

Subjects for the glass at St Barnabas derive from Scripture, from standard themes in Christian theology, and also relate to the cycle of the Christian year and even to the functions of parts of the building. The chancel glass, for example, contains Eucharistic references to bread and wine. The subject of Christ blessing children was frequently chosen for memorials in stained glass, part of its topicality dating back to 1800s when infant mortality was much higher than in subsequent decades. The Vipond window, depicting the Good Shepherd, shows another subject suitable as a memorial for a child dying in infancy.

An unusual subject in the glass at St Barnabas is the depiction of Christ healing a sick woman, which appears to derive from passages describing the healing of Peter's mother-in-law.

The most elaborate stained glass windows often included architectural details simulating the carved canopies over statuary. The south transept window shows a particularly rich example. Canopy styles were virtual trademarks for their designers, as each stained glass studio had its own. Lyon canopies in gothic style, for example, included fleshy leaves of a type not seen in McCausland work. In turn, Luxfer also had its own style, different from either McCausland or Lyon.

The oldest glass now in St Barnabas is the Vipond window. The excessive amount of enamel painting and coarse style are close to signed work by the Dominion Stained Glass studio. Enamel painting derived from traditions dating back as far as the 1400s and much used by many stained glass artists of the 1800s and even early 1900s. In Canada, enamel painting was used on plain or white glass when coloured glass was either unavailable or prohibitive in cost. The glass obtained by stained glass studios in Canada was always imported, often from Great Britain, but also from France, Germany and the United States.

The Annunciation of Gabriel to Mary. Matthew 1:26-38

Adoration of the Magi. Matthew 2:1-12

Jesus Heals Peter's Mother-in-Law. Matthew 8:14-15;
Mark 1:30-31; Luke 4:38-39

Lying in bed with a fever, or Jesus Raises the Ruler's
Daughter from the Dead. Matthew 9:25;
Mark 5:38-42, the raising of the daughter of Jairus

Christ Blessing Children. Matthew 19: 13-15;
Mark 10:13-16; Luke 18:15-17

Christ in the House of Mary and Martha. Luke 10: 38-42

Palm Sunday. Matt. 21:6-11; Mark 11:7-10;
Luke 19:35-44; 12:12-16

Gethsemane (Agony in the Garden). Matthew 26:36-39;
Mark 14:32-36; Luke 22:39-44 (Mount of Olives)

Crucifixion. Matthew 27:33-44; Mark 15:24-39;
Luke 23:33-49; John 19:18-30

The Three Marys at the Tomb. See Mark 16:1-8

Ascension. Acts 1:1-9

Jesus the Bread of Life. John 6:22-58

Jesus the Good Shepherd. Luke 15: 3-7; John 10:7-18

St Barnabas: Jewish Levite, convert in Jerusalem;
introduced Paul to the Apostles. Called an Apostle in
Acts 14:14. Heraldic Symbol: Shield, gules (red); a
fess (horizontal band) argent (silver or white). Three
Tudor roses, argent (silver or white), at the top, one
at the bottom; two roses gules (red) on the fess.

– K. Corey Keeble 12 April, 2008



STAINED GLASS in St. Barnabas, Chester Anglican Church

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A presentation by K. Corey Keeble • Hosted by the Riverdale Historical Society

Stained glass is an art of colour, line and light. Stained glass windows are composed of two essential components – the glass itself, and the bonding, traditionally in the form of strips of lead, which hold the glass together. The glass, usually coloured, may be augmented by overpainting in enamels to add tone, texture, and detail. Historically, the combination of pieces of coloured glass and came about as a response to a technical limitation. During the Middle Ages in Europe, glass making techniques could not produce pieces of glass of sufficient size to span the height and width of window openings in churches which grew larger as the art of architecture progressed, climaxing in the enormous window openings of the great Gothic cathedrals and churches of the High Middle Ages. To overcome this liability, designers used strips of lead to enable them to assemble many small pieces of glass into a matrix large enough to fill the dimensions of a window opening. The genius of stained glass design lay in part in incorporating the leadlines as a technical necessity into the aesthetics of the overall design, outlining and accenting compositions in a manner akin to the outlines of modern colouring books.

While the art of stained glass was in decline from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, it underwent a spectacular revival during the 1800s. The revival of stained glass art took place in the dual context of growing interest in the art and architecture of the Middle Ages, and the effects in glass making brought about by advances in chemistry and technology associated with the Industrial Revolution.

Two essential types of glass emerged in stained glass design in the 1800s. So-called “antique” glass was not old glass, but hand blown glass. In contrast, “cathedral” glass, was machine made, with hot glass passed through metal rollers. As the result of studies by antiquarians and scientist alike, glassmakers of the 1800s re-invented what came to

be called the “true mosaic process”, using contoured leadlines to outline and augment compositions of multiple pieces of coloured glass.



The development of nineteenth century stained glass in Toronto took place in the context of the Gothic Revival in architecture. Rudimentary efforts had been made in the 1830s and 1840s, but assumed greater maturity with the efforts of Joseph McCausland in the 1850s. The McCausland studio not only pursued its own course of evolution, but provided the training ground for generations of artists and craft specialists who began to set up their own studios. Among them was Napoleon Theodore Lyon who was associated with Joseph McCausland as early as 1868, and who had set up his own independent stained glass design studio in the 1880s. N. T. Lyon's studio flourished until the end of the 1920s, and succumbed to the tribulations of the Great Depression of the 1930s. At the end, the Lyon studio was absorbed back into the McCausland firm, in this case the firm of Robert McCausland Ltd, which owed its name to Joseph McCausland's son Robert, one of the greatest pioneers and practitioners of the art of stained glass in Canadian history.

Most of the stained glass in the Church of St Barnabas derives from the Lyon studio, but there are two others represented within in the building. There are two windows which appear to derive from the Luxfer studio, active in Toronto at the same time, and one – the earliest in the church – which may be the work of the far less well known Dominion Stained Glass Studio.

Typically, the stained glass windows in churches like St Barnabas have been installed as memorials. Sadly, many parish histories provide far more information on the donors and donees of their stained glass than on the studios which designed, assembled and installed them. Fortunately in St Barnabas, not only is the style of the designers fully evident, but many of the windows are signed and dated. The origins of windows where the studio names are missing or concealed are easily recognizable through stylistic comparison with those which are signed.

While the history of St Barnabas dates back to 1857-1858 when it was part of the parish of St John's, Norway, the present building in its present Neo-Gothic style was constructed in successive phases during the early 1900s. The transition from an earlier wooden structure to a more enduring one of brick was already well under way in 1910 with construction on the nave extending up to the transepts.



A new parish hall was built between 1918-1919, and in 1921, according to parish records, the cornerstone was laid for the eastern part of the building comprising transepts, chancel, sanctuary offices and a chapel (later converted into a sacristy). Most of the glass in St Barnabas dates from the 1920s up to and including 1930, with one window from an earlier building. It is convenient to deal with the glass beginning in the nave, and continuing with

the transepts, nave, and west wall.

The church is on an east – west access with the chancel at the east end. Thus, when facing the chancel, north is left, and south is right. The disposition of the glass, date, subject, and maker are as follows:

Layout of Stained Glass • St Barnabas, Chester Anglican Church

CHANCEL North Side (E-W)

- 1930 Christ Blessing, bread in left hand.N. T. Lyon
- 1930 Good Shepherd.....N. T. Lyon

CHANCEL South Side (E-W)

- 1929 Christ with chalice.N. T. Lyon
- 1930 Light of the World, after Holman Hunt.....N. T. Lyon

NORTH TRANSEPT

- (?) The Three Marys at the Empty Tomb. Post 1916.....N. T. Lyon

SOUTH TRANSEPT

- 1921? Christ in the House of Mary & Martha, w/ canopy work.....N. T. Lyon

NAVE South Side (E-W)

- 1928 Annunciation. Dedicated by Lady Pellatt.N. T. Lyon
- (?) Adoration of the Magi, c.1921-1930.....N. T. Lyon
- 1926 Christ Blessing Children.....N. T. Lyon
- 1920+ War Memorial Window, Ded. to J. McWetters (d.1920) Luxfer Prism
- (?) Gethsemane (Christ Praying), 1920s. Luxfer Prism ?
- 1900? Good Shepherd; Vipond Window.....Dominion ?

NAVE North Side (E-W)

- 192- Crucifixion.N. T. Lyon
- 1929 Palm SundayN. T. Lyon
- 192(?) Christ Healing a Sick WomanN. T. Lyon
- 1929 St BarnabasN. T. Lyon

WEST WINDOW

- (?) Ascension, Holtorf Window.....N. T. Lyon

STAINED GLASS AS MEMORIAL ART

While memorial stained glass windows usually bear inscriptions naming the persons they commemorate, they may also bear the names of the individual donors who commissioned the work. Examples of all categories are found in the glass at St Barnabas. The 1928 Annunciation window by N. T. Lyon in the south aisle of the nave, for example, was donated by one of Toronto's most illustrious financiers, Sir Henry Pellatt, in memory of his wife Lady Mary Pellatt, who died in 1924. Henry Pellatt's involvement with Casa Loma is well known, but the family name is also recorded in stained glass commissions for at least two Toronto churches, St Peter's Carlton St, and St Barnabas.

The Vipond window at St Barnabas provides a visible and tangible connection to the Rev. Frank Vipond (1866-1941), rector of St Barnabas from 1905-1912. The window, dedicated to the memory of his son Frank Finlay Vipond (24 January 1899 – 17 January 1900) is one that touches the heart of the viewer with a special poignancy, as does the World War I memorial window dedicated to J. McWetters (d.1920). Both World War I and World War II were followed nation wide by the dedication of countless numbers of memorial windows in honour of the fallen. In the case of the McWetters window, the style of the glass suggests it to be work of Toronto's Luxfer studio.