

The WINDOWS

OF

HOLY TRINITY CHURCH & MEOLE BRACE



including original descriptions by
REV HENRY F. BATHER, vicar, 1871.

INTRODUCTION

This church was built in 1869, and is believed to be the 4th church on the site since Saxon (pre Domesday) times. Its inspiration was the then vicar, Archdeacon Henry Francis Bather, who also commissioned the original stained glass windows from the company of the artist William Morris. The majority of the windows were designed by Morris, Edward Burne-Jones and Ford Maddox Brown. Only the centre chancel window was installed at the opening of the church – that to the left followed in 1870 and that to the right in 1871. There are also windows by Kempe and Powells. A lovely portrait of Archdeacon Bather hangs in the vestry.

This guide starts with the Archdeacon's original theological description of the chancel windows, written in 1871, alongside additional notes, translations and photographs. Descriptions of the windows in the Lady Chapel and side windows follow. A more modern artistic appraisal of the chancel windows was made by Sheila M Langford in c1985 and is included at the end.



A DESCRIPTION of the WINDOWS & RAREDOS

Henry F. Bather, Vicar, Nov 1871

The Church being dedicated to Holy Trinity, the general design is to represent in the three apse windows and RareDOS, the work of the Holy Trinity in the salvation of man.

The first window (N.E.) represents the work of God the Father in His dealings with man under the old preparatory Dispensation, prior to the revelation of God the Son, and the new Dispensation of the Holy Spirit.

It is to be read from left to right, beginning with the top row.

The first line points to the loss of original innocence and the need of salvation.

1. *The Fall.*
2. *The Expulsion.*
3. *The Sacrifice of Cain and Abel*; or, the human craving for atonement.

The second line shews God's revelation of Himself through a human mediator, and through the moral law.

1. *The Finding of Moses*; or, the providential separation of the human instrument.
2. *Moses at the Bush*; or, his commission, and instruction in the truth of God's nature.
3. *Moses breaking the Tables of the Covenant*; or, man's reception of that holy law, whereby is "the knowledge of sin".

The third line points to God's revelation of Himself through the outward and visible ordinances of a ceremonial law, which "made nothing perfect".

1. *Eli and Samuel*; or, the tabernacle service, with its failures and imperfections.
2. *The Building of the Second Temple*; or, the house of God, which, because only "made with hands", like the first, must "vanish away".
3. *Zachariah offering Incense*; or, the last scene in the old dispensation, prior to the "bringing in of a better hope".

The circle in the head of the window represents *Hebrew Psalmody*, a band of singers surrounded by angels playing musical instruments.

The Left Chancel Windows

HEBREW
PSALMODY

The
FALL

The
EXPULSION
From
EDEN

The
SACRIFICE of
CAIN & ABEL

The
FINDING of
MOSES

MOSES
and the
BURNING
BUSH

MOSES
BREAKS the
TABLES of the
COVENANT

ELI
&
SAMUEL

BUILDING
the SECOND
TEMPLE

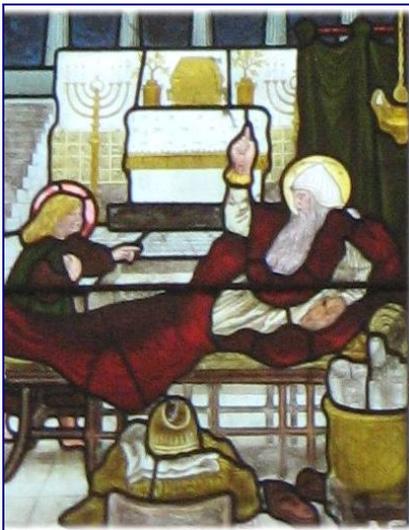
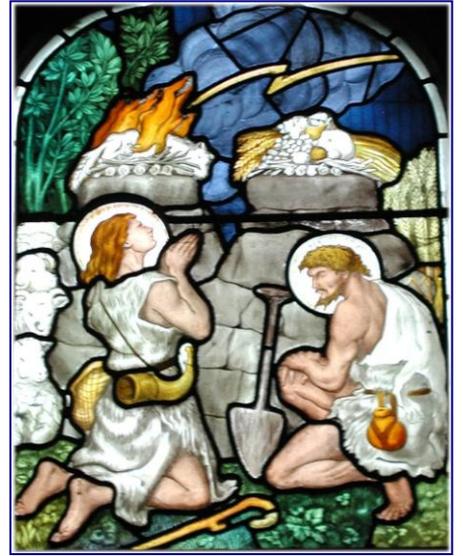
ZACHARIAH
OFFERING
INCENCE

***THEME:
THE WORK OF GOD THE FATHER
IN HIS DEALINGS WITH MAN***

All designs by Ford Maddox Brown except "Building the Temple" and "Moses Breaking the Tablets of Stone" by Burne-Jones. Installed in 1870.



THE LEFT CHANCEL WINDOWS



The second window (central), coupled with the **Reredos** below it, represents the great work of God the Son in the redemption of mankind.

It is treated in a different manner from No 1 – not historically, but ideally – the figures being more conventional, and the background not filled in. It is also arranged in a different order, with the main subjects running up the centre.

At the bottom of the central light is represented *The Nativity*; above it *The Crucifixion* with adoring angels beholding the things which “the angels desire to look into”.

The circle in the head shews the *Ascended Saviour on His Throne of Glory* surrounded by ten thousand of His saints, and with “a rainbow round about the throne in sight like unto an emerald”.

The two side lights are filled with representative figures introduced as Christ’s witnesses.

1. Left: *Angels*
1. Right: *Prophets* – *Isaiah* with his emblem the saw, and *Ezekiel* with the mystical globe.

2. Left: *Apostles* – *St. John* with the cup, and *St. Peter* with the key.
2. Right: *Apostles* – *St. Paul* with the sword, and *St. James*, first Bishop of Jerusalem, with the church.
3. Left: *Kings* – Patriarchal and Christian – *Melchizedec*, King of Salem, with the bread and wine, and *Louis IX of France*, the saintly king of modern history.
3. Right: *Martyrs* – *St. Stephen* with the palm branch, and *St. Nicholas*, Bishop of Myra, with the child. He was martyred in the 4th century and is the legendary patron saint of little children.

The subject of The Resurrection, omitted in the window, finds place in the **Reredos** below it:

The central group shews our Blessed Lord stepping forth from the grave in triumph, to enlist the world under His banner, in the presence of the angel watchers and the startled Roman guards.

The supporting figures are: St. Mary Magdalene “bringing the spices which she had prepared”, and St. Thomas with his doubts removed.

The side panels connect the main subject with the thought of Holy Communion. The one on the left contains a cluster of grapes, with the scroll “I am the true Vine”, the one on the right contains ears of wheat, with the scroll “I am the Bread of Life”.

The Central Chancel Windows

THE
ASCENDED
SAVIOUR on
His THRONE

ANGELS

APOSTLES:
ST. JOHN
&
ST. PETER

KINGS:
MELCHIZEDEC
&
LOUIS IX

THE
CRUCIFIXION

THE NATIVITY

PROPHETS:
ISAIAH
&
EZEKIEL

APOSTLES:
ST. PAUL
&
ST. JAMES

MARTYRS:
ST. STEPHEN
&
ST. NICHOLAS

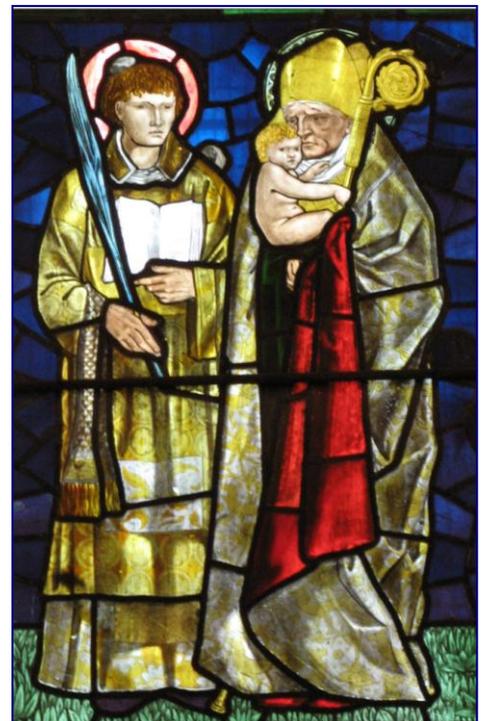
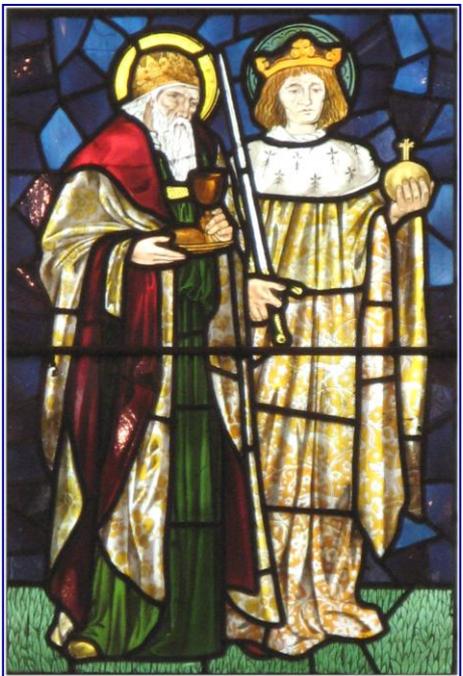
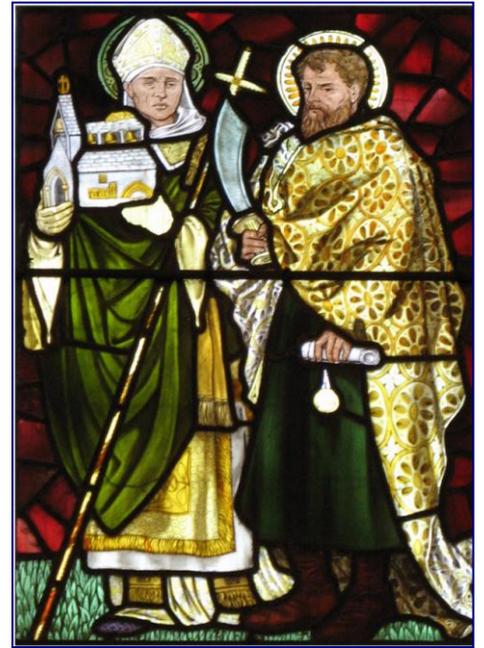
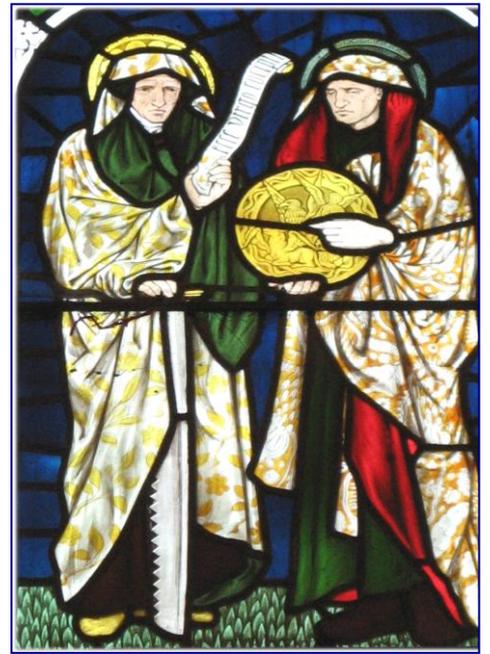
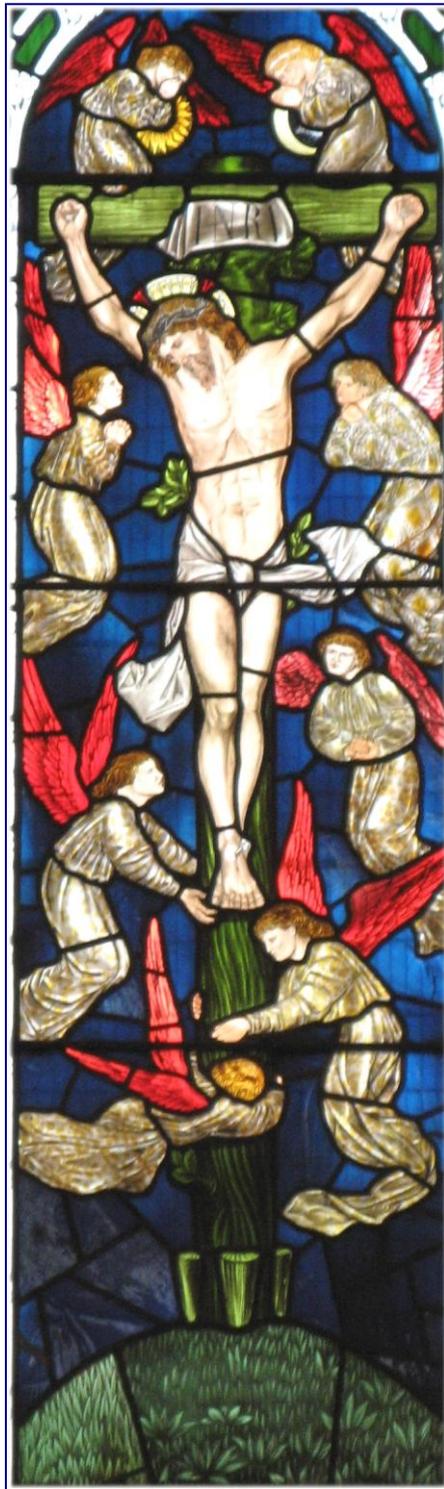
RAREDOS – THE RESURRECTION
Depicts Jesus rising from the tomb watched
by Mary Magdalene (with spices) and
Thomas (no longer doubting).

***THEME:
THE WORK OF THE SON OF GOD IN THE
REDEMPTION OF MANKIND***

All designs by Edward Burne-Jones, except St. Paul & St James which Maddox Brown collaborated with. This is the earliest window, installed at the building of the church in 1869.



THE CENTRAL CHANCEL WINDOWS



The third window represents the Dispensation of God the Holy Spirit, and is similar in method to No 1.

The first line shews typical facts, by which the new dispensation was ushered in.

1. *The Adoration of the Magi*. “Gentiles shall come to Thy light, and kings to the brightness of Thy rising”.
2. *The Descent of the Holy Spirit on our Lord at His Baptism*, before angel witnesses; pointing to the acceptance of regenerate Humanity in the person of Jesus Christ.
3. *The Transfiguration*; or, the welcoming of the new dispensation by Moses and Elias, the representatives of the Law and the Prophets under the old.

The second line shews the blessings to be found in the new dispensation, as prefigured in the acts of Christ.

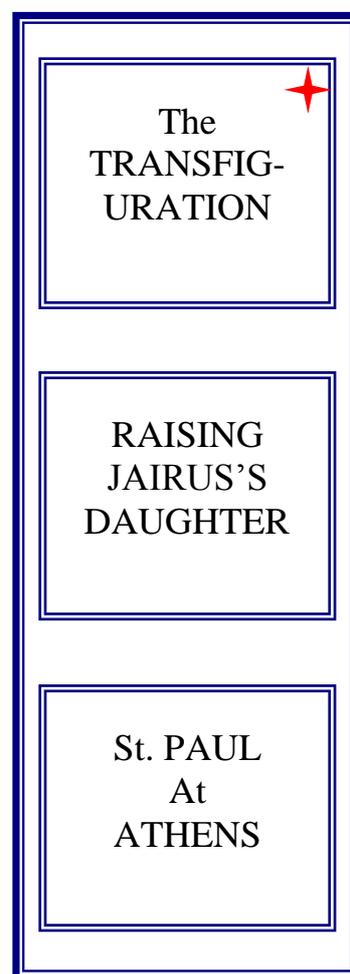
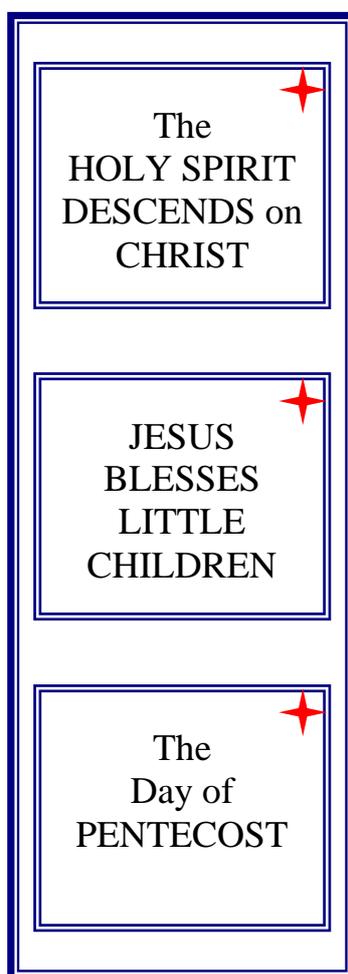
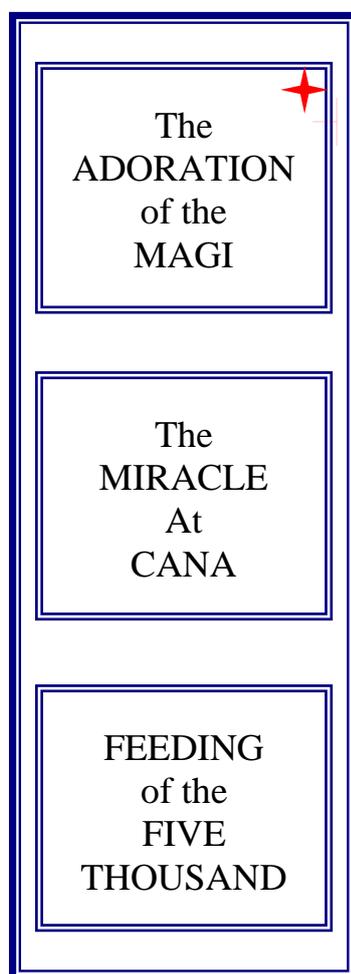
1. *The Miracle at Cana of Galilee*; or, “the water of earth changed into the wine of heaven”.
2. *Christ blessing little children*; or, the kingdom of heaven opened to the childlike.
3. *The raising of Jairus’s daughter*; or, “gifts of healing by the same Spirit”.

The third line points to the universality of the new dispensation and its final triumph.

1. *The feeding of the five thousand*; or, the all-sufficiency of the Bread of Life, “divided to every man severally”.
2. *The day of Pentecost*; or, the gift of tongues, for preaching the gospel to every creature.
3. *Saint Paul at Athens*; or, the Gospel asserting its spiritual authority over heathen philosophy.

The circle in the head represents “*Christian Minstelsy*”, with angels surrounding cusps striking bells.

The Right Chancel Windows

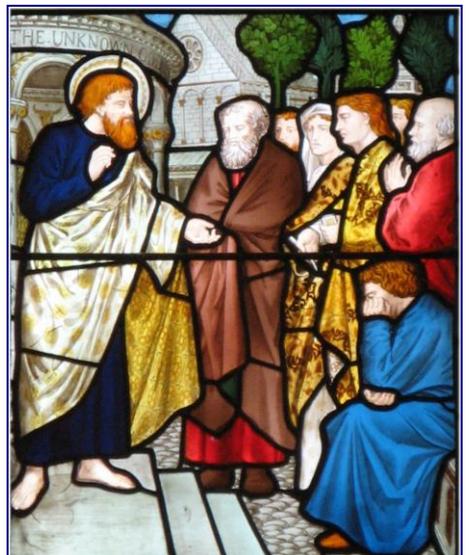
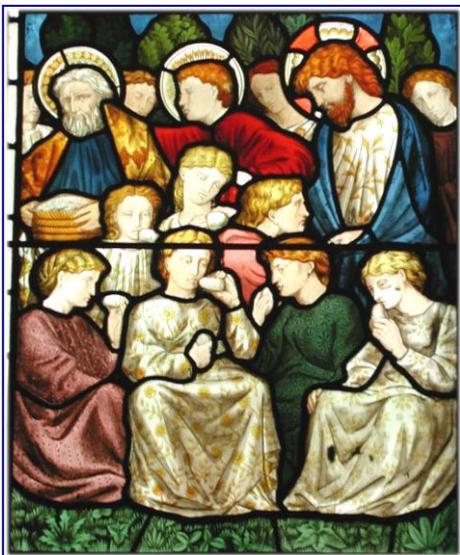
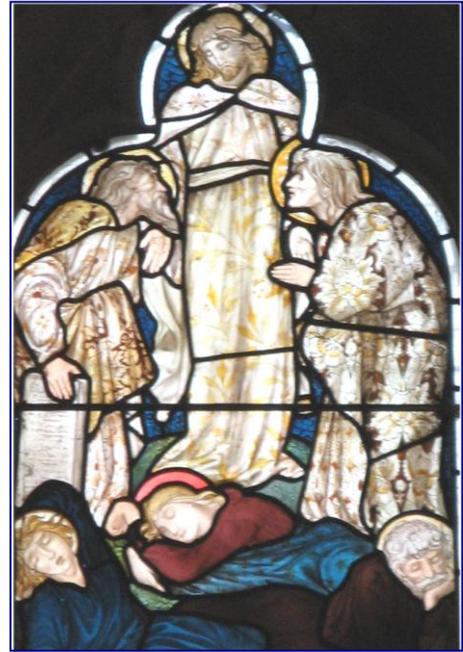
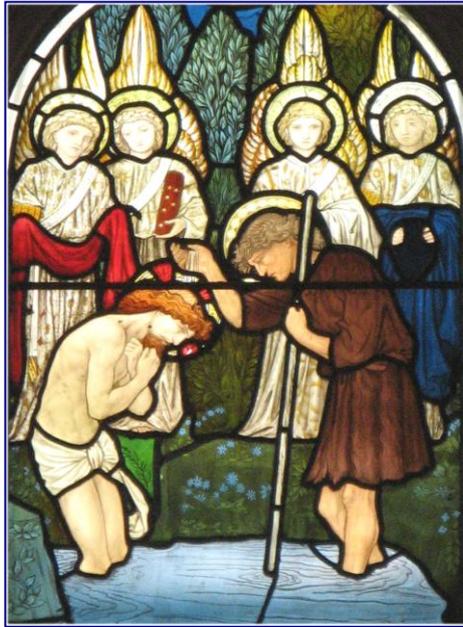
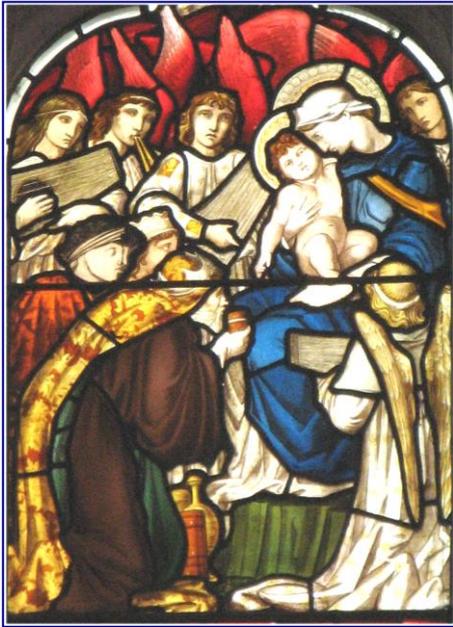


***THEME:
THE DISPENSATION OF GOD THE
HOLY SPIRIT.***

Windows marked  by Burne Jones. Others by William Morris. Installed in 1871.



THE RIGHT CHANCEL WINDOWS



The three windows are the work of Messrs Morris and Co, 26 Queen Square, Bloomsbury.

The central window placed at the building of the church in 1869 was presented by the architect, E. Haycock Esq, and other members of his family, in memory of his brother, Thomas Haycock.

The N.E. window, placed in 1870, was presented by G. Burr Esq in memory of his parents and brothers.

The third window was placed in 1871 by subscription from James Loxdale Esq, John Loxdale Esq, George Loxdale Esq, R. Juson Esq, G. Burr Esq, J.J. Peele Esq, John Heighway Esq, and the Rev H.W. Moss.

The Reredos, of pink and white alabaster, fixed December 1869, was presented by James Loxdale Esq, and is the work of Mr Thomas Earp, sculptor, Lambeth.

The above statement has been drawn up that the full meaning of these works of art may be better appreciated by parishioners and others.

The Church is always open during daylight, and a copy of this paper will be found in the vestry for the use of those who may wish to study the windows. The most favourable time to see them on bright days is from two to three o'clock; on dull days the morning time is equally good.

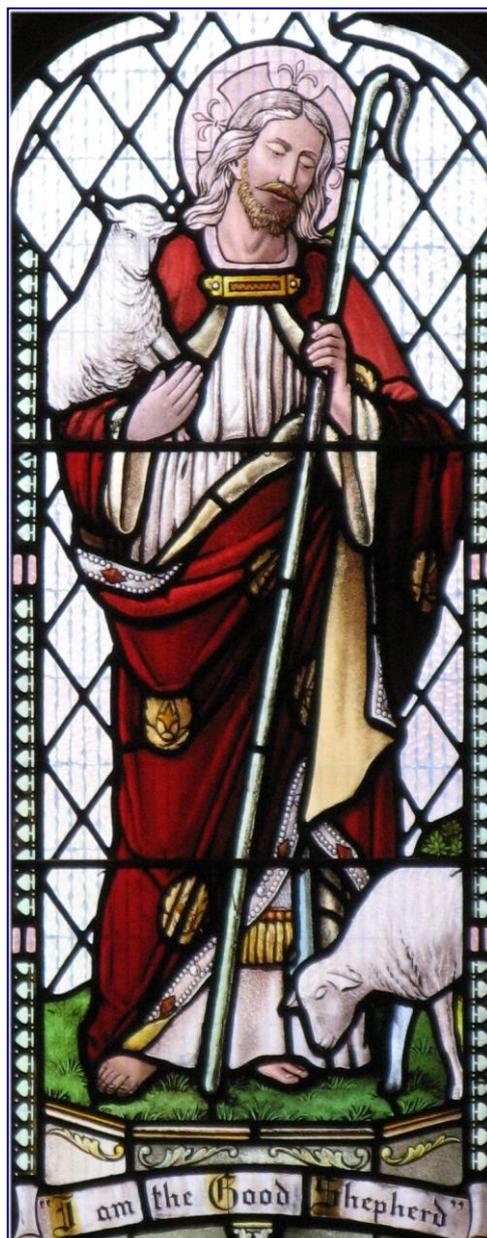
Henry F. Bather

Vicar
Meole Brace
Nov 1871



*Portrait of Archdeacon Bather
in the church log book 1880*

The Left (North) Side Windows



JESUS & THE GOOD SHEPHERD

On the left a depiction of the Saviour, in memory of Minnie Evans who died 1951.

To the right, the Good Shepherd was added later in memory of her husband William Evans, a verger and sacristan at Meole for 31 years, who died in 1958.

Provenance unknown



VALOUR, SACRIFICE & ENDURANCE

In memory of Walter Nickels and all the men of Meole who fell in the First World War.

The circle above is the angel Michael destroying the dragon.

Dedicated together with the War Memorial in 1921.

William Morris



RUTH, DEVOTION, & MIRIAM

This is a Burne-Jones design. In the original the figure on the left was Mary of Bethany, but as the church already had a “Martha and Mary” the name was altered to Ruth.

Inscribed “Serve the Lord with Gladness”

In memory of Margaret Pugh who died in 1903.

William Morris

The Lady Chapel Windows



THE ANNUNCIATION WINDOW

On the left the **ANGEL GABRIEL**: “Hail Mary full of grace”.

To the right the **VIRGIN MARY**: “Be it unto me according to your word”

In memory of Emma and Rhoda Bather.

By Charles Eamer Kempe
1894



SAINT TIMOTHY

Given by the children of Meole Brace

By Burne-Jones
1896

SAMUEL

In memory of Anthony Grey of Brent House.

“Speak Lord for Thy servant heareth”.

By Burne-Jones 1899





JESUS The CARPENTER With JOSEPH & MARY

In memory of Major Coldwell

By Burne-Jones 1901

The Right (South)
Side Windows
Designs by Burne-Jones
& Maddox Brown



Faith

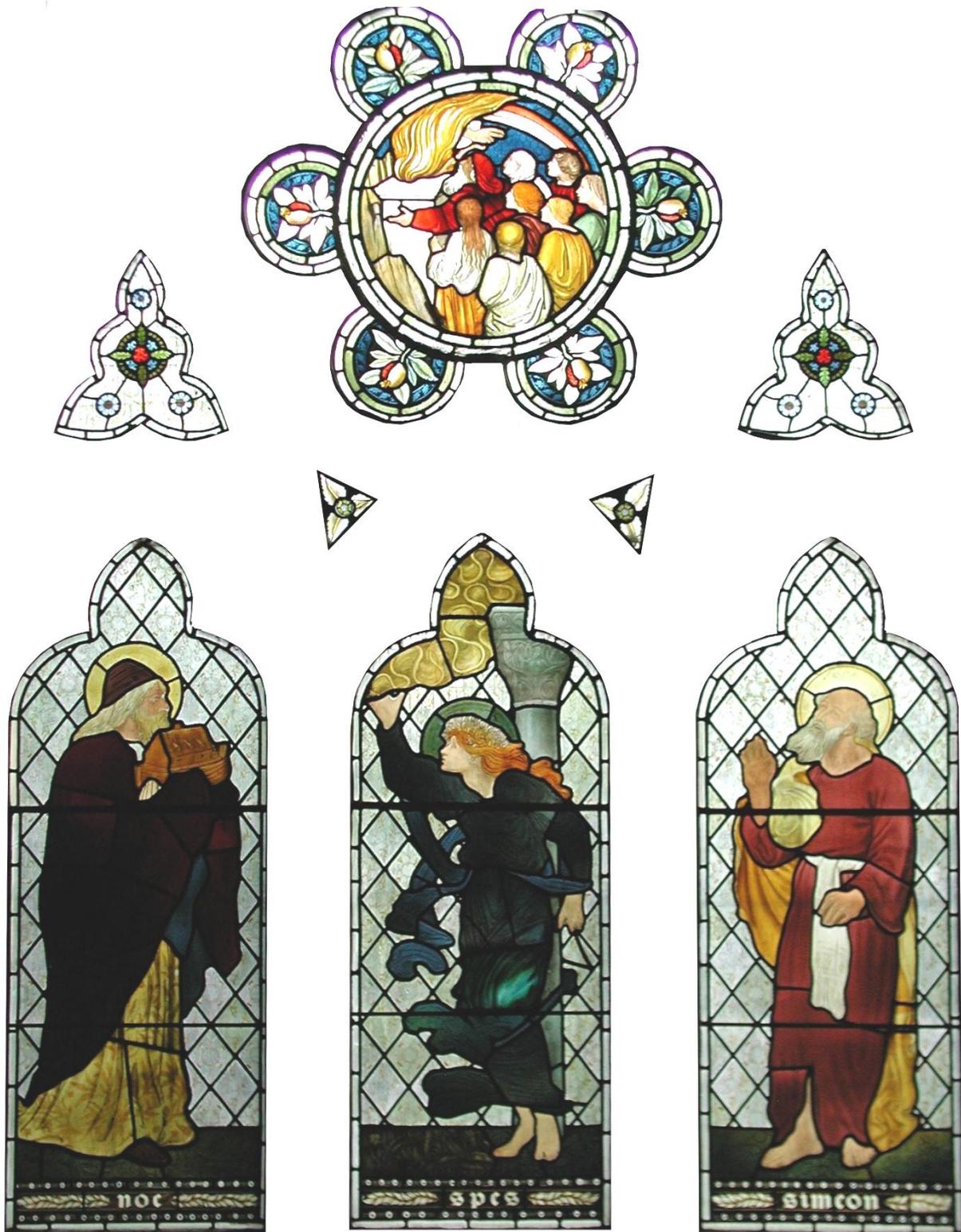
Left: **ENOCH**, clasping a hand “Enoch walked with God”.

Centre: **FIDES** (Faith)

Right: **ELIAS** (Elijah) with the ravens that sustained him in the wilderness.

Inscription: “Have Faith in God”

In memory of Arthur Henry Bather, Assistant Accountant General of the Navy.



Hope

NOAH, with his ark:

SPES (Hope):

SIMEON

Circled Above: **NOAH** sacrificing to God for his deliverance from the flood, and God's promise in the rainbow

In memory of Mary Flavel of Pulley.



Charity

Left: **St. JOHN**

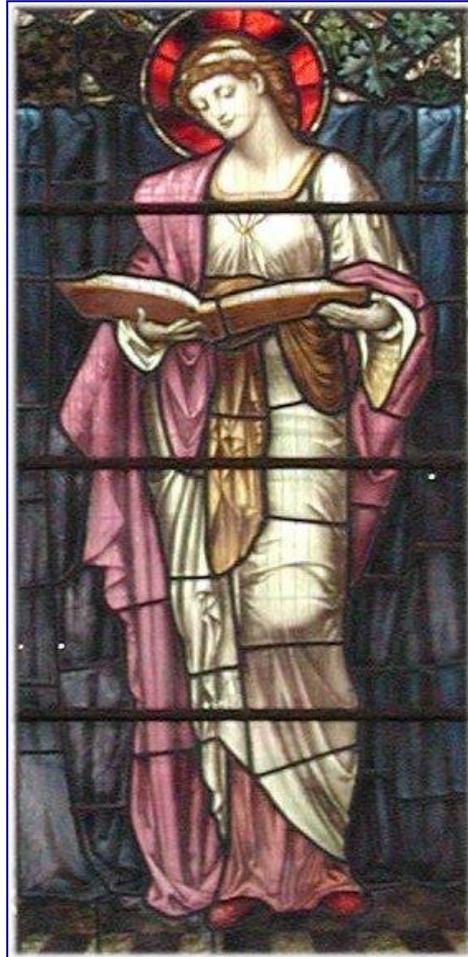
Centre: **CARITAS**(Charity)

Wafting vapours of love and mercy, while at her feet hatred and cruelty are consumed by fire.

Right: **St. PAUL**

Inscription: "God is of Love" (Gk)

In memory of Archdeacon and Mrs Henry F Bather, vicar at the time this church was built, and who commissioned the principal windows.



Martha & Mary

In memory of Sarah and Ann Peake of Kingsland.

"The Master is come and is calling for thee."

By James Powell & Sons (Whitefriars Glass)

Dated 1887

Artist unknown.

STAINED GLASS WINDOWS

Windows In

HOLY TRINITY CHURCH

Sheila M. Langford

(A paper written as part of an art course project. Photos added.)

The little church of Holy Trinity at Meole Brace, Shrewsbury, houses a surprising collaboration between some of the most distinctive figures of the Pre-Raphaelite era. The church was consecrated in 1869 to replace a 70 year old church of such apparent ugliness that the eccentric vicar of the time decided to replace it. The three stained glass Chancel windows were executed by Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co, founded in 1861 as “Fine Art Workmen in Painting, Carving and Metals”; but from the beginning stained glass occupied an important place in their activities. Two of the partners, Ford Madox-Brown and Edward Burne-Jones had previous experience in stained –glass work for Powells of Whitefriars, with one of Burne-Jones’ early windows for a Maidstone church reputed to have “driven Ruskin wild with joy”. The 1862 International Exhibition started a fashion for memorial windows, where six were exhibited, and so with the gift of two memorial windows assured, the more the creative approach of William Morris’s firm obviously appealed to the architect, Edward Haycock.

The East apse window consists of three lights in each window, with tracery of a 7-foil circle above. Each main light (apart from the middle centre) has three tiers of subjects; and of the total twenty six subject panels four were designed by William Morris, seven by Ford Madox-Brown and fifteen by Edward Burne-Jones, although joint collaboration also occurred. The total effect of the three windows is rather overwhelming, the intense and dramatic subject matter, combined with the brilliance of the glass mosaic produced a hypnotic kaleidoscope of colour.



An original sketch of Morris and Burne-Jones by B-J. (Perhaps pondering over the Meole Brace designs.)

The LEFT HAND WINDOW

The left hand window features episodes from the Old Testament predominantly designed by Ford Madox-Brown. His figures have a boldness with deep recessions in the folds of the draperies, adding a dramatic quality. In *Adam and Eve* the serpent's sinuous coils entwine the naked Eve's leg, while clothed Adam realises the consequences of his action. As in *Expulsion from Eden*, the figures are close to the surface, with the impact of the expulsion highlighted by the brilliant red of the expelling angels. A certain depth is introduced in the *Finding of Moses* and the *Burning Bush* with horizons clearly defined. All the scenes reflect Ford Madox-Brown's distinctive personality, and the integration with Burne-Jones' work in *Building the Temple* and *Worship of the Golden Calf* is brought off in masterful fashion. Cartoons were often used again and again, but Madox-Brown designed *Samuel and Eli*, *Expulsion from Eden*, *Finding of Moses* and *Moses and the Burning Bush* especially for this window. Two of these designs were later used for Jesus College, Cambridge. However, *Sacrifice of Zachariah* and *Sacrifice of Cain and Abel* had been used earlier at a church in Cheddleton, with *Cain and Abel* also existing at Middleton Cheney in 1868. Compared to the other two windows, composition and colouring has a subtler quality, particularly in the tones of blue used in the *Sacrifice of Cain and Abel*. The window is inscribed at the bottom "To the Glory of God and in Memory of his parents, brothers and sisters this window was placed by G.Burr 1870".



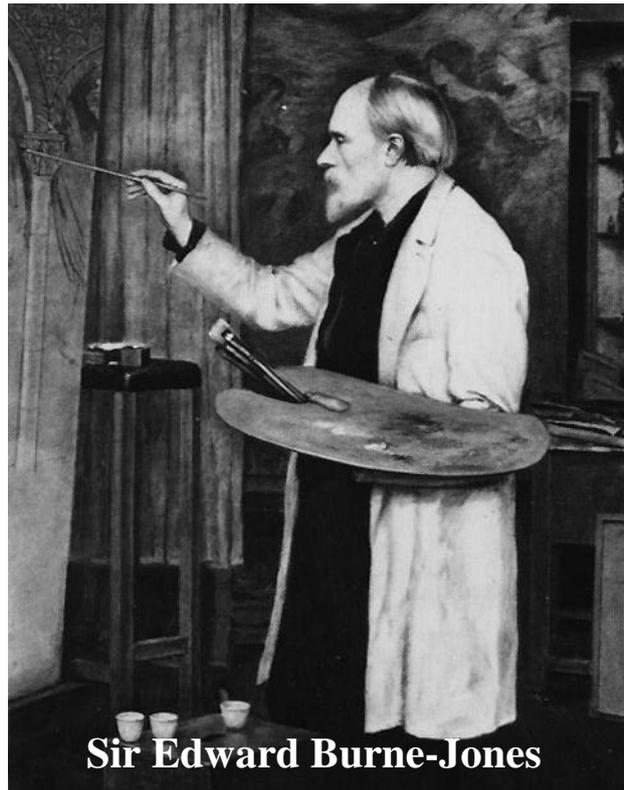
The CENTRAL WINDOW

The central window, above the altar, illustrates themes from Christ's life, all to Burne-Jones designs (though Madox-Brown collaborated on *St. James* and *St. Paul*). The large central panel shows *Christ on the Cross*, on the hilltop of Calvary, attended to by ministering angels – with rather surprising bright red wings. The background sky has tints of ultramarine and peacock blue which contrast with the deathly paleness of Christ's body, and the sepia tones of the angel's drapery. Beneath, against a mosaic jigsaw of red glass, the *Virgin and Child* with golden haloes watch over the supplicants below them. Christ is

surrounded by the figures, in the left and right windows, of the prophets and saints. Burne-Jones' use of two figures squarely in the foreground makes this window a most powerful composition. His love and reverence for women is clearly seen in his *Angels with Harps* – both with the flaming auburn hair of the preferred Pre-Raphaelite model – with their wings of rich gold. This window was commissioned by Edward Haycock, the architect of the church.

The RIGHT HAND WINDOW

The right hand window is a happy marriage of the work of William Morris and Burne-Jones, and depicts scenes from the New Testament. The two men had been friends and worked together for many years; consequently there was a clear understanding of each other's ideas, colour sense and composition which is reflected in the harmony achieved here. William Morris designed four of the nine scenes, and it is interesting to note that both men differentiated the disciples from Christ by the use of a red halo. Burne-Jones appeared to be suffering a loss of confidence at this time; he noted in his account book on 14th



Sir Edward Burne-Jones

August 1771 “By Adoration of the Kings, Transfiguration, Pentecost, £40. These I confess are not worth 40 pence. I have seldom, if ever, produced work of such marked inferiority – I felt indifferent to the reputation of the Firm at that time. Let us think no more about it.”. But only a few weeks later he was able to make a half ironical comment: “St. Hugh, St. Peter, St. John. £36, slight and hurried in handling I admit – but there is my old vigour of design and massive treatment of drapery.”. For in all these scenes the use of flowing robes with their light and shadow caught by the folds adds a brilliance to the depictions. The *Marriage Feast at Cana* is one of the most ambitious of William Morris's early figure designs, it was originally composed for St. Peter's at Cranbourne and repeated both at Sunderland (1865) and here at Meole Brace. It is likely that his other designs in this window, the *Miracle of the Loaves*, *Raising Jairus's Daughter* and *St. Paul Preaching* were originally made in 1865 for St. John the Evangelist at Torquay.

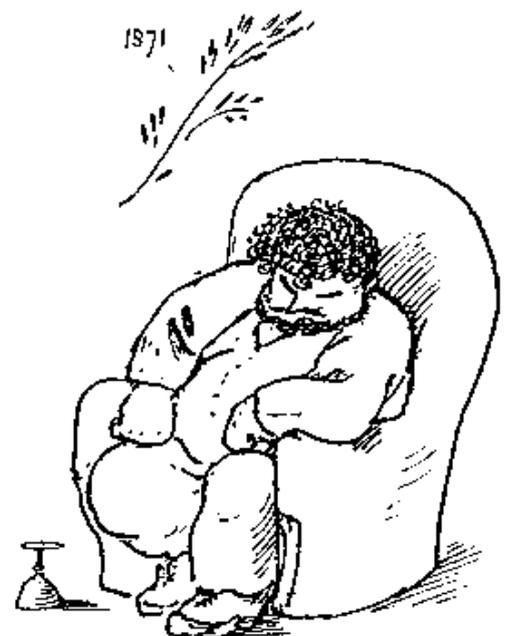


The composition of the three windows follow the sense of architectural form that was prevalent in Morris & Co windows between 1869 and 1875, where they are divided horizontally into three tiers (apart from the two tiered centre light of the middle window). Burne-Jones was undoubtedly the expert in stained glass in the Morris firm. He had an understanding of the techniques of glass cutting which allowed his cartoons to be translated with ease. Many of William Morris's designs called for shapes which were impossible to cut. Morris's strength was in his eye for colour,

though he was slow to utilise Powells of Whitefriars experiments in new coloured glass production. All Burne-Jones' cartoons for the Morris firm are in black and white only, as he and Morris had an intuitive mutual understanding of what was needed. Likewise, lead lines and glass painting were left entirely to the skilled and experienced craftsmen to translate – although all three artists would have undoubtedly watched the progress of work in the studio.

The remainder of Holy Trinity Church has many fine stained-glass windows, and Morris & Co supplied windows up until 1921, often using past cartoons of Burne-Jones. But the apse windows are an exceptional piece of work, in the interweaving of the three artists' work and ideas and the brilliant mosaic of colouring in the glass. The skill of the artists has been ably translated by the craftsmen into a decorative scheme which remains a fitting tribute to the Pre-Raphaelite movement.

Sheila M Langford



*William Morris by Edward Burne-Jones.
Perhaps exhausted after his efforts at Meole.*