

St. Paul's Cathedral, Dundee

A guide for visitors.



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Welcome!

St Paul's is a cathedral for Dundee and for everyone. You are welcome here.

In this leaflet you can find out all kinds of things about the Cathedral's history, about the making of the building, about the glorious stained glass, and much more besides. But first - stop. Stand just inside the main doors, stop, and look up. This is a place built to the glory of God and built to be a place of peace, welcome and inspiration for the people of Dundee. Breathe in the peace, enjoy the welcome, and after your visit, as you go, take with you the inspiration and the blessing of this unique place.



The Transfiguration of Jesus
- North Aisle Window

The Great Holy Work - Building St. Paul's

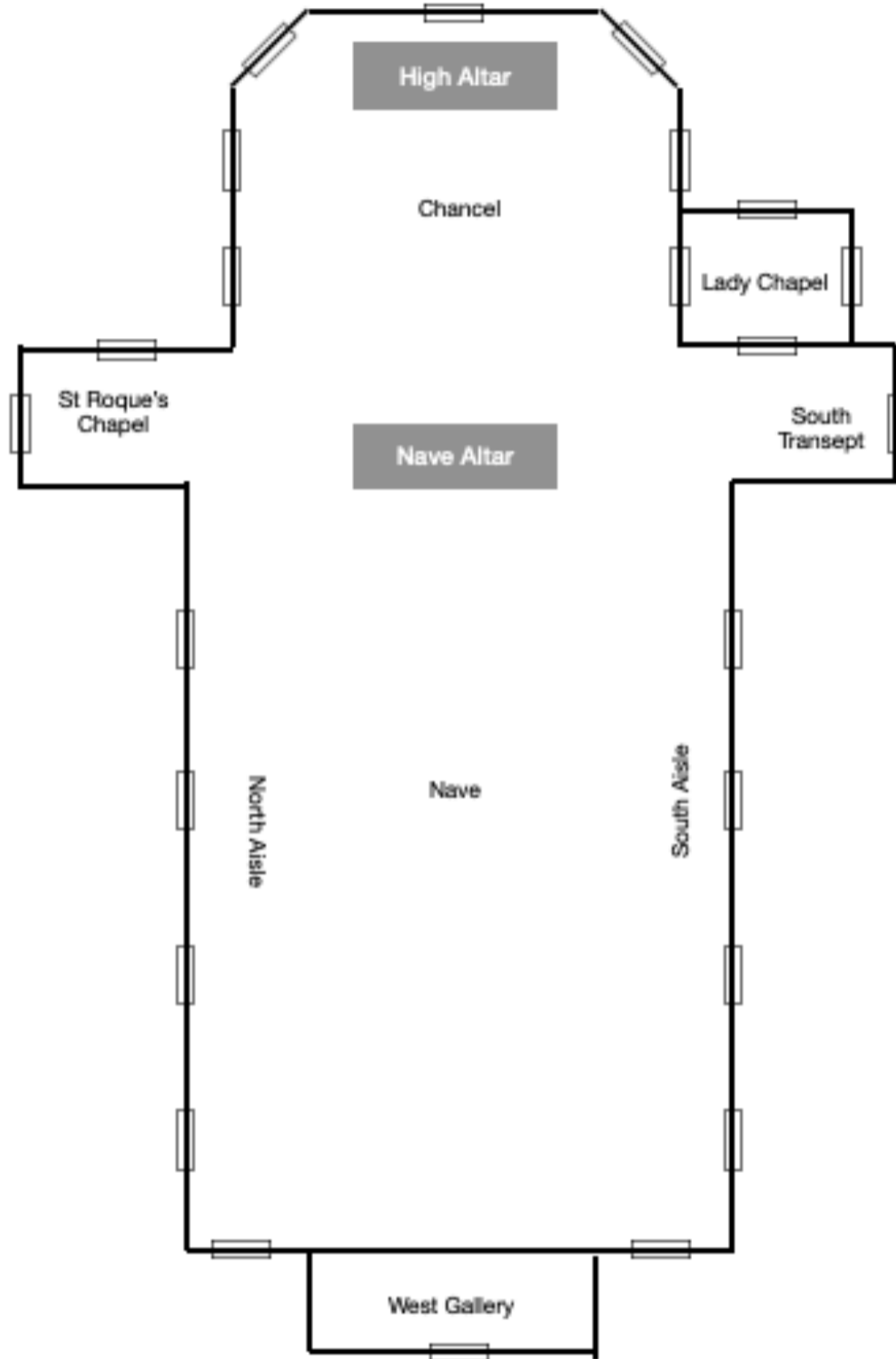
In December 1847 the new Bishop of Brechin, Alexander Penrose Forbes, arrived in Dundee. At that time most legal restrictions on the Episcopal Church had been lifted but it still had few church buildings and the congregation of St. Paul's used to meet in a room above a bank in Castle Street. In 1849, it was decided to erect a new church and Bishop Forbes preached a sermon announcing "the great, Holy work" of building what became the Cathedral. Several sites were considered, but eventually Dundee's historical Castlehill was chosen. The Cathedral was designed by the architect George Gilbert Scott, at an overall cost of £14,000.

The foundation stone for St. Paul's was laid in July 1853, in the present day sacristy of the Cathedral. Over the next two years, and with the help of considerable fundraising, the Cathedral was built upwards from the foundations on the Castle rock.

St. Paul's Church was opened for worship in December 1855. The project was still considerably in debt, and it was only when this debt had been cleared that St. Paul's was consecrated, at a special service on 1 November 1865. In the years before Bishop Forbes' death in 1875, and afterwards, the Cathedral was furnished in ways which enhanced Bishop Forbes' vision of the Cathedral as a place of beauty.

St. Paul's Church was made the Cathedral of the Diocese of Brechin in 1904. Today it is a working church, the home of a lively congregation, and through the years has hosted services for all kinds of occasions, local and national. The main service is every Sunday at 10.30 am: everyone is welcome.

A Plan of the Cathedral



The West Gallery & Bell Tower

The Cathedral has a ring of eight **bells**. They are rung regularly for services on Sundays and other occasions, often for weddings. Sometimes for a special occasion a longer peal is rung. In September 2022 the bells were rung muffled to mark the death of Queen Elizabeth II. The clapper of the bell, the part that strikes the side to make the bell sound, can be muffled on one side or both, and this produces an echoing, quieter sound.



The West Gallery - captured from the Nave.

The South Aisle

Baptism



The Font

The Font - The baptismal font is situated at the west end of the Cathedral, near the entrance, which is the traditional place for a font to be placed. The stonework on the pedestal of the font is of historical interest, incorporating a fragment from the twelfth century Lindores Abbey in Fife.

Baptism from Stonehaven Jail - The original painting "Baptism from Stonehaven Jail" can be found here. This was painted by George Washington Brownlow. The painting belongs to the Bishop of Brechin and it shows people bringing their children to be baptised at Stonehaven Jail (tollbooth) during 1748-1749. At the time the Episcopal Church was outlawed, so three Episcopalian ministers were imprisoned there.



'Baptism from Stonehaven Jail'

Alan Campbell Don

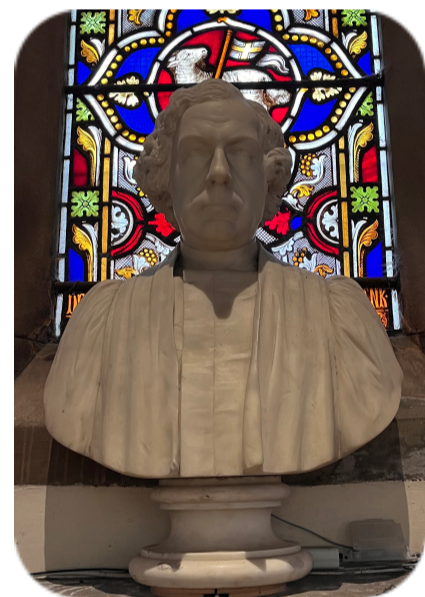


Alan Campbell Don

The bust on the window ledge of the South Aisle is that of **Alan Campbell Don**. Born in Broughty Ferry in 1885, Don was ordained in 1913 and appointed Provost of this Cathedral in 1923. He left Dundee in 1931 and went on to have a distinguished career in the Church of England including appointments as Dean of Westminster Abbey, Chaplain to George VI, Elizabeth II and also to the Speaker of the House of Commons. He died in 1966 and his ashes are buried in Westminster Abbey.

The North Aisle

The bust on the window ledge above the door in the North Aisle is that of **Alexander Penrose Forbes**, the founder of this Cathedral. There is lots of information about him elsewhere in this leaflet.



Alexander Penrose Forbes

The South Transept

The Lindores Cabinet

The **Lindores Cabinet** is decorated with seventeen panels of medieval carving. These are believed to have originally formed part of the choir stalls of Lindores Abbey in Fife (1191-1559). After the Reformation, the panels were taken and installed in the pulpit of St. Mary's Parish church in Dundee. When the panels were removed during an eighteenth-century renovation of

St. Mary's, Bishop James Rait (1742-88) bought them and built them into the pulpit in the Episcopalian Seagate Chapel. After the move to Castle Street Chapel in 1812, the panels were transferred to the new pulpit. However, following alterations in 1839, they were distributed among members of the congregation.



The Lindores Cabinet

In 1923, the Provost of St Paul's Cathedral, Alan Campbell Don, organised a collection of these historic items and they were built into the present Lindores Cabinet.

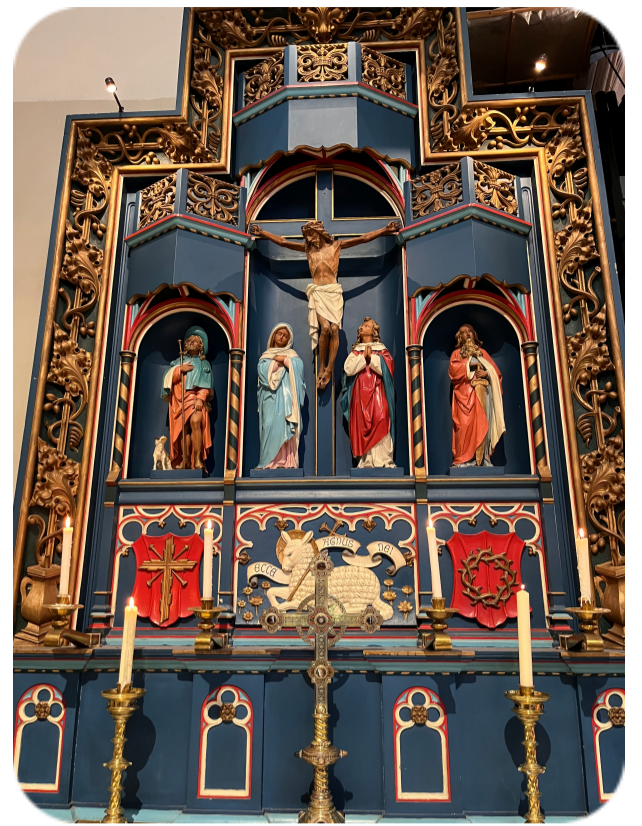
The North Transept

St. Roque's Chapel

In the early twentieth century, the mission church of St Roque was opened in St Roque's Lane to serve the pastoral needs of the Blackscroft area of Dundee, to the east of the city centre. In 1956, redevelopment and a declining population in central districts led to its closure. The church was close to the site of the medieval St. Roque's chapel outside the Cowgate Port, where lepers and plague victims were housed.

St. Roque is believed to have been born around 1295 into a wealthy family. However he gave up his material possessions and travelled, tending to many who had plague on his travels. Roque eventually caught the plague himself and legend has it that a dog, brought him bread each morning! When he recovered, Roque returned to his hometown in Montpellier, France, but was not recognised and was mistaken for a spy, imprisoned and died in prison in 1327.

St Roque's Chapel in the Cathedral (the North Transept) now houses the Altar, the Reredos and the War Memorial from St Roque's mission church. The Reredos is the panel behind the Altar decorated with painted wooden figures. It shows the crucifixion of Jesus, with Mary and St. John at either side of the cross. St. Paul is to the right of this scene. St. Roque stands in the left-hand panel, dressed as a pilgrim, wearing a hat and cloak (with shell brooch) and holding his walking staff in his left hand. His right hand is lifting his robe to display his plague sores, and he is accompanied by his faithful dog. Look closely to see the bread roll in the dog's mouth!



The Reredos from St. Roque's mission church.

The Lady Chapel

A **Lady Chapel** is a chapel dedicated to Mary, the mother of Jesus. The Lady Chapel in the Cathedral is a place for contemplation and prayer, set back a little from the main route around the building. (Originally it was planned that the organ would be housed in this space, but it was moved to the north side of the building. A chapel was then added later.)



Mosaic behind the altar in the Lady Chapel

The mosaic behind the altar shows the Annunciation, when Mary was visited by an angel who told her she was going to be the mother of Jesus. Look at the angel's wings, like peacock feathers. The Lady Chapel windows show scenes from the story of Jesus' birth. The altar was brought from the former St Paul's Chapel in Castle Street.

Chancel

The **Chancel** is the area where the ministers and choir sit during a service.

Cathedra

The most distinctive chair that you will see in the Chancel is the **Cathedra**, which is the seat of the Bishop of the Diocese. Like all cathedrals, the Cathedral is named after the bishop's cathedra. Cathedra is Greek for 'seat', and the bishop has a special seat because of the ancient tradition that someone would sit down to teach.

Over the seat is the coat of arms of the Diocese of Brechin, and on the sides there are carvings of St. Margaret, Queen of Scotland, and her son David I, who established the original Diocese of Brechin. David is shown carrying a model of Brechin Abbey which he founded.



The 51st Bishop of Brechin, Andrew, in the Cathedra

Bishop Forbes' Tomb & Memorial.

Bishop Forbes died in 1875 at the age of 59. He is buried in the Chancel and you can see his **tombstone** here - a brass and marble slab that was presented by his sister Elizabeth Forbes. The Latin inscription reads *'Here lies Alexander Penrose Forbes, who fell asleep in the year of salvation 1875, of his episcopate the 28th, and of his actual age the 59th.'*



Memorial to Forbes

There is also a **memorial** to Forbes, an 'altar tomb', carved from alabaster and showing him wearing medieval style robes. This is located on the North side of the sanctuary, close to the High Altar.

Cathedral Saints: Paul, Andrew and Modwen.

Saints are ordinary people, just like us, who did extraordinary things as they tried to live their lives in response to God's love.

There are a number of saints associated with the Cathedral and you will find images of them as you walk around. Three of these are carved into the cedar wood stalls of the Chancel.

The Cathedral is named after **St. Paul**. Paul opposed Christianity until he had an encounter with God that changed his life. He became one of the most influential people in the history of Christianity. He travelled from place to place, founding churches and writing letters telling people the Good News about Jesus. He was eventually sentenced to death by the Roman Empire for being a Christian around 62-64 CE. This Cathedral is named after him. A carving of Paul sits at the Eastern end of the stalls on the South side. He is shown holding his symbol, a sword.



Saint Paul

Andrew is the patron Saint of Scotland. Andrew was a fisherman who met Jesus and responded to Jesus' call to follow him. Andrew continued to follow Jesus, and after the events of Jesus' death, resurrection and ascension Andrew continued to spread the Good News about Jesus. In Patras, Greece, Andrew was put to death for being a Christian and was hung on a cross shaped like an X (the saltire on the Scottish flag is a St Andrew's cross). Andrew is shown holding this cross in a carving above the Precentor's chair.



Saint Andrew

Above the Provost's chair is a carved figure of **St Modwenna** or St Modwen, a 7th century Irish abbess (some sources say 9th), who founded two nunneries at Burton in Derbyshire. Some years later she came to Scotland and accounts of her life mention Edinburgh, Stirling and the Carse of Gowrie. Modwen is said to have died near Longforgan, when her companions saw her body being taken up to Heaven accompanied by silver swans. Later her bones were removed to Burton Abbey and the shrine of St Modwen in Burton Abbey became a place of pilgrimage. Modwen's statue showed her leaning on a pilgrim staff, and pregnant women prayed that they might lean on it for support during childbirth.



Modwen

The Sanctuary

The High Altar



Christ in Glory - the High Altar
Reredos

The **Reredos** (canopy behind the altar) dates from 1867. It was designed by George Gilbert Scott and made by Clayton and Bell. The canopy is built in alabaster and marble.

The detailed mosaic work is of Christ in Glory, seated and crowned. There is an orb of the world in one of his hands and the other hand is raised in a sign of blessing. This work was made in the famous glass workshop of Antonio Salviati, on the island of Murano, Venice.

The **High Altar** came later and was presented in 1884 in memory of Bishop Forbes by Sister Frances Elizabeth, Mother Superior of the Sisterhood of St Mary and St Modwenna. The altar consists

of a huge slab of black marble from the Frosterley quarries in Weardale, Co. Durham. It is eight feet long, nearly a foot thick and beautifully speckled with the fossils of sea creatures from over 300 million years ago!

The Credence Table, Aumbry and Piscina

To the right of the High Altar is a stone shelf set into the wall. This is a **credence table** where things used in a service can be placed. The **piscina** can act as a small sink where things used during a service can be washed and the **aumbry** is a cupboard where bread and wine that are used during a service can be stored afterwards, so they can be taken to people who cannot come to church.

The Credence Table, Piscina and Aumbry at the Cathedral are all a memorial of Sister Margaret Mary, of the Sisterhood of St Mary and St. Modwenna in King Street, Dundee. They were added in 1888 and are inscribed with the words 'Sister Margaret Mary in peace, May 26, 1887'. Sr Margaret Mary was a member of the Sisters of the Poor and came from a local family who were associated with St. Paul's.

The shelf of the memorial is of red Irish marble, and the rest is Derbyshire alabaster. In the canopy above, you can see the letters 'S P' for Sisters of the Poor, and the carved marguerite flowers, in allusion to Sr. Margaret Mary. The memorial cost £86.



Credence Table, Piscina and Aumbry

Stained Glass Windows

Stained glass windows are often an important part of a church building. They are a visual way of telling the stories of the Bible and the Church, and are often very beautiful. The Cathedral has many beautiful windows, and more information about them all is available in our stained glass window guide.

South Transept Stained Glass Window

The main subject of the large window is a series of scenes from the life of St. Paul. In chronological order these are: the stoning of St Stephen; the Conversion of St. Paul; Ananias giving sight to the convert; divine honours offered at Lystra; St Paul's deliverance from prison; before Felix, the governor; shipwreck on journey to Rome; St Paul's martyrdom in Rome, AD 64.



South Transept Window, with scenes from the life of Paul

North Transept Stained Glass Window



Detail of Cuthbert holding Oswald's head from the North Transept window

The upper section depicts four saints of the Early Church: Saints Chrysostom and Basil of the Eastern Church; and Saints Augustine and Ambrose of the Western Church. The figures in the central section are saints of these islands. From the left they are St. David, King of Scotland, 1124-1153, holding Brechin Cathedral, which he founded; St Columba, the Irish missionary and first Abbot of Iona, 563; St. Edward the Confessor, King of England, 1042-1066, holding St John's ring; and St. Cuthbert, Prior of Melrose Abbey and Bishop of Lindisfarne (c.635-687) who is holding the head of the great Northumbrian King, Oswald. The lower section illustrates incidents in the lives of the principal figures

above. David is shown distributing alms; Columba is preaching to the Picts; Edward the Confessor is receiving St John's ring from pilgrims; and Cuthbert, who wanted to be a hermit, is being persuaded (under protest) to become Bishop of Lindisfarne.

The tracery above the main window features Christian imagery relating to the Crucifixion and the Holy Eucharist.

The Cathedral Today

I wonder what else you saw as you looked round the Cathedral - and who else. Maybe someone came in and lit a candle in St Roque's Chapel (perhaps you did yourself). There might have been someone sitting quietly in a pew. Sometimes people climb up the steps just to see what's at the top. You might have seen people arranging flowers, or cleaning, or a conversation going on, or people getting ready for a service. You might have noticed things we tend not to put into a guidebook: the sound system, the posters about events, the leaflets about where help is available, the children's pictures on the Young Church noticeboard. There might have been an exhibition or people coming in for a meeting.

The Cathedral is a working building and all kinds of things happen here. It is here for worship, every Sunday and often on other days. It opens its doors every day to be a place of prayer. Here, everyone is welcomed, and here we work so that everyone can flourish. The Cathedral stands as a constant sign of faith, hope and love at the heart of the city.

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