

*Church of  
St Michael & All Angels*



**Stained Glass**  
Guided Tour & History

611 St Clair Ave West, Toronto

*This booklet produced in 2021*

## *History of the St Michael's Church Building*

Although St Michael & All Angels was founded in August of 1907, it is on the Patronal Feast of St. Michael and All Angels, September 29, that the parish has celebrated its anniversaries. The church was originally housed in a tent on Pinewood Avenue north of St. Clair, and the first church building was at Vaughan Road and St Clair. In 1909, this building was moved to its present site, and the first sod was turned for the present building on Michaelmas, 1915. It was completed a year later. In 1957, the church was consecrated by the Right Reverend Frederick H. Wilkinson, Bishop of Toronto.

### *About this Booklet*

We welcome you to take this self-guided tour of our stained glass windows. This booklet will provide you with information on the biblical stories of each window, along with art and artist details, relevant biblical verses, and the opportunity for occasional guided reflections and prayers. Through this tour we offer you a time of peaceful reflection, meditation, and educational background, as suits your interests.

### *About the Artists*

The windows of the church were designed by Yvonne Williams and Ellen Simon, from the studio of Yvonne Williams, with contributions from Rosemary Kilbourn.

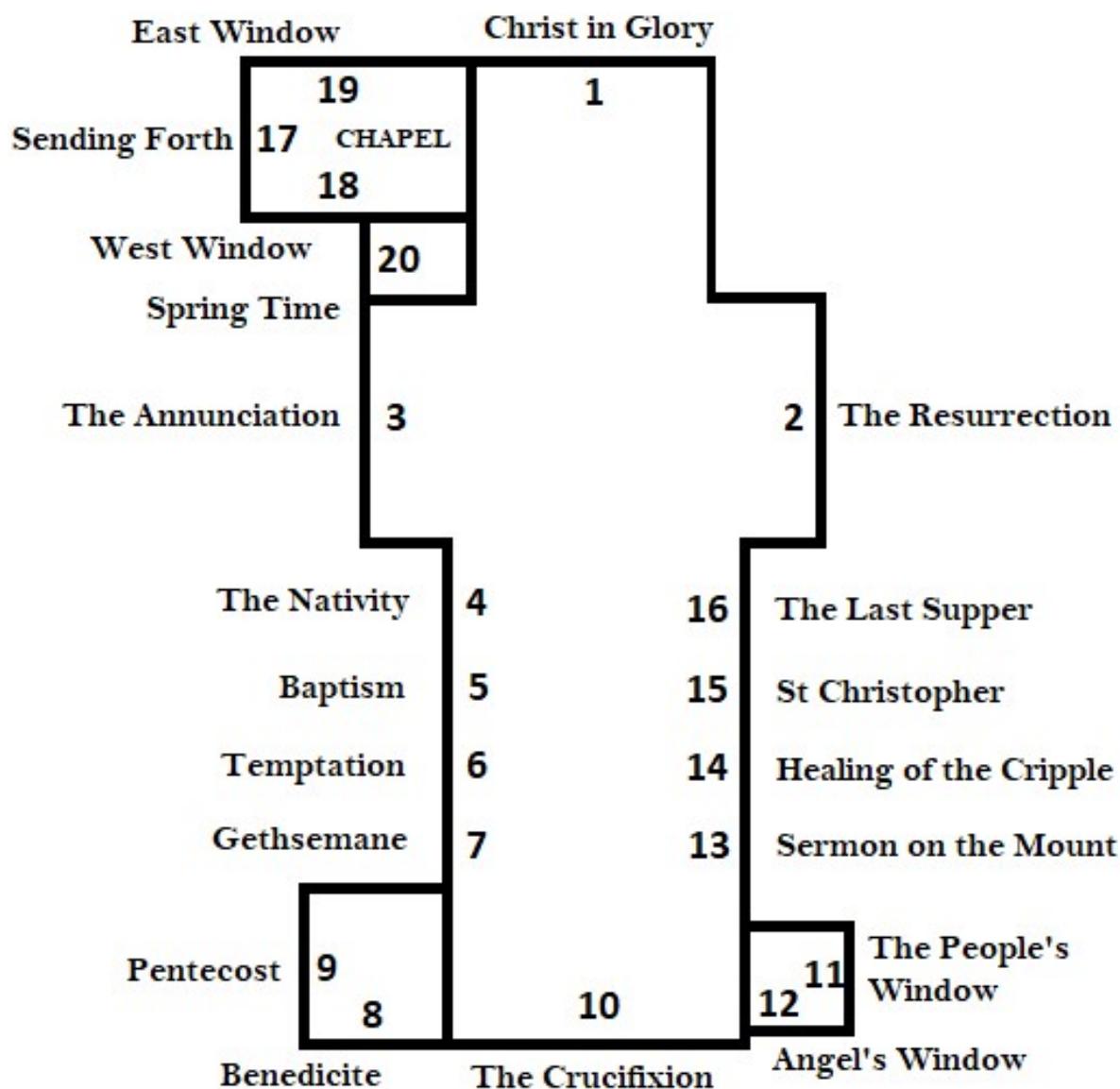
Yvonne Williams, 1901-1997: Attended the Ontario College of Art, then studied in Europe and the USA. She worked in Toronto and Albion township from 1932 to 1980.

Ellen Simon: Trained with Yvonne Williams and collaborated with her on several of the windows. She also completed several windows on her own.

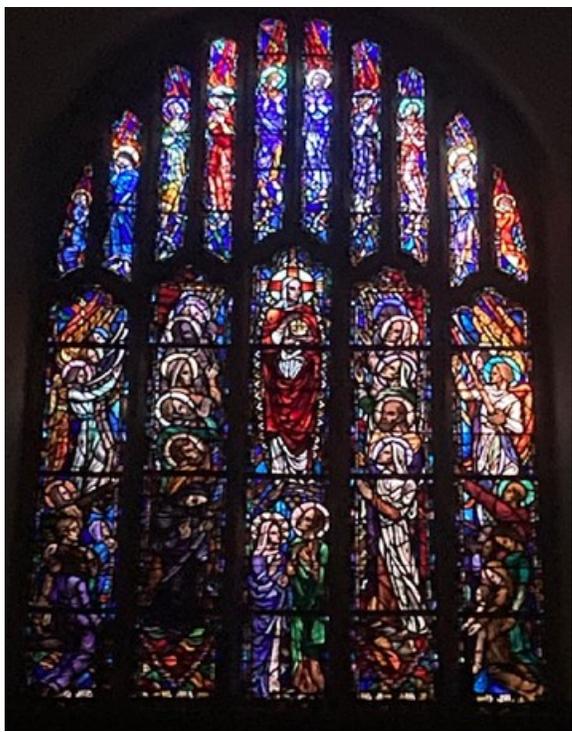
Rosemary Killbourn: Was an artist and teacher of stained glass craft. She was also a devoted student of Yvonne Williams.

Bromsgrove Guild, England: Contributed the window of St Christopher before 1940 (exact year unknown).

## Legend of Stained Glass Windows



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|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Christ in Glory</li> <li>2. The Resurrection</li> <li>3. The Annunciation</li> <li>4. The Nativity</li> <li>5. Baptism</li> <li>6. Temptation</li> <li>7. Gethsemane</li> <li>8. Benedicite</li> <li>9. Pentecost</li> <li>10. Crucifixion</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11. The People's Window</li> <li>12. Angel's Window</li> <li>13. Sermon on the Mount</li> <li>14. Healing of the Cripple</li> <li>15. St Cristopher</li> <li>16. The Last Supper</li> <li>17. Sending Forth</li> <li>18. West Window</li> <li>19. East Window</li> <li>20. Spring Time</li> </ol> |
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## 1: Christ in Glory

*Left:* This window depicts the ascension of Jesus, the moment in time when he ascends into the full glory of God and is returned to his heavenly form. His disciples surround him looking on in the adjacent panels, joined by angels from above in the panels forming the arch.

*Bible Verse:* Acts 1:10-11

*Artist Note:* This is the first window made for the church by Yvonne Williams in 1950. The diagonal lines lead our eyes to Jesus. There is a border, called a fillet line, around each panel. This is the only window that features this artistic detail.

## 2: The Resurrection

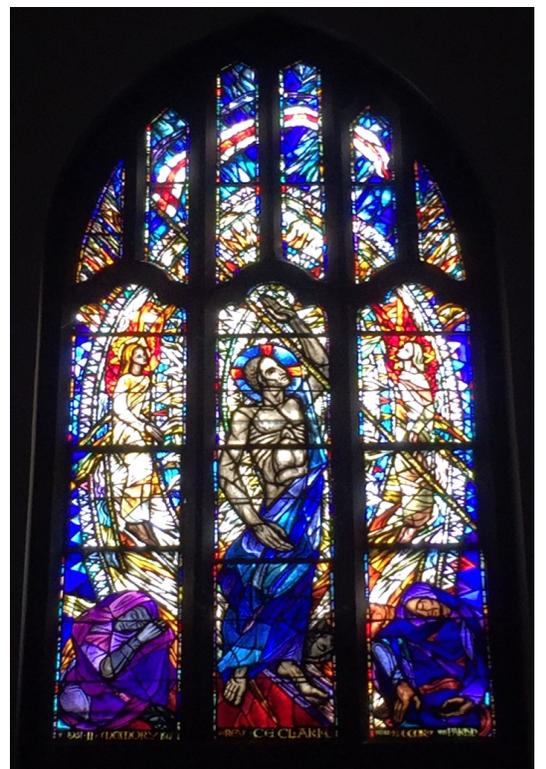
*Right:* The image depicts the dramatic moment when Jesus arises from the tomb surrounded by angels. At Jesus' feet are women deep in grief, as yet unaware that Jesus has risen.

*Bible Verse:* Luke 24:1-8

*Reflection:* What areas of your life remain locked in grief, sadness, or the inability to see God's grace?

*Prayer:* Jesus, help me to see you when the world (or my world) seems dark.

*Artist Note:* Hand blown glass was used to create the robes of the apostles and Jesus' blue robe. There are about 3400 pieces of glass in this window.



## 3: The Annunciation

*Left:* This window conveys a feeling of peace and joy through its gentle colours and visual uplift through the position and movements of the Angel Gabriel as he comes to share the good news with Mary that she is to bear Jesus, the Son of God.

*Bible Verse:* Luke 1:26-38

*Reflection:* Though this is a time of great joy and beauty, Mary is only a young woman for whom pregnancy before marriage could have meant death. When have you felt called to do more than you believed you could handle?

*Prayer:* Lord, help me to have the courage of Mary in facing my challenges.

*Artist Note:* This is the first work that Yvonne did with the help of Ellen Simon. They also completed all of the windows on the north wall together.



## 4: The Nativity

*Right:* This scene of the first Christmas depicts Mary and Joseph with the new infant Jesus, surrounded by a multitude of Angels singing hallelujahs before God.

*Bible Verse:* Luke 2:1-7

*Reflection:* In many ways, this is a picture of relief, of recognition, of the fulfilment of trust, and of heartfelt thanksgiving. Are there moments in your life when you've felt called to sing your own hallelujahs?

*Artist Note:* Yvonne created this piece from a drawing by Ellen. There is a rare piece of glass above the star over Mary which is pale blue with a rosy streak. The central angel has red hair, which was supposed to be golden but changed colour during the firing process.



## 5: Baptism

*Left:* We see Jesus being baptised by John the Baptist in the River Jordan. Above them is a dove, the sign of the Holy Spirit, that comes to rest upon Jesus after his baptism. It is from this moment forward that Jesus' ministry becomes recognized.

*Bible Verse:* Luke 3:21

*Artist Note:* Yvonne used colours that were as gentle as the expressions of the angels to depict the baptism by St John. In John's hand, a few drops of baptismal water gleam in a small shell.



## 6: Temptation

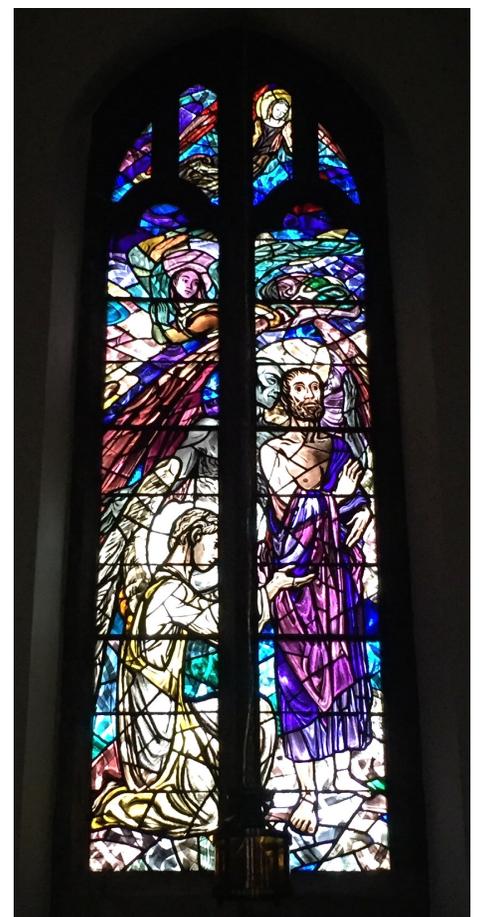
*Right:* Here, Lucifer can be seen whispering temptations in the ear of Jesus, who wears blue and purple robes, while an angel in white and gold robes kneels at his side offering words of peace.

It is unusual for Satan to be depicted with wings. This window uses this visual reference to the rebellious angel Lucifer's fall to earth when cast out of Heaven.

*Bible Verse:* Matthew 4:1-11

*Reflection:* What temptations do you struggle with?

*Prayer:* Lord, help me to resist that which would take me away from knowing your love.



## 7: Gethsemane



*Left:* Here, in the Garden of Gethsemane, we see a troubled Jesus bowed in prayer, aware that the time of crucifixion is near. "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will." His disciples, instructed to keep a watch whilst he prays, can be seen asleep in the right hand corner.

*Bible Verse:* Matthew 26:36-46

*Reflection:* In this passage, Jesus is at his most vulnerable, feeling deserted by God and his disciples. Has there been a time when you have felt most vulnerable? What helped you to overcome this fear? If you are presently experiencing these feelings and wish to reach out, please speak to one of our church representatives or use our contact information is included at the end of this booklet.

*Artist Note:* The vision of Gethsemane sweeps up from the bottom of the window to a red robe over one of the disciples. It continues to Jesus' gold, pink, and ruby robe and halo, leading upward through the light of the angels to the ruby and gold at the top, creating sweeping movement through this moment of turmoil.

## 8: Benedicite

*Right:* The six windows in the main entrance hall were designed and made by Ellen Simon. Each window is made of one-inch squares. Keeping them in order during the creation process was challenging because they were fired twice and handled six times. Each window has its own inscription engraved in the stone sill.



## 9: Pentecost

*Bottom Right:* This piece over the main entrance depicts the moment in the story of Christianity after the death, resurrection and crucifixion of Jesus when the disciples, unclear on how to proceed in sharing the Good News of God's love, receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The tongues of fire, illustrating the Holy Spirit, are strong in form and colour to depict the intensity of the drama and motion of this moment in the biblical story. The waves of colour link and unify the window by creating continuous movement across each panel, and symbolize the unifying multilingual phenomenon that is spoken of in this biblical passage.

*Bible Verse:* Acts 2:1-4





## 10: The Crucifixion

“Greater love has no one than this: that they lay down their life for their friends.” *John 15:13*

*Left:* Yvonne created this piece to be equal parts war memorial and depiction of the crucifixion, showing the suffering of Jesus with the suffering of mankind through war. Christ is more than life size, at 7-feet tall, and is outlined by several hundred tiny pieces of glass that can only be seen in bright light. On the left in white is St. Michael, our church’s patron Saint, and on the right is the fallen Lucifer. In the arch at the top are a cross, nails, hammer, sponge, and garments.

*Bible Verse:* John 15:13

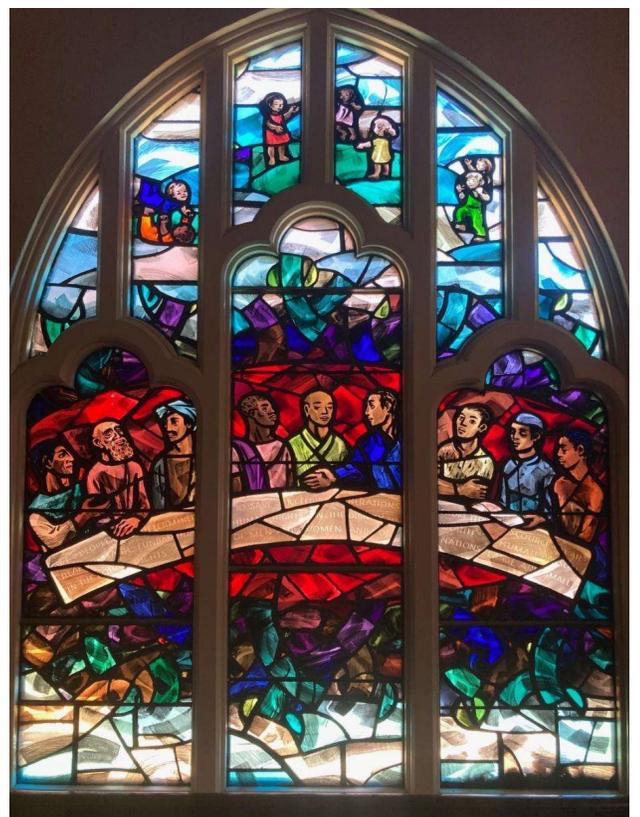
*Reflection:* When have you been called to sacrifice for the sake of another? When has another sacrificed for you?

*Prayer:* Lord, thank you for sacrificing your life so that I might know God. Help me to live a life as loving as yours.

## 11: The People’s Window

*Right:* Ellen Simon created this window showing nine different races and nationalities seated around a table with children playing together overhead. The text is from the preamble to the Charter of the United Nations. It reads:

*“We the peoples determined to save succeeding generations from the surge of war reaffirm faith in human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small.”*



## 12: Angel’s Window

“Bless the Lord, you his Angels!” *Psalms 103:20*

*Left:* Completed in 1983 by Ellen, this window shows three angels representing different races, reaching out to one another in friendship, reminding us that we the people, from all walks of life, are agents of God.



### 13: Sermon on the Mount

*Right:* Surrounded by thousands, Jesus preached, sharing the good news of God's love to and for all of God's creation.

The Sermon on the Mount is a pivotal part of Jesus' story when he shared his core teachings with the crowds, which became central to the teachings of Christianity. For those seeking a deeper understanding of Christian discipleship, the Sermon on the Mount is an excellent place to begin.

*Bible Verse:* Matthew 5-7

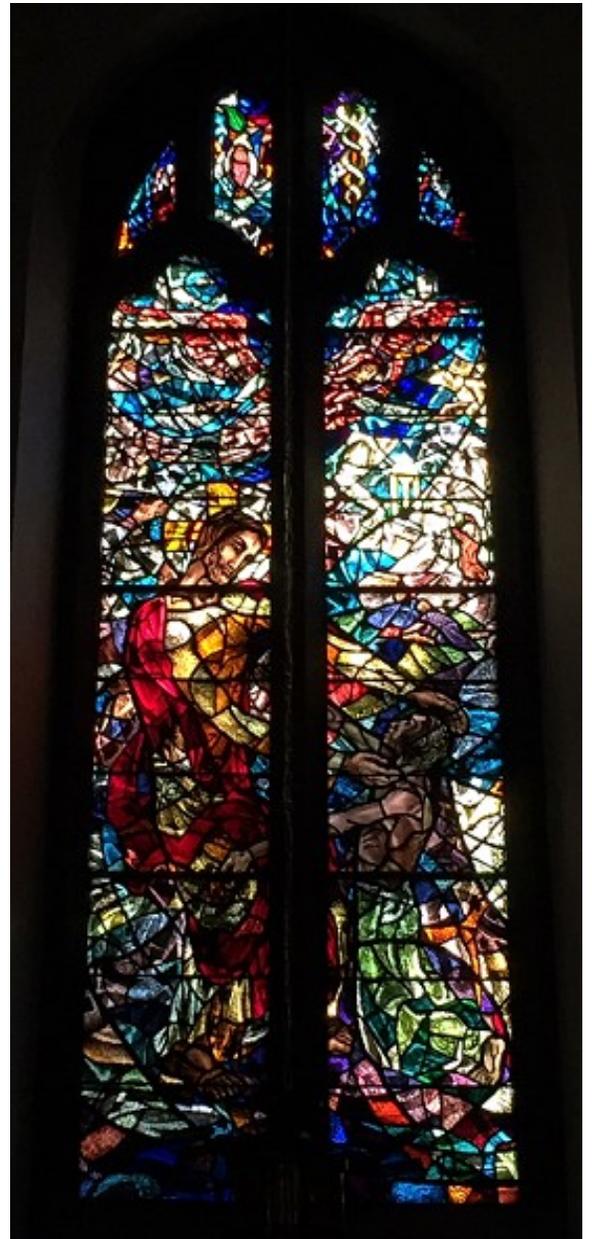
*Artist Note:* This is Yvonne's final and most abstract window in the series. Colour, rhythm, and sparkle carry the message of the sermon.

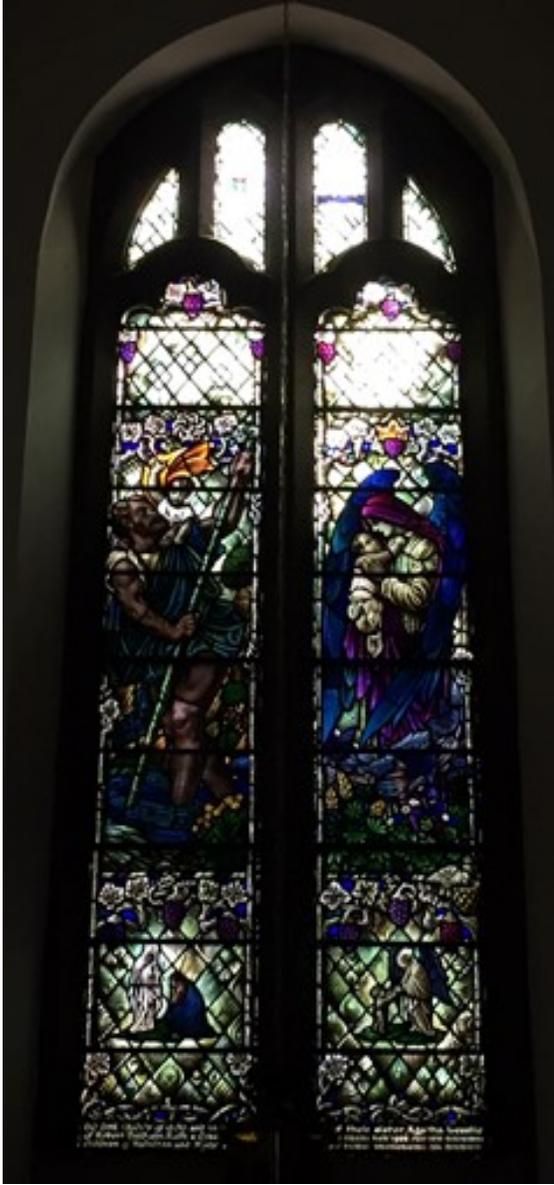
### 14: Healing of the Cripple

*Left:* Jesus heals an ailing man, who's been unable to walk for 38 years. A large part of Jesus' ministry is found in healing stories, all anchored in the transformative process of reconnecting to the love of God.

*Bible Verse:* John 5:1

*Artist Note:* This window continues Yvonne's abstract style, using thousands of pieces of glass to depict Jesus and a kneeling man simply presented. The artist used a range of vibrant colours and shapes to bring a lively energy to the scene of Jesus performing a miracle of healing. The angel theme continues as in all of the windows at St Michael's church, with an angel (possibly Archangel Raphael, the angel of healing) overlooking the scene from above. The symbol for the practice of medicine can be seen in the top right of the arch.





## 15: St. Christopher

*Left:* St. Christopher, a third-century Christian martyr killed by the Roman Empire, is patron Saint of travellers. He is known for carrying the Christ child safely across a river, depicted here in serene colours. It features a motif of grape vines with ripe, vivid purple grapes and garden plants that is typical of the Bromsgrove Guild style.

In the spirit of St Christopher, Patron Saint of travellers, St Michael's has a rich history of welcoming those from new to the community, whether new to the neighbourhood or to the country. Many, including a large contingent from the West Indies and more recently the Philippines, have found themselves at home here.

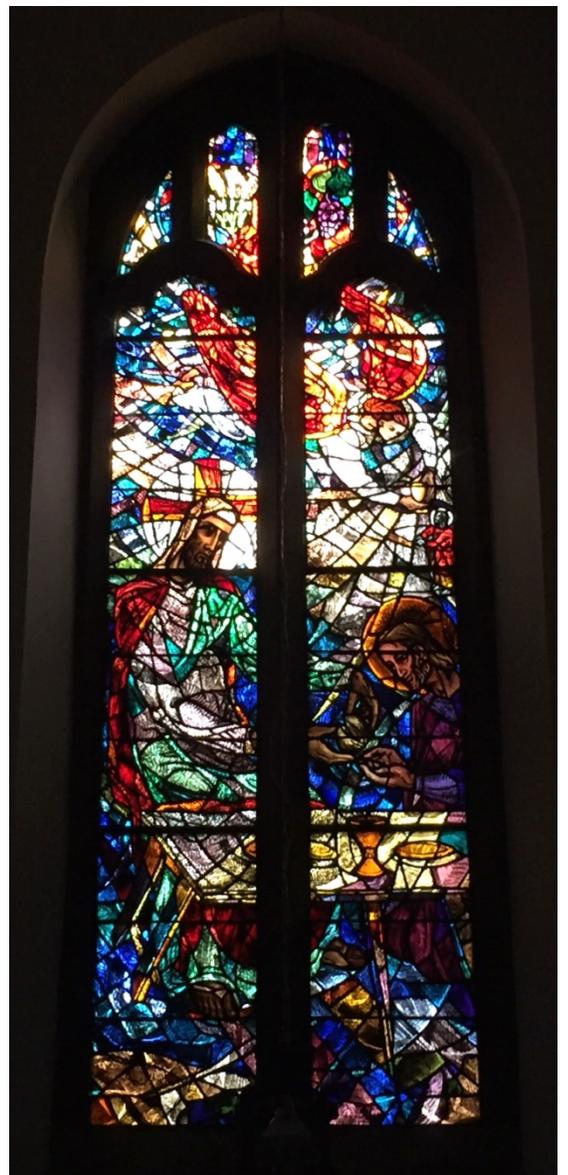
*Artist Note:* This window was made by the Bromsgrove Guild in England, and installed at St Michael's before 1940, making it likely the oldest window at the church. The exact year of its creation is unknown.

## 16: The Last Supper

*Right:* This window scene takes place in the last days of Jesus' earthly life. During the Passover celebration (remembering that Jesus and the first disciples were Jewish), Jesus shared bread and wine with those at the table. As he did, he asked them to continue doing this together, after he has gone, in remembrance of him. For Christians worldwide, when we partake in communion (also known as the Eucharist), we humbly invite Jesus into our hearts that we might grow to be more like him.

*Bible Verse:* Luke 22:14-19

*Artist Note:* If Yvonne were to redo this window, acid would be used to make the bread offered by Jesus pure white. At the top, grapes and grains are used to represent the wine and bread.



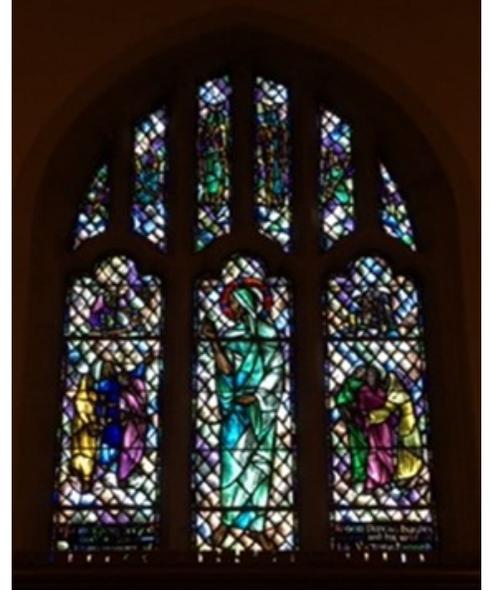
# The Chapel

## 17: The Sending Forth (of the Apostles)

*Right:* At the end of any service, Christians are reminded of Jesus' instruction to the disciples: to go out and share the good news with all those that God sends to them. A daunting task in this day and age when the church has a history mottled with broken promises and cruel and hypocritical behaviours. This window reminds us that at the core of Christianity we find love. We are called to share the good news of God's infinite forgiveness and love with all those who are seeking.

*Bible Verse:* Luke 9:1-6

*Artist Note:* Yvonne designed the proportions, lettering, and themes of Baptism and Healing for this window featuring a main figure drawn by John Green.



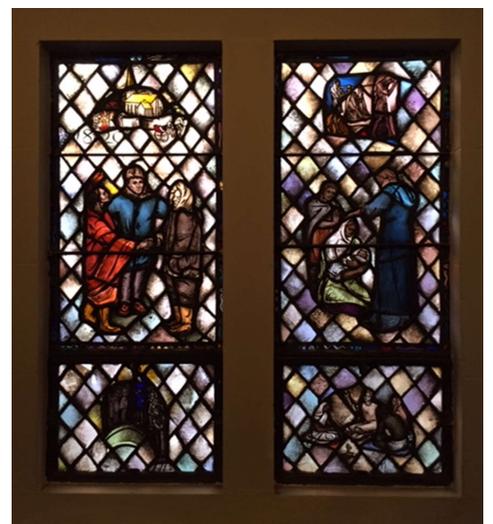
## 18: West Window

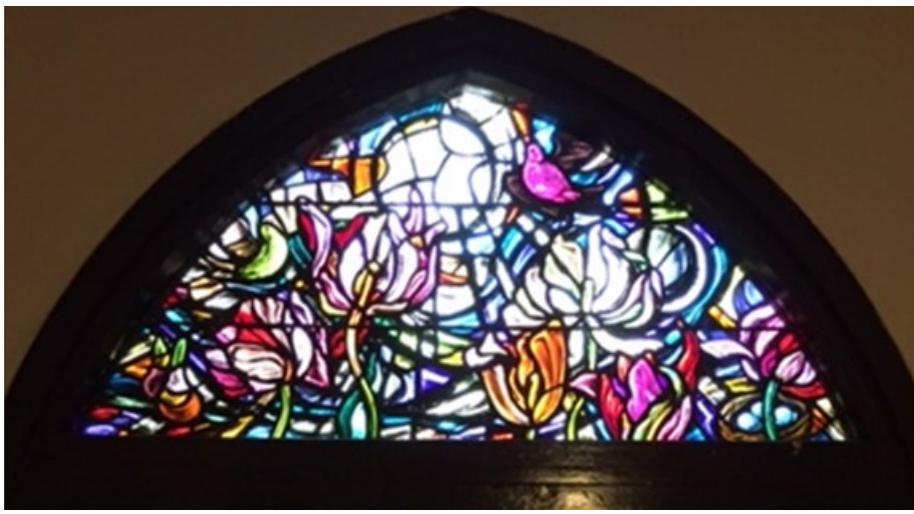
*Right:* This window shows pioneers celebrating the first Communion and Ordination at St Paul's Church in Nova Scotia in 1750, one year after the founding of Halifax. The first Anglican service was held in 1710 in Annapolis Royal, Nova Scotia. St Paul's is the oldest Anglican church in Canada.



## 19: East Window

*Right:* The left panel shows the mission of the church following settlement in the rest of Canada. It depicts a European, a First Nations representative, and an Inuit representative pledging peace in 1820. The right panel shows Canadian Anglican missions in India, Africa, and the West Indies. This window cannot be viewed as an historical record. We know from Anglican records that in 1820, Anglican Church representative Rev. John West and schoolmaster George Harbridge established the first Anglican Residential School for Indigenous pupils that operated until 1833 in Red River.





## 20: Spring Time

*Left:* This window was the last to be installed at the church, created by Rosemary Killbourn. It depicts spring as a time of renewal and potential of life to come, reiterating the various themes throughout the church depicting the life of Jesus and the hope found in faith.

*Reflection:* As you conclude your tour of the stained glass, perhaps reflect on what areas of your life are coming into bud or bloom, what areas of the garden of your life need attention and renewal, or areas in need of pruning, deadheading, or simply being taken out? Is there an area that's ready for breaking new ground?

### *Thank You*

We thank you for taking the time to learn more about the history and beauty of St Michael & All Angels, and welcome you to reach out and connect with us at any time.

### *Connect with us:*

Clergy and staff at St Michael's can be contacted with the following:

Church Office:

Phone: 416-653-3593

Email: [smaachurchoffice@gmail.com](mailto:smaachurchoffice@gmail.com)

*Space for Thoughts & Reflections:*