

St. Paul's Cathedral

11A Charing Cross Road

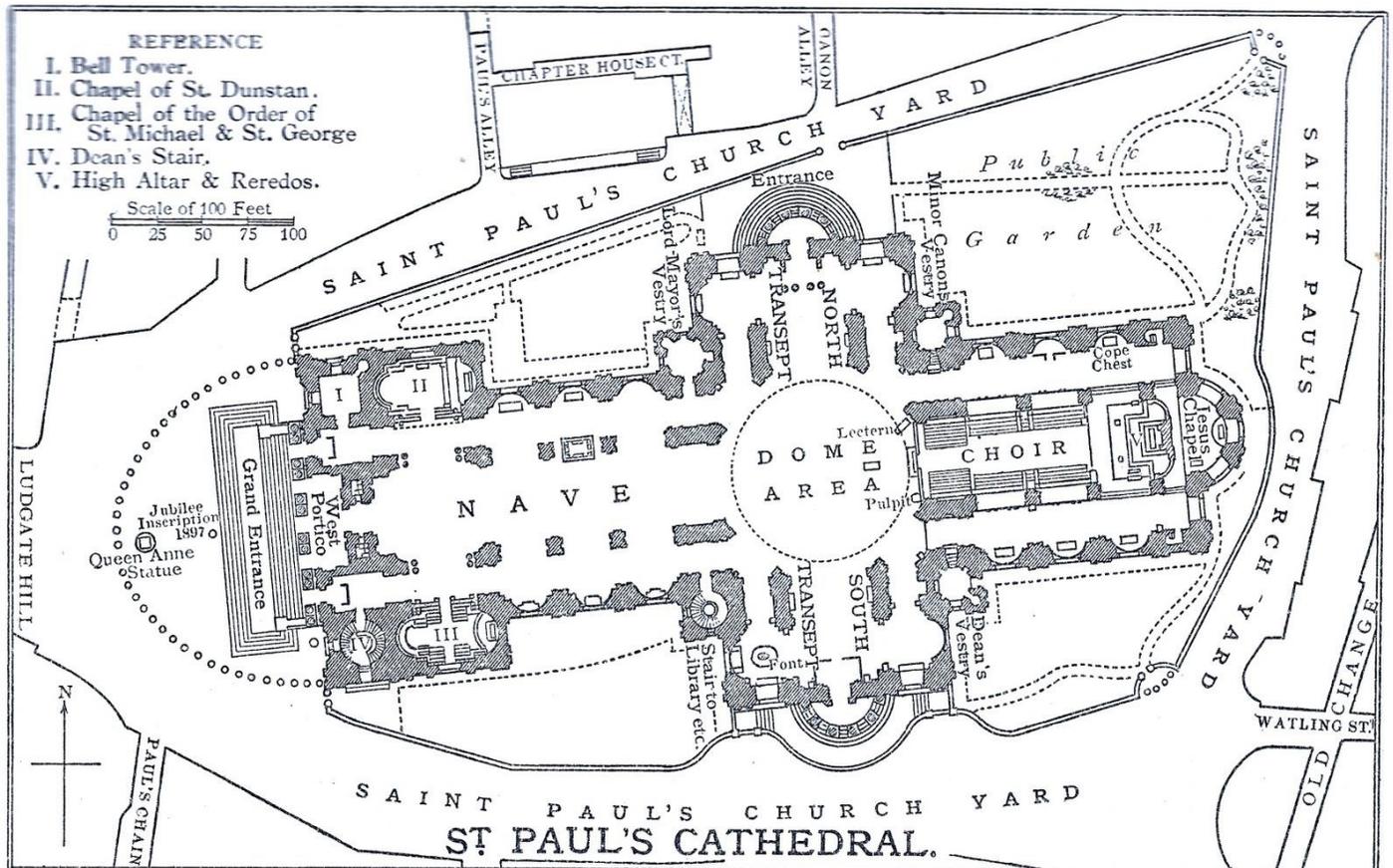
Tube: St. Paul's - Central Line, Mansion House - District and Circle Line, Blackfriars - District and Circle Line
Bank - Central, Northern, Waterloo & City Lines and DLR

Train: City Thameslink, Blackfriars, Cannon Street, Liverpool Street

Bus: 4, 8, 11, 15, 17, 23, 25, 26, 56, 76, 100, 172, 242, 521

9:30 AM – 4:30 PM (Closed Sunday) £18

London Pass (Free entry)



The Nave

The Cathedral's Nave provides a stunning view of the full length of the Cathedral, leading down to the Dome. Here you will also find a monument to one of Britain's greatest historical figures, the Duke of Wellington. Completed in 1912, it depicts the duke sitting on horseback and is the cathedral's largest monument.

The Dome

Inspired by St. Peter's Basilica in Vatican City, St. Paul's Dome is the second largest cathedral dome in the world. Its painted interiors by Sir James Thornhill show eight scenes from the life of St. Paul and is a truly stunning sight. You can climb 376 steps to the Stone Gallery and a further 152 to the Golden Gallery, both on the outside of the Dome. You're welcome to take photos on these galleries.

The Whispering Gallery

One of the best-known features of the Cathedral because of its acoustic properties, the Whispering Gallery circles the interior of the vast dome, 30 metres above the Cathedral Floor. If you whisper against the wall at any point, you can be heard by anyone with their ear against the wall at any other point around the gallery, even on the other side.

The High Altar

Made of marble and carved and gilded oak, the current altar replaced a Victorian marble alter which was damaged during the Second World War due to a bomb strike that destroyed a large part of the east end of the Cathedral.

The Grand Organ

Built and installed in 1695, the Grand Organ is one of the Cathedral's greatest artefacts after undergoing several restorations over the centuries. It has 7189 pipes, five keyboards and 138 organ stops.

The Crypt

Extending the entire length of the building, there are over 200 monuments and memorials in St. Paul's Crypt. Discover the tombs of historical British figures such as Admiral Lord Nelson, Arthur Wellesley Duke of Wellington, scientist Alexander Fleming and the architect of St. Paul's Sir Christopher Wren.

Oculus: an eye into St, Paul's

Step back in time and watch the cathedral's 1400 year history come to life with a 270° film experience, located in the former Treasury in the Crypt. Discover St Paul's history and explore the daily life of the cathedral with three films: Life of the Cathedral, **Resurgam**, I will Rise Again; and Virtual Access: the Dome.

St Paul's Cathedral, London, is an **Anglican cathedral, the seat of the Bishop of London** and the mother church of the Diocese of London. It sits on Ludgate Hill at the highest point of the City of London. Its dedication to Paul the Apostle dates back to the original church on this site, founded in AD 604. The present cathedral, dating from the late 17th century, was designed in **the English Baroque style by Sir Christopher Wren**. Its construction, completed in Wren's lifetime, was part of a major rebuilding programme in the City after the Great Fire of London.

History - Pre-Norman cathedrals

By the 16th century the building was starting to decay. After the **Protestant Reformation under Henry VIII and Edward VI**, the Dissolution of the Monasteries and Chantries Acts led to the **destruction of interior ornamentation and the cloisters, charnels, crypts, chapels, shrines, chantries and other buildings in St Paul's Churchyard**. Many of these former Catholic sites in the churchyard, having been **seized by the Crown, were sold as shops and rental properties**, especially to printers and booksellers, who were often Puritans. In 1561 the spire was destroyed by lightning, an event that was taken by both Protestants and Roman Catholics as a sign of God's displeasure at each other.

The task of designing a replacement structure was officially assigned to **Sir Christopher Wren in 1669**. He had previously been put in charge of the rebuilding of churches to replace those lost in the Great Fire. More than 50 City churches are attributable to Wren. The "topping out" of the cathedral (when the final stone was placed on the lantern) took place in 1708.

War damage

The cathedral survived the Blitz although struck by bombs in 1940 and 1941.

Occupy London

In October 2011 an anti-capitalism Occupy London encampment was established in front of the cathedral, after failing to gain access to the London Stock Exchange at Paternoster Square nearby. The cathedral's finances were affected by the ensuing closure. It was claimed that the cathedral was losing revenue of £20,000 per day

Plan

St Paul's Cathedral is built in a **restrained Baroque style** which represents **Wren's rationalisation of the traditions of English medieval cathedrals with the inspiration of Palladio**, the classical style of Inigo Jones, the **baroque style of 17th century Rome**, and the buildings by Mansart and others that he had seen in France. It is particularly in its plan that St Paul's **reveals medieval influences**. Like the great medieval cathedrals of York and Winchester, St Paul's is comparatively long for its width, and has strongly projecting transepts. It has much emphasis on its facade, which has been designed to define rather than conceal the form of the building behind it. **In section St Paul's also maintains a medieval form, having the aisles much lower than the nave, and a defined clerestory.**

Exterior - Dome

Wren drew inspiration from Michelangelo's dome of St Peter's Basilica, From the time of the Greek Cross Design it is clear that **Wren favoured a continuous colonnade (peristyle)** around the drum of the dome, rather than the arrangement of alternating windows and projecting columns that Michelangelo had used and suggests that **he was influenced by Bramante's "Tempietto"**. In the finished structure, Wren creates a diversity and appearance of strength by placing niches between the columns in every fourth opening. The **peristyle** serves to buttress both the inner dome and the brick cone which rises internally to support the lantern.

The lantern, like the visible masonry of the dome, rises in stages. The most unusual characteristic of this structure is that it is of square plan, rather than circular or octagonal. **The tallest stage takes the form of a tempietto** with four columned porticos facing the cardinal points. Its lowest level is surrounded by the

West Front

For the Renaissance architect designing the west front of a large church or cathedral, the universal problem was how to use a facade to unite the high central nave with the lower aisles in a visually harmonious whole. **Since Alberti's additions to Santa Maria Novella in Florence**, this was usually achieved by the simple expedient of linking the sides to the centre with large brackets

Wren's solution was to employ a Classical portico. The windows of the lower storey are smaller than those of the side walls and are deeply recessed, a visual indication of the thickness of the wall. The paired pilasters at each corner project boldly.

Walls

The building is of two storeys of **ashlar** masonry, above a basement, and surrounded by a balustrade above the upper cornice. **The balustrade was added, against Wren's wishes**, in 1718. The internal bays are marked externally by paired pilasters with Corinthian capitals at the lower level and Composite at the upper level. Where the building behind is of only one storey (at the aisles of both nave and choir) the upper storey of the exterior wall is sham. It serves a dual purpose of supporting the buttresses of the vault, and providing a satisfying appearance when viewed rising above buildings of the height of the 17th century city. This appearance may still be seen from across the River Thames.

Interior

Internally, St Paul's has a nave and choir in each of its three bays. The entrance from the west portico is through a **square domed narthex**, flanked by chapels. The nave is 91 feet in height and is separated from the aisles by an arcade of piers with attached Corinthian pilasters rising to an **entablature**. The bays, and therefore the vault compartments, are rectangular, but Wren roofed these spaces with saucer-shaped domes and surrounded the **clerestory** windows with **lunettes**. The **transepts** extend to the north and south of the dome and are called (in this instance) the North Choir and the South Choir.

The choir holds the stalls for the clergy, cathedral officers and the choir, and the organ. These wooden fittings, including the pulpit and Bishop's throne, were designed in Wren's office and built by joiners. The cathedral is some 574 feet in length (including the portico of the Great West Door.) The interior of the dome showing how Thornhill's painting continues an illusion of the real architectural features.

The main internal space of the cathedral is that under the central dome which extends the full width of the nave and aisles. The dome is supported on **pendentives** rising between eight arches spanning the nave, choir, transepts, and aisles. The eight piers that carry them are **not evenly spaced**. Wren has maintained an appearance of eight equal spans by inserting segmental arches to carry galleries across the ends of the aisles, and has extended the mouldings of the upper arch to appear equal to the wider arches.

Above the keystones of the arches, at 99 feet above the floor and 112 feet wide, runs a cornice which supports the **Whispering Gallery so called because of its acoustic properties: a whisper or low murmur against its wall at any point is audible to a listener with an ear held to the wall at any other point around the gallery**. It is reached by 259 steps from ground level.

The dome is raised on a tall drum surrounded by pilasters and pierced with windows in groups of three, separated by **eight gilded niches containing statues**, and repeating the pattern of the peristyle on the exterior. The dome rises above a **gilded cornice** at 173 feet to a height of 214 feet. Its painted decoration by Sir James Thornhill shows eight scenes from the life of St Paul set in illusionistic architecture which continues the forms of the eight niches of the drum. At the **apex of the dome is an oculus inspired by that of the Pantheon in Rome**. Through this hole can be seen the decorated inner surface of the cone which supports the lantern. This upper space is lit by the light wells in the outer dome and openings in the brick cone. Engravings of Thornhill's paintings were published in 1720.

Apse

The eastern apse extends the width of the choir and is the full height of the main arches across choir and nave. It is **decorated with mosaics**, in keeping with the choir vaults. The original reredos and high altar were destroyed by bombing in 1940. The present high altar and **baldacchino** was dedicated in 1958 as the American Memorial Chapel. It was paid for entirely by donations from British people. The Roll of Honour contains the names of more than 28,000 Americans who gave their lives while on their way to, or stationed in, the United Kingdom during the Second World War. It is in front of the chapel's altar. The three windows of the apse date from 1960 and depict themes of service and sacrifice, while the insignia around the edges represent the American states and the US armed forces. The **limewood** panelling incorporates a rocket—a tribute to America's achievements in space.

Sarcophagus of Nelson in the crypt

The largest monument in the cathedral is that to the Duke of Wellington by Alfred Stevens. It stands on the north side of the nave and has on top a statue of Wellington astride his horse "Copenhagen". Although the equestrian figure was planned at the outset, objections to the notion of having a horse in the church prevented its installation until 1912.