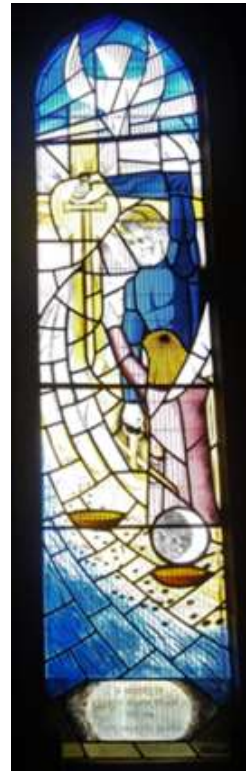




St Michael's Church Stained-Glass Windows



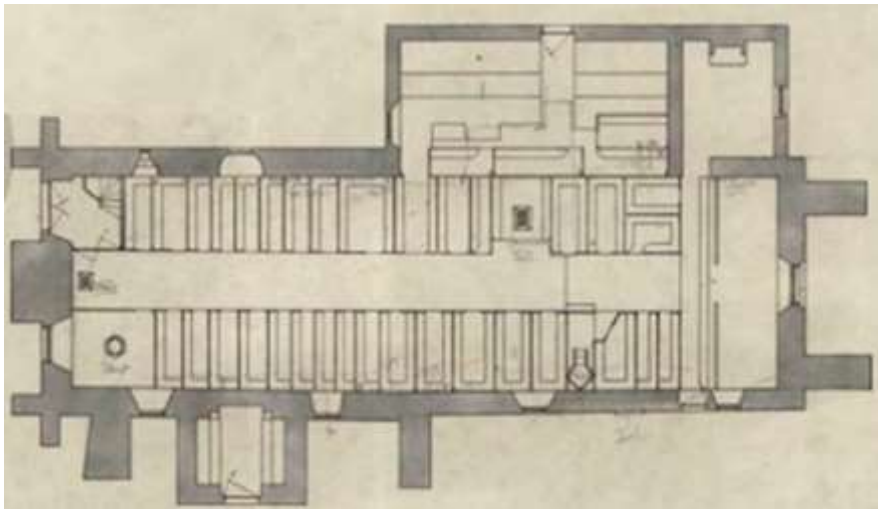
Introduction

St Michael's is basically a late Norman or Transitional church, perhaps of a date not long before 1200, which has seen considerable later alteration, perhaps in four phases, the most recent of which has erased much evidence of the intermediate three. A major restoration of 1892, which removed all evidence of the previous Georgian phase and left the church very much in the state that we see it in today. The work respected the style of the original building, with post-medieval windows being replaced and new transept and chancel arches inserted, all in a free interpretation of a Transitional Gothic style of c 1200.

Front elevations and plan of St. Michael's Church, Bowness on Solway, before the 1892 rebuild.

Dated November 1889, by Dale Oliver Architect Carlisle (Ref: DB-6_PLANS_1_6_3-5).

Note that the main entrance was at the front (West Gable) and there were only 10 windows.



An original watercolour painting by George Wright dated 1890 hangs in the church. It shows the interior before the 1890-1 restoration – with low ceiling and just one plain-glass window on the East wall above the altar.

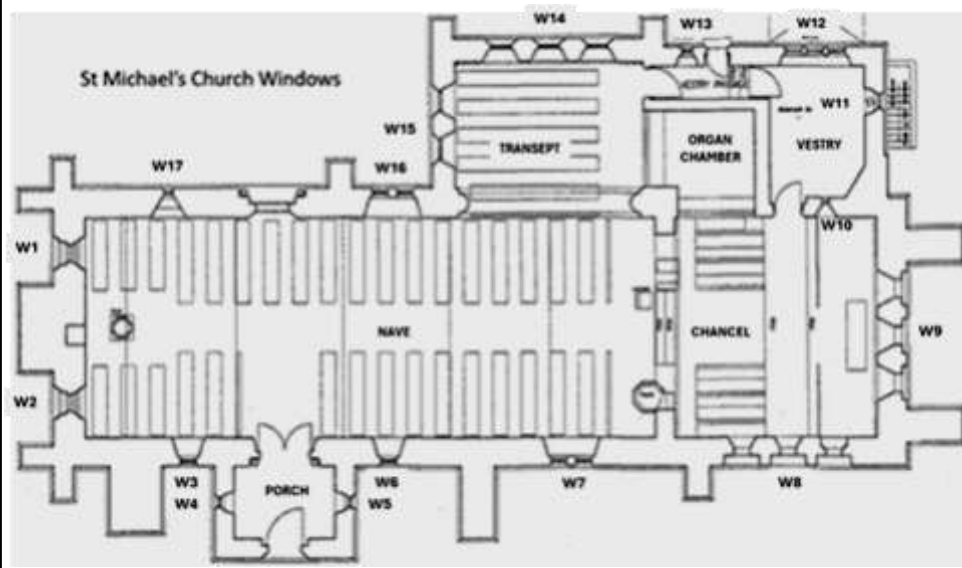
N.B. there is a copy of this painting on the North door opposite the entrance.



Stained-glass windows today

The stained-glass windows are all of great beauty. The early morning sun shining through the East window, the evening sun through the West, and the late midsummer sun lighting up all the glass in the Transept, is breathtaking.

The first stained-glass window by Daniel Bell was installed during the 1892 restoration. It is above the altar on the East wall (W9). The rest of the stained-glass is from the 20th century and contains a number of recurring local themes including the sea, fishing, agriculture, children and the church building.



The West Windows (W1 & 2) - given in memory of members of the Wills family who have had association with Bowness from the middle of the 17th Century. They depict, on the South side, our Lord's baptism, and on the North side, our Lord with children. Around the edges of both windows are gladioli and pansies, the favourite flowers of some of the family commemorated, mentioning the lovely glass with shades of colour striking through the main colour, and also the "bubbles" where the glass was "blown".



South Window (W 3): The window in the South wall at the West end was given by Mrs Moore of Port Carlisle in 1957 in memory of her husband Dr W. H. Moore who practised in Kidderminster, and also her son, Dr J. H. Moore, who tragically drowned in the Irish Sea. The subject of the window, "The Good Samaritan" is very appropriate.



The Porch (W 4 west side) - *In this little window in memory of Ben Carey and designed by Alex Haynes of Brampton in 2006, no painted glass is used. The sun represents God the creator and illuminator. The moon symbolises time, tides and the mutability of human existence. Below are the pools, gullies and sea washed turf of the Solway marshes.*



South Window (W6): *The middle window on the South side was given in 1962 in memory of William Richardson Poole, and Catherine Poole, by their daughter, Elspeth. The scene is that of Christ stilling the storm, which recalls the fact that William Richardson Poole was a great fisherman, and that his son was drowned.*



The Allen Window (W 7a) - This stained-glass window, situated in the South wall and nearest to the pulpit, It was donated by the widow and family of the late Rev. J. M. Allen M.A., Rector of this parish from 1961 to 1972. Designed by Mr R. R. Nichol KS R.I.B.A. and the glass prepared by Mrs C. Boyce of Banks, Lanercost, it depicts Christ protectively embracing two young people (Mr Allen was greatly Involved in youth work). Christ's robe is Khaki in colour (Mr Allen served in the Border Regiment in the Second World War) and round his head the Corona is in the form of a star (Mr Allen was a veteran of the Burma campaign and a holder of the Burma Star). At the feet of Christ is a dog, and flowers of the Solway estuary. Below is a Haaf net (one of Mr Allen's hobbies was haaf-net fishing) which has been skilfully designed to incorporate the three crosses of Calvary, and a salmon. In the sky above the head of Christ are birds of the Solway Firth.



The Nelson Window (W 7b) - Next to the Allen window is one given in memory of Mrs. Elizabeth Nelson (1923-1998) who was a staunch supporter of St Michael's for most of her life and was a Churchwarden from 1968 to 1998. The window has been executed by Alex Haynes of Brampton and shows St Michael holding the scales of judgement while protecting the weak (symbolised by the child). The child points to the sun (creation) and the sword of the angel who leads the fight against evil - the sword being in the shape of a cross (redemption). In the lower part of the window, we see the moon and the tides of the Solway (representing change), and the notes of Elgar's "Nimrod" overture.

Above, the dove represents the descent of the Holy Spirit. From the child's pocket protrudes a cross - Mrs. Nelson always carried the following prayer with her:

A Cross in My Pocket

*I carry a cross in my pocket, a simple reminder to me
Of the fact that I am a Christian, no matter where I may be.
This little cross is not magic, nor is it a good luck charm.
It isn't meant to protect me from every physical harm.
It's not for identification for all the world to see.
It's simply an understanding between my Saviour and me.
When I put my hand in my pocket to bring out a coin or key,
The cross is there to remind me of the price he paid for me.
It reminds me, too, to be thankful for my blessings day by day
And strive to serve him better in all that I do and say.
It's also a daily reminder of the peace and comfort I share
With all who know my master and give themselves to his care.
So, I carry a cross in my pocket reminding no one but me
That Jesus Christ is Lord of my life If only I'll let him be.*



South Window (W8): On the south side of the chancel are three pleasing windows in memory of rev. Samuel Lindow, picturing the three great virtues: Faith, Hope & Charity.

St. Paul refers to these in his first epistle to the Christians at Corinth – ‘how abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity’. As charity is the greatest it occupies the central of these three windows.

N.B. Charity, in Christian thought, is the highest form of love, signifying the reciprocal love between God and man that is made manifest in unselfish love of one’s fellow men. In Christian theology and ethics, charity (a translation of the Greek word *agapē*, also meaning “love”) is most eloquently shown in the life, teachings, and death of Jesus Christ.



*To the Glory of God and in loving memory of the rev Samuel Lindow MA Rector
1889-1908 - Created by subscription.*

The East Window (W 9) -

The windows at the eastern end of the Church are beautiful and depict scenes from the gospels. The original purpose of stained-glass windows was to teach people in more illiterate days the truths of the gospel. But even in those days we can learn a tremendous lot from such windows as these. They were given in memory of John and Mary Wilson of Longcroft.

The central figure, Jesus Christ, expresses both the resurrection and the ascension. Below is our Lord before Pontius Pilate. How interesting to think that the Roman soldiers such as those seen in the window could have lived in the Roman fort at Bowness - carrying their emblems of the eagle and the letters SPQR (Senatus Populus Que Romanus) - the Roman Senate and People.

Above this 'Victory' we see our Patron Saint overcoming the dragon, which strengthens us in our battle against the forces of evil with the confidence of our victory through Jesus Christ.

Very appropriately this central expression is flanked by fishermen and farmers. In the North window Jesus Christ reaches out to support St Peter on the sea, and below he sows the good seed. In the South window the miraculous draught of fishes and below the Good Shepherd, scenes lived out every year in the parish.



Vestry Window (W 10): On the North Wall of the Sanctuary a small window has at its base some re-used pieces of dog tooth carving. The stained glass was designed by G. Maile & Son of Canterbury and shows the Risen Christ holding a chalice over a representation of the Church. The window was donated in 1972 by Mrs M. Carverhill (nee Gunson) in memory of her husband, Geoffrey.



Transept Windows

(W14 & W15) -

These are best seen in the light of the setting mid-summer sun, which brings the full richness of the colours.

The three on the North side, presented by the Irving family who lived at

Port Carlisle are full of significant detail. In the centre is the Archangel Michael, and he is standing over the Church and Parish as depicted by the outline of Criffel with the sun setting behind it. The Solway waters are to be seen, and the Roman Fort at Bowness.



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In the lower half of the centre light is Saint Columba setting sail from Ireland. Two other Northern Saints are represented in the other two lights - Saint Ninian with the Archangel Gabriel above, noted by the Lilies in his hand, and Saint Kentigern in the right window with the Archangel Raphael above. Saint Kentigern was a favourite Saint of Scotland, and the West of England. He went to take a Mission in Wales, and on the way, probably passed through Bowness. The Churches at Bromfield, Caldbeck and Crosthwaite, all of which Churches are dedicated to him, probably mark the journey he took. Kentigern is often known by another name - 'Mungo', which means 'Dear One'. There is a legend attached to his life: The King of that day had given his Queen a ring and noticing that she was not wearing it one day he said he would give her a day in which to account for it, for he suspected her of unfaithfulness. In desperation she went to Mungo and asked him what she should do. In reply he told her to go down to the sea and ask a fisherman to catch a fish. In its mouth, he told her, would be the ring. This she did and the ring was found. Hence the symbol of Saint Kentigern is a fish with a ring in its mouth, which will be seen in this window. He is the Patron Saint of Glasgow, which City's Coat of Arms incorporates this symbol.

This window

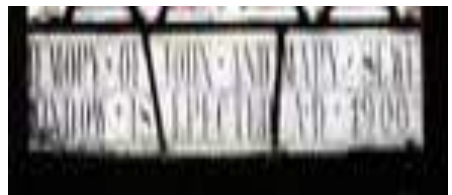
is dedicated to the

memory of



James Irving of Black-hall House Carlisle b.1835 d.1872	Peter Irving of Port Carlisle b.1804 d.1869 & Jane his wife b.1808 d.1890	Barbara Bell wife of James Irving b.1835 d.1895
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On the West side there are two windows given in memory of John and Mary Sewell, and their son John. They depict mothers bringing their children to Jesus, a subject chosen because 'Grandfather (John Sewell) was so very fond of children'.



To the glory of God in loving memory of John and Mary Sewell and John their son. This window is erected AD 1900

The North Windows (W16): The memorial window to men from the Parish who fell in the First World War. Their names are commemorated on a brass tablet on the wall, and also on the War Memorial in the churchyard immediately on the right of the gate.



The North Windows (W17) - The Norman Nativity Window shows the thickness of the walls and was donated in 1988 by Miss S. Thompson (see "Organ") in memory of her parents and aunts. The design by Mr R. Nichol, the Cathedral Architect, skilfully embodies a number of themes. The star above the Church is the Star of Bethlehem which shines into the form of a cross reminding us that the Babe of Bethlehem was born a Saviour. The Cross is above and around the Church. Notice the two bells in the bellcote, part of the history of our Church. The figure of the Virgin Mary, the mother of Jesus, is actually watching over the Font - the place of the Baptism. In her hand are three lilies, the symbol of purity.

