



The Symbolism of
Our Sanctuary
Needlepoint

A Gift from

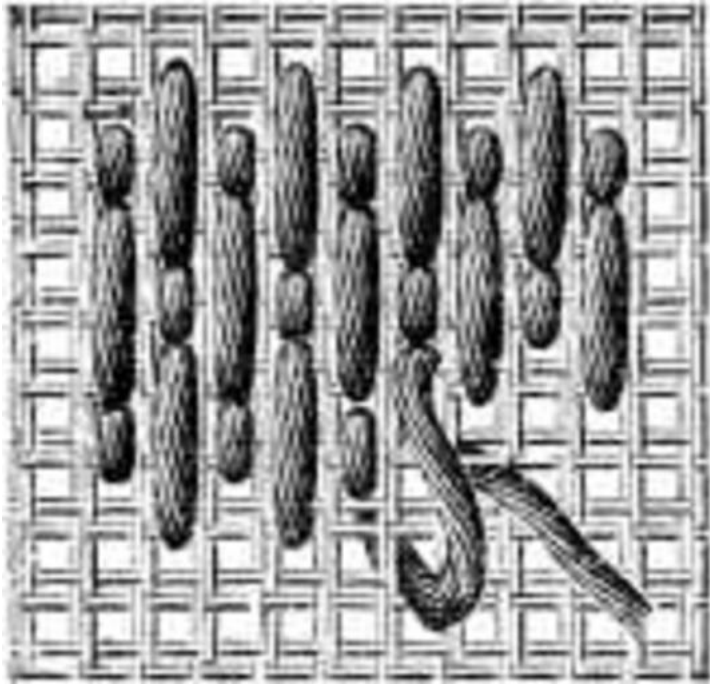
The Women's Guild of Christ's Church, 1954



Our Altar Cushions

The symbols herein explained, were the loving work of Ladies of Christ's Church Women's Guild from 1951—1954. The Altar Cushions were given by them in loving memory of the women who have worshipped and served our Lord at this Altar.

Needlepoint Definition



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- A type of “counted thread” embroidery
- Stitched through a stiff piece of canvas
- Known as “canvas work”
- Both linen and cotton may be used
- Single or double-mesh canvas
- 150+ types of stitches can be used
- Detail depends on thread count



Some Historical Tidbits

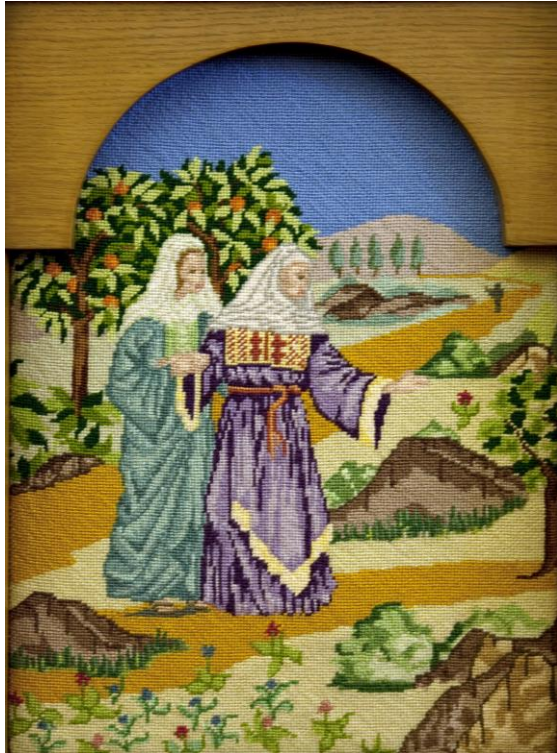
- Needlepoints were found in a Pharaoh's Cave - in 1,500 B.C.
- Used in furniture starting in 1600s
- *The Royal School of Needlework* was founded in 1872 in England
- Very popular in slippers!
- Museums have the best collections



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Symbolism



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- We have a mix of symbols
- Some are for the Trinity
- Many are for the Apostles
- Others are from our traditions
- A few are not fully understood

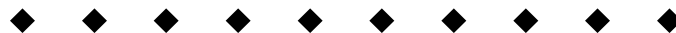


Needlepoint for Kneelers

- For centuries, churches have had their parishioners stitch altar cushions
- Christ's Church is one of those churches
- In 1951, the ladies started a 3-year project to make needlepoint cushions
- They made 26 needlepoint covers
- What follows are pictures of them
- Info about the symbols is listed



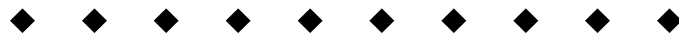
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Christ's Church, Greensburg

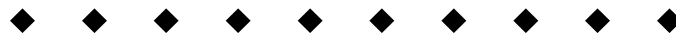


- First service: September 19, 1813
- In 1814, The Rev. Moses Bennett began visiting/preaching
- He became our first rector
- Parish charter was signed in 1822
- Granted on January 31, 1823



The Lamb of God

- A most beautiful and authentic symbol of our Lord
- “Behold the Lamb of God”
 - John 1: 29, 36
- “Blessing...be unto the Lamb”
 - Rev 5:13
- He was/is our Passover Lamb



Dove of the Holy Spirit



- The Holy Spirit is often shown as a dove
- When Jesus was baptized, the Holy Spirit descended as a dove
- See Matt 3:16, Mark 1:10, Luke 3:22, and John 1:32



The Celtic Cross

- One of the most familiar crosses
- Found in Great Britain & Ireland
- The circle suggests eternity
- Widely used on top of churches



The Crown of Life



- Symbol of victory and sovereignty
- Symbolizes the reward of the faithful
- Found in 1 Peter 5:4
- Also on James 1:12



Shield of Christianity—the Chi Roi

- The oldest symbol of Christianity
- Composed of 2 Greek letters in the name of Christ, “X” and “P”
- More of an abbreviation
- Not seen in public until after Christianity was no longer banned
- Used by underground Christians before then



Shield of the Apostle—Saint James the Greater



- Labored in Jerusalem
- Preached in Spain
- Only Apostle whose death is recorded in Scriptures: Acts 12:2
- Beheaded; sword of martyrdom
- Escallop shell represents pilgrimage by the sea



Star of Bethlehem

- This five-pointed star is the star of Bethlehem
- Represents Jesus incarnation
- Num. 24:17, “A star will come out of Jacob”
- Matt. 2:1, “We say His star in the east and have come to worship Him”



Shield of the Apostle—Saint Peter



- “The rock upon which Christ built His church”
- The leading Apostle at Pentecost
- Wrote epistles under his name
- Crucified by Nero
- Requested to be crucified upside down—not worthy to die as Christ died



Shield of the Apostle—Saint Jude

- Also known as Thaddeus
- Was a fisherman
- May be the author of the Epistle of Jude, but not proven
- Believed to have been martyred with St. Simon because they share a common day in the calendar of saints



Shield of the Apostle—Saint John

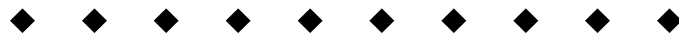


- “The disciple whom Jesus loved”
- Bishop at the Church of Ephesus
- Exiled to Isle of Patmos
- Wrote a Gospel, 3 epistles, and the *Book of Revelation*
- Chalice shows a rising asp which was an attempt on his life
- Died a natural death



Shield of the Apostle—Saint Thomas

- Also known as Didymus
- Evangelist in Persia and India
- Built a church with his own hands:
thus, the carpenter square
- Shot with arrows
 - A pagan “priest” then ran a spear through him
 - Image shows a spear



Shield of the Apostle—Saint James the Lesser



- Brother of Jude
- Cousin of Jesus
- Was the first bishop of Jerusalem
- Was martyred by being bludgeoned to death
- Body parts were then sawed—thus, the symbol



Shield of the Apostle—Saint Philip

- Was a missionary to Phrygia and Galatia according to tradition
- Was believed to have been martyred but evidence is sparse
- Image shown is a budded cross



Shield of the Apostle—Saint Andrew



- Brought his brother, to Peter, to our Lord
- Apostle to the Gentiles
- Founded church in Russia
- Preached in Greece
- Martyred in Greece
- Image represents cross he was crucified upon



Shield of the Apostle—Saint Bartholomew

- Used the Gospel of St. Matthew to preach in India and Armenia
- Image is of 3 flaying knives
- Was flayed and crucified



Shield of the Apostle—Saint Paul

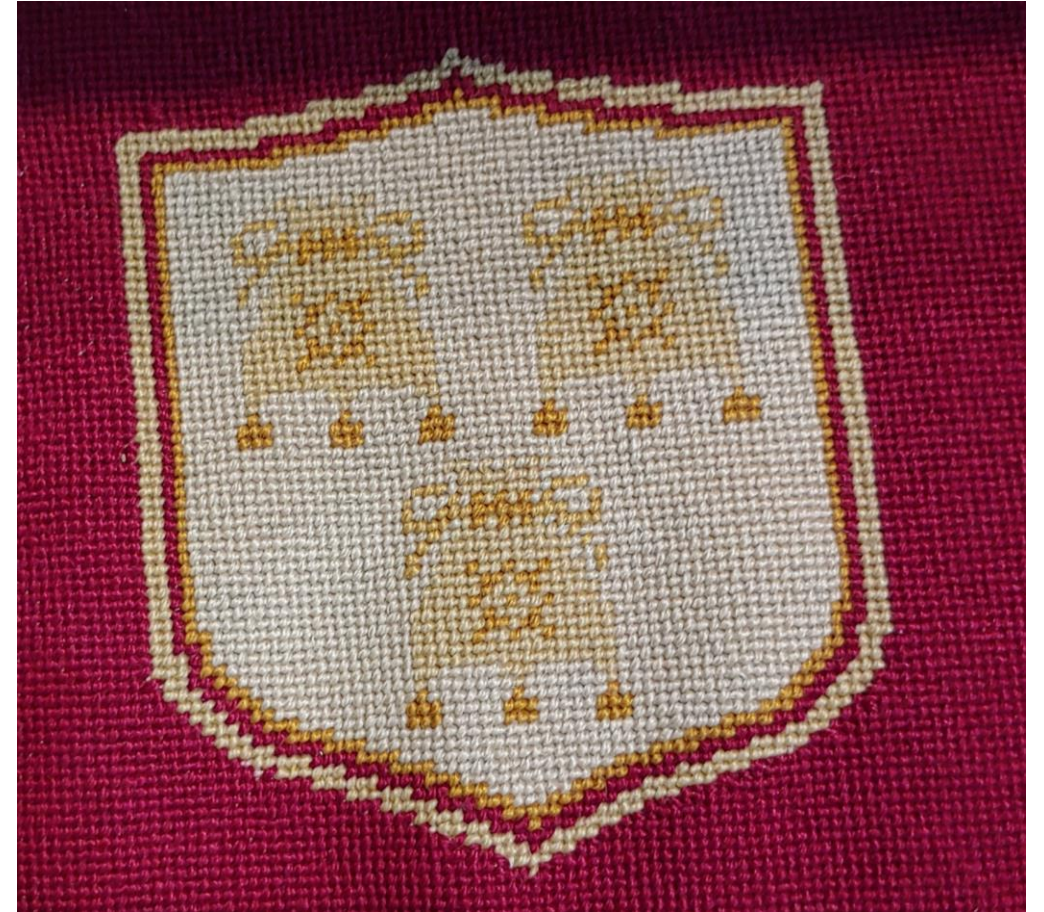


- Considered the greatest Apostle
- Wrote 14 epistles
- Conducted 3 missionary tours
- Martyred by Nero, 68 AD
- Image is an open Bible with “the Sword of the Spirit”



Shield of the Apostle—Saint Matthew

- Preached to Jews in Ethiopia
- Began preaching in Palestine
- Wrote the Gospel of Matthew
- Was crucified on a “T” cross
- Image displays 3 money bags reflecting his job as tax collector before he was called by Christ



Rose of Sharon



- From Song of Solomon 2:1
- "I am the rose of Sharon, a rose of the valley"
- The King James editors called it the "Rose of Sharon"

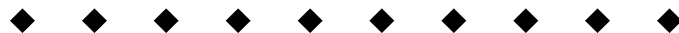


The Symbol of a Bishop

- The traditional symbol
- The Miter symbolizes his sacerdotal authority
- The key his theological and moral authority
- The staff his pastoral authority

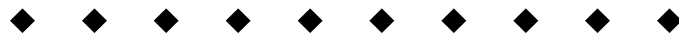


IHS—a Monogram of Jesus' Name



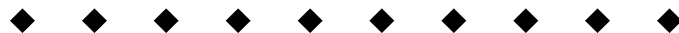
The Symbol of the Hand of God

- The first 8 centuries, God the Father was symbolized with a hand
- Based on Ex 15:6 and Ps 48:10
- Two fingers symbolize the human and divine nature of Jesus, the Son of God
- Always portrayed with a 3-rayed halo showing hand belongs to God the Father



References

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