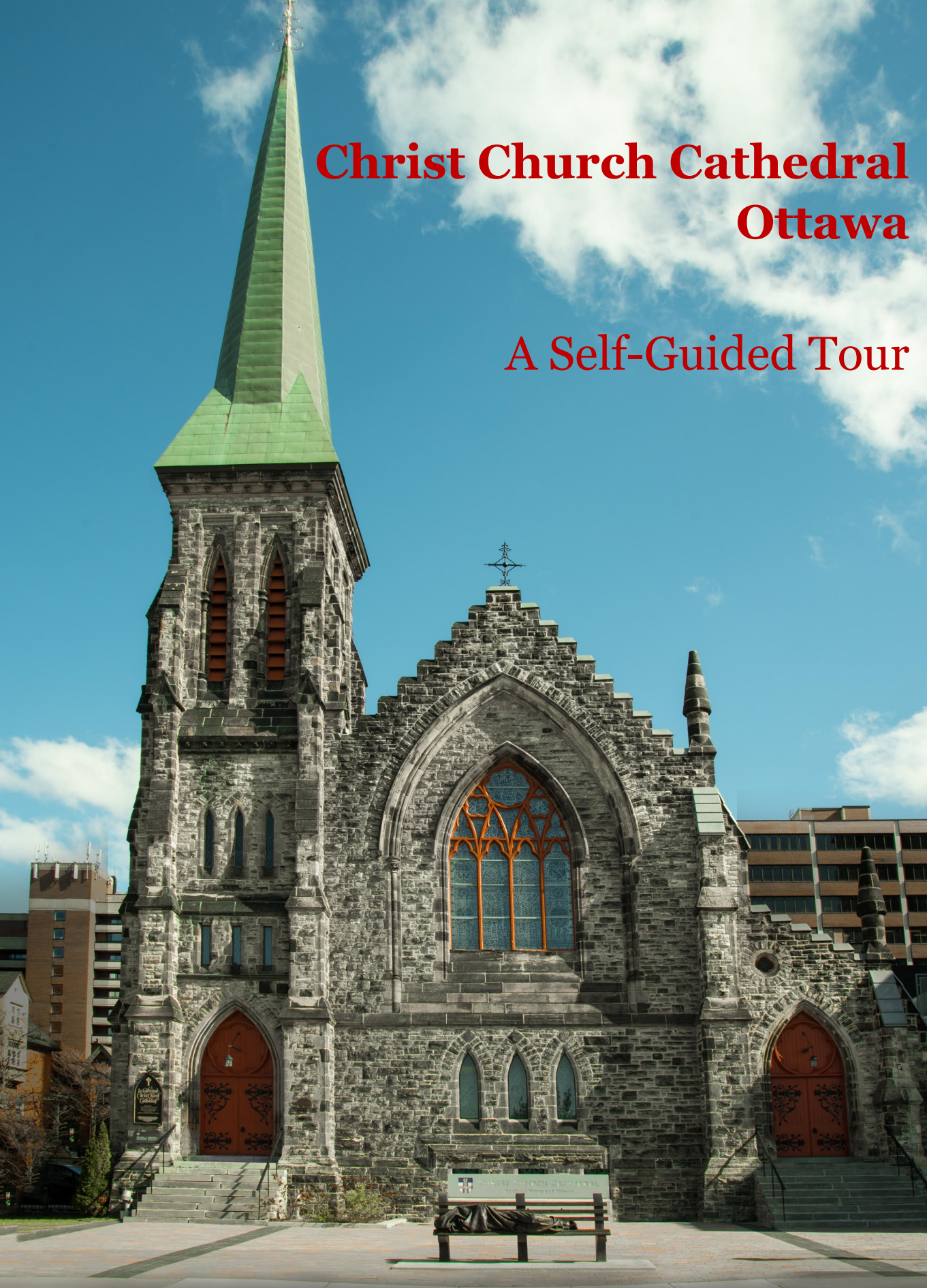


# Christ Church Cathedral Ottawa

## A Self-Guided Tour

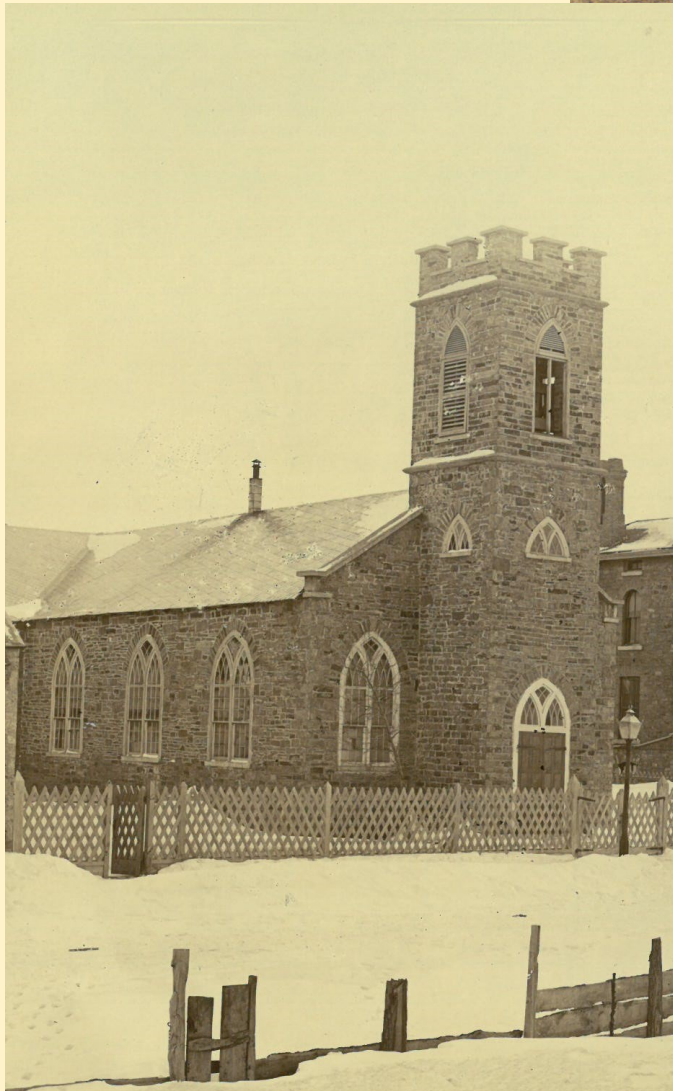
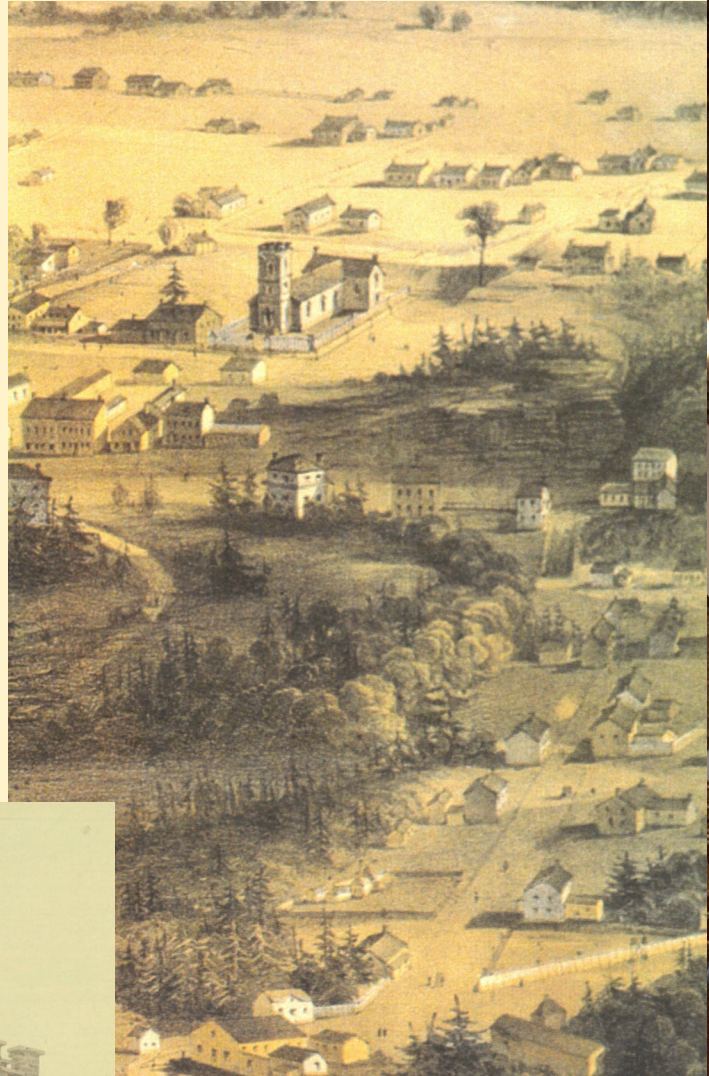




The Cathedral, which stands on the traditional territory of the Algonquin Anishinaabe, had its beginnings in 1832, as the first Anglican church in Bytown, a rough-hewn settlement established for the building of the Rideau Canal.

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.





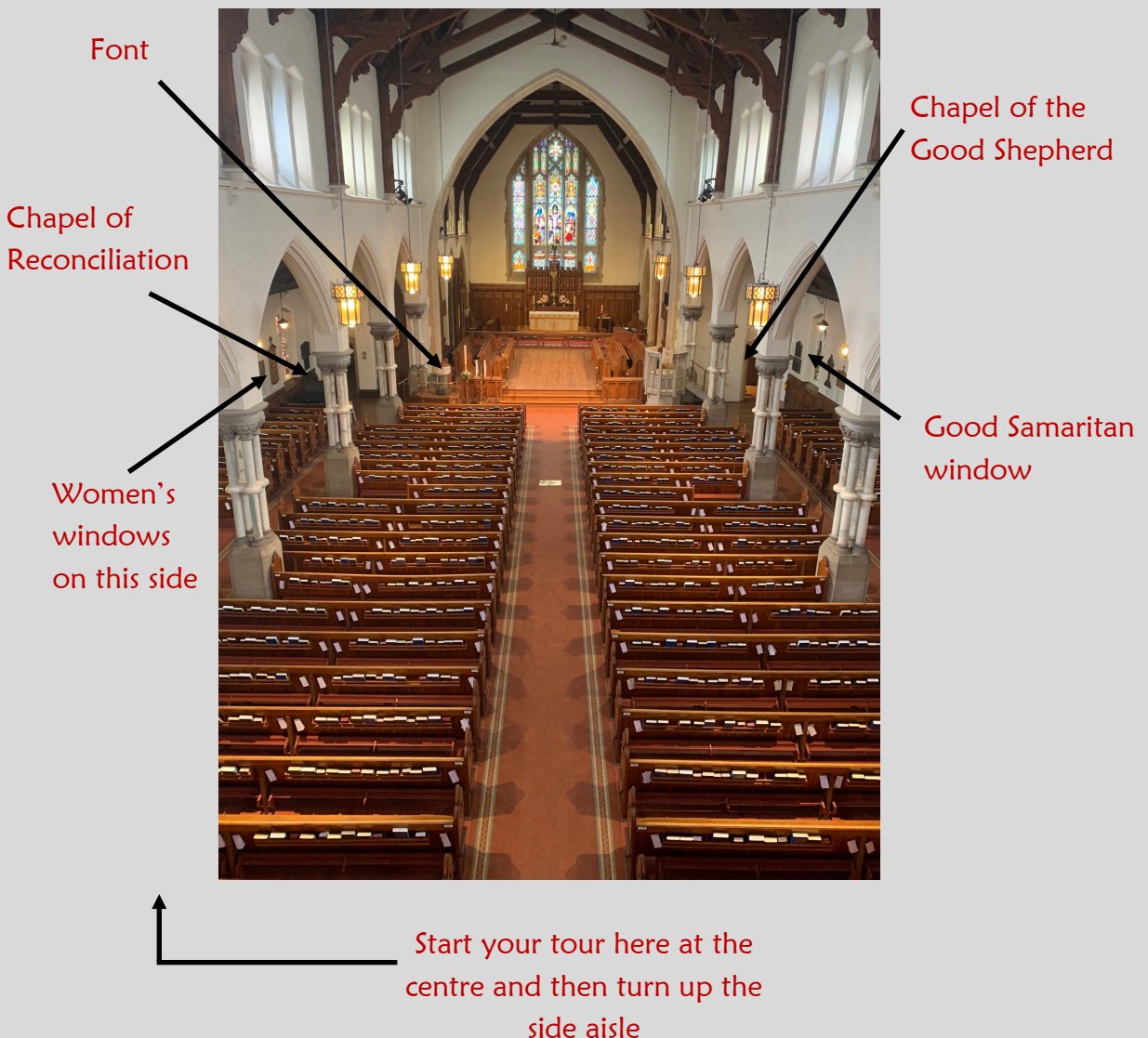
**C**hrist Church Cathedral offers a wide range of ministries to its large and diverse congregation, primarily through hundreds of liturgies each year, from quiet weekday services to colourful choral Eucharists on feast days. It is also an open place of welcome and hospitality, where people of all ages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




Centuries of tradition go into the design of churches, which are intended both to inspire awe and reflect Christian beliefs. For generations, churches were built in the shape of a cross, facing west at the entrance and east at the altar (ours is more north and south). Soaring ceilings and

pointed windows draw our attention heavenward and every line seems to point to the altar, sitting atop several steps in the chancel. In between, in small details and great windows, key aspects of the Christian story are told.

### Altar and Carved Reredos



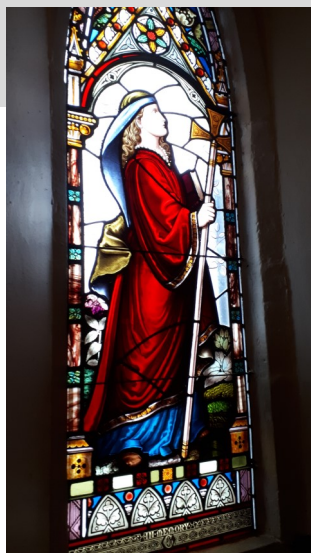
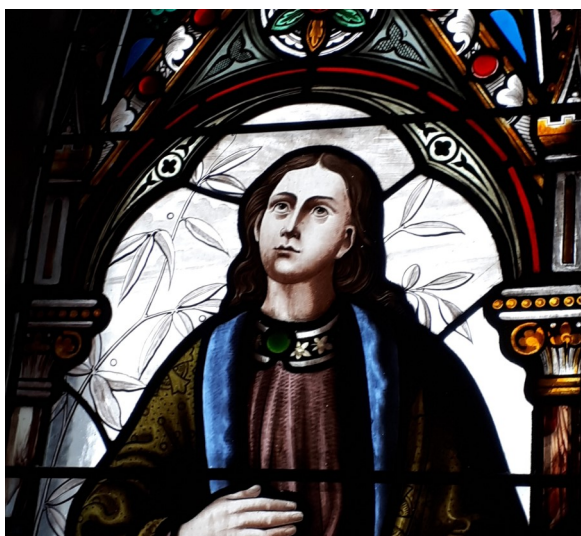


A photograph of the interior of Christ Church Cathedral, showing rows of wooden pews, large stone columns, and a colorful stained glass window in the background. The lighting is warm and dramatic, highlighting the architectural details.

We invite you to  
let this pamphlet be  
your companion on  
a walk around Christ  
Church Cathedral as  
we explore how  
Christ's story is told  
in this sacred place,  
in details great and  
small.



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 steeple. 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.







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 Easter morning 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 story in the Bible 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.





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 lectern remind us that the word of God invites 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, written 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."





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 (named 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.



## COMMUNITY OF THE CROSS OF NAILS



Every Friday, along with partners around the world, the Coventry Litany of Reconciliation is prayed in the Cathedral:

All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

The hatred which divides nation from nation, race from race, class from class, Father forgive.

The covetous desires of people and nations to possess what is not their own, Father forgive.

The greed which exploits the work of human hands and lays waste the earth, Father forgive.

Our envy of the welfare and happiness of others, Father forgive.

Our indifference to the plight of the imprisoned, the homeless, the refugee, Father forgive.

The lust which dishonours the bodies of men, women and children, Father forgive.

The pride which leads us to trust in ourselves and not in God, Father forgive.

Be kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.



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.



The Cathedral is an open place of welcome and hospitality, where people of all ages and backgrounds gather for prayer, inspiration, friendship and service. It is frequently the site of diocesan, ecumenical, interfaith and state events.

*Look for the first of our four church mice, 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. Great 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 the 12 apostles, 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.

Immediately above the altar is the "east" window (in a traditional church layout, the altar is to the east, where resurrection dawns). 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 the Sparks family, who were early benefactors.

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.









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).









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 every week day, and the chapel also contains an Aumbry (on the wall to the right of the altar), where reserved sacrament is kept.



As you head down the steps toward the nave, you will see the Cathedral's coat of arms on display. Passing into the nave, to the right is a beautiful marble pul-

pit, 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, to mark its centennial as a Cathedral, the Canadian Heraldic Authority presented Christ Church Cathedral with its Coat of Arms.

The white mitre indicates the Cathedral as the Chair (Cathedra) of a Bishop. On each side of the mitre are heavenly stars: The work of the church is to lead and bring others to Jesus. The blue background signifies the heavens. The golden rays of light come from the image of Christ as The Light.

The red Cross of St. George expresses the roots of the Anglican church. On the red cross is a wavy cross; this image is taken from the Cathedral's



Memorial Window. The west-to-east flow is that of the Ottawa River; the north, the Gatineau River; the south, the Rideau River and Canal system.

At the junction is the sacred monogram of Christ—the letters Chi and Rho, which begin the Greek word for Christ.





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.





## HOMELESS JESUS

A bronze sculpture depicting Jesus as a homeless person sleeping on a park bench has been installed in front of Christ Church Cathedral in Ottawa. The sculpture 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.

Bishop John Chapman dedicated the sculpture in the hope its prominent location will remind us to have compassion, and to work toward safe and affordable housing for everyone.

The life-sized piece was created by Canadian sculptor Timothy Schmalz.









A photograph of the interior of Christ Church Cathedral in Ottawa. The image shows rows of dark wooden pews with pointed tops, receding into the distance. In the background, a large, ornate stone pillar stands next to a tall, narrow stained glass window that allows light to filter into the space. The lighting is warm and focused, creating a sense of depth and reverence.

## CREDITS

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A place of prayer on Algonquin territory since 1832*

*The Anglican Cathedral in the Nation's Capital  
Cathedral of the Canadian Forces Anglican Military Ordinariate*