

The West Window depicts the feeding of the five thousand, which is the only miracle recorded in all four gospels. The four panels below depict the four gospel writers, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, with the bible references to the accounts of the miracle in each gospel.

The Texts

Most of the window and door arches have biblical texts painted above, and the pulpit also has a text around the rim (restored in 2002). The texts read as follows -

Chancel arch: *"Come unto me all that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest"*

West Window: *"What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul"*

Pulpit: *"Hearken, behold there went out a sower"*

South side - from West to East -

Door: *"Thou God seest me"*

Window: *"Examine me O Lord, prove me and try me"*

Above the organ: *"A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another"*

Transept, behind organ: *"God is our refuge and strength. A very present help in trouble"*

North side - from West to East - Three windows -

"Except a man be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God"

"Cast thy burden on the Lord and he shall sustain thee"

"Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ"

Arch above the vestry curtain: *"There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth"*

Transept window, in the vestry: *"If any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his"*

There is no text over the east window, which is perhaps surprising. Possibly it has been painted over. There is some evidence of earlier painted decoration over the walls. To the East side of the organ a small portion of wall has been exposed by replacement of the switch gear, and this shows traces of painting. The texts seem to be somewhat influenced by the Workhouse with their emphasis on burdens and labour.

Compiled from a guide written by John Conibear (2002) with additional material by Revd Nigel Sanders, updated by Roy and Elizabeth Shimmin (2004). © St Mark's Church Committee.

A Guide to St. Mark's Hospital Church, Maidenhead

The church is a focal point of the hospital site being adjacent to the original main building of the Union Workhouse, built in 1836. The church gave the site and the nearby road its name.

The £2000 cost of the entire church structure, organ, furnishings etc. was met by Mr. John Hibbert of Braywick Lodge, who was Chairman of the Board of Guardians. John Hibbert was a generous benefactor and was largely responsible for establishing Maidenhead Cottage

Hospital and also Windsor Hospital. The church was built by Charles Cooper of Pinkneys Green who, with his son John Kingdom Cooper, built many of Maidenhead's finest Victorian buildings.

The church was opened on the 30th May 1873 when it was decided that the offertory be expended in charitable purposes in connection with the poor. The church has two beautiful stained glass windows. The east window was installed in memory of Sister Lydia Jane Hibbert who died on 2nd December 1878 and also in memory of Mary Malyon, Matron of the Union Workhouse for 29 years. The west window was completed in 1886 by members of the Coney family in memory of their father.

The organ was built by Henry Jones, one of four bothers who were organ builders with factories in the London area in the mid to late 19th century. He built organs in a number of other churches in Maidenhead and elsewhere, some 450 in all.

The Chaplain of the Workhouse acted as officiating Minister at St. Mark's and the first Chaplain in 1873 was the Rev. W. B. Hole. Up to 2004 there have been a further 18 ministers and the post is now combined with that of



Incumbent of St. Peter's Furze Platt, currently the Rev. Dr. Mark Balfour Mr Brian Rose and Mrs Pat Rose, licensed lay ministers, have special responsibility for St. Mark's Church.

To mark the centenary of the church, a special thanksgiving service was held on the 30th May 1973 and the sermon was preached by the Bishop of Reading, the Rt. Rev. Eric Wild. A 125th Anniversary service was held on 26th April 1998, with the sermon also being preached by the Bishop of Reading, the Rt. Rev. Dominic Walker OGS.

The Grade 11 listed structure is the responsibility of the Windsor, Ascot and Maidenhead Primary Care Trust which also meets the cost of heating and lighting. In 1994 the Hospital authorities repaired the unsafe top part of the west wall and bellcote, following a £3000 grant from the Borough Council. After many years of silence this enabled the bell to be rung again. In 2012 the building was completely re-roofed - a major work.

In recent times, the generosity of past and present members of the congregation have enabled many worthwhile projects to be undertaken, including restoring the organ, decorating internal walls, repairing and protecting stained glass windows, and carpeting the sanctuary area. The most recent improvements have been upgrading the sound system and restoration of the stonework and painted decoration of the pulpit, making the text legible again. In 2001 a main notice board was erected by the St. Mark's Road entrance to enable services and other church activities to be publicised.

Financial and other matters are considered by the St. Mark's Committee. Audited accounts are published annually in respect of cash collections, donations, etc., received at St. Mark's. This income is used mainly to meet essential expenses and for charitable distributions which include the Hospital. The contents of pledge envelopes go to St. Peter's Parish as a contribution toward the cost of running the Parish and the wider Church.

Services are principally based on the Book of Common Prayer, which, for an earlier generation of hospital patients visiting the church, was the most familiar form of service. The Sunday Holy Communion services now use Common Worship, Order Two (contemporary language), which is a conservatively modernised version of the Prayer Book Service. Following the retirement of Honourary Curate, Revd Nigel Sanders, the Bishop gave permission for St Mark's congregation to receive Holy Communion by Extension.

The Sunday pattern of services is Holy Communion on the first and third Sundays and Morning Prayer on other Sundays, all at 10.15am. There is Holy Communion at 11.00am on the second and fourth Wednesdays held either in the Church or elsewhere in the Hospital. A number of hospital in-patients come to the services. Sunday congregations number 30-50 and are drawn from the local area and more widely.

St. Mark's is not licensed for weddings due to legal complexities over its ownership and relationship to the Church of England. It is possible, however, for weddings to take place with the aid of an Archbishop's Special Licence, and this has happened in recent years.

The Windows

The church has two beautiful stained glass windows at the East and West ends of the church. The East window represents scenes from the beginning and end of the life of Christ.

The lower section has four panels representing from left to right - The nativity. Joseph, Mary and Jesus, with the star shining above. Here and throughout Mary is robed in the traditional blue. The Presentation in the Temple (Luke 2:21-38). Jesus is held in the arms of the aged Simeon and there is a bird-cage containing "a pair of doves and two young pigeons" which was the normal offering for a poor family. The flight into Egypt. Mary rides on a donkey, holding the baby Jesus with Joseph walking alongside. In the Carpenter's Shop. Jesus is pictured with Joseph and Mary and tools of the trade.

The upper section has four taller panels representing - The Baptism of Jesus by John (the Baptist) in the Jordan. At the top is the dove representing the descent of the Holy Spirit on Jesus. The Crucifixion, with the Virgin Mary and John at the foot of the cross. (John 19:26). The descent from the Cross, with John, Mary Magdalene and Joseph of Arimathea. The resurrection from the tomb, with sleeping guard.

The top section shows the ascended Christ in Glory, worshiped by angels on either side.

