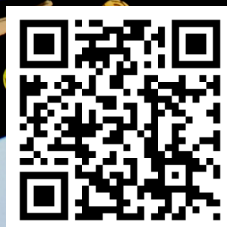


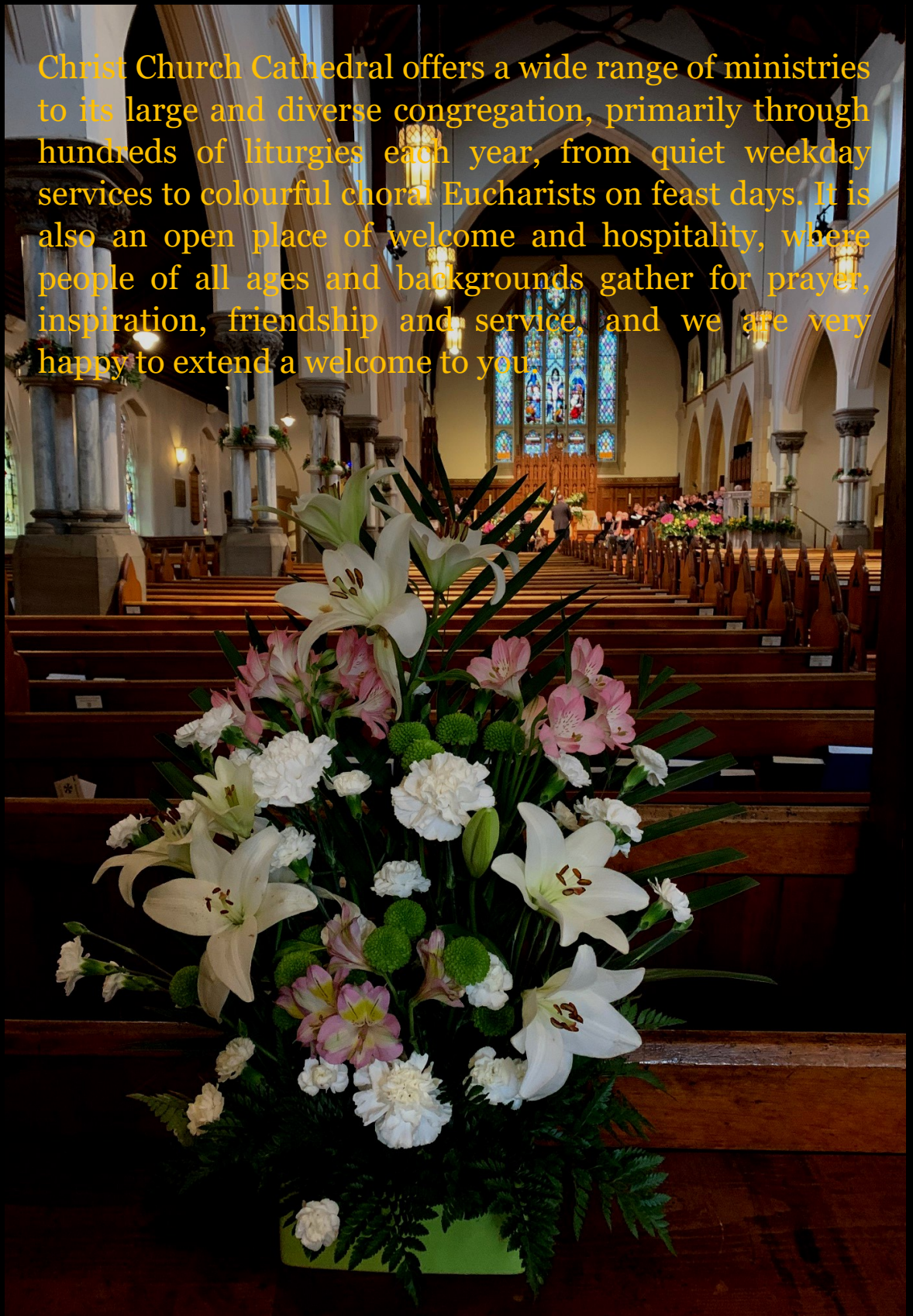
CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL OTTAWA

SELF-GUIDED TOUR



Christ Church Cathedral—
A Video Tour

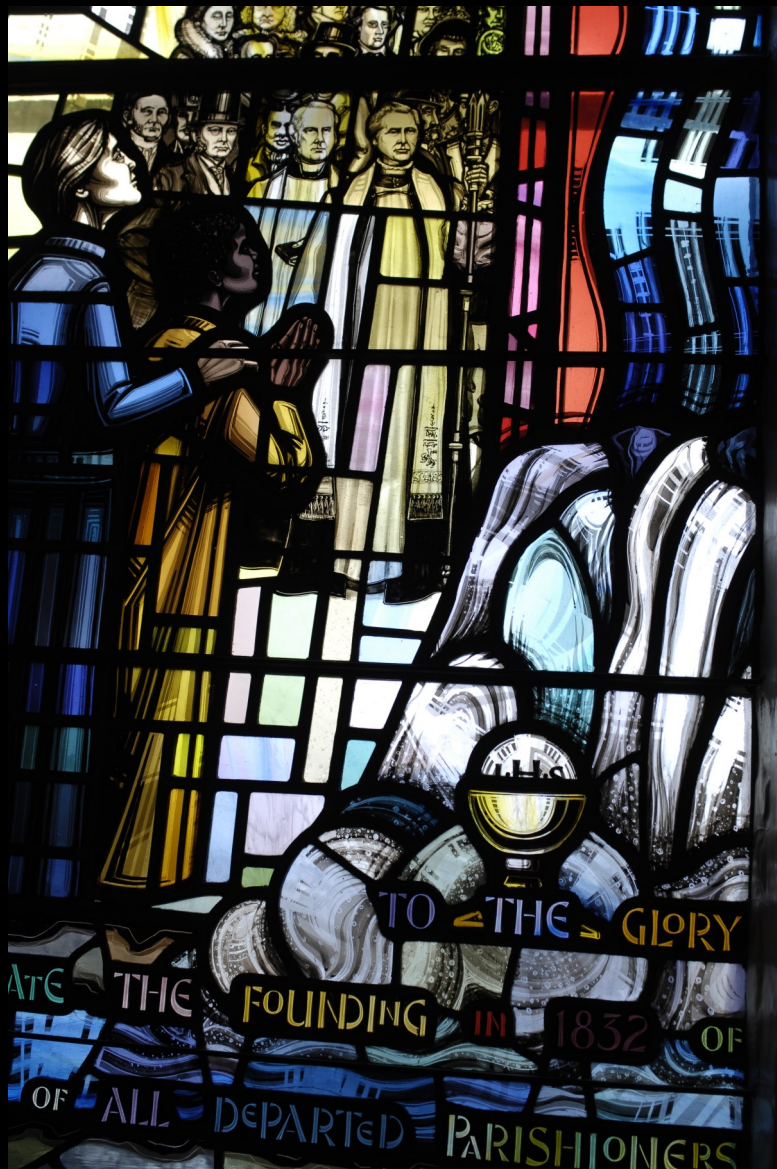
Christ Church Cathedral offers a wide range of ministries to its large and diverse congregation, primarily through hundreds of liturgies each year, from quiet weekday services to colourful choral Eucharists on feast days. It is also an open place of welcome and hospitality, where people of all ages and backgrounds gather for prayer, inspiration, friendship and service, and we are very happy to extend a welcome to you.



The Cathedral, which stands on the traditional territory of the Algonquin Anishinaabe, had its beginnings in 1832, as the first Anglican church in Bytown, a rough-hewn settlement established for the building of the Rideau Canal.



The first church was a simple stone building with planks for pews and only one wood stove against the bitter chill of winter.



The growing lumber trade and the selection of Ottawa as the capital of Canada brought rapid growth to the town, and despite several renovations, Christ Church's congregation soon outgrew its original church. The building you are in was built in 1872, designed by King Arnoldi, who helped design the original Parliament buildings. In 1897, it was named the cathedral of the newly created Diocese of Ottawa. In 1932, the chancel — home to the altar, organ and choir stalls — was expanded to the size you see today.

We invite you to let this pamphlet be your companion on a walk around Christ Church Cathedral so you can see how the story of our faith as Anglican Christians is told in this sacred place, in details great and small.



**CHAPEL OF
RECONCILIATION**

CHANCEL

**CHAPEL OF
THE GOOD
SHEPHERD**

**BAPTISMAL
FONT**

**GOOD SAMARITAN
WINDOW**

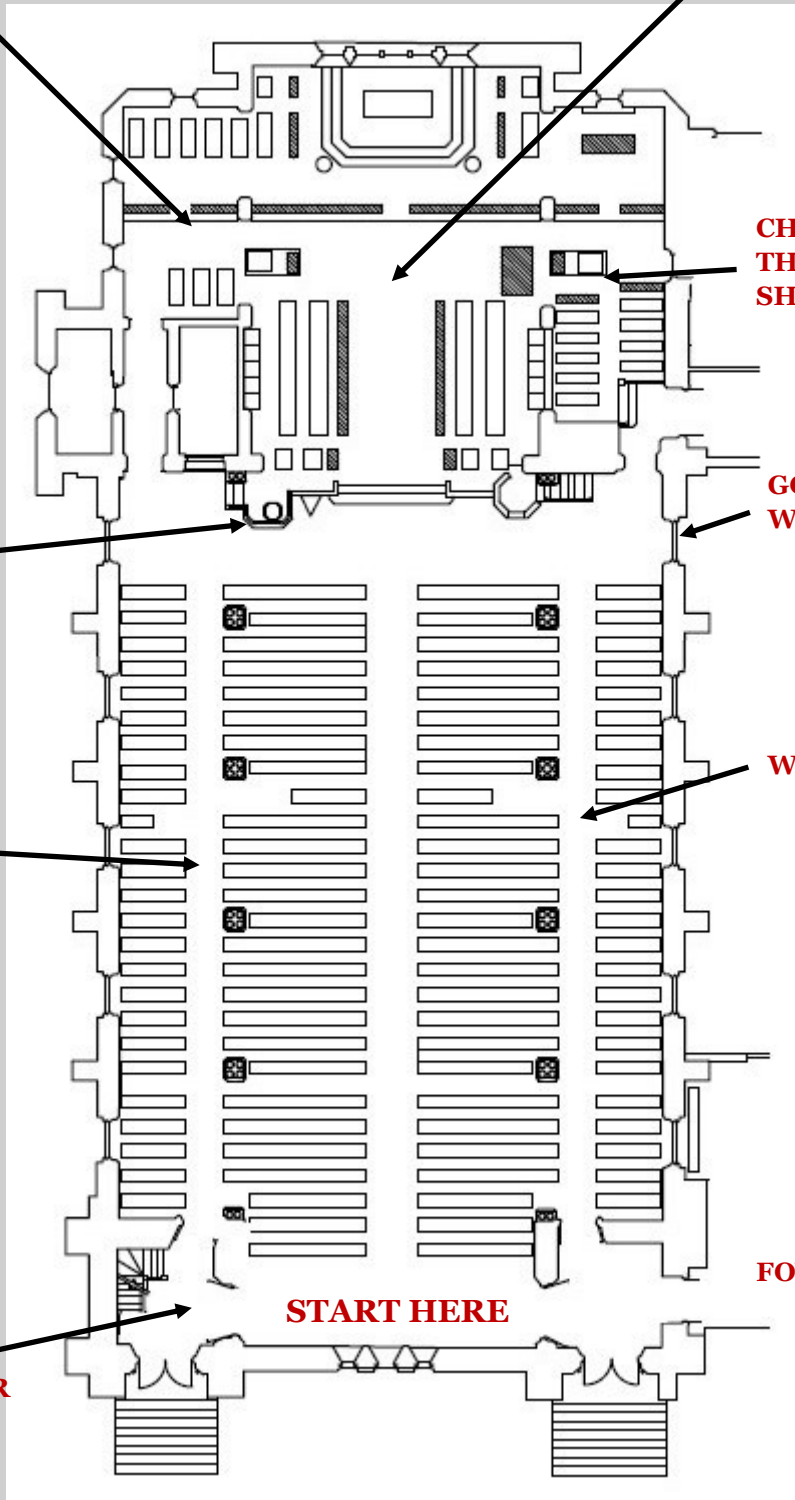
EAST AISLE

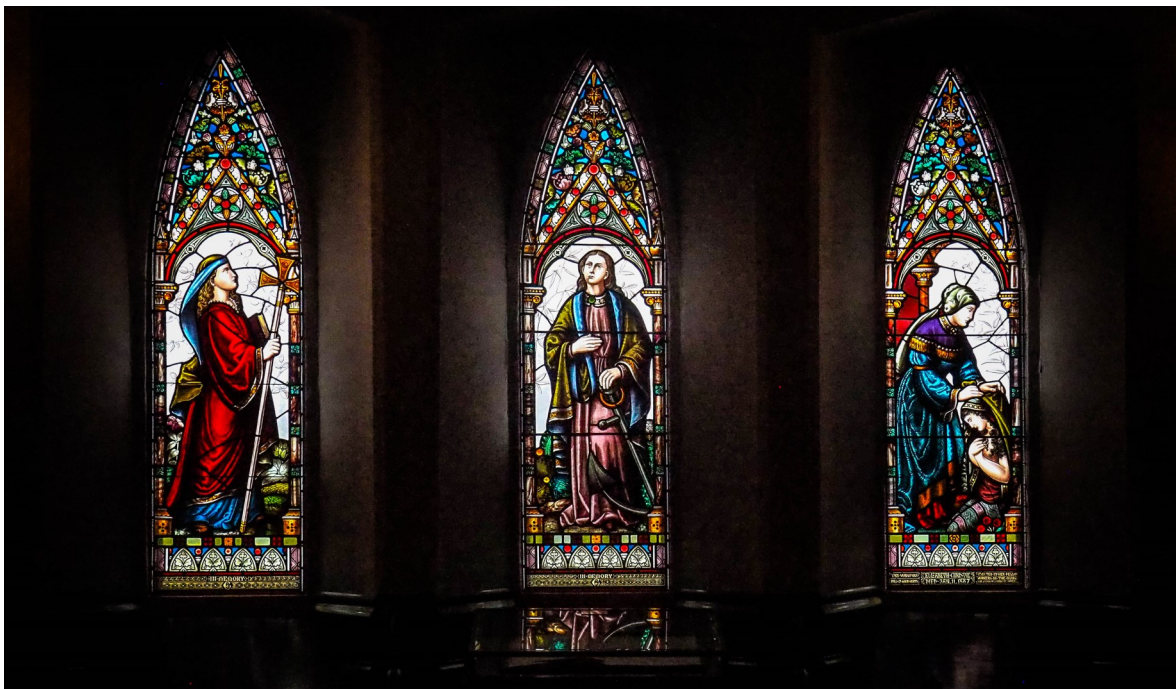
WEST AISLE

FOYER

START HERE

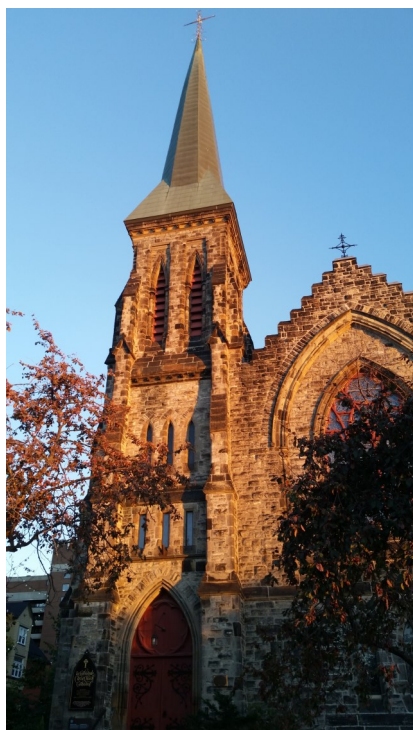
BELL TOWER



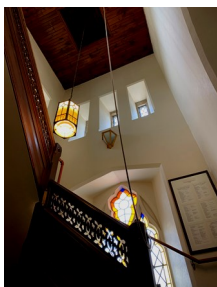


START

We will start our tour at the back of the centre aisle, looking at the three arched stained glass windows on the north wall, featuring three women who represent faith, hope and love—everlasting gifts God bestows on us.



Just ahead to the east, through the doors, are the stairs to the BELL TOWER. This is home to the 516 pound bronze bell that was specially cast for the original church in 1839. It rang to celebrate the creation of Canada on July 1, 1867, and continues to ring for services today.



EAST AISLE

Turn right into the east aisle, where many of the windows celebrate the role of women in the Christian story, starting with those who went to the tomb on the first Easter day to find that Jesus had risen from the dead—reminding us that women were the first witnesses to the resurrection.



Next we have the boy Jesus in the temple at Jerusalem, speaking with the elder teachers. This window depicts the only Bible story about the childhood of Jesus.



The next window depicts women engaging in some of the traditional roles of deacons — caring for the poor and vulnerable. It is interesting because it was created in a time when women were not permitted to ordained ministry in the church. Today, the Anglican Church of Canada ordains women as deacons, priests and bishops.

The quote from Jesus, “I was hungry and you gave me meat, I was naked and you clothed me. Inasmuch as you have done this, you have done it unto me,” shows the spiritual importance of the work they are doing. Christian faith is all about caring for others.



The idea of listening to and following the words of Jesus is carried through into the next window, which tells the story of the sisters Martha and Mary—although Martha is not to be seen in the window.

She, of course, was in the kitchen, taking care of their guests, and complaining that Mary should be helping with dinner, not listening to him teach.

Jesus gently rebukes Martha, saying: “Mary has taken that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.”

The final window has a classic rendering of Jesus as the light of the world, and another, picturing the risen Christ approaching Mary Magdalene in the garden on Easter morning.



BAPTISMAL FONT

At the right of the archway, you will see the baptismal font. God enters into a faithful promise or covenant with us when we are baptized, making us “Christ’s own forever.” Baptism is also the rite of initiation that makes us full members of the Christian church. The font has been given a place of prominence next to the lectern, where readings from scripture are read. The placement of the font and the lectern remind us that the word of God invites (or compels) us into a relationship with God.



Behind the font is a three-billion-year-old piece of stone, cut from one of the oldest rock formations on earth, the Cadillac Breach near Val d’Or, Quebec. It is a reminder of God’s eternally creative power.

The icon to the left of the font, painted by Viorel Badoiu, was commissioned for the Cathedral in 1989. It features Mary, the Mother of God, gesturing toward the child Jesus, to show he is “the way.”





CHAPEL OF RECONCILIATION

Here, a plaque on the wall explains the significance of the chapel and the cross of nails. This chapel recognizes the cathedral's role as the Cathedral of the Anglican Military Ordinariate of the Canadian Forces. The flags include those of the military chaplaincy and the air force, army and navy. The regimental colours on the walls are explained in interpretive notes.

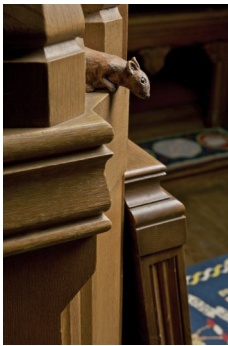
The chapel has three windows, representing the great "I am" statements of Jesus from the Gospel of John: "I am the light of the world, I am the bread of life, I am the resurrection and the life." The phrase "I am who I am" was spoken to Moses at the burning bush when he asked for the name of God. When Jesus says "I am" he is identifying himself with God.



Under the south "I am" window is a Tau crucifix (after the Greek letter it resembles). It was made by Victor Tolgesy, a Hungarian-born Canadian sculptor, and left to the Cathedral in 2001 by Naomi Jackson-Groves, a niece of A.Y. Jackson of the Group of Seven.

CHANCEL

As you enter the chancel, note the ornate wooden throne, adorned with cherubs, beside you. This is the cathedra, or seat of the bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Ottawa. A cathedral takes its name from having a cathedra in it.



Look for Bishopmouse, perched on the back corner of the cathedra. Bishopmouse has three carved friends, in different spots around the chancel — one on the Dean's stall, one on the base of the lectern and one snoozing gently beside the pulpit. Cathedrals often have whimsical features in them, so do look in the details of other wooden objects for interesting creatures.

The carved wooden reredos behind the altar dominates the sanctuary. It centres on Jesus with his arms open in welcome, reflecting the motto of the Cathedral, “Come all who are weary and heavy laden.” The figures to the far left and right are Moses and Isaiah, representing the law and the prophets of the Old Testament. Jesus is flanked by 12 saints, arranged in two tiers, each identifiable by his symbol. The carved relief panels stretching east and west along the walls to the left and right of the reredos feature scenes from the life of Jesus, from the annunciation of His birth to Mary, through to His ascension.



If you look up, immediately above the altar, you will see the “east” window (in a traditional church layout, the altar is to the east, where resurrection dawns; here the east window is actually south).

East windows normally depict the resurrection, but this one, unusually, centres on the birth, baptism and crucifixion of Jesus. The window is a memorial to early benefactors, the Sparks family.



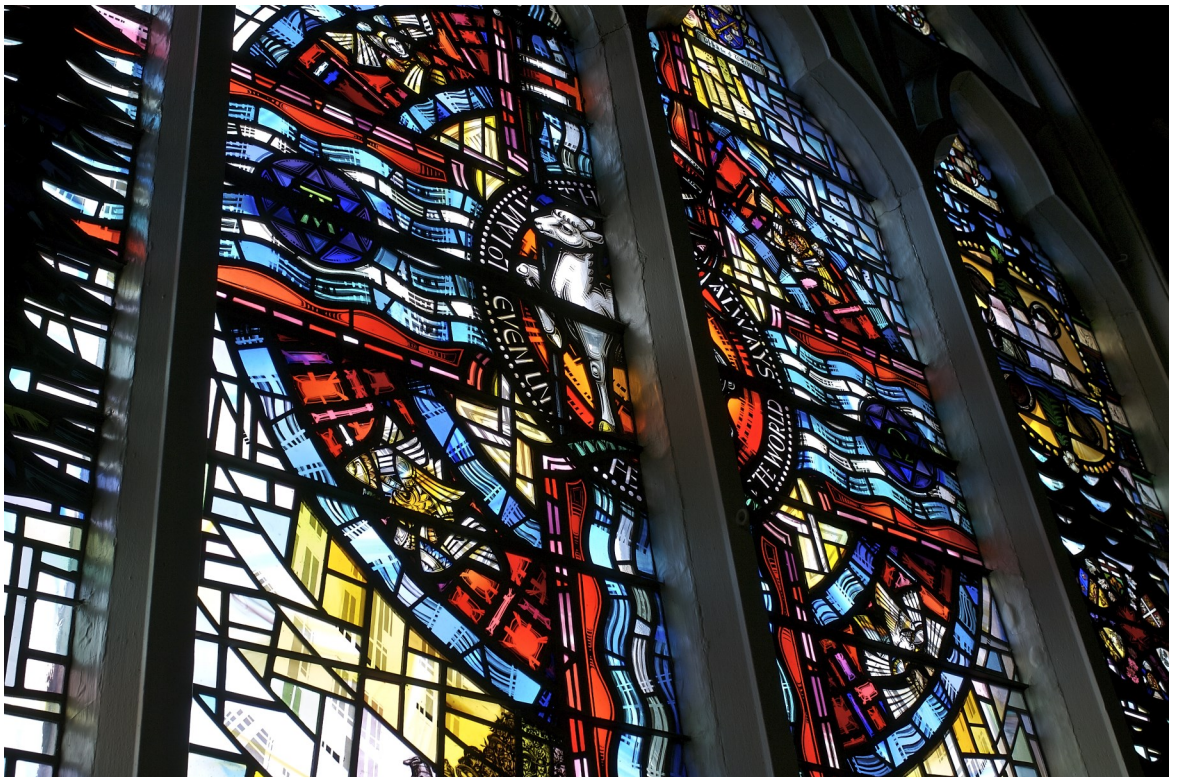
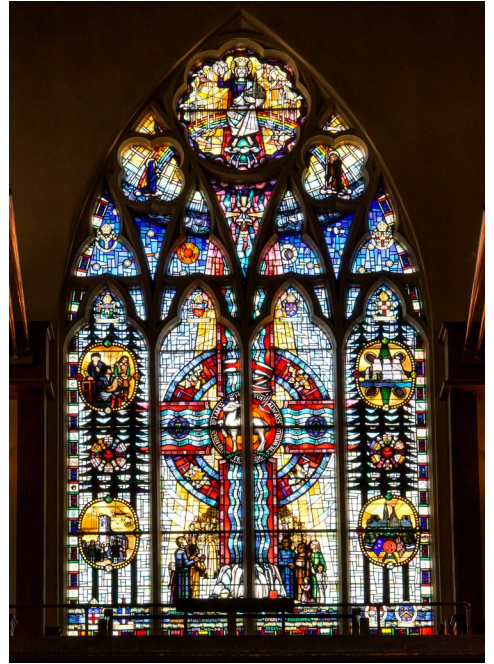
On the column to the right of the communion rail, there is a small, heavy black cross that originates from Canterbury Cathedral in England, the see of the Archbishop of Canterbury. Every Cathedral in the 165 countries of the worldwide Anglican Communion has a Canterbury Cross in it.



CHANCEL (CONTINUED)

Now turn around to get a sense of the whole space.

From here you can see the magnificent “west” window, commissioned to celebrate the 1982 sesquicentennial of the founding of Christ Church Bytown. The cross at its centre represents the confluence of the Ottawa, Rideau and Gatineau rivers, a meeting of waters that has been an important gathering place for people since time immemorial. Filling the lower portion of the window are crowds of people, representing the diversity of the population served by Christ Church over the years, and at the top sits Christ the King, holding the Cathedral safe in his arms.





The great rafters and beams of the roof, the four-inch thick floor boards and the pews are all made of white pine, the wood that was the foundation of the region's economy for much of the 19th century, and into the 20th.



At the base of each rafter in the chancel are carvings of birds, each one a Christian symbol: a peacock, representing eternal life; a phoenix, symbolizing resurrection; a dove for the Holy Spirit; and a pelican, depicting the self-giving love of Christ (female pelicans were once believed to feed their young from their own flesh if food was scarce).



CHAPEL OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

Now continue past the Canterbury cross into the Chapel of the Good Shepherd, portrayed in the window over the altar.

The Eucharist is celebrated here weekdays, and the chapel also contains an aumbry (on the wall to the right of the altar), where reserved sacrament is kept. On the west wall you will see the names of the men and women who served in Christ Church Bytown and Christ Church Cathedral as bishops and rectors.

As you head down the steps toward the nave, you will see the Cathedral's coat of arms on display.



Passing into the West Aisle, to the right is a beautiful marble pulpit, dedicated to Charles Hamilton, the first bishop of Ottawa, and to his son Harold, who was also a priest. Tucked down beside it on the left is wee Pulpitmouse.



In 1996, the Canadian Heraldic Authority presented the Cathedral with its Coat of Arms. The white mitre indicates the Cathedral as the Seat of the Bishop. On each side of the mitre are heavenly stars: the blue background signifies the heavens., with golden rays of light shining down. On the red cross of St. George's, a wavy cross, representing the confluence of the Ottawa River, the Gatineau River, and the Rideau River. At the junction are the Greek letters Chi and Rho, which begin the word Christ.

WEST AISLE

As you move toward the west aisle, look at the top of the large marble columns on both sides of the nave.



The flora carved in the capitals of the columns represent species native to the region (including maple and oak) as well as others that draw their symbolic meaning from the Bible: wheat and vine (representing the Eucharist), the thistle (symbolizing sin and the Fall), and the rose (symbolizing love and the Nativity).



Turn your attention to the windows along the west aisle. Like the others you have seen, most depict parables, symbols, saints, or scenes about Jesus.

The first window, however, interpreting the parable of the Good Samaritan, is unique.

Take a moment to contemplate it, and you will see that the Good Samaritan is represented as Jesus himself—reminding us that Jesus embodied his own teachings, showing us that we are close to God when we offer the generous, healing love of God to all whom we meet in the world.

Do think about this as you enjoy the rest of your time in this great Canadian Cathedral. †

There are many other aspects of the Cathedral to explore and experience. Here are some of them.

The Cathedral's Choirs are world-class and feature prominently in services of worship on Sundays, and at other special times during the year. There are three ensembles: the Cathedral Choir of Men and Boys, the Cathedral Girls' Choir; and *Voces Cathedrae*, a choir of women and men.

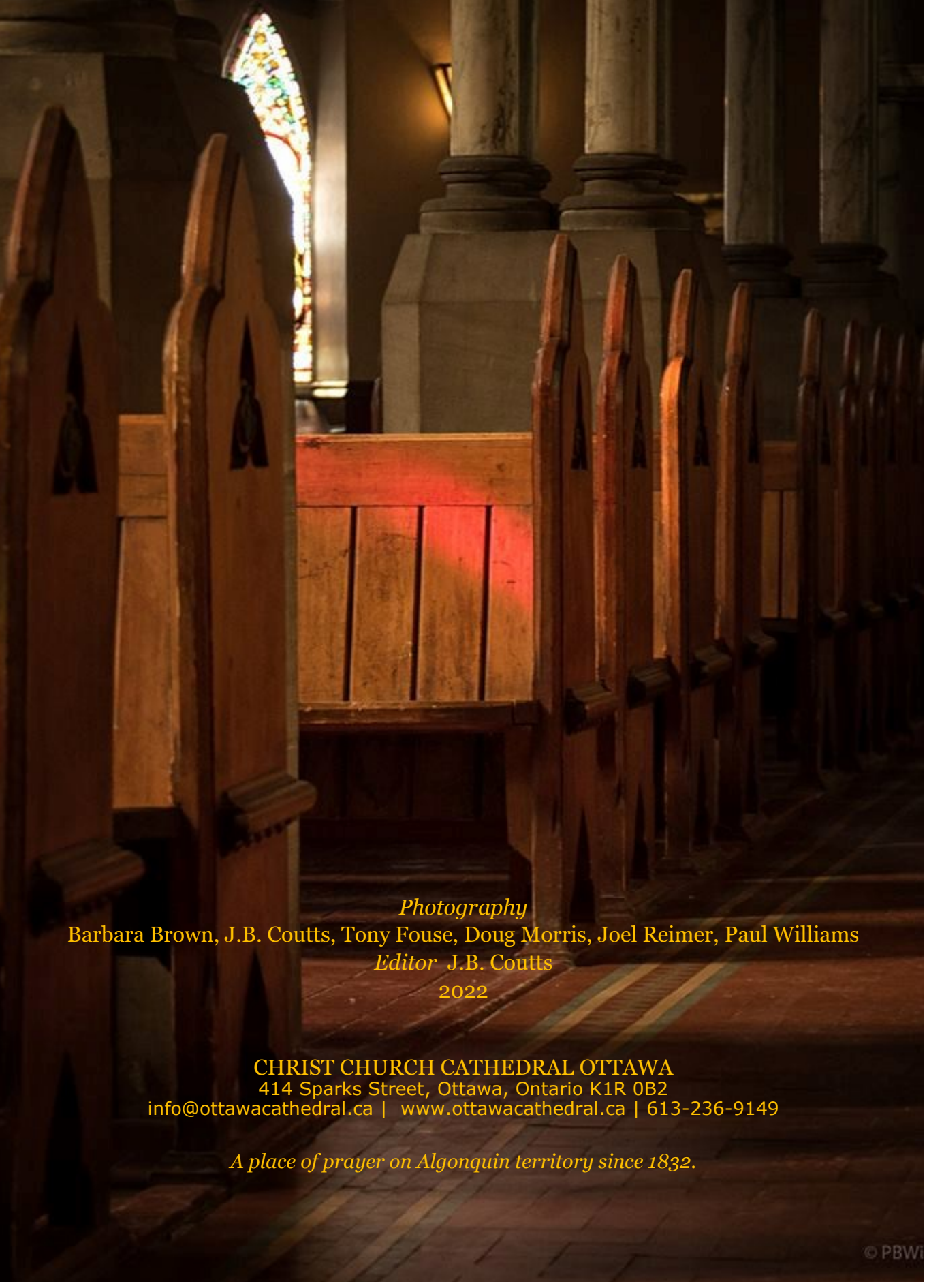


The life-sized bronze sculpture in the Forecourt, depicting Jesus as a homeless person sleeping on a bench, was created by Canadian sculptor Timothy Schmalz. It represents the voice and presence of people who are homeless or street-engaged in our communities, and our belief that God is present wherever people suffer. The sculpture is in its prominent location to remind us to have compassion, and to work toward safe and affordable housing for everyone.

Follow the signs to the Columbarium, an elegant and peaceful cemetery in the refurbished undercroft of the Cathedral; a secure, fully accessible, spacious, and beautifully appointed space. Carefully laid stonework surrounds its formal entrance, leading into a charming chapel and then into the Columbarium itself, where single and double niches are arranged into fourteen sections along its east and west walls. The sections are made of oak, and each niche is sealed with a custom made, solid oak door. A brochure is available should you be interested in purchasing a niche.



On the floor of the Great Hall is a replica of the 13th century eleven-circuit labyrinth at Notre Dame Cathedral in Chartres, France. An introduction to walking the Labyrinth may be found on the southeast wall of the Hall. Feel free to walk the Labyrinth, which is not a puzzle or a maze, but a very prayerful and contemplative pilgrimage—like the one you had as you made your way through this self-guided tour of the Cathedral.



Photography

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Editor J.B. Coutts

2022

CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL OTTAWA

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A place of prayer on Algonquin territory since 1832.