

# STAINED GLASS AT THE CHURCH OF ST SIMON-THE-APOSTLE

525 Bloor St East, Toronto



*Report on the Stained Glass*  
*St Simon-the-Apostle Anglican Church, 525 Bloor Street East, Toronto*

**List of Leaded Glass Windows in St. Simon's Church**

CVMA	Date	Title / Location	Artist / Artisan	Dedication / Note
<b>EAST CHANCEL</b>				
I	1899	<i>Christ Blessing Children</i>	Robert McCausland Limited	
<b>SOUTH EAST PORCH</b>				
sII	c1888	Plain Quarries	unknown	
sIII	c1888	Plain Quarries	unknown	
<b>SOUTH TRANSEPT</b>				
sIV	1921	<i>Dorcas</i>	Robert McCausland Limited	dedicated to the memory of Martha Bolton Wilkes d.1919
sV	1983	<i>Memorial to the Women of St. Simon's 1883-1983</i>	Stephen Taylor	
sVI	1990	<i>Omnia Opera</i>	Doreen Balabanoff	Dedication panel missing
<b>SOUTH NAVE</b>				
sVIIa	1927	<i>St. Simon</i>	Robert McCausland Limited	Dedicated to the memory of Augustas Perrine Burritt d.1925
sVIIb	1927	<i>St. Matthew</i>		
<b>SOUTH WEST PORCH</b>				
sVIII	c1888	Plain Quarries	unknown	
sIX	c1888	Plain Quarries	unknown	

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CVMA	Date	Title / Location	Artist / Artisan	Dedication / Note
<b>WEST END</b>				
sX	c1888	Plain Quarries	unknown	
nXVII	c1888	Plain Quarries	unknown	
<b>NORTH NAVE</b>				
nXVIab	1935	<i>Te Deum: All the earth doth worship thee.</i>	Peter Haworth (attributed)	Dedicated in memory of Annie Gertrude Wheeler. Beloved wife of Dr. Arnold Mason d.1935
nXVIcd	1925	<i>Te Deum Window: To thee all angels cry aloud.</i>	Robert McCausland Limited	Dedicated in memory of George Boyd d.1925
<b>NARTHEX</b>				
nXVa	1965	<i>The Marriage at Cana</i>	Gerald E. Tooke	
nXVb	1965	<i>The Feeding of the Multitude</i>		
nXVc	1965	<i>The Healing of the Blind Man</i>		
nXVd	1965	<i>The Resurrection</i>		
nXIVab	2004	Plain Glass	unknown	

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**NORTH TRANSEPT**

nXIII	c1888	Plain Quarries	unknown	
nXII	1997	<i>St. Cecilia</i>	Sarah Hall	
nXI	1931	<i>The Beatitudes</i>	Robert McCausland Limited	Dedicated in memory of Edward Cartwright Cayley, Rector 1900-1921

nX	c1888	Plain Quarries	unknown	
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**NORTH ENTRANCE**

nIX	1953	Obscure glass	unknown	
nVIII	1953	Obscure glass	unknown	
nVII	1953	Obscure glass	unknown	

**NORTH SIDE CHAPEL**

nVI	c1976	<i>Annunciation of the Angel Gabriel to the Blessed Virgin Mary</i>	Yvonne Williams	Erected in memory of the Honourable William Finlayson
nV	1976	<i>Annunciation of the Shepherds</i>	Yvonne Williams	Erected in memory of Ethel Sinclair Finlayson
nIV	c1976	<i>The Nativity with SS Mary-the-Virgin and Joseph</i>	Yvonne Williams	Erected in memory of Audry Janet Morgan d1975
nIII	1965	<i>The Ascension</i>	Gerald E. Tooke	Erected in memory of Janet Fuller Banks d1956

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### **EAST END CHAPEL**

NV	(1965?)	<i>The Descent of the Holy Spirit</i>	(Gerald E. Tooke?)
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### **VESTRY**

nII	1888	Plain quarries	unknown
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### **WEST END CHAPEL**

NVI	1953	Plain Quarries	unknown
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### **CHOIR NORTH CLERESTORY**

NI	c1888	Plain quarries	unknown
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NII	c1888	Plain quarries	unknown
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NIII	c1888	Plain quarries	unknown
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NIV	c1888	Plain quarries	unknown
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## **Identification of Windows**

All the windows have been identified using the Corpus Vitrearum Medii Aevi (CVMA) method of nomenclature. The CVMA numbering system is mnemonic, simple to use and internationally recognized. It eliminates lengthy written descriptions to locate a panel precisely within a building. It is based upon compass orientation. For churches liturgical East is always at the high altar. The compass east-end of St. Simon's is also liturgical East.

For ground plan numbering a line is drawn from liturgical east to west. The east window is always "I", and the west window "W". Lower case n(orth) and s(outh) are used for all the windows of the relevant orientation above and below the centre line. Upper case is used for all upper (clerestory or balcony) windows. Roman numerals are used to number each opening from east to west whether or not the window contains historically important glass. The windows are listed clockwise around the building.

For detailed window plan and panel numbering, numbering always follows the same sequence from bottom to top, left to right. In order to distinguish between

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main panels and tracery panels, the number precedes the letter for main panels (1a), the letter comes before the number (A1) for the tracery. Both follow a sequential grid pattern directly related to the panel divisions, number of tracery openings and architectural divides. Transom divisions are treated as integral with the panel numberings.

### **Stained Glass at St. Simon-the-Apostle Church**

The basic texts for these descriptions of the stained glass at St. Simon's is taken, with permission, from notes provided in 2008 by Dr. K. Corey Keeble, Conservator of European arts at the Royal Ontario Museum, — and for which advice the parishioners of St. Simon's Church are very grateful.

#### **Historic Overview**

Stained glass is an art of colour, line and light in which pieces of coloured glass, usually toned with overpainting in enamels, are combined with a lead matrix to form windows. The technique, popularly associated with the arts of the Middle Ages, underwent a spectacular renewal in the context of the Gothic Revival of the 19th century. In Toronto, enamel painting on glass was in evidence as early as the 1830s, and coloured glass, with the panes jointed by leading was already in evidence in the 1840s. The art of stained glass was put on a firmer footing in the 1850s, notably by Joseph McCausland, his colleagues and associates. Stained glass studios proliferated in Toronto as elsewhere during the second half of the 19th century and into the 20th. As the art matured, there was greater emphasis on the use of coloured or pot-metal glass with a corresponding reduction of overpainting in enamels, except for monochrome painting applied for effects of texture and tone.

Stained glass designers from the time of the Gothic Revival combined two important features of the revival, the scholarly study of Medieval stained glass and stained glass techniques and the tremendous impetus to developments in glass technology which came about through the scientific and technical

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developments of the Industrial Revolution. The Victorians revived what came to be known as the "true mosaic principle" in which lead was used not only for the construction of stained glass windows, but as an aesthetic element in glass design. The use of lead line in the Middle Ages had been a technical necessity which was transformed into an important aesthetic component of design, outlining and highlighting elements of colour, form and composition. Since Medieval glass-makers were only able to produce glass in small sections, leading was essential as a bonding element to produce windows of sufficient size for the ever greater openings for them as Merovingian, Carolingian and Romanesque buildings were succeeded by the great Gothic cathedrals and churches of the 12th, 13th and 14th centuries. The use of the leadlines as an integral part not only of the construction of stained glass windows, but of their design aesthetic was one of the great achievements of the Gothic Revival of the 19th century.

All of the stained glass as St. Simon's, regardless of date or style, functions as a visual equivalent of passages in Scripture. It would be appropriate to think of each window as part of the Bible in glass, and as an equivalent to the art of the icon in Byzantine tradition. Unlike the opaque surfaces of icons and books, however, stained glass has the advantage of its transparency and the communicative power it derives from light. Light, symbol of a divine essence and divine power, is an essential element in the art and design of stained glass. First and foremost, stained glass windows are designed as windows with the dual function of providing protection from the elements and letting in light. In churches, the elements of light, however, also plays a highly symbolic rôle as a symbol of the Divine. Natural light imparts to glass a unique sense of animation and power. As the natural light outside changes, so too do the strength and tone of colour in stained glass. To sit by a stained glass window at different times of the day, and under different weather conditions is to see the glass as if it were a living, breathing, entity. The ultimate glory of stained glass is to participate in this unending rhythm of waxing and waning natural light. It brings to reality words from the Benedicite:

O ye Nights and Days, bless ye the Lord:  
praise him and magnify him for ever.

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O ye Light and Darkness, bless ye the Lord:

praise him and magnify him for ever.

O ye Lightnings and Clouds, bless ye the Lord:

praise him and magnify him for ever.

### Plain Glass

St. Simon's still retains several windows with plain glazing. Of these, there are four small clerestory windows (NI, NII, NIII, NIV) on the north side of the choir. In the north transept, there is a window (nX) with plain glazing above the east door, and a larger window with plain glazing (nXIV) at the west end of the north transept. The west wall of the nave has two large windows with plain glazing (sX and nXVIII), and as noted there are further windows with plain glazing through the door at the south west end of the nave (sIX) and in the anteroom beyond it (sVIII). And small plain glazed windows (sII) also original to the first church exists in the stairwell at the southeast corner of the building and in the southeast porch (sIII). There is also a small plain window in the west wall of the chapel (NVI) above the entrance.

Plain glazing in wood frames (nII) exists in the Vestry and northwest (XVII) Audio Visual control room.

### Christ Blessing the Children (I)

The earliest figure glass in St. Simon's is seen in the east window of the chancel. The window, dating from 1899~ belongs to the early years of the operation of the independent enterprise established by Robert McCausland, son of Joseph McCausland, who had worked as a designer to his father during the partnership of Joseph McCausland and Son through the 1880s and much of the 1890s. The Chancel window shows a naturalism, foreshortening, illusion of the third dimension, and extensive use of enamel-overpainting typical of the period. In part the use of enamels by Toronto stained glass studios was determined by cost factors and limited availability of supplies of coloured glass. In the late 1800s – early 1900s, two major types of glass were used by Toronto studios,– antique and



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cathedral. Antique glass was not old glass, but cut from flattened hand-blown glass cylinders, with irregularities of thickness, and with inclusions and striations which had their own aesthetic justification. Cathedral glass was machine-made by passing sheets of hot glass through metal rollers to ensure even thickness. Patterned rollers were used to produce endless varieties of low relief surface effects.



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The Chancel window at St. Simon's is typical of the best achievements of Robert McCausland's studio at the end of the 1800s. The design, which includes details influenced by Late Medieval and Renaissance art, is absolutely typical of its period, and stands apart from conventional Gothic Revival stained glass designs. In spirit, it is closer to the originality associated with English stained glass designs associated with William Morris, and with his associates and followers. It is in fact a remarkable achievement for a Toronto studio, and is one of the genuine treasures of glass in St. Simon's church.

### **Dorcas (siv)**

The Dorcas window derives from Robert McCausland Limited, a firm which continues in operation to the present day. The 1921 Dorcas widow in the south transept is typical of McCausland work in the years immediately after World War I, and includes simulated architectural canopies in Neo-gothic style. Canopy designs, while used by many firms, had their own distinctive features, and those of the 1921 window cannot be confused with those of any other firm. The angel heads in the



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mouchettes of the tracery around the canopies are also of distinctive McCausland style, as are the linear figures of angels shown as statuettes in the centre of the canopy design. While their vesture is based on western European traditions, the angels are shown with long stoles, closer to the epitachelion and orarion of Orthodox vesture. This is a consistent feature in McCausland depictions of angels during the early 1900s. The subject of Dorcas distributing bread to the poor was popular in stained glass of the period, and appears at St. Simon's as a minor variant on the firm's standard iconography for the subject. Below the main figures is a simulated Gothic arcade with a band of text commemorating Martha Bolton Wilkes (d.1919). While Martha Wilkes died in 1909, the window dates from 1921, a caution for those who might assume in the absence of other evidence that the glass dates from the same year as the date of death of the donee. The 1921 window, predicated on English traditions of stained glass design, is devoid of the kind of enamel painting common in the late 1800s. The use of white glass for the flesh parts of the figures represents a shift from the enamel overpainting of the late 1800s, and the adoption of a feature found in English glass inspired by Late Gothic designs of the 1400s.



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### **Memorial to the Women of St Simon's (sV)**

While new stained glass windows were installed in the Chapel at St Simon's in the 1960s and 1970s, additional commissions for the main body of the church were not introduced until after 1980. The first of these was the 1983 Memorial to the women of St Simon's designed by Stephen Taylor for installation in the church's south transept.

Stylistically, it may be compared with work by Taylor in two other Anglican churches, Holy Trinity ([www.yorku.ca/rsgc/HolyTrinity.html](http://www.yorku.ca/rsgc/HolyTrinity.html)) and the Church of the Messiah ([www.churchofthemessiah.ca](http://www.churchofthemessiah.ca)).

The design shows cognizance of the essential two dimensionality of stained glass as an artistic medium, with broad swathes of vibrant colour and a central flat, two-dimensional, stylized draped female form used as an icon of Woman. The lack of foreshortening and exclusion of any illusionistic suggestion of depth may be related to advances not only in other modern media such as

painting, but in textile design as well. Taylor, however, worked subordinate stylized floral forms such as the iris, violet and periwinkle into the design to suggest an aura around the central female figure, and stylized representations of carnations or pinks in red.

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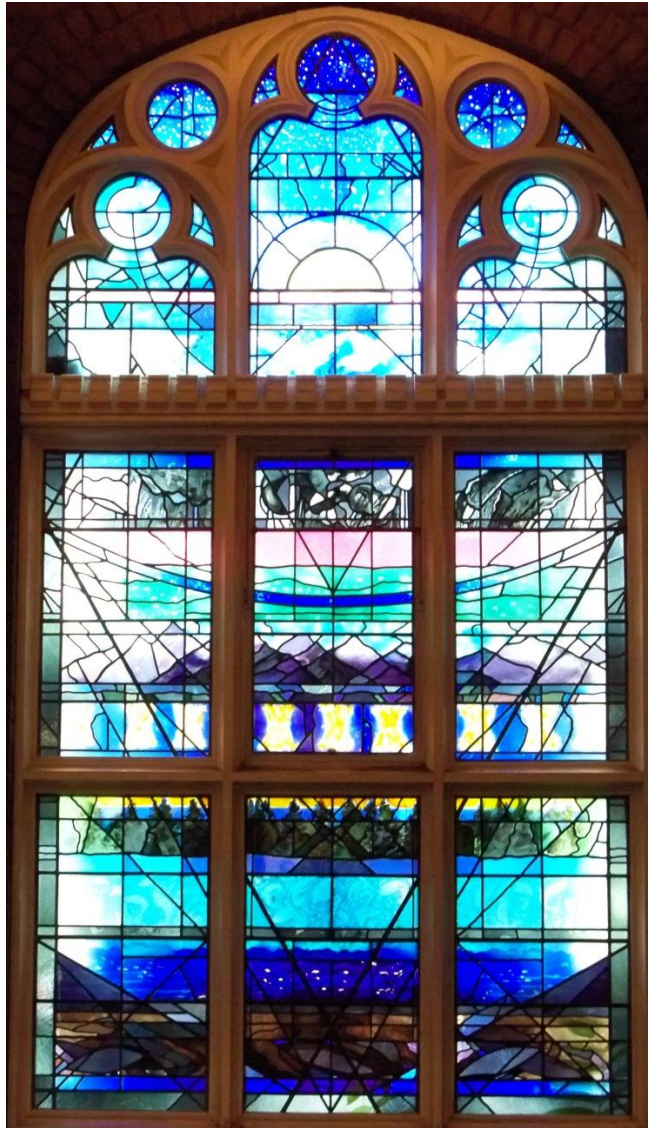
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### **Omnia Opera (sVI)**

The advance of modern stained glass artists towards a richer vocabulary of abstract form, and towards using traditional stained glass techniques in newer and more inventive ways and combinations is well illustrated in the south transept window to the west of Stephen Taylor's.

Doreen Balabanoff's Omnia Opera window of 1990 includes a broad range of techniques, respectful of the history of stained glass art but advancing it, as with Taylor's, in new directions.

While some modern glass designers employ foils instead of lead to bond the pieces of glass, the balance of colour and line of classic stained glass design has been retained, and techniques such as etching and enamelling have been revived almost as intellectual commentary on the history of the art through the centuries. The Balabanoff window, while uncompromising in its modernism, provides a potent visual parallel to the works of the Benedicite as a modern, abstract iconographic complement to the individual verses of the canticle which is its inspiration.





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### SS Simon and Matthew (sVII)

Located in the south wall of the nave to the west of the south transept is the 1927 McCausland window with depictions of SS Simon and Matthew. The window is dedicated to Augustus Perrine Burritt (d.1925), and includes Gothic canopies of novel design with leaf-shaped crockets based on border ornament found in McCausland designs as early as the late 1850s – early 1860s. The figures derive

from well-established McCausland iconographic types dating back to the 1800s. St Simon is shown with a saw, an attribute also associated with the martyrdom of St James-the-Less, while St Matthew is shown with a bag of coins in reference to the tradition that he was a tax collector prior to becoming one of the Apostles. The two figures are shown posed in front of brocade dossals with pomegranate repeats, a motif adapted from Netherlandish and German painting of the 1400s. Both figures are flanked by simulated scrolls



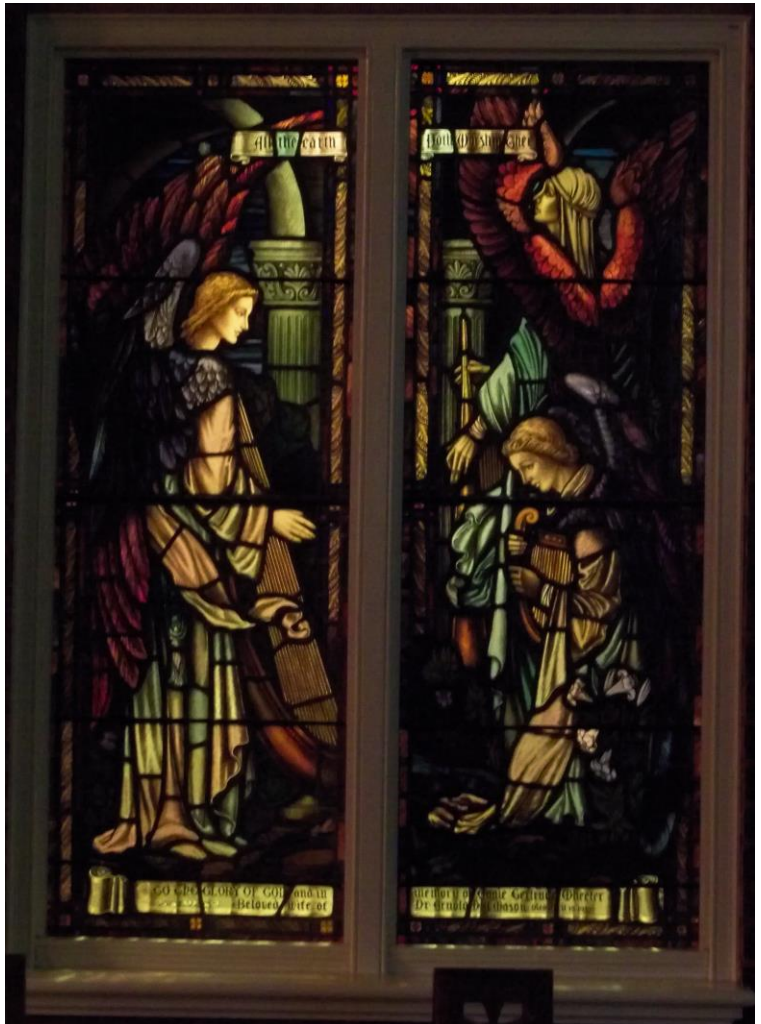
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bearing the name of each Saint. Conspicuous in the design is the use of white glass for the flesh parts of the figures, a feature based on English glass work of the 1400s.

### Te Deum (nXVlab)

In the north wall of the nave, to the west of the 1925 McCausland window is an accompanying one which also features text from the *Te Deum*, in this case the words "All the earth doth worship thee". The style of the window suggests that it is the work of Peter Haworth (1889-1986). The style is flatter, more two-dimensional, more geometric, stylized, and abstract than McCausland designs of the same period. Dedicated to the memory of Annie Gertrude Wheeler (d. 1935), wife of Dr Arnold A. Mason, the window features depictions of three angel musicians, one at the left and two at the right, with stringed instruments.



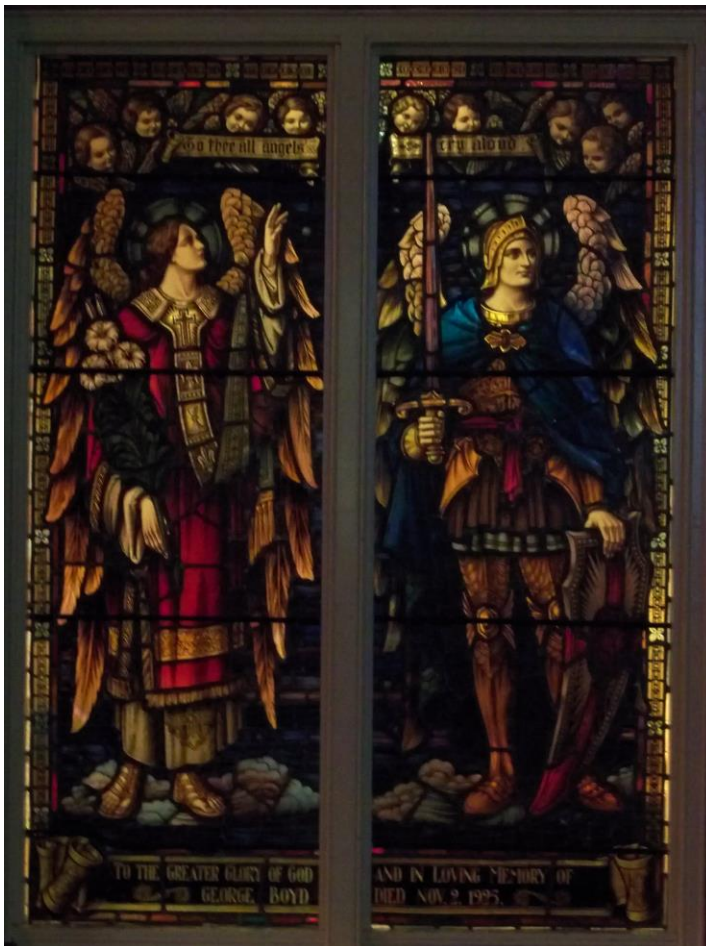
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### Te Deum (nXVIcd)

Dating from 1925 is a McCausland window in the north wall of the nave with the words "To thee all angels cry aloud", taken from the *Te Deum*. Dedicated to the memory of Mr George Boyd, the window is divided into two parts with a depiction of the Archangel Gabriel at left, and the Archangel Michael at the right. Gabriel is shown with a stalk with three lilies, a reference to the iconography of the Annunciation, while Michael is shown in armour with a sword in his right hand.

The figure work, draperies, and ornament are all typical of McCausland work of the mid 1920's, in this case the period shortly after Robert McCausland's death in 1923. Of particular interest is the design and ornament of Gabriel's stole, shown draped over his left arm. The ornament consists of a Latin cross, fleur-de-lys, chalice and a second fleur-de-lys.





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The Marriage at Cana (nXVa), The Feeding of the Multitude (nXVb), The Healing of the Blind Man (nXVc), and The Resurrection (nXVd)

Gerald E. Tooke was responsible for the four remarkable rectangular panels of stained glass which are now mounted in the north wall of the new narthex built for St. Simon's in 2001. Signed by the artist and dated 1965, they were dedicated to the memory of Anna Alfreda Waller (d.1964) and her husband (d.1949). Originally located in similarly-oriented openings now forming the main entrance doors to the nave, they render the themes of the Marriage at Cana (nXVa), the Feeding of the Multitude (nXVb), the Healing of the Blind Man (nXVc), and the Resurrection (nXVd) in bold, direct iconographic form as powerful visual parallels to the Scriptural texts on which they are based.



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### **St. Cecilia (nXII)**

The most recent addition to the stained glass within St. Simon's Church is Sarah Hall's 1997 St. Cecilia window in the north transept to the west of the 1931 McCausland Beatitudes window. The window includes a figure of St. Cecilia at centre, with trumpet bearing angle at left and right, and a band of musical notation below. The window blends glass traditions and techniques ancient and modern with the same regard and respect for the past seen in both the Taylor and Balabanoff windows, and with the same sense of advancing a traditional art into a new environment and a new context.



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### The Beatitudes (nXI)

The final McCausland window in St Simon's is the 1931 depiction of *The Beatitudes* in the north transept, dedicated to the memory of Edward Cartwright Cayley, Rector from 1900-1921. It includes Neo-gothic canopy work at the top of the window with a band of Gothic Arches at the base. The figure work and painting, while based on traditional McCausland type, show numerous significant changes from the studio's work of the 1920's. The changes are indicative of a constant process of evolution related in part to changes in period aesthetics and in part to changes in personnel.



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**The Annunciation of the Angel Gabriel to the Blessed Virgin Mary (nVI)**

With both Tooke and Williams, the design process is not one of reduction but of refinement and purification of form towards a vocabulary of form with the greatest potential for visual expression and direct communication. The trimming away of non-essential form is immediately apparent in the three north windows of the nave of the chapel. All are by Yvonne Williams, and all date from the 1970s. As an iconographic cycle, they are meant to be read from west to east (or from left to right), culminating in Tooke's Ascension window at the east end of the north wall. The first, The Annunciation of the Angel Gabriel to the Blessed Virgin Mary, was erected in memory of the Honourable William Finlayson, and in style is comparable to the second, The Annunciation to the Shepherds.

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### The Annunciation to the Shepherds (nV)

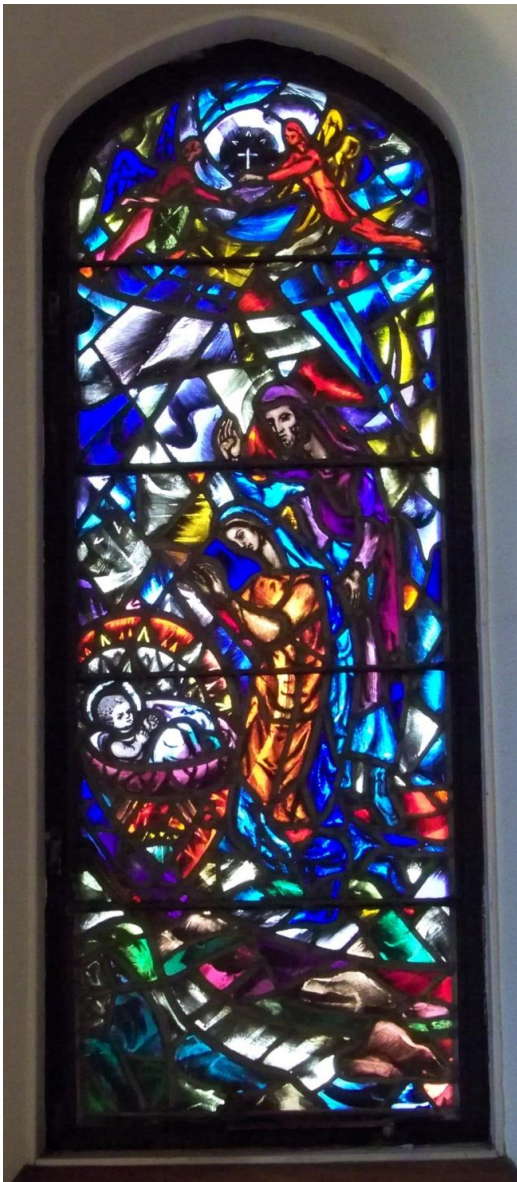
The second window in the Williams series, the Annunciation to the Shepherds, was erected in memory of Ethel Sinclair Finlayson in 1976. The chapel windows as a suite, present notable stained glass works by Gerald E. Tooke and Yvonne Williams. Williams (1901-1997) played a major role in the development of Canadian stained glass towards a growing acceptance of the legacy of the Modern Movement of the 20th century. Paradoxically, while her art looked forward, it also drew much from the traditions of earlier Medieval glass, such as that at Chartres, which she visited and studied in person. Increasingly her art moved toward greater simplification and stylization of form and line, eschewing the quasi-naturalism of nineteenth century design for forms which were more linear and two-dimensional, and in which the leadlines were given a greater degree of interplay and balance with the colour of the glass itself.





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### **The Nativity with SS Mary-the-Virgin and Joseph (nIV)**

The third window, depicting The Nativity with SS Mary-the-Virgin and Joseph was erected in memory of Audrey Janet Morgan (d.1975), and is also stylistically analogous in every feature with the other two windows by Williams. The three windows comprise a set of stained glass panels which are touchstones for the stained glass work carried out not only by Yvonne Williams but by her associates and followers. While modern in spirit, they also take the Viewer back in time and space to the evocative visual power of both French and English stained glass of the twelfth century and to the glories of Canterbury and Chartres.

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### **The Ascension (nIII)**

Gerald E. Tooke, born in England in 1930, along with Yvonne Williams, ranks among the bold explorers adding new dimensions to stained glass art in the twentieth century. Tooke's glass is represented at St. Simon's in the chapel, and in the new north narthex. His 1965 Ascension window at the north east end of the chapel is dedicated to Janet Fuller Banks (d.1956), and shows tendencies toward the abstraction of simplification of the human form which intensify its iconographic power and force.

### **The Descent of the Holy Spirit (NV)**

Located in the east wall, high above the Chapel altar is a roundel by Gerald E. Tooke, The Descent of the Holy Spirit, believed to have been installed in 1965.

