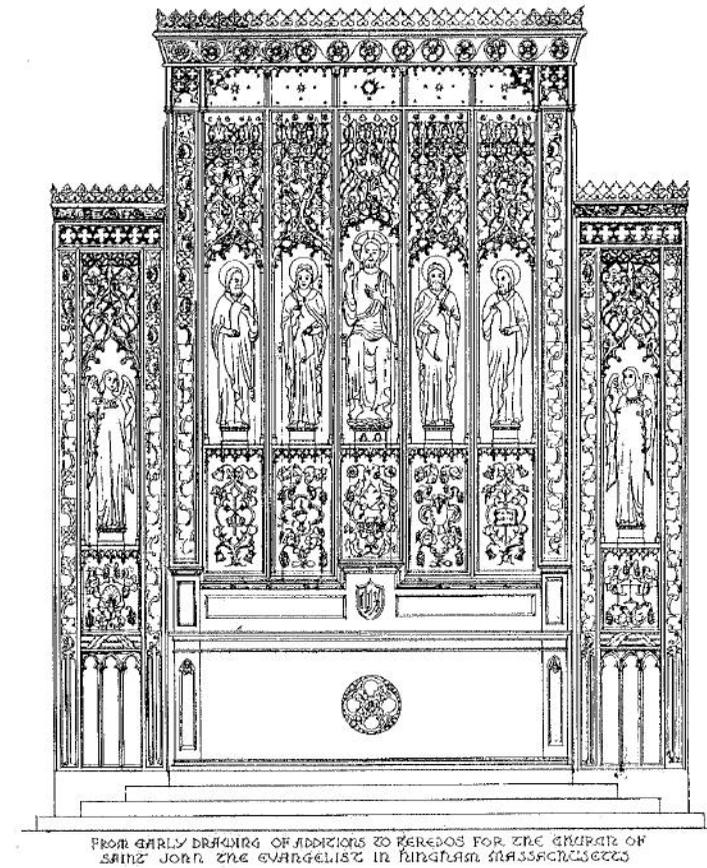


# A Journey through the Episcopal Parish of St. John the Evangelist Hingham, Massachusetts



## *A Brief Guide to the History, Stained Glass & Interior Appointments*

## Welcome

We bid you a warm welcome to St. John's and offer this brief journey through the history, architecture, windows, art, and interior appointments of the parish. For over 125 years the Episcopal Parish of St. John the Evangelist in Hingham has witnessed to the presence of Jesus Christ in our midst through worship, prayer, and service to the wider community. We are a church community with a hallowed past, an engaging present, and a vibrant future. It is to this reality that we offer our greatest praise and thanksgiving.

## A Brief History of St. John's

The Episcopal Church in Hingham had its earliest beginnings with summer services held in the 1820's. The first regular services were held in Hingham Square over what is now Winston Flowers. In 1883 a small wooden building was erected on Main Street opposite Water Street and the Rev. Charles Wells was appointed the first priest in charge of the congregation.



Original Church Building  
(directly across Main Street)

In 1906, during the rectorship of the Rev. George Weld, the church building was moved across the street to the top of the hill, the site on which the present building is now located. The federal style house next to the church, built in 1789, was purchased to serve as a rectory. A parish hall was added and the church was remodeled after a fire when a bell tower was added. In 1914, the present stone parish hall was erected, containing a gymnasium on the lower level. In 1919, the old wooden building was razed and the present stone church was erected.

Made of locally quarried Weymouth "seam-face" granite, it was built as a gift of Mrs. Ezra Ripley Thayer in memory of her husband who had been Dean of the Harvard Law School. The church building was completed while the Rev. James Bullitt was Rector.

The Rev. Daniel Magruder was Rector from 1921 to 1951, a ministry that lasted through the Great Depression and World War II. He is remembered by many for his dramatic flair and kindly ways. Under his leadership, the church school expanded and a boys' choir was established.

traditional symbol of the eagle. This is an especially fine bit of Victorian stained glass, created by Burnham Studios. The window is a memorial to Thomas Margetts, one of the founders of St. John's parish. In the hallway outside the church office is a window that portrays the *Agnus Dei* (Lamb of God). This and the Victorian window that reads "Blessed are the pure in heart" in the Tower Room probably came from the original church building. Finally, the small round window in the Rector's Parlor of an angel praying with crossed arms was above the altar in the original wooden church building across Main Street.

## Please Return Again

It can take a lifetime to fully appreciate the architectural and spiritual detail of a church like St. John's. We hope this guide serves as inspiration to return again and again. For this parish community is not a mere museum but a vibrant community of faith where the gospel of Jesus Christ is continually preached through word and action. Wherever you are on your own spiritual journey, we bid you godspeed and blessings.

*Acknowledgments:* Much of this document draws upon the work of the Rev. John Gallop, 6<sup>th</sup> rector of St. John's, and the Rev. Robert Edson, 7<sup>th</sup> rector of St. John's. Father Edson has rightly described this parish as "a Bible in glass, woodcarving, and stone." His continued interest in and passion for the history of this parish is an inspiration to us all.



## The Episcopal Parish of St. John the Evangelist

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## The Chapel

Located on the left side of the Nave, the chapel originally housed the organ pipes before the church was expanded in 1954.

### Painting of Moses Striking the Rock

A Renaissance scene depicting the Israelites in the wilderness, with Moses striking the rock from which water gushes forth (Genesis 17:5-6). This has always been referred to as symbolically pre-figuring the rite of Baptism.

### Sanctuary Lamp

A hand-wrought Florentine silver piece, dating from about 1500.

### The Altar

This is the original altar of St. John's – brought from the old wooden church across the street.

### The Calvary

The figures over the screen symbolize Christ's atoning sacrifice, bringing us new life and salvation. The accompanying figures are St. John the Evangelist and the Blessed Virgin Mary. The word "Calvary" (Latin) refers to the "place of a skull" (where Jesus was crucified).

### The Narthex

The fine antique oak table in the vestibule is in the English Tudor style; it is a so-called "refectory" table. Above the table is a polychromed terra-cotta representation of the Virgin and Infant Jesus in the Italian Renaissance style, as is also the carved wood frame. The small window in the narthex near the bell rope depicts St. John the Evangelist as a young man.

In the front entrance, just through the main doors of the church are two windows that incorporate the themes of the two great sacraments, Baptism and Eucharist. They are memorials to the Rev. Diane Edson, the wife of the Rev. Robert Edson, the 7<sup>th</sup> Rector of St. John's.

### Additional Windows

At the entrance to the chancel (in the corridor next to the sacristy) is a small fragment retained from the former church building picturing St. John the Evangelist with his

The Rev. John Gallop led the parish as Rector for the next twenty-eight years from 1951 to 1979 during which time the church was enlarged with the addition of offices and classrooms in 1954 – 1955 with the eventual addition of a parking lot and memorial garden for burial of ashes. St. John's Nursery School shared the facilities for forty years until they built a school building of their own which is now Hingham Nursery School.

The Rev. Robert Edson served as Rector for the next twenty-six years from 1981 to 2007. During those years the parish emphasized quality worship with a strong music program, Christian formation for all ages, youth programs and outreach efforts. In 1996 and in 2006, capital campaigns were held to raise funds for refurbishing the parish hall and classrooms, the organ, and the rectory.

The Rev. Timothy Schenck was installed as the eighth Rector of St. John's in 2009 and the parish continues as a vibrant community of faith in the heart of Hingham.

## Stained Glass Windows

Upon entering the church building, it is difficult not to be taken with the stained glass windows which are among the most beautiful on the South Shore. The windows were designed by two well-known Boston companies – Charles Connick Studios and Reynolds, Francis & Rohnstock. We will begin by describing the Great West Window in the back of the church and move clockwise through the south nave, chapel, sanctuary, and north nave. But first, if you look high above the West Window, you will notice a small round window in the rafters depicting an angel with crossed arms, a traditional posture of prayer.

### The Great West Window

Symbolized here are the allegorical figures of the five traditional virtues: Justice, Faith, Love, Hope and Truth. *Love*, the greatest, is given the central position. The noble symbol of love, the parable of the Good Samaritan, is pictured below while St. Martin of Tours is shown above tearing his cloak and giving half to a poor beggar. The lancet on the left is devoted to *Faith*, symbolized by the lamp, the angel, and a dove; the balancing figure is *Hope*. The symbol of the Ark under darkened skies with the single star is designed for the base of the Faith lancet, while the Ark with the rainbow and the returning dove occupies the base of the Hope lancet. In the extreme left lancet is *Justice*, where we encounter Solomon settling the dispute between the two women claiming motherhood. To the right is *Truth*, featuring Moses and the burning bush and Christ teaching Nicodemus about the meaning of being born again.

In the two central tracery pieces at the top appear angels bearing shields inscribed with the monographs of Christ – “IHS” (the first three letters of Jesus’ name in Greek) and the *chi rho* “XP” (first two letters of Christ in Greek). Smaller tracery members contain symbols of the four Evangelists: the winged man (St. Matthew), the lion (St. Mark), the bull (St. Luke), and the eagle (St. John).

#### **The St. Joseph of Arimathea & St. Anne Window**

With the theme of wisdom, understanding, and counsel, an angel with the word *Sapientia*, or wisdom, is shown in the apex. The left lancet features St. Joseph of Arimathea, a man of wealth who asked for the body of Jesus to be buried in his own tomb. On the right is St. Anne, mother of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

#### **The St. Andrew & St. Margaret Window**

This window depicts St. Andrew and St. Margaret, both patrons of Scotland. Scenes below show Jesus calling Andrew to be a “fisher of men” and St. Margaret giving food to beggars. The small inset figures depict associations in the life of S. Randall Lincoln, in whose memory the window was given. You can spot the Church of St. Andrew’s, Hingham, England (home of the Lincoln ancestors), Derby Academy, the old Anchor Tavern (where Lincoln was born), his Boston bull terrier, and the Masonic symbol. In the margins are bachelor button flowers which he wore in his lapel. Lincoln was the son of William Otis Lincoln, who with Thomas Margetts and Josiah Prentice Tucker were among the founders of the Parish.

#### **The Nativity Window (In the Chapel)**

The Star of Bethlehem is visible in the apex of this nativity-themed window. In the lower left lancet, the Angel Gabriel announces to Mary that she is with child. Other scenes in the medallions depict Mary and Joseph travelling to Bethlehem to pay the temple tax, the refusal at the inn; the visit of the shepherds, the coming of the wise men, and the flight into Egypt.

#### **The Crucifixion & Resurrection Window (Sanctuary Left)**

Beginning in the lower portion of the left lancet, Jesus is whipped and scourged and then compelled to carry his cross as he consoles the women of Jerusalem. At the top, Jesus hangs on the cross while Mary his mother, John, and Mary Magdalene look on. Beginning at the bottom of the right lancet, the body of Jesus is taken down from the cross as Joseph of Arimathea requests the body of Jesus. At the top, Jesus is resurrected while the guards sleep. In the middle the angel sits at the empty tomb to tell the women that Jesus is risen.

## **The Nave**

### **Hymn Boards**

The pair of hymn boards nearest the front of the church were designed especially for the panels at the top. These Renaissance wood carvings depict (on the right) the Annunciation and on the left the Circumcision.

### **Antique Madonna**

At one time it was believed that this terra-cotta polychromed figure was the work of the artist Jocola della Quercia (1378-1438). A visit by sculptor Peter Rockwell, son of Norman Rockwell, confirmed that it is a 19th century reproduction – there is a similar Madonna in the Gardner Museum. The canopy is said to have been made of wood from the ship that took Napoleon to St. Helena.

### **Carved Pew-Ends**

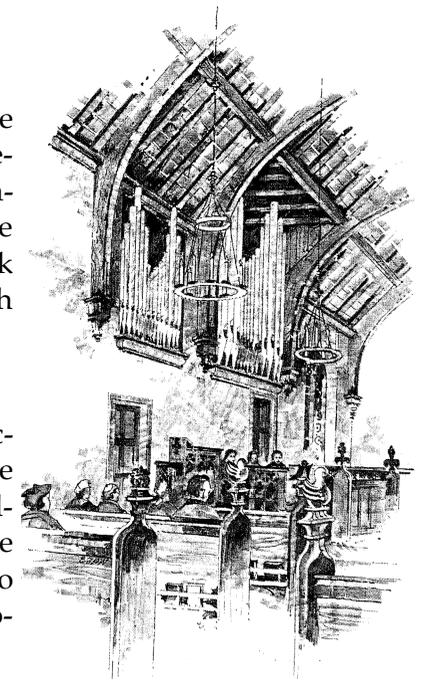
The carved pew-ends are copied from a small parish in Swathan, near London. The figures are doves of peace, the Tudor rose, the Scottish thistle, and the pomegranate, symbols of eternal life. On the front pews on either side, the wings of the doves are open.

### **Wardens’ Wands**

These silver-headed staves mark the place where the Wardens and their families traditionally sat. On special occasions they are carried in procession to symbolize the offices of Junior and Senior Warden. The eagle is a symbol of St. John; the cross and boat-hook symbols of St. Andrew (a nod to our connection with St. Andrew’s, Hingham, England.)

### **Needlepoint Kneelers**

The St. John’s Needlepoint Guild has been very active in recent years. Each row has a different theme from the Bible. Interestingly, the needlepoint kneelers on either side of the altar were donated from the parishioners of St. Andrew’s, Hingham, England, to encourage us in beginning our own needlepoint project.



### **The High Altar**

Behind the free-standing altar is the original High Altar. Into the center stand for the altar cross is carved the Christian symbol *IHS* (the first three letters of Jesus' name in Greek). Surrounding detail includes intertwined grapevines, complementing the wood carvings on the reredos and being symbolic both of the Eucharistic wine and Jesus' statement that "I am the true vine."

### **The Bishop's Chair**

Located on the left side of the sanctuary, this chair was sent to the newly established mission in Hingham from the congregation of St. Andrew's Church, Hingham, England in 1884. The chair itself is Victorian in style but was made to preserve some several medieval-era carved wood panels.

### **Lectern**

This antique woodwork was originally a table leg (a 14<sup>th</sup> century English carving). Mr. Edgar Walker designed the stand. The eagle with his foot on the turtle comes from one of Aesop's fables about a turtle that wanted to be taught to fly. When the eagle explained that he was not equipped for flight, the turtle persisted so the eagle took him up and let him go. The moral of the story: don't attempt to do that for which you are not equipped. Another interpretation views the tortoise as representing the world in time, with the eagle symbolizing the power of the Gospel triumphant over time.

### **Chancel Rail & Pulpit**

The carved oak chancel rail and pulpit were preserved and remodeled from among the furnishings of the previous church, acquired to beautify the building after being moved across the street (1906). It is a memorial to Josiah Prentice Tucker, first Senior Warden of St. John's Parish.

### **Cross Over the Celebrant's Chair**

This was given to St. John's by the people of St. Andrew's, Hingham, in Norfolk, England, to mark our 100th anniversary as a parish. The wood and stone are from their 14th century church.

### **The Organ**

The St. John's pipe organ is a 28-rank, three-manual Aeolian-Skinner to fit the acoustics and size of the enlarged church building and dedicated on June 24<sup>th</sup>, 1962. It was refurbished as part of a 2006 capital campaign.

### **The Holy Week Window (Sanctuary Right)**

This pair of windows depicts scenes from the Passion of our Lord. In the apex is the crown of thorns. Beginning on the lower portion of the left lancet, Jesus makes his triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday; he then gathers the twelve disciples together for the Last Supper; he prays in the Garden of Gethsemane; is betrayed by Judas with a kiss; stands before Pilate; and is mocked and scourged by the soldiers.

### **The Stories of Jesus Window**

Located in the chancel behind the organ console, this window depicts scenes from the life of Jesus. It includes, beginning in the top right lancet, the twelve-year-old Jesus teaching in the temple; performing his first miracle at a wedding in Cana where he turned water into wine; and raising the daughter of Jairus. In the upper portion of the left lancet Lazarus, having been raised from the dead, emerges from his tomb; Jesus with the woman at the well; and the woman healed by touching the hem of Jesus' garment.

### **The St. Paul & St. Barnabas Window**

This window depicts the missionary St. Paul and his companion St. Barnabas. Barnabas is in the left lancet, holding the gospel of St. Matthew. In the *predella*, Barnabas is at the altar of fire where he and Paul were mistakenly thought to be the gods Zeus and Hermes. In the right lancet, the apostle Paul holds his double-edged *Spiritus Gladius* (Sword of the Spirit). In the *predella*, Paul is blinded and converted on the Road to Damascus.

### **The Resurrection Window**

This is the only window in the church with three lancets. The apex is the Christ child with the cross, beneath which is the hand of God. Beneath him is the angel of the resurrection sitting at the empty tomb. On the top left is the *agnus dei*, the Lamb of God. In the top right are angels with the crown of thorns, hammer, and sponge. In the middle left is Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane and in the middle right is Christ carrying his cross, with Veronica holding the veil with the imprint of his face. At the lower left is Peter and John going to the empty tomb and on the lower right are the three Marys: Magdalene, the mother of Jesus, and the mother of James.

### **The St. Nicholas & St. Dorothea Window**

The theme here is service, generosity and charity depicting St. Dorothea on the right and St. Nicholas on the left. St. Nicholas was the 4<sup>th</sup> century Bishop of Myra in present-

day Turkey. Over him in the canopy is an angel with three bags of coins from the legend that Nicholas saved a family from a certain life of poverty by climbing onto the roof and dropping three bags of coins down the chimney. St. Dorothea was martyred in 313. On the way to her execution a young man asked her to send him fruits and flowers from paradise. In the canopy an angel holds the basket of fruits and flowers delivered by the young child whom she holds as she presents her flaming heart, the symbol of charity, to God.

#### The St. Francis & St. Elizabeth Window

On the left is St. Francis of Assisi surrounded by birds and other animals to whom he has preached. His "Canticle to the Sun" is represented in the fish, flower, and squirrel. St. Elizabeth of Hungary is depicted with a cloak full of roses, recalling the legend that the household bread she was taking to the poor was turned into roses to appease her husband who feared her love for the poor was indiscriminate. Below is a basket of bread and a jug of wine for the poor, to whom she dedicated her life.

**The Madonna & St. John the Evangelist Window** The theme is "motherhood" exemplified by the Madonna and Child and St. John the Evangelist. The Madonna is depicted in the left lancet, robed in traditional blue and holding the Christ child. In the *predella* is the Annunciation of Mary with the angel Gabriel holding a scroll on which is inscribed *Ave Maria, Gratia Plena* ("Hail, Mary, full of grace"). One of the jewels in the Madonna's crown is a piece of ancient glass from Rheims Cathedral in France given by the Rev. Daniel Magruder, the parish's rector from 1921-51, who had served as a chaplain in France during world War I. On the right is St. John the Evangelist as a young man, to whom Jesus gave care of his mother after his death. In the *predella* on the right is Mary being commended to the care of John at the Crucifixion.

### The Sanctuary & Chancel

#### Carved Reredos

The beautifully hand-carved mahogany reredos was designed by Edgar T. P. Walker, executed in the studios of Irving, Casson & Davenport, Boston, and carved by Ernesto Pelligrino. The statues themselves are carved in holly wood.

#### Central Figure

Christ is seated as on a throne above the letters "Alpha" and "Omega," the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, symbolizing Christ as Lord from the be-

ginning to the end of time. Above in the fret-work is the Dove of the Holy Spirit, and in the panel beneath (behind the altar cross) is the Lamb of God and the Book with the Seven Seals (as detailed in Revelation).

#### On the Right Side

**St. Luke** holds a scroll and pen symbolizing his office as Gospel writer. Above is the Ox, associated with Luke as a symbol of strength and beneath is an artist's pallet, referring to an old legend that Luke was a painter as well as a physician.

**St. Paul** is shown with sword in hand, indicating the mode of his martyrdom. Above is a ship symbolic of his missionary journeys and below are the sword and book, referred to in Ephesians (6:17), "the sword of the spirit" - *Spiritus Gladius*.

#### On the Left Side

**St. John the Evangelist** is depicted with scroll and pen as Gospel writer. Above is an eagle, symbolic of the power of the Gospel message while below is the snake and chalice - a medieval legend that St. John rid a poisoned chalice of its power by his blessing.

**St. Peter** holds the keys traditionally associated with his office. Above is the rooster, referring to his denial of our Lord and below is the upside down cross - a symbol referring to the mode of his martyrdom. The crossed keys are symbolic of his Apostleship.

#### Carved Angels & Tracery

The angels on either side are symbolic and decorative, mainly to direct the eye toward the central figures. Beneath, on the left, is a carved shell, symbolic of Christian pilgrimage, by tradition associated with St. James. On the right are the scales, associated in symbol with the last judgment. The tracery carving on the framework displays the entwined grapevine, symbolic of life - from the fruit of the ground and, religiously, of the Eucharist.



The West Front