

ST. MATTHEW'S ANGLICAN CHURCH - 1916

THREE CHURCHES SINCE 1827

The First Church

St. Matthew's Church, started in 1824, was one of the first churches in the community. Built "on rising ground ... in Mercer's Cove," the church had a tower and gallery. It was consecrated in 1827 by Rt. Rev. Dr. Inglis, Bishop of Nova Scotia. This building, measuring 40 ft by 28 ft, was enlarged a number of times, but it still did not meet the needs of a growing congregation.

The Second Church

A new St. Matthew's was built here, further up the harbour and "in a more commanding location," than the previous church. Timber for this larger church, 818 stout sticks each measuring 20 ft, was hauled from the woods by the congregation. The windows of quarried glass came from England. The building, measuring 80 ft by 55 ft excluding the chancel, could seat 900. It was consecrated by Bishop Feild on October 24, 1861.

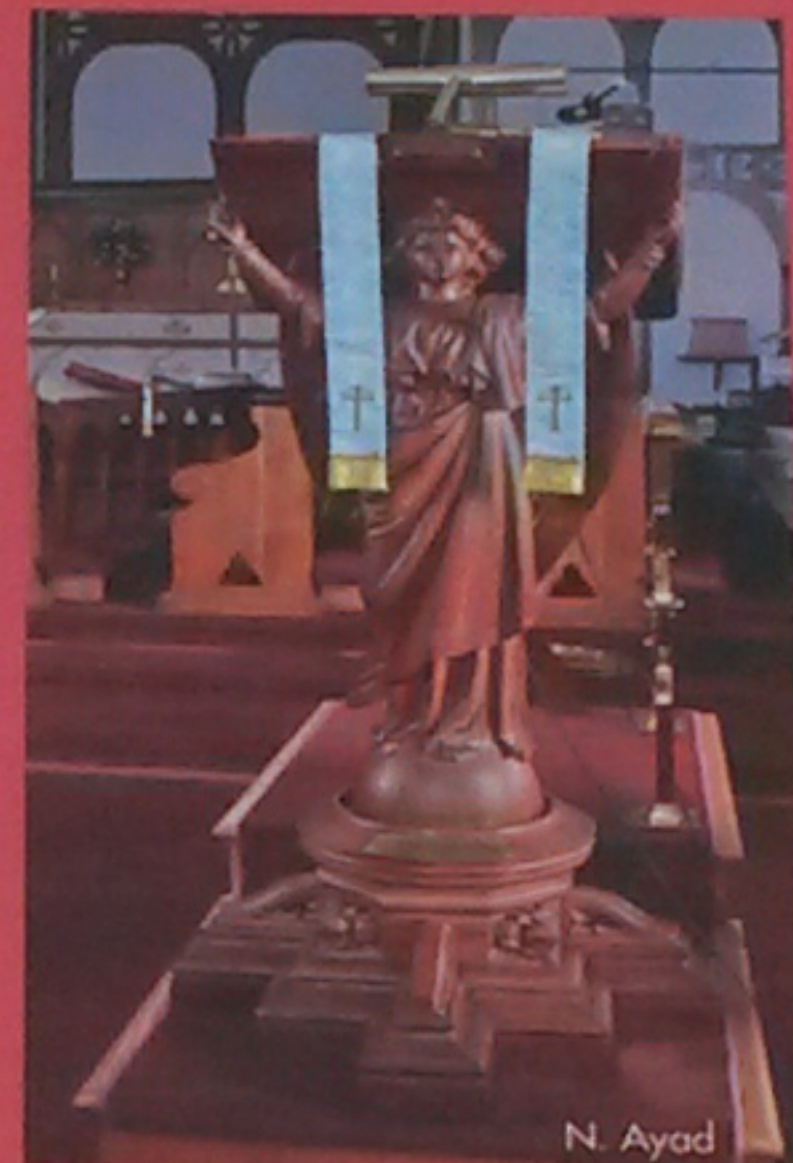
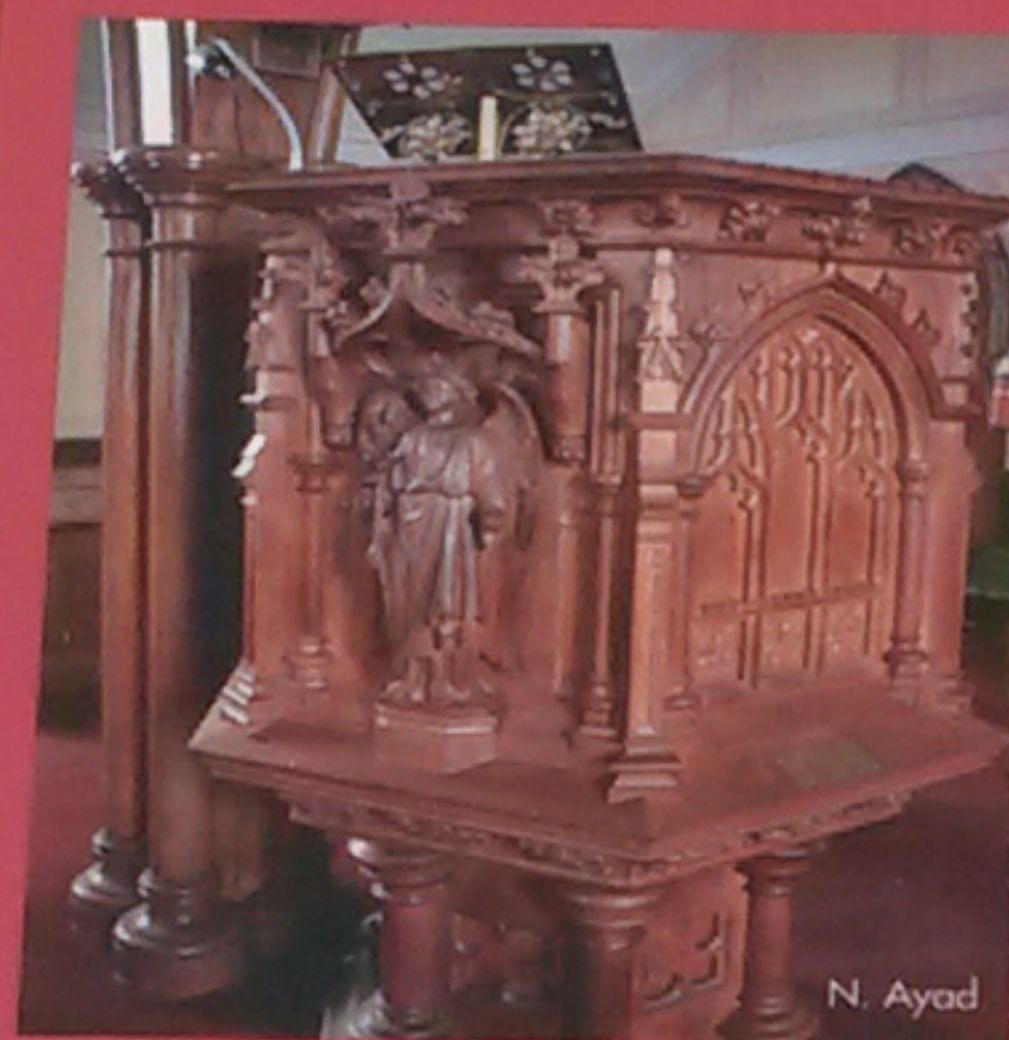
The Current Church

The cornerstone for the current St. Matthew's was laid on July 12, 1911 and the church was consecrated on May 7, 1916. With seating for 1,100, it is one of the largest wooden churches in the Province.

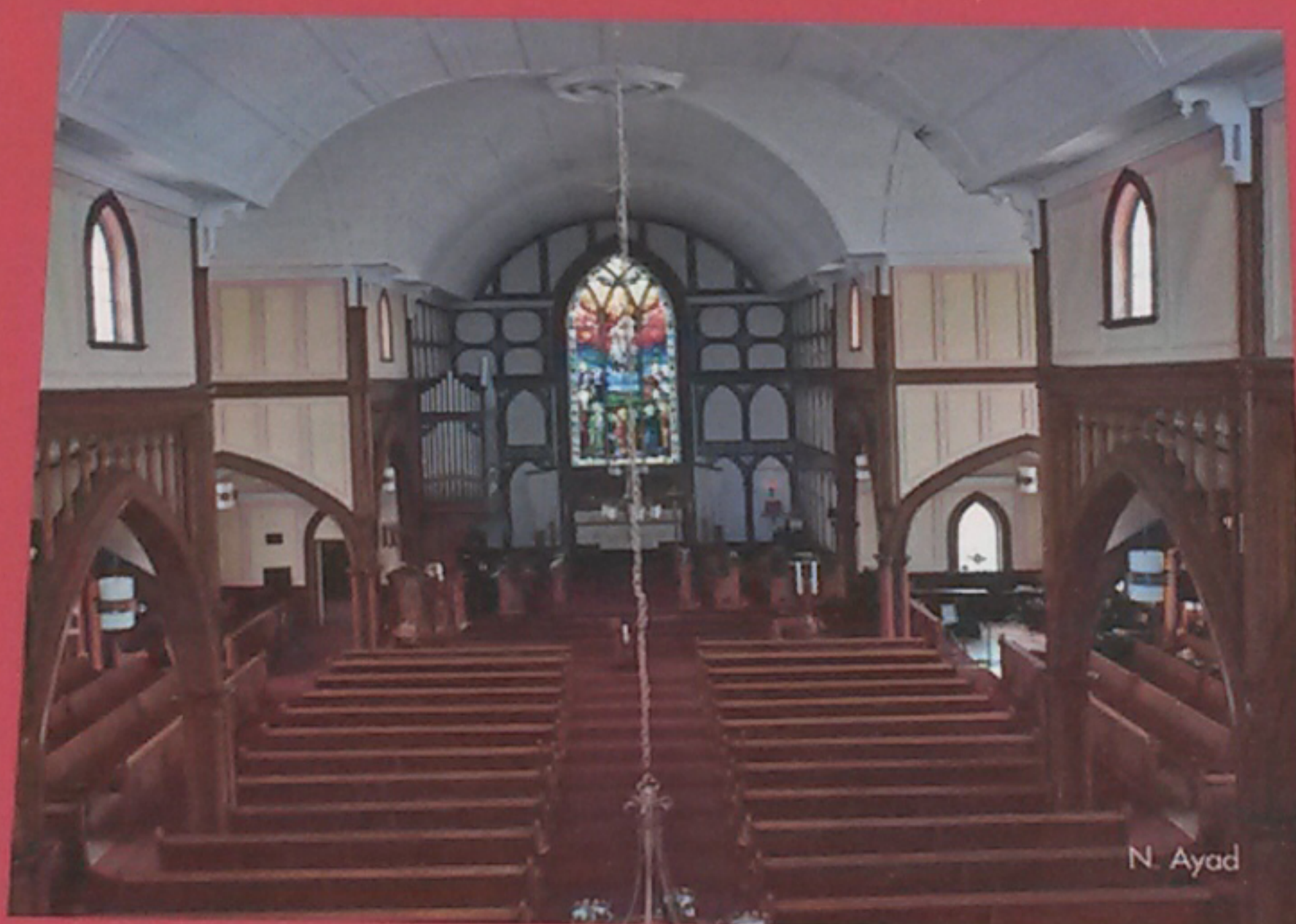


The New St. Matthew's in about 1920

SOURCE
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Angels are depicted in both the lectern and the pulpit. The lectern appears as an angel whose up-stretched arms hold the Bible.

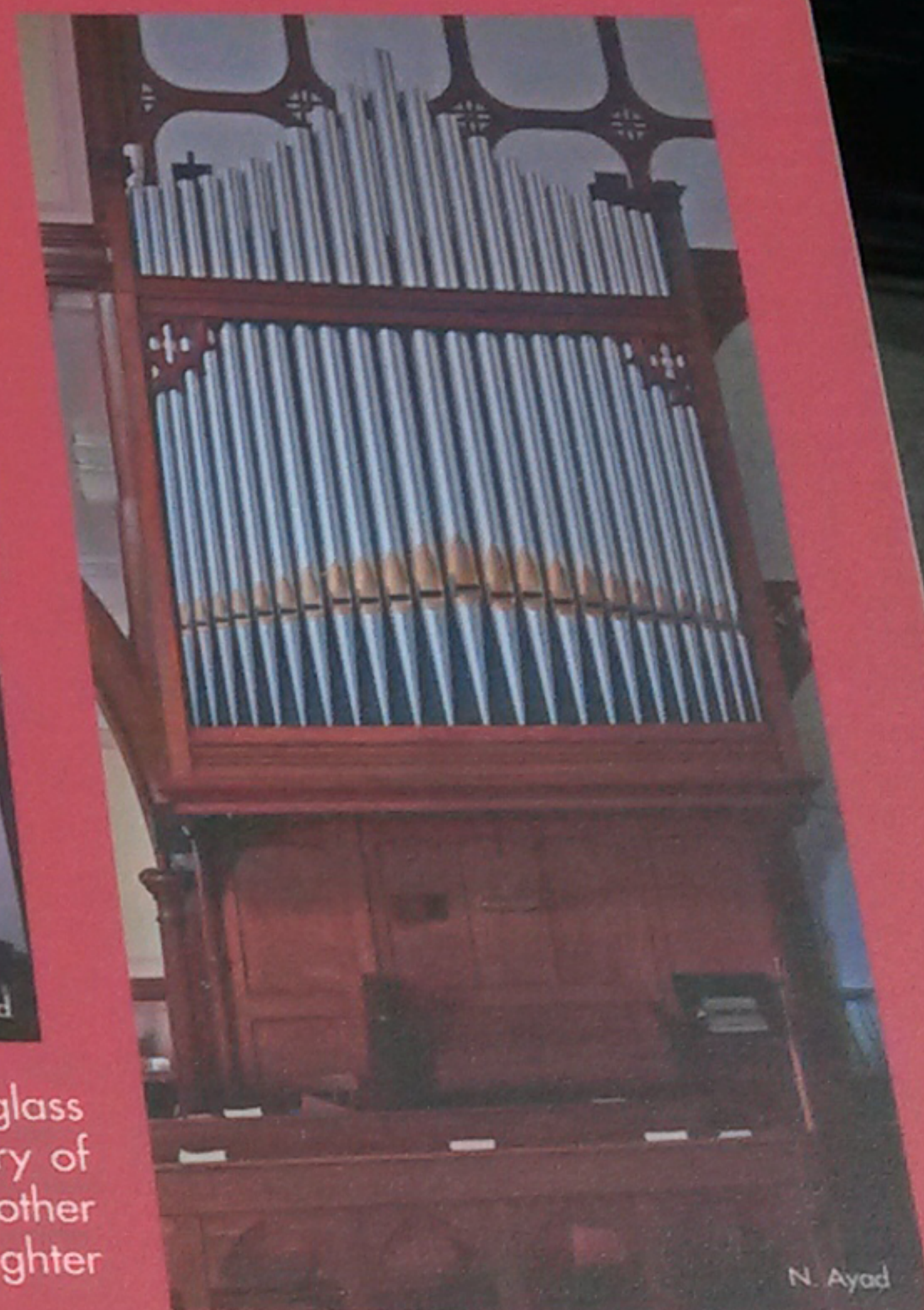


The decorative dome was built by Samuel Greenland of Coley's Point.



The Ascension is depicted in the stained glass window. Its inscription reads: "To the Glory of God and in loving memory of my brother Charles and my wife Annie and my daughter Ella Susie." Azariah Dawe donor.

The reredos (altar screen) was made from an oak tree taken from the old rectory garden in Mercer's Cove. It was cut, trimmed and shaped by Shearstown master carpenter Solomon Badcock



This single-manual pipe organ, built by Philip H. Selfe, Hull, England was installed in 1912.

"New Priest in Conception Bay" Rev. Robert Traill Spence Lowell

Rev. Robert Traill Spence Lowell who served at St. Matthew's 1843-1847 was an American and a brother of the poet James Russell Lowell. Rev. Lowell, born in Boston, was the son of a Unitarian clergyman. He graduated from Harvard University, and was ordained in 1843.

He is the author of the book, "New Priest in Conception Bay", the setting for which is Bay Roberts, although he used the fictional name of Peterport.

