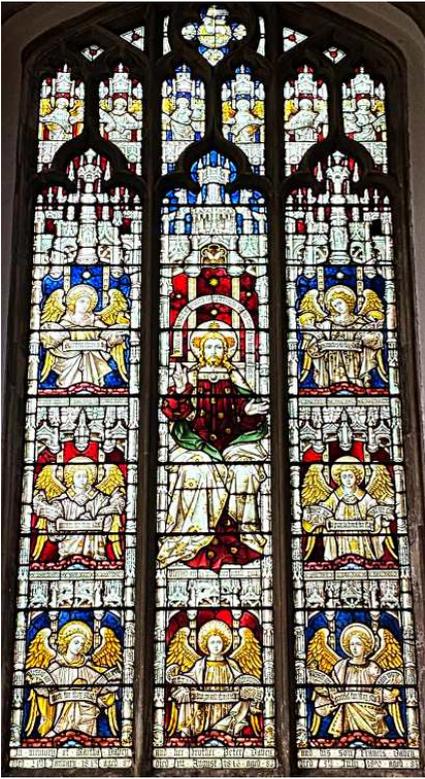


So the glory of God and in loving memory of Elizabeth Jones, this window was erected by her husband the Rev Charles Alfred Jones, Vicar of this parish, and by her brothers and sister in the year of our Lord 1880

The far right panel of East window, St. Augustine

I wish you all a Joyous Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year.

Adrian Beckingsale



The Beatitudes

As we move into the New Year we continue to look at some of the stained glass windows in St Mary's Church, Dedham. At the east end of the north aisle facing East is a three-panel window by Clayton and Bell, one of the most prolific and respected manufacturers of stained glass of the mid-19th century.

The window depicts "The Beatitudes" which Jesus enumerated at the beginning of the "Sermon on the Mount" (Matthew 5: 3-10). Centrally we see "Christ in Majesty" also known as "Christ Enthroned" and He is surrounded by seven Angels.

The seven Angels are all dressed in white with differing halos and gold wings and wonderfully curly blond hair. Each Angel carries a ribbon with the words of the first seven of the Beatitudes on them.

Christ has a ribbon over his head with the words of the eighth Beatitude on it, "*Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake for theirs is the kingdom of heaven*".

Christ is seated on His throne wearing luxuriously embroidered and jewelled robes, He has an elaborate halo and His right hand is raised in blessing and His left hand open showing the stigmata. This image of Christ sitting as ruler of the world arose within the iconography of the Church at least as early as the 4th century AD, and has been very little altered in its format ever since. Again this window is in the typical renaissance revival style of its era, which we learn from the dedication inscription in the glass at the bottom of the window is from the 1890's.

Each section of the window depicts detailed architectural stonework, and at the top six more Angels preside over the scene. Below Christ's feet is another ribbon carrying the words, "*Blessed are you when men revile you*". Not included as one of the eight Beatitudes, but what Jesus said directly to his disciples, rather than the crowd, after he had spoken the Beatitudes themselves. Extra vitality and interest is given to the work by the clever use of alternating bright blue and red backgrounds for Jesus and each Angel.



Christ seated on His throne.



At the other side of the Church, at the west end of the south aisle, is a stained glass window in a very different though rather mixed style. This three panel window shows depictions of three ladies, each standing barefoot above a label in Latin: CARITAS (Charity), FIDES (Faith) and SPES (Hope).

The figure of Charity or Love, as more recent biblical translations suggest, holds a burning sacred heart, which signifies Jesus' intense love for us.

The figure of Faith holds a crucifix to remind us that Jesus suffered and gave his life on the cross for us.

The figure of Hope is shown with hands held in prayer, signifying that when we pray we are reminded that by God's love and Jesus' death, we are given hope of forgiveness and eternal life.

No doubt this window is intended to remind the viewer of I Corinthians 13, with its well-known description of charity / love.

It was designed by Wilfred G. von Glehn and bears his initials and the date 1909. He was friend and companion of

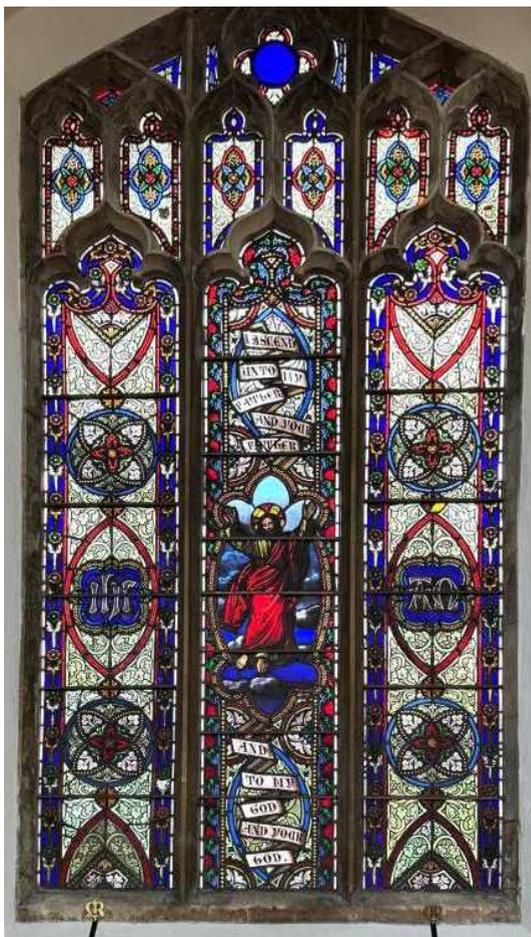
Caritas (Charity) Fides (Faith) Spes (Hope)

John Singer Sargent, the famous American artist, and both are known for their portraiture and depiction of Edwardian luxury. Von Glehn was also part of the impressionist movement. The window is a fusion of differing styles. The tall robed ladies are almost pre-Raphaelite in style; they are dressed in long robes of dark purples, blues, reds and browns, and the central figure has red hair, whilst the use of glass with gradations of colour within each panel is typical of the Arts and Crafts movement. The shaping of the individual pieces of glass in the background sky give a distinct nod to Glehn's impressionist leaning, but the architectural surrounds retain the renaissance revival style of many of the other somewhat earlier windows in the church. The overall appearance however is very balanced, eye-catching and effective. The window was donated by Ariana Curtis in memory of her late husband, a cousin and friend of John Singer Sargent and presumably of von Glehn.



Initials of
Wilfred G.
Von Glehn

Adrian Beckingsale



This month we are going to look at two windows in the South aisle of St Mary's Church, Dedham. Towards the Eastern end a three panel window shows "The Ascension" of Christ. This window is attributed to J. Powell and sons in 1848. The Powells ran the Whitefriars glassworks in London for five generations in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

They brought many innovations to both the production and colouring of stained glass and were probably the most prolific makers of stained glass in England during this period. There are very many examples of their windows throughout Churches in the UK.

In the centre panel a text ribbon extending above and below the figure of Christ reads "I ASCEND UNTO MY FATHER AND YOUR FATHER AND TO MY GOD AND YOUR GOD".

In the middle the figure of Jesus rises up into the clouds with his arms raised in blessing. In the Bible, the Ascension is recorded in Mark 16:19-20, Luke 24:50-53 and Acts 1:6-11. It is worth looking at the wonderful painting of the Ascension by John Constable, which we are fortunate to have, hanging over what was the old South door.

In the left hand panel we see inscribed IHS. These letters are very often seen in association with images of Jesus but there is some controversy about their origin and meaning. If they originate from the Greek tradition then they simply translate as JES, which is, of course, an abbreviation: the first three letters of Jesus. However if they arise from the Roman tradition then they may stand for the Latin "In Hoc Signo" (vinces), "by this sign" (you will overcome). The sign in question being the sign of the cross. Contemporary sources tell us that, the night before the Battle of the Milvian Bridge in 312 AD, Constantine had a vision of the cross and told his soldiers to paint this on their shields. Constantine won the battle. As a result he became the Emperor of the Western Roman Empire and converted to Christianity stopping his predecessor Diocletian's vicious persecution of Christians.

In the Right hand panel we see the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, Alpha and Omega, again a commonly seen image in Christianity. "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty." (Revelations 1:8).

Towards the Western end of the South aisle is another three panel window in a similar style which is also probably by J. Powell and Sons.

The central panel depicts Jesus as “The Good Shepherd (John 10:1-18) with a shepherd’s crook and a sheep carried round his shoulders. The text ribbon reads: “The Son of man is come to save that which was lost”. At the top of the window in the tracery we see “Alpha and Omega” again.

The side panels show four winged creatures. In the Bible in the Book of Revelation we read of the vision of four winged creatures, a lion, an ox, a man and an eagle at the foot of God’s throne. Over time these became interpreted as representing the four Gospel Writers.

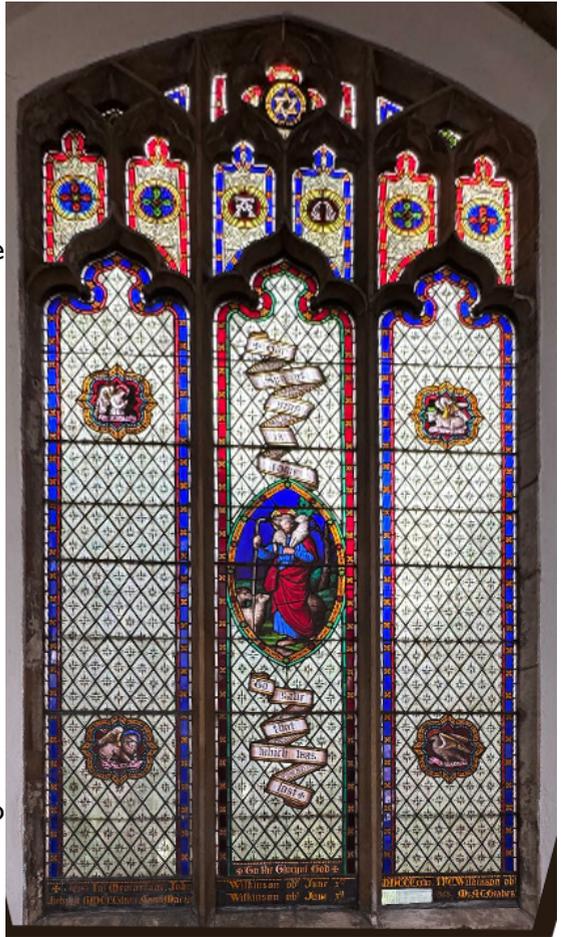
The winged lion stands for St Mark as his gospel emphasises the royal dignity of Christ.

St Luke is suggested by the ox, a sacrificial animal, as his Gospel stresses the sacrificial nature of Christ’s ministry.

The winged man, or angel, came to represent St Matthew as his Gospel opens with the human antecedents of Jesus.

The winged eagle, the creature which flies closest to Heaven, symbolises St John because of his visions and heavenly opening of his Gospel.

These four symbols are known as the Tetramorph and are commonly seen in Christian manuscripts and church edifices.



St Mark



St Luke



St Matthew



St John

Adrian Beckingsale

Old Testament Figures

The majority of the stained glass windows in St Mary's Church, Dedham and in Christian Churches in general depict scenes from the New Testament and the life of Jesus. However, in the side windows of the chancel, above the New Testament scenes, we see representations of twelve of the important figures of the Old Testament. Each of them is labelled with their name at the bottom of the window and although they have elaborate clothes and head-dresses they do not have halos as they are not Saints.



Abraham

"Abraham patriarch" Abraham was called Patriarch because, as was promised by God, he became the father of the Tribes of Israel and, we read in Genesis 15, his descendants would become as numerous as the visible stars in heaven. Abraham is tested by God and told to sacrifice his son Isaac. At the last minute God reprieves Isaac because Abraham has shown true obedience and provides a ram for the sacrifice instead. (Genesis 22). The window shows Abraham carrying the knife to sacrifice Isaac, and the fire with which to burn the sacrifice.



Moses

"Moses homo Dei" Moses man of God led the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt and parted the Red Sea so that they could escape. He is, however, most famous for receiving the "Ten Commandments" on the two tablets of

stone from God on Mount Sinai. (Exodus: 31: 18 for the first set which Moses broke in anger when the Israelites worshipped the golden calf and Exodus 34: 1 for the second pair of stones replaced by God). Here Moses is shown carrying the two tablets marked with ten Roman numerals .



David

"David Rex" David was the second King of Israel after Saul. He is shown carrying a harp as among other achievements he was the author of nearly half the Psalms and can also be credited with making music and singing a fundamental element of worship. (1 Chronicles 16: 4-7)

"Solomon Rex" Solomon succeeded David as King of Israel he is shown holding in his right hand a jewelled sceptre, a symbol of absolute power. In his left hand is a book titled "Sapientia Salomon" (The Wisdom of Solomon) on the cover. Solomon's wisdom is proverbial and we read in 1 Kings 4: 29 "God gave Solomon wisdom and very great insight, and a breadth of understanding as measureless as the sand on the seashore".



Solomon

Old Testament Figures

The other eight figures are all “Prophets” and have their own books in the Old Testament. Often in Latin inscriptions in church a form of shorthand was used to condense the writing and here p’pheta stands for propheta or prophet.

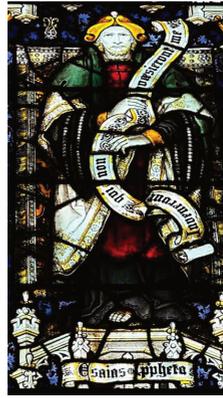
They are Amos, Elias (Elijah), Esaias (Isaiah), Esdras (Ezra), Ezechiel (Ezekiel), Ieremias (Jeremiah), Malachias (Malachi) and Samuel.



Amos



Elijah



Isaiah



Ezra



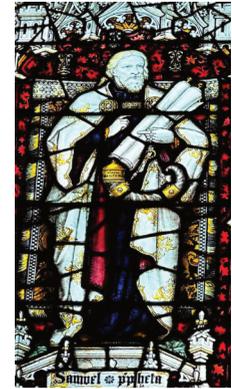
Ezekiel



Jeremiah



Malachi



Samuel

Mostly these figures carry text banners with quotes from their book in the Bible. However there are a couple of other biblical allusions depicted which are worth noting. Samuel carries, as well as the scrolls of his book, an elaborately decorated and gold mounted horn in which was kept Holy Oil used for anointing Kings. He used this oil to anoint David (1 Samuel 16: 13) and it was also used to anoint Solomon (1 Kings 1: 39). It is also easy to miss at the feet of the figure of Elijah, a beautifully depicted “Raven” with a wafer of bread in his mouth. In 1 Kings 17: 2-6 we read that the Lord instructed Elijah to take refuge in a ravine where he would drink from the brook and ravens would bring him bread and meat twice a day to feed him.

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