

ONLINE GUIDE TO SAINT AUGUSTINE OF CANTERBURY, HIGHGATE

The first thing that strikes you about Saint Augustine's is the extraordinary ziggurat-like tower, a highly unusual design by the 20th Century Architect J. Harold Gibbons. You then become aware of the beautiful sculpture of the calvary on the West Front, which was modelled by Dorothy Rope, one of that gifted family of artists. The tower has been recently retiled and the calvary cleaned thanks to a generous Heritage Lottery Fund Grant.



LOTTERY FUNDED



The Tower



The Calvary

Before you enter you should walk a little way down Langdon Park Road to see the polychromatic brickwork on the north side of the nave. This shows how the interior looked as designed by John Dando Sedding in the 1890s. Sedding was a star Arts and Crafts Architect, responsible for great churches such as Holy Trinity, Chelsea. When you go inside you will find a quite different white-washed church.

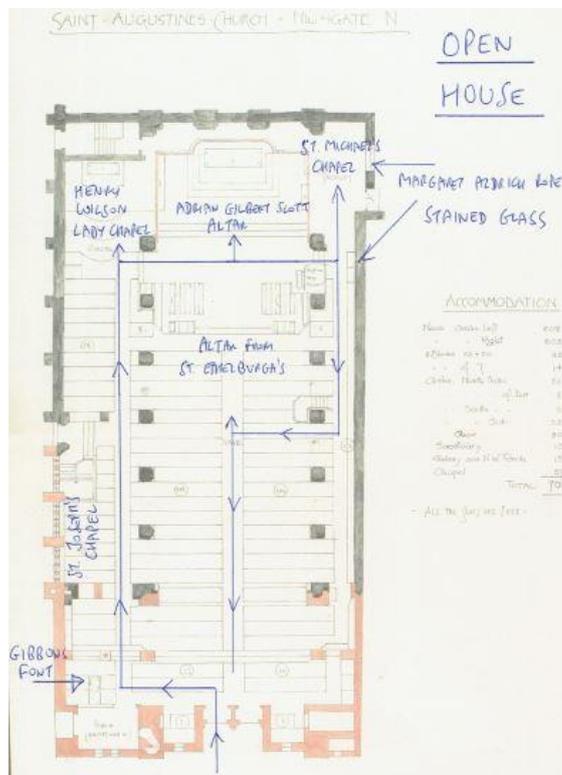


Polychromatic Brickwork



Whitewashed Interior

When you enter through the porch or west doors you are at first in Gibbon's tall west narthex, which, with the tower, was completed in 1914. This end differs greatly from Sedding's original design and his assistant Henry Wilson's later work. A fire destroyed the nave roof and damaged the church in 1924 and the interior was subsequently whitewashed.



Proceeding down the north aisle you come to the beautiful Lady Chapel designed by Wilson, the paving, altar and reredos are in total harmony, with an altarpiece painting of the Annunciation by Christopher Whall.



Wilson's Chapel



Saint Ethelburga's Altar and the High Altar

As you cross the nave you will see the high altar designed by Adrian Gilbert Scott in the 1930s and you will pass by the altar from St Ethelburga's church in the City, rescued after the 1993 IRA bombing and moved to Saint Augustine's. High up on the East wall is a roundel stained glass window by Margaret Aldridge Rope, sister of Dorothy.



Margaret Aldridge Rope Windows

In the south aisle is another charming window by Margaret of the Christchild with angels and you then enter Saint Michael's chapel. This was originally built for children and has figures of the Annunciation by the Rope sisters and a very different, much later, stained glass window by Margaret.



As you walk down the south aisle you can appreciate the remarkable variety of furnishings, including a confessional, unusual in an Anglican church. If you want to learn more about the church and its history the Illustrated Architectural History is available amongst the other literature.

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