CHURCH OF THE TRANSFIGURATION
“The Little Church Around the Corner”

One East 29th Street
New York, New York

Information for Sunday Tour Guides

Joan Seymour, Chairperson
Dear Tour Guides:

Herewith are the revised Tour Guide Notes. The suggested sequence is:

General Introduction
History of the Church
Chancel and Environs
Transept Aisle
Compline Windows
St. Joseph of Arimathea Mortuary Chapel
Singing Boy
Houghton Memorial Window
New Organ
Joseph Jefferson Window
Golden Rule Window
Windows along the North Aisle (if time permits)
Narthex
Holy Family Chapel with Brides’ Altar
St. Mary’s Chapel
Exit

Occasionally you will note repetitious statement in the notes. This is done to emphasize and correlate the overall relationships between the elements of the tour. The section at the end called “Miscellaneous Information” contains some ancillary information should a visitor ask.

Respectfully submitted,

Elsie Testa,

April 1999
(Revised: 2009)
I. INTRODUCTION

Seat the visitors in the first few pews near the chancel, and welcome them. Tell them it would take too long to cover everything of interest so you will be touching the high spots only.

Since its founding in 1848, there have been only seven rectors in the Church of the Transfiguration:

1848 **First:** Rev. Dr. George Hendric Houghton, Founder (1848-1897) 49 yrs

1987 **Second:** Rev. Dr. George Clarke Houghton, his nephew (1897-1923) 25 yrs

1923 **Third:** Rev. Dr. Randolph Ray (1923 – 1958) 35 yrs

1958 **Fourth:** Rev. Orin A. Greismyer (1958-1971) 12 yrs
He was Priest-in-Charge for 21 summers during Dr. Ray’s vacation, before becoming Rector in 1958.


2000 **Sixth:** Rev. Dr. Charles Miller (2000 – 2004) 4 yrs

2007 **Seventh:** Rt. Rev. Andrew R. St. John, Appointed Vicar in 2005
Became Seventh Rector in 2007

II. HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

As a young theological student, George Hendric Houghton was impressed by the poverty and deprivation he saw in New York City. At Bellevue Hospital the nurses were prisoners from Blackwell’s Island; there were no appointed chaplains. He took it upon himself to administer communion to the sick and dying; to minister to orphans and those in need of spiritual and material help.

Ordained in 1846, he particularly wanted to establish a parish in the vicinity of Bellevue Hospital - “a parish of the poor” - in a neighborhood of immigrants who lived amidst poverty, overcrowding, violence and disease – and no church of any kind.

Dr. Houghton found two families (a total of six communicants) who promised their help in developing his plan. Rev. Lawson Carter offered a room in his home at 48 East 24th Street for Sabbath use. The first service was held on the first Sunday in October 1848. We still celebrate the first Sunday in October each year as Foundation Day.
On February 12, 1849, the parish was organized under the corporate name “The Church of the Transfiguration of the City of New York”. It was the first church in the Anglican Communion to be given this dedication. The Rev. Mr. Carter continued the free use of the room in his house and eventually $1500 was raised for the purchases of the site and building of a church. However, Dr. Houghton realized that this was not enough to establish the kind of church he dreamed of.

He was unhappy with the Site Committee’s decision to purchase three lots in the present location – 29th Street and Fifth Avenue. He considered it too far from the area in which his ministry was most needed. Moreover, it was increasingly apparent that the affluent were moving into the area. However, money was the over-riding factor and on May 12, 1849 the Site Committee reported the purchase of three lots for $2800. On November 27, 1849 the Building Committee reported contraction for the erection of the church for $1900 not including the pews. On December 28, 1849 a contract was made for the rental of an organ at $4 per month.

On March 10, 1850, the room on East 24th Street was abandoned and the congregation who now numbered 40 communicants held their first service in the new church. It was a one-story building measuring 70 x 35 feet.

On the two lots adjoining the church to the west, a parish schoolhouse for 24 boys was built. The congregation continued to grow and by June 1852 (2 years and 4 months after leaving 24th Street) a bigger church was needed. The schoolroom which abutted the church to the west was now opened into the main edifice and supplied with pews. To preserve the parish school, a room was built above the former schoolroom and classes transferred there.

NOTE: The original church building extended from the west end of the nave to the present entrance to the chancel.

The Transept aisle was built in 1854 and the interior of the church was beginning to acquire warmth and grace from the gifts of parishioners. Dr. Houghton preached from a carved black walnut pulpit. This was replaced by one of Carrera marble and wrought brass in 1890 – the gift of a parishioner.

In 1862, the first of many memorial windows that adorn Church of the Transfiguration was given.

In 1863, the Transfiguration window (now in St. Joseph’s Mortuary Chapel) was placed above the high altar.

Between 1854 and 1864 additions were made to the original building. Changes were made by taking down partitions, putting on an addition here or there to meet the needs of the growing congregation. By the 1860’s it was nicknamed “The Church of the Holy Cucumber Vine”. The rectory was built in 1859.

With the completion of the alterations made in 1864, the building assumed the general outlines of the complex as it stands today. In the space of 14 years, the size of the edifice had quadrupled and the seating capacity was over 1000. Moreover, charitable societies and kind works on which the rector had set his heart were established.
It should be noted, however, that extensions and changes went on over the decades and it was not until the winter of 1895 that the new chancel was opened and used. Several months later, a modern organ was installed to replace the old one.

Dr. Houghton worked without pay until February 1, 1855 when the vestry voted him a salary of $2500 per year. In the intervening years (1850-55) he earned $500 per year as a Professor of Hebrew at the General Theological Seminary. It was sufficient for his needs. He slept on a cot in a small room of the church. He was content to have any salary that he would have received used for the growing church.

With the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861, a war hospital was hastily opened in New York. Dr. Houghton served as chaplain without pay (until a paid chaplain was appointed). He comforted the wounded and the dying; he read the Burial Office standing by the side of the hearse.

The Church also served as a station in the “Underground Railway” during the Civil War. During the Draft Riots in July 1863, Dr. Houghton housed many runaway slaves and local blacks in the Church and refused to turn them loose to the rioting mobs milling around the streets.

The Draft Riots were the result of resentment growing out of the Conscription Act of 1863. This Act provided that any man who paid $300 to the government was exempt from military service. This was interpreted by many as favoring the wealthy. Moreover, since slavery was a major issue of the war, Negroes were considered the culprits in this unsatisfactory situation.

During three days of terror, a motley army with clumsy weapons roamed the streets ready to shed blood. A Negro church on 30th Street was burned to the ground. Negroes were dragged from their beds and hung from trees and lamp-posts. An orphanage on Fifth Avenue and 43rd Street housing 200 black children was burned to the ground. Fortunately, the children were hurried out the back entrance and rushed to a nearby police station and from there to Blackwell’s Island. Warned by the police that they would not and could not protect him from the mob should they attack the Church, Dr. Houghton refused to surrender the refugees to the mob. When the mob did appear at the church Dr. Houghton lost his temper. He shook his fist at them and shouted: “You white devils, you! Do you know nothing of the spirit of Christ?” They were so intimidated by this show of courage, they dispersed.

The furnishings of the church – its altar, pulpit, lectern, sacred vessels, etc. grew as the church grew. At first, they were few and simple and as prosperity came, many and beautiful. Most of them came as gifts or memorials to departed loved ones. The first of the many memorial windows was installed in 1862.

Having established the general background of the Church, you can now start the tour pointing out items of interest at the high altar end of the church.

III. THE CHANCEL AND ENVIRONS

Marble Rood Wall: Given in memory of Mary Houghton (wife of the second rector) by her husband. In mosaics, symbols of the Blessed Sacrament – on the left, the Pelican symbolizing Christ’s sacrifice on the Cross; on the right, the sacred lamb symbol of Christ. In addition, sheaves of wheat representing the Bread, grapes representing the wine.
**Bible on the Lectern** : Given in memory of Edwin Booth by members of the Players Club. (in archives)

**Windows on either side of the high altar** : A memorial to a member of the Altar Society who served for twenty years as President.

**High Altar** : Of Italian marble. Note the Transfiguration in the Reredos.

**Tabernacle** : Of Siena marble. The door of bronze gilt is set with family heirloom jewels.

**St. Faith Window (Behind the pulpit)** : Oldest church window in this country; made of authentic 14th century glass. Similar pieces of this ancient glass are in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. It was salvaged from an old Belgian Church destroyed during the Napoleonic wars.

**Stations of the Cross (along the North aisle)** : 18th Century paintings that once hung in a chapel in Rome. They were a gift from Mrs. Franklin Delano who also gave the lych gate.

**The Blessed George Hendric Houghton Memorial Chapel** : Installed in 1987 in the space vacated by the old organ when the Arnold Schwartz organ was installed. Note bust of founding Rector.

### IV. THE TRANSEPT AISLE
(Built in 1854 and extended during the 1860s).

**The Madonna Shrine** : The Blessed Mother and Child stands in the alcove at the far end of the aisle. It was a gift to the church in the 1930s from a parishioner. A semi-circle of little windows depicting angels with musical instruments runs around the alcove wall, halfway up.

At one time, a Baptistry stood in this alcove. (There were two – one here, and one in the Chantry).

**The “Swing Low, Sweet Chariot” Window** : Located to the right of the Madonna Shrine, this window is a memorial to George and Elizabeth Wilson (he a former slave, she a freewoman) who worked for Dr. Houghton for 30 years after the Draft Riots. It depicts the Baptism of the Ethiopian Eunuch by St. Philip the Apostle.

**The Actors’ Memorial Window** : A clerestory to the left of the Madonna Shrine is a memorial to members of the theatrical profession who have died sung and unsung, and was given to the church by Jessie Van Brunt in 1930.

**The Edwin Booth Window (La Farge)** : Given in 1898 by The Players, a theatrical group founded by Booth, and of which he as the first President. The window, on the west wall of the transept, shows Booth in the role of Hamlet. His funeral was held in the Little Church in 1893.

**The Diamond Window (La Farge)** : Located in the vestibule, the window is a memorial to the Spanish actor Jose Marie Munoz. The window contains 25 pieces of crystal glass in a garland. Legend has it that if you touch one of those pieces of crystal and make a wish, the wish will come true. It has been named “The Wishing Window”.
The Columbarium: A resting place for the ashes of former parishioners. Parishioners may purchase a niche for future use.

Before leaving the Transept Aisle point out that the immediately adjoining area is the Common Room and Parish House, where many parish activities take place: musical, educational, and social. Other activities include a church school and adult study groups conducted by the Clergy. Point out the book store.

Transfiguration House replaces the 1960s Parish House which in turn replaced an original Parish House in a brownstone purchased in 1893 through the generous donation of Mrs. Sara Zabriskie.

V. THE COMPLINE WINDOWS

On October 9, 1855, the first Dr. Houghton married Caroline Graves Anthon, a drawing teacher who devoted much of her time to art. As a memorial to her when she died in 1871, he had the Compline Psalms, which she had done on parchment, reproduced in stained glass and installed in the Church.

For many years, the windows were obscured by a heavy velvet curtain and went unnoticed. Some years ago, Father Catir ordered the curtain removed. When this was done, it was seen that the curtain was backed by wallboard. When the wallboard was removed, it was seen that some of the windows had been smashed by vandals. (The windows are set in an outside wall.) The red glass panes represent the replacement of the vandalized windows.

VI. ST. JOSEPH’S OF ARIMATHEA MORTUARY CHAPEL

Consecrated in 1908 in memory of the founder, St. Joseph of Arimathea Chapel is used for the repose of a body up to the time of the funeral service. Friends and family members may keep a watch and pay their respects. Some people prefer this to a funeral parlor.

The second Dr. Houghton designed it. Over the years many prominent persons have reposed here. The grillwork gates were given by a parishioner in memory of her brother who died in 1929.

Above the altar is the Transfiguration window, a copy of Raphael’s famous painting “The Transfiguration” which is in the Vatican Museum in Rome. Originally (since 1863) this window was above the high altar, and was later replaced by the present reredos. To the left is the Te Deum window. To the right, the Raising of Lazarus.

The Chapel is dedicated to St. Joseph of Arimathea, described in the Gospels as a rich man and a disciple of Jesus. On the night of the Crucifixion he went to Pilate and obtained permission to take away the body of Jesus. He wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and laid it “in his own new tomb”. Nicodemus came too. The windows on either side of the chapel altar depict Nicodemus (left) and St. Joseph (right).

On either side of the chapel gates are statues of the Four Archangels (Uriel, Gabriel, Michael, Raphael). The bronze tablets beneath give the names of those memorialized by each statue.
VII. THE SINGING BOY

Outside of St. Joseph of Arimathea Chapel (and to the right) is the statue of a small boy holding a song book. Known as “The Singing Boy” the statue was done by an American artist in Rome in 1871. When the open book is touched lightly it gives forth musical notes.

VIII. THE HOUGHTON WINDOW

A memorial to George Clarke Houghton (the second rector) dedicated in 1926, a gift of Dr. Houghton’s daughter. The central figure is a likeness of him. Kneeling are two assistants. The upper and lower borders depict the 7 saints connected with the 7 sacraments.

IX. THE NEW ORGAN

During the 1960s and the early 1970s, the need for a new pipe organ was becoming increasingly evident. The old organ was becoming increasingly unplayable. In 1978 the Vestry decided to initiate a campaign for a new organ. Members of the parish and the “Little Family” were asked to support the drive for the new organ. Pledges were made over a 3-year period but the funds raised were not sufficient for the cost of the new organ.

An appeal poster was placed in the entrance of the Church in the hopes that visitors might notice the appeal and respond with donations. The poster remained in the church vestibule for 2-1/2 years and although it attracted some donations, additional funds were needed. In November 1980, Mrs. Arnold Schwartz entered the church to pray; she noticed the appeal poster and wondered if she might help the church attain its goal. Several days later while browsing in a book shop she came across a book on New York churches. She opened it. There was a picture of the “Little Church” at the turn of the century. Then a newspaper clipping fell from the book. Upon picking it up from the floor, she found that it was an article about the Rev. George Hendric Houghton, our founder. Mrs. Schwartz was convinced that she should make a decision about a gift for the new organ. Several days later she met with Father Catir and pledged a gift that would triple the then-current size of the organ fund. The Vestry decided to name the instrument in memory of Arnold Schwartz, Mrs. Schwartz’s late husband. On July 17, 1981, the church entered into contract with C. B. Fisk, Inc.

The new organ was designed and begun by C. B. Fisk, Inc. in 1986 and completed in April 1988. Daniel Maloney, a parishioner and distinguished sculptor, executed the special wood carving on the organ case. The Zimbelstern star, the 12 zoological and botanical panels above the impost panel, the rosette on the Tudor arches at floor level, and the brackets beneath the organ keyboards are his design.

The dismembered organ arrived at the church on November 8, 1987, and parishioners, led by Mrs. Schwartz, carried the instrument’s pieces into the Church. The organ had to be re-assembled and voiced, and finished. On Easter Sunday, April 10, 1988, it was used for the first time.

A Book of Remembrance containing the names of all faithful departed persons in whose memory gifts for the organ fund were given, as well as the names of those who gave thank offerings for the organ, is kept within the organ case.
The Good Shepherd Statue on the side of the organ is the oldest carved statue in the church, and was originally set in the old wooden pulpit in 1858.

THE CHOIR

In 1881, the vested choir of men and boys was introduced, an innovation in the Episcopal Church. Ours is the oldest choir of men and boys in New York City, and the oldest surviving of such choirs in the United States.

X. THE JOSEPH JEFFERSON WINDOW

As you move to the rear of the church, stop at the Joseph Jefferson window and tell the story of how the church came to be known as “The Little Church Around the Corner”.

A few days before Christmas in 1870, an actor named George Holland died. A good friend, Joseph Jefferson, and Holland’s son tried unsuccessfully to have the actor buried from the Church of Atonement, then at Madison Avenue and 28th Street. The rector of that parish (Rev. Mr. Sabine), hearing that the deceased was an actor, was willing to conduct the funeral from the man’s home, but refused the use of the church. Although admitting that church canons did not prohibit church funeral services for actors, Rev. Mr. Sabine had a personal prejudice against doing so. When asked by Joseph Jefferson if there were no other church in the neighborhood from which his friend could be buried, the rector replied, “I believe there is a little church around the corner where they do that sort of thing”. Jefferson bowed and replied, “If that be so, sir, God Bless the little church around the corner”. And so George Holland was buried from this church.

The story attracted nation-wide attention in the newspapers. Overnight, the Church of the Transfiguration became known as “The Little Church Around the Corner” and drew the affection of actors in general until this day. Ironically, the “Little Church” that Rev. Mr. Sabine spoke of so slightingly, had twice as many communicants as did his own church.

The Joseph Jefferson window shows the figure of the Christ under the lich gate receiving the shrouded figure of George Holland, led by his friend and fellow actor Joseph Jefferson dressed as Rip Van Winkle, a role he played many times on the stage.

XI. THE GOLDEN RULE WINDOW

This clerestory above the South side of the center aisle was given in 1933 in honor of Dr. Ray’s tenth anniversary as rector. The theme of the design is the Golden Rule as it had been interpreted in all the great religions, culminating in the Christian concept of “Love Triumphant” shown in the central medallion. This medallion depicts a crowned heart with a figure denoting Light (on the left) and another denoting Prayer (on the right).

Symbols in medallions down the left side suggest Zoroastrianism by the palm leaf pattern, Islam by a water jug, the Buddhist by the ancient swastika, and the Egyptian by the lotus flower.
NOTE: The swastika or Fylfot Cross is one of the most common variations of the non-Christian cross. It appears in many ancient cultures. It was used by the Hindus and the Buddhists in India, by the early Babylonians, and Assyrians.

When the Chinese used it in blue, it symbolized Infinite Celestial Virtue, and in yellow it meant Infinite Prosperity. To some tribes of the North American Indians, it represented the four directions, and to other tribes it stood for the four seasons. The Greeks liked the design and used it simply for decoration.

Symbols in medallions down the right side indicate the Hindu religion by the Tree of Life, the Roman by the Dolphin, the Hebraic by the 7-branch candlestick and the Chinese by the cloud conventionalized to indicate Heaven.

Immediately adjoining the Golden Rule Window is the St. Francis of Assisi window given by Jessie Van Brunt in 1941. The three medallions show scenes in the life of St. Francis.

XII. WINDOWS IN THE NORTH AISLE

There are a number of memorial plaques and stained glass windows in this aisle. It is not recommended that all of these plaques and windows be discussed as part of the tour because of time restrictions. However, in the event a visitor indicates an interest in any of the windows, each is described below:

The Montague Window: In memory of Henry J. Montague, matinee idol of the 1870s and founder of the Lambs Club. He is shown in pilgrim’s robes with the crimson cross of the Crusader on one shoulder and carrying a pilgrim staff with the scallop shell of St. James, a pouch and a water skin.

The Philip Allen Post Window: One of the oldest memorials in the church (circa 1875). Made of 13th century glass, it depicts the Adoration of the Magi, the Crucifixion, and the Nativity.

The John Drew Window: Given in memory of the American actor by his daughter in 1928. The window depicts St. John the Beloved Disciple.

The Murillo Madonna Window: A memorial to Mary Houghton, wife of the second rector.

The St. Alban Window: Representing St. Alban, the first martyr of Britain (303 A.D.)

The St. Augustine Window: In honor of St. Augustine, the first Archbishop of Canterbury, consecrated in 597 A.D.

The Emily Burknor Hurry Window: A memorial to a 16-year old who died in 1866. The theme is the story of Ruth, shown gathering the sheaves and her pledge to Naomi, “Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God”.
The Ellen Stewart Newman Window: She died in 1906, and the window is inscribed “In honor of St. Helena”. St. Helena was the mother of Constantine the Great, and is said to have discovered the true Cross in Palestine.

The St. Faith Window: Located behind the pulpit, this is the oldest church window in this country. It is made of authentic 14th century glass. It came originally from an old Belgian church destroyed during the Napoleonic wars. A similar piece of this ancient glass is in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City.

The Mary Gertrude Houghton Strombom Window: This clerestory window is the nearest to the pulpit and faces the transept aisle. It is a memorial to the daughter of the second rector. She died in 1928. It was dedicated in 1930.

XIII. THE FONT

Moved to present position in 2009. Original baptistery in transept. In the 1930s the font was moved to the small apse off the Holy Family Chapel. It is now used liturgically. The font is of Italian marble and finely carved.

XIV. THE NARTHEX

In this area, the Peace Shrine and Narthex Screens are important features.

The Peace Shrine was dedicated on Armistice Day (now Veterans Day), 1942, by Dr. Ray in response to letters from members of the Family of the Little Church in this country and abroad, asking for prayers for their loved ones in the Armed Forces.

It was originally called the Victory Shrine and stood in the alcove of the Compline Windows. In addition to the lovely statue of Our Lord designed after the famous Christus Consolator by Thorwaldsen, flags of the allied nations were placed in the shrine. These remained until the end of World War II when they were removed. There used to be a Book of Remembrance on the shelf beside the shrine to receive the names of those for whom prayers were desired.

The Narthex Screen is similar to one in Lord Shaftesbury’s Chapel in Wimborne, St. Giles, in the south of England. It was given in 1928 in memory of a long-time Senior Warden, Elijah P. Smith.

The figures in the Crucifixion Group (above the archway) and the Saints (on opposite wall of the Narthex) were done by the famous woodcarvers of Oberammergau, Germany.

XV. THE HOLY FAMILY CHAPEL

The Chantry (or Chapel of the Holy Family) is a memorial to the founder George Hendric Houghton. Recall that this portion of the church was part of the original building; it was the parish schoolroom for boys. In 1852 it was annexed to the main portion of the new church and a new schoolroom was built above the Chapel of the Holy Family. With time, this room became the Guild Hall which today is the meeting place and national headquarters for the Episcopal Actors’ Guild of America.
The Episcopal Actors’ Guild was founded by the Rev. Walter Bentley, Deaconess Hall, and Dr. Ray in 1923 to form a liaison between the theatre and the Church. The first president of the Guild was the late George Arliss; the second president was Otis Skinner. The Guild is a philanthropic organization which provides financial assistance to indigent and elderly theatrical people as well as a pleasant meeting place where they may gather for fellowship and to reminisce about “the old days” in the theatre. Frequent readings, musicals, and parties are sponsored by the Guild for its members.

**Items of Interest in the Holy Family Chapel**

**Altar**: Italian marble; made possible through contributions of hundreds of bridal couples married in this chapel. This is commonly known as “The Brides’ Altar”.

**Tabernacle Door**: Gilded and richly jeweled with heirloom jewels; gifts of brides.

**Reredos**: Gifts of friends and parishioners; polychromed in colors and gold. In the form of a triptych, the upper part depicts the betrothal of the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph with the figure of the high priest in ceremonial robes standing between them.

In the lower section, three rare carvings of black oak; more carvings of black oak; more than 400 years old; originally in an ancient Scottish monastery that no longer exists. All three panels concern the Crucifixion.

During Lent, the doors of the triptych are closed over the central portion to create a penitential and austere tone during this solemn time.

**The Apse on the Southside of the Chapel**: Was the Baptistery from the 1930s until 2009 when the font was moved into the Nave. The Madonna Statue (Sir Richard Westmacott; English; 1825) was moved here from main Chapel in 2009. Note the stained glass ceiling restored in 2009.

**XVI. ST. MARY’S CHAPEL**

St. Mary’s Chapel or the Lady Chapel was given in 1906 by the second rector in memory of his wife who died suddenly in 1902. He designed it himself. Her death was a blow from which he never fully recovered. During Dr. Houghton’s lifetime it was for his and his daughter’s personal use only. After his death it was opened to the public and is now used to hear confessions, for private consultation with the clergy, and as a place for quiet and meditation. The entire chapel is in English pointed Gothic style. Point out these features:

**The Altar**: Of Italian marble, with a replica of Leonardo da Vinci’s Last Supper in Venetian mosaics in the lower front panel.

**The Frieze**: Under the ceiling, was painted by the Italian painter, Valenti. It depicts Murillo’s Madonna, angels playing on musical instruments, the shepherds, the three wise men, and above the windows, the three crosses of Calvary.
The Floor: Of marble mosaics; 12 shields with symbols relating to the life of Christ:
- The column to which Christ was bound, with the thongs, knife and staff
- Crown of thorns with the three nails
- Flail and seamless coat
- Ladder and sponge
- The hammer and three nails and pliers
- The miter and crozier
- The keys of the Church
- The ship indicating Baptism
- The hammer and the awl

The central shield bears the monogram of the Blessed Virgin, M.R.; and in one shield is M.C.H., Mary C. Houghton.

The Windows: They face the garden and show up well particularly on a sunny day. They are copies of famous paintings.
- Left Window: Raphael’s Madonna del Gran Duca
- Center Window: Altar of the Church
- Right Window: Botticelli’s Virgin and Child

The Glass Doors Separating the Lady Chapel from the Holy Family Chapel: The 12 glass panels show scenes in the life of the Virgin Mary, from the Annunciation to her death. Of ancient stained glass, they were designed by Italian and German artists.

Lunettes: Above the glass doors between the Holy Family Chapel and the Lady Chapel are the Bird Window (left) and the Tree Window (right) given in honor of a priest in 1934.

XVII. EXIT

As the visitors leave through the main door of the church, point out the Tower over the front door, and the Lich Gate at the entrance to the garden. They were not part of the original building, but were added around the turn of the century.

In 1902, the second rector received funds to place a 1200-pound bell in the tower. It tolls at the time of the consecration of the Holy Eucharist.

The lich gate was made possible by a generous parishioner, a member of the Delano family, and was completed in 1896. A lich gate is a type of medieval portal, covered by a roof, under which the bier was rested for preliminary prayers before being carried into the church for the funeral service.

Lich gates are still found in England, generally in rural church yards, and several are in the United States as well.
MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

George Hendric Houghton was born on February 1, 1820, and died on November 17, 1897.

George Clarke Houghton, nephew of the founder, was born on December 17, 1850, and died in 1923. He attended the school connected with the Church of the Transfiguration. He graduated from the General Theological Seminary in June 1870 and was ordained the following year. Dr. Houghton’s only daughter, Mary Gertrude Strombom, died in 1928.

Anna Hougton (sister of the second rector) served as the founder’s hostess after his wife died. She went to live abroad when her brother became rector. She died in 1930 in Nice (in her nineties) and was the last Houghton link with the Little Church.

There are three famous bread lines associated with the Little Church. The founder instituted the first in 1864. The second Dr. Houghton started a breadline in 1907 after the panic of the period. Dr. Ray started the third in 1930 following the crash of 1929.
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