

OLD ST. PAUL'S, BALTIMORE



A Brief History *and* Self-Guided Tour



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Welcome

Welcome to Old St. Paul's Church, Baltimore. We're glad you're here and hope that you find your time with us to be prayerful, historically stimulating, and spiritually refreshing. Old St. Paul's is a special place, a parish with a rich history and a vibrant present, and we are pleased to share this sacred space with you. We offer this self-guided walking tour so that you can experience the beauty and history of the parish at your own pace.

Before you begin the tour you may wish to take a moment to acclimate yourself to this historic place of worship. Many people find it helpful to first take a seat in one of the pews and read the following brief history of Old St. Paul's. As you set out on this journey through the church building, we do ask that you be considerate of those in prayer or meditation by keeping voices low. If you feel moved to make a donation to the parish, please place it in the offering box at the rear of the church.

A Brief History of Old St. Paul's

Old St. Paul's began as one of the original 30 parishes established in Maryland by the Church of England in 1692 and predates the founding of Baltimore City itself in 1729. The first church building was a log cabin structure on the banks of Colgate Creek near present-day Dundalk in southeast Baltimore County. By the 1720s it became clear that the major population center of the colony would be further north and west, so the Maryland Assembly was called upon to lay out what they termed "Baltimore Town." At this time the parish vestry purchased a lot in the newly-formed village, plat #19, a choice piece of property encompassing the highest point overlooking the harbor. (The current church occupies the northwestern-most corner of this original parcel.) The second church was constructed in the 1730s in the same block as the current building, but in the middle of the block facing Lexington Street.

As the city grew, it became increasingly clear that the church was inadequate to accommodate the growing population. In 1784 a new church building was completed in the same place as the previous church, but still resembling what we would today consider a small country parish. The church's graveyard surrounded the church and a brick wall encompassed the property.

In 1791 funds were secured to build a suitable rectory to house the parson and his family built on land donated by John Eager Howard, a vestryman of the church and a Maryland politician. The Historic Rectory now sits one block west of Old St. Paul's on the corner of Saratoga and Cathedral Streets and is the oldest continuously occupied residence in the City of Baltimore.

In 1799, the Benevolent Society of the City and County of Baltimore was formed by women of the parish to provide education for thirty young girls between the ages of 7 and 14, with preference given to orphans. This school remained open until 1950 and was the precursor to what would become St. Paul's School for Girls which opened in 1959.

The parish cemetery was moved in 1800 to what was then the western edge of the city, now the corner of Redwood Street and Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard, behind the University of Maryland Hospital. Among the many notable Marylanders buried there is Samuel Chase, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, Lieutenant Colonel George Armistead (1780–1818), commander of the garrison at Ft. McHenry during the war of 1812; and his nephew, Brig. General Lewis A. Armistead (1817–1863), of the Confederate States Army. (The cemetery is open to the public by appointment through the parish office.)

The fourth building to be called St. Paul's Parish was erected in 1817 and designed by the noted Baltimore architect Robert Cary Long. As the city continued to grow into an urban center it became clear that a rustic church building with a courtyard seemed out of place. The new building was neoclassical in style and offered an imposing façade of Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian columns abutting Charles Street.

In 1849, led by the rector, Dr. Wyatt, the St. Paul's Boys' School was founded which, in 1853, was incorporated as "The Boys' School of St. Paul's Parish." The school has had several homes throughout Baltimore and in 1952 was moved to Brooklandville where it now shares a campus with St. Paul's School for Girls.

On Friday, April 28, 1854, about a year after the debt was finally paid for the 1817 church, the church burned nearly to the ground in but three hours' time, with only the side walls and steeple still standing. Saved from destruction was the 1815 Bishop's Chair, the marble baptismal font, and the window of the Suffering Christ, which now resides above our front, middle doors. The vestry wasted little time securing the funds and design for a new church structure for what would become the fifth and current building of St. Paul's Parish. The new building was built on the foundation of the 1817 church and was designed by the famous English-born architect Richard Upjohn. Upjohn created an impressive Italian Romanesque building in Lombardy Gothic style that was consecrated in 1856.

On Easter Sunday 1873, the Choir of Men and Boys sang for the first time. Founded by the rector, the Reverend John Sebastian Bach Hodges, the boys were drawn from our school. To this day, the boys of the choir are students at St. Paul's School.

Parts of the present church have undergone renovations over the years. The chancel area was changed substantially between 1901 and 1904, enlarging the area for the choir, adding a reredos by Tiffany, and a large East Window by Maitland Armstrong. The chancel area was again renovated in the early 1990s, restoring it to its former glory. In the early 1960s, a major portion of the current undercroft (the space directly below the nave) was dug out. To accomplish this great feat, all the tiles and pews were removed and a bulldozer was driven through the center entrance! At this time, all the original pew doors were removed as well. In 2002, the undercroft went through a major renovation, creating, among other things, a new kitchen, a new Sunday School room, and a dedicated choir vesting area.

Also in 2002, the Choir of Men and Girls was formed as a parallel program to the Boys' Choir. The girls of the choir are all students at St. Paul's School for Girls.

We have several names—from our incorporated name, "Vestry of St. Paul's Parish of Baltimore County," to "St. Paul's Parish," to "Old St. Paul's," and even, "The Mother Church," a reference to the fact that our parish was the first church in Baltimore. One may well wonder how we came to be called *Old* St. Paul's. As the first church in Baltimore, our parish helped start many other Episcopal churches in the city. The Church of St. Paul the Apostle is one such church, established in 1875, and now unfortunately defunct. To distinguish easily between the churches we began to be referred to as *Old* St. Paul's. Though we are now well over 300 years old, our mission of sharing the Gospel of Christ is not by any means as antiquated or turgid as the "old" in our name might imply. Ours is a vital community dedicated to the service of God, and we hope you will find your time in our church uplifting and rewarding.

The Tour

Please refer to the diagram on the back cover of this brochure and use the corresponding numbers to guide you through the building.

We begin our tour at the back of the church in front of the **Great West Doors (1)**. As you walk down the nave of the church toward the altar, one of the first things that catches your eye is the **Great East Window (2)**. This window was designed by Maitland Armstrong of New York, installed in 1902, and refurbished in 1994. The lettering at the bottom of the window reads: “O Ye Spirits and Souls of the Righteous, Bless Ye the Lord: Praise him and Magnify Him Forever,” taken from the canticle, *Benedicite omnia opera Domini*. It depicts the River of Life and shows men, women, and children from all walks of life praising the God and offering gifts.

As you walk down the **Nave (3)**, across English Minton floor tiles, look up to see the large, circular **Roundels (4)** between the arches on either side of the nave. They contain the symbols of the four evangelists found in the Book of Revelation. Matthew is represented by the winged man, Luke by the winged creature with the head of an ox, Mark by the winged lion, and John by the soaring eagle. Above the Roundels you will find a series of **Clerestory Windows (5)** fashioned by both Clayton & Bell and Tiffany Studios.

Continuing toward the east end, you will notice a depiction of the **Agnus Dei (6)**, the Lamb of God triumphant, a traditional symbol of the sacrificial and saving Lord, above the Great East Window. Below it is written, “Behold the Lamb of God” and above is written, “Glory in the Highest.” In the panels on either side of the window are representations of **Early Greek Christian Symbols (7)**: *Chi Rho*, the first two letters of the word “Christ” in Greek and the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, symbolizing the beginning and end of all things. The decorated cross in the midst of these symbols is adapted from a Celtic cross dating from the time of St. Columba in sixth-century Scotland.

Below the Great East Window you will see the mosaic **Reredos (8)** designed by Tiffany Studios of New York in 1902. The stones in the center panel are unpolished peridots, the August birthstone. Quite prominent is the depiction of two peacocks, symbols of the resurrection in ancient Christian art. The two side panels show passion flowers, symbolic of Christ’s death, and grapes, representative of the wine used at communion. The High Altar (9) sits below, made of imported white marble and set in three sections, symbolic of the Holy Trinity.

To the left of the High Altar is the 1815 **Bishop’s Chair (10)**, saved from the 1854 fire. With its gilded crosiers and miter the chair has served numerous bishops over the years and is used today whenever the current Bishop of Maryland visits the parish.

Before leaving the chancel area, turn around and look up to the back of the church. In front of you is a **Tiffany Rose Window (11)** depicting the Holy Spirit. Beneath this is another Tiffany window showing the **Suffering Christ (12)**. The small portion of the window representing Jesus’ head with the crown of thorns was another item saved from the fire of 1854, beautifully incorporated into the design of the new building.

To the right of the chancel and sanctuary area you enter the **Lady Chapel (13)**. This worship space, used for daily services, is dedicated to Mary, the mother of Jesus. The two Tiffany windows depict St. Anne with the Blessed Virgin Mary on the left and St. Augustine with his mother St. Monica on the right.

Between the Lady Chapel and the sanctuary rests the **Organ console (14)** on an elevated platform. The main body of the **Organ (15)** is located across the chancel in the northeast corner of the church, with the **Antiphonal Organ (16)** located on the west wall. The main console operates both the front and back organs. Although parts of the instrument, including the front organ's case, date from the original 1859 installation by Roosevelt, the present organ largely dates from the work of three builders in the 20th century. Redesigned and greatly enlarged by Ernest M. Skinner in 1916, additions were made by the Austin Organ Company in 1970, and it was again mechanically rebuilt and tonally enlarged by the M.P. Möller company of Hagerstown, Maryland in 1981. The present instrument consists of 68 ranks, totaling 4,077 pipes. The Antiphonal Organ, with its **Trompette Royale (16)**, *en chamade* (mounted horizontally), was added (along with the new console) in 1991 in anticipation of the tricentennial celebration of the parish in 1992. Also in anticipation of the tricentennial year, the 23-bell Harrison Carillon was added in the North Tower as a gift to the city through the generosity of a number of prominent Baltimore corporations and George T. Harrison. In 2006 a new, high-quality Zimbelstern (a mechanism consisting of eight cast bells which play in rapid succession) was added to the instrument in loving memory of parishioner and vestry member Laurie Smullin Russell. When the Zimbelstern is engaged, a nine-point star rotates, playing the bells. The star is located in the upper center of the façade of pipes at **(15)**.

As you walk down the steps of the Lady Chapel you will see an historic **Baptismal Font (17)** saved from the 1854 fire. Carved out of Italian marble and then shipped to Baltimore, it was designed by the French architect Maximilien Godefroy, who also designed the Unitarian Church at Charles and Franklin Streets. Directly across from the font you will notice steps rising to the wooden **Pulpit (18)**. The cross and orb on top of the pulpit symbolize the reign of Christ over the whole earth.

Moving toward the back of the church you will pass the **South Wall Windows (19)**, a series of smaller stained glass windows. Walking from east to west, these windows depict the following:

- ✦ **The Good Samaritan.** Clayton & Bell, 1903.
- ✦ **The Transfiguration.** Clayton & Bell, 1899.
- ✦ **Angel of Hope.** Tiffany Studios, 1903.
- ✦ **Angel of Faith.** Tiffany Studios, 1903.
- ✦ **St. Luke the Evangelist.** Tiffany Studios, 1892.
- ✦ **St. Paul the Apostle.** Originally above the High Altar from 1856–1902.

The South Tower once housed **St. Peter's Chapel (20)** and has been used as a vesting area and Sunday School room. There are two windows in this tower: the west window depicts an **Angelic Ministering Spirit**, crafted by Tiffany; the south window is a Clayton & Bell work showing **Christ and Child**.

Walking along the west wall you will encounter a black walnut wooden structure that was the building's original **Reredos (21)**. It was moved to the back of the church in 1902 after the Tiffany Reredos was installed. In 2001, the reredos was moved forward several feet to accommodate the church's first air-conditioning system.

The **North Tower (22)** serves as the usual entrance for the church. The four stained glass windows, done by Connick studios, depict **St. Paul, St. Luke, St. Christopher, and St. Francis of Assisi**. Continuing down the north aisle of the church you will encounter the **North Wall Windows (23)** with six more stained glass windows. From west to east these windows represent the following:

- ✘ **Life of David.** Clayton & Bell, 1890.
- ✘ **St. Michael the Archangel.** Clayton & Bell, 1890.
- ✘ **The Ten Talents.** Clayton & Bell.
- ✘ **The Resurrection.** Clayton & Bell. With the inscription, “I am the Resurrection and the Life” (top) and “Why seek ye the living among the dead” (bottom).
- ✘ **The Annunciation** (top) and **Christ in the Temple** (bottom). English Glass, late 19th century.
- ✘ **Three Marys at the Tomb.** Tiffany Studios. The inscription reads, “He is not here. He is risen.”

Bearing to the right, you will now come across the large, four-sided, stone **Baptismal Font (24)**. On the four sides it has the words: “One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism, One Father,” a paraphrase from the Ephesians passage used in the baptismal liturgy. To the right of the font is the **Eagle Lectern (25)** that symbolizes the spreading of the Gospel. Above it hangs a brass fixture that was converted from gas to electricity. The fixture was restored to its former glory in 2000 in loving memory of Sally Carey, parish administrator from 1975 until her untimely death in 1996.

Throughout the building you will notice a number of memorials given on behalf of parishioners and clergy. Several are of particular note. On the North Wall is a memorial dedicated to Samuel Chase, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, and his father Thomas, rector of St. Paul’s from 1745–1779. To the left of the Eagle Lectern you will find a memorial to The Right Reverend James Kemp, rector of St. Paul’s from 1812–1827 who later became the second Bishop of Maryland (1816–1827).

To the right of the pulpit is an ornate marble memorial dedicated to The Reverend John Sebastian Bach Hodges, rector of St. Paul’s from 1870–1905, who founded the Choir of Men and Boys in 1873. On the South Wall is a memorial to The Reverend William Wyatt, associate rector of the parish from 1814–1827, and subsequently rector from 1827–1864, who was instrumental in the founding of St. Paul’s School for Boys in 1849. You will also notice several war memorials dedicated to parishioners who gave their lives in the service of America’s armed forces.

For perspective on the exterior of the building it is helpful to exit the church and cross over Charles Street. From this vantage point you catch a strong sense of the architect’s style and purpose. To the left of the triple-arched portico rises the North Tower, originally designed to be a much taller 150 feet, which houses the **Harrison Carillon (26)**. Directly above the portico you will see two stone **Panel Friezes (27)** salvaged from the burned 1817 church building. On the left is a depiction of Moses and on the right a representation of Christ, both by sculptor Antonio Capellano. The parish’s **Garden Columbarium (28)** is housed the right of the building, through the iron gates and fence saved from the 1817 church.

We hope you have enjoyed your tour through Old St. Paul’s. While this building is a treasure to our parishioners and the City of Baltimore, it is through our worship in it that we are best able to express and partake in God’s glory. We welcome you to pick up other literature about us (in the North Tower) and please join us for services at any time. We wish you Godspeed on your journey.

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Service Schedule

from mid-September to mid-May

Sundays

8 a.m. The Holy Eucharist, Rite I (spoken)

9 a.m. The Holy Eucharist, Rite II (with choir)

10 a.m. Education Hour for children and adults

11 a.m. Choral Eucharist, Rite I

(Choral Morning Prayer and Eucharist on second and fourth Sundays)

Weekdays

12:15 p.m. The Holy Eucharist (Wednesdays)

*For our summer schedule or more information our parish life,
please visit our web site: www.osp1692.org.*

LEGEND

- 1 Great West Doors
- 2 Great East Window
- 3 Nave
- 4 Biscuits
- 5 Clerestory Windows
- 6 Agnus Dei (Lamb of God)
- 7 Early Greek Christian Symbols
- 8 Biscuits
- 9 High Altar
- 10 Bishop's Chair
- 11 Tiffany Rose Window
- 12 Suffering Christ Window
- 13 Lady Chapel
- 14 Organ Console
- 15 Front Organ
- 16 Antiphonal Organ
- 17 Historic Baptismal Font
- 18 Pulpit
- 19 South Wall Windows
- 20 South Tower
- 21 Original Biscuits
- 22 North Tower
- 23 North Wall Windows
- 24 Baptismal Font
- 25 Eagle Lectern
- 26 Harrison Cullion
- 27 Panel Pictures
- 28 Garden Columbarium

