

# St. Dunstan's Church of the Highlands Parish

Shoreline, Washington

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with assistance from Fr. Thomas Dement*

With a rich heritage, wonderful works of art, and a building set in the natural beauty of its wooded surroundings, St. Dunstan's Church of the Highlands Parish in Shoreline, Washington, understands the signification of "worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness".

St. Dunstan's parishioners began worshipping in the Florence Henry Memorial Chapel around 1950. The Chapel, which opened in 1911, is in The Highlands, a gated community north of Seattle. W. Marberry Somervell – well known locally for his design of the Green Lake and Roosevelt library branches in Seattle – designed the Florence Henry Memorial Chapel. While there are arrangements with the Diocese of Olympia for St. Dunstan's to use the Chapel, the building is owned by the Highlands



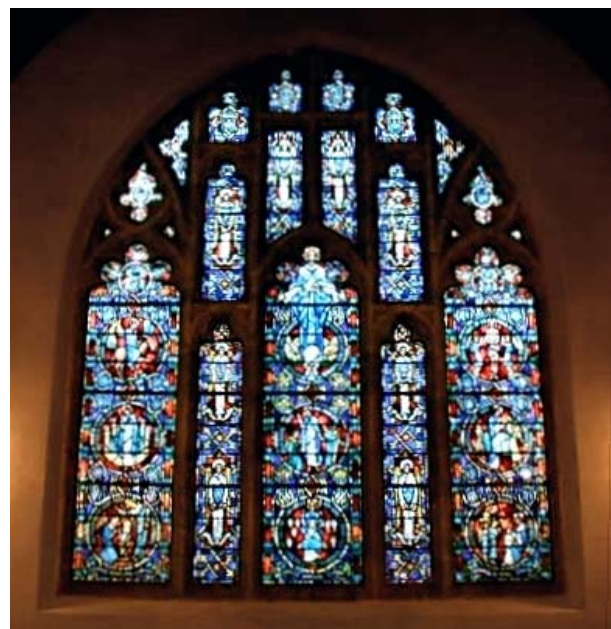
and has never been consecrated as an Episcopal church.

The Chapel has a marble bas-relief of the Last Supper that was carved for the Italian exhibit of the 1909 Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition. Horace and Susan Henry, donors of the Chapel, purchased the carving when the Exhibition closed and had it installed over the altar in a specially carved wood frame.

There are three tuned bells in the tower. While not hung for change ringing, this ringing style can be approximated with some effort. The windows in the nave and sanctuary are stained glass in a late medieval period (14th century) style. The Charles Connick Studio of Boston created and installed them from

BELOW: Marble bas-relief of the Last Supper over the altar in the Henry Chapel.

RIGHT: The "west window" in the Henry Chapel.



1932 to 1960. There is also a carved rood screen separating the choir from the nave. This adds to the feeling of tradition when worshipping in the Chapel.

The new congregation, not owning the Henry Chapel, purchased land near the Highlands for a parish hall. What was originally built as the parish hall has now become the primary place for worship. Services are still held in the Chapel for the early Sunday morning Eucharist and the late evening Eucharist on Christmas Eve.

Through the years, St. Dunstan's has grown gracefully into a beautiful place to worship God. Much of that grace is the artwork on the grounds, including a carving of Chief Spokane Garry holding a Book of Common Prayer on his lap while offering a sign of peace.

Artist Dudley C. Carter (1891-1992) created the carving of Chief Spokane Garry (?-1892) from a dead tree on a wooded portion of the property in 1961. The work followed the publication in 1960 of Chief Spokane Garry (T. S. Denison & Company, Inc., Minneapolis) by the Rev. Canon Thomas E. Jesset, who was then vicar of St. Dunstan's. There are numerous works by Carter in the metropolitan Seattle area and San

Francisco.

Chief Spokane Garry learned about Christianity and Anglicanism when he was sent to the Red River School, Fort Garry (Winnipeg), Manitoba. The chief – whose tribe held the lands where Spokane, Washington, stands today – was instrumental in negotiating peace treaties with the territory of Washington and the United States government.

A Celtic cross designed by Lycia Danielle Trounton was placed over the porch at the main church entrance in 2003. It has Celtic knot-work intertwined with symbolism related to the most famous of the Glastonbury abbots and parish patron, Dunstan. The cross was a commission by two parishioners, Tom and Jean Keefer, to commemorate the tragic loss of a daughter and son.

Many Episcopal churches have needlework kneelers at the communion rail as does St. Dunstan's. The original 10 kneelers were presented in 1994. Additional kneelers were added later to accommodate a redesigned sanctuary. The design on each of the primary kneelers includes different designs of a cross (Bottony, Celtic, Fitchee, Greek, and so forth).

"Spokan Garry," carved by Dudley C. Carter.



Celtic cross designed by Lycia Danielle Trounton before mounting over porch.







Seat cushion created by Jeanette Michel.

In addition to the kneelers, there are two seat cushions in the sanctuary designed and created by Jeanette Michel. Based on traditional religious designs, these cushions complement the festive altar frontal. At the center of the design is a bursting pomegranate, a symbol of the Resurrection and the power of Jesus – who burst the tomb and come forth again in life. The pomegranate also serves as a symbol of the church – one fruit containing many seeds.

A recent project involved a large cross-section of St. Dunstan's Parish when individuals and families were invited to paint a tile with some identifying symbol. Afterwards, these tiles were fired and mounted along the stairway to the undercroft.

The church school has taken this idea a step further (no pun intended) by having students create small concrete octagons and circles into



Tiles created by St. Dunstan's parishioners and mounted along the stairway to the undercroft.

which they have left objects and traced words. Upon completion, these were placed along the various walkways and paths on the property.

St. Dunstan's building fits beautifully on a large wooded lot. The windows in the nave allow the outside beauty to surround worshipers. Plantings in the garden areas blend with otherwise natural surroundings. An outdoor columbarium nestles among trees and rhododendrons. Instead of a labyrinth, St. Dunstan's offers wooded trails for meditative walking.

There are different types of the beauty of holiness. The Florence Henry Memorial Chapel speaks of a deep traditional artistic glory. St. Dunstan's Church has carefully added human works among a natural glory. The parishioners of St. Dunstan's Church of the Highlands Parish receive nurture from both. †



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The Florence Henry Memorial Chapel.