

# London Revealed

# Wren's Churches



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# Introduction

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Travel guidebooks for the ultra curious, Approach Guides reveal a destination's essence by exploring a compelling aspect of its cultural heritage: art, architecture, history, food or wine.

The Great Fire of 1666 ravaged the old city of London, destroying all that was in its path, including St Paul's cathedral and 87 parish churches. At the age of 37, the multi-talented Christopher Wren was appointed as Surveyor-General of the King's Works and tasked with rebuilding what had been lost. It was a project that consumed him for the rest of his life. The fruits of Wren's labors are on full view today, marvels of art and architecture wedged among the modern city. They are yours to discover.

## What's in this guidebook

- **Art and architecture review.** We provide background on Christopher Wren and his design aesthetic, isolating trademark features that you will see again and again while touring. To make things come alive, we have packed our review with high-resolution images.
- **Tour of the highlights.** Following our tradition of being the most valuable resource for culture-focused travelers, we offer a tour of Wren's top London churches (itinerary below). For each, we reveal its most important architectural and decorative features and offer a discussion that ties it all together.
- **Advice for getting the best cultural experience.** To help you plan your visit, this guidebook supplies logistical advice, maps and links to online resources. Plus, we give our personal tips for getting the most from your experience while on location.
- **Information the way you like it.** As with all of our guides, this book is optimized for intuitive, quick navigation; information is organized into bullet points to make absorption easy; and images are marked up with text that explains important features.

## Itinerary

This guidebook offers a tour of Wren's top 10 churches: St Bride\*, St Magnus the Martyr\*, St Margaret Lothbury\*, St Margaret Pattens, St Martin Ludgate, St Mary Abchurch, St Mary Aldermary\*, St Mary le Bow, St Paul's cathedral\* and St Stephen Walbrook\*. To help travelers with limited time prioritize their itineraries, we have marked the six stops that are absolute must-sees with asterisks (\*).

## Contact us anytime

Our readers are our greatest inspiration. Email us at [founders@approachguides.com](mailto:founders@approachguides.com) to let us know about your experience with Approach Guides — many of our recent updates have been inspired by customers like you. We personally respond to every email.

We hope this cultural guidebook offers you fresh insights into London's distinctive art and architecture and sets you on a path to making your own discoveries.

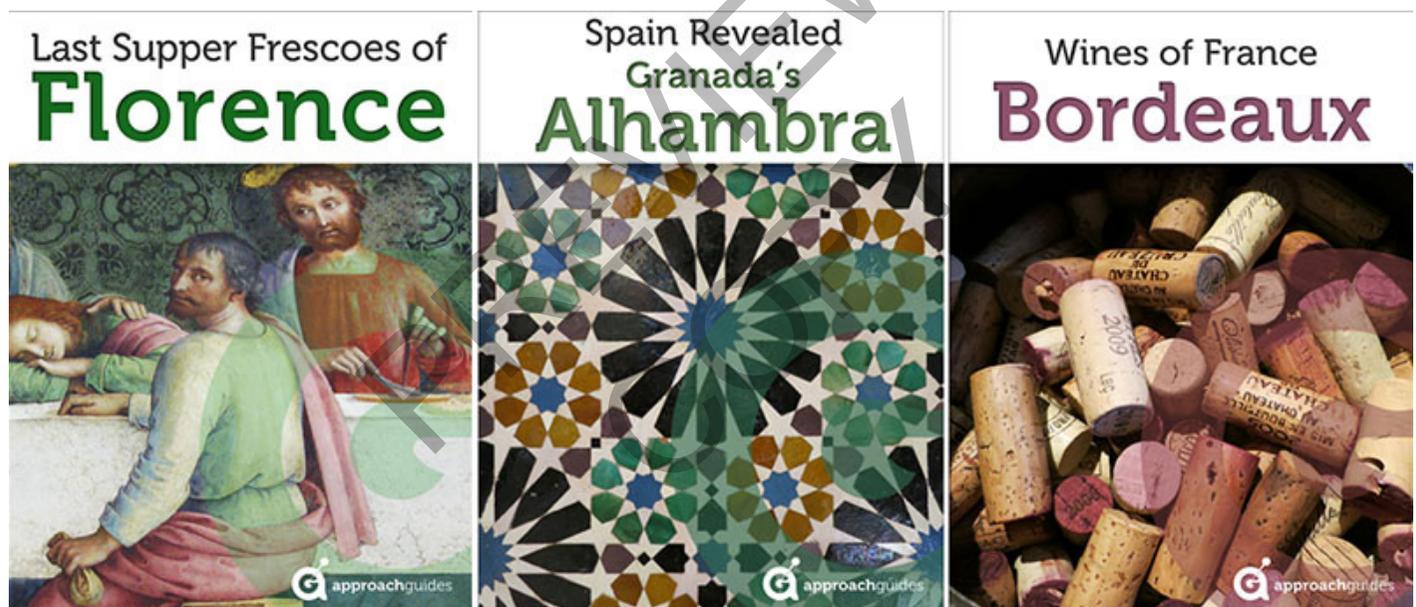
Enjoy your trip!



David and Jennifer Raezer  
Founders, Approach Guides  
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# London Revealed: Wren's Churches

**Version 1.0**

by [David Raezer](#) and [Jennifer Raezer](#)

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Approach Guides  
New York, NY  
[www.approachguides.com](http://www.approachguides.com)

ISBN: 978-1-936614-53-0

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For, Mathematical Demonstrations being built  
upon the impregnable Foundations  
of Geometry and Arithmetick, are the only Truths,  
that can sink into the Mind of Man, void of all Uncertainty;  
& all other Discourses participate more or less of Truth,  
according as their Subjects are more or less capable  
of Mathematical Demonstration.  
Therefore, this rather than Logick  
is the great Organ Organoon of all infallible Science.

—

Christopher Wren,  
in his inaugural lecture as professor of astronomy  
at London's Gresham College in 1657.

Read [the complete lecture](#)  
in *Parentalia or Memoirs of the family of the Wrens*.

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## Watch Before You Go

Watch the [London episode of Insights](#), an online travel show from the creators of Approach Guides.



[Watch our video](#) on Wren's churches.

To see all episodes in our video series, visit [approachguides.com/video](https://www.approachguides.com/video) or subscribe to our [YouTube channel](#).

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## Meet the King's Architect



**Fig 5.** Christopher Wren.  
Portrait by: Sir Godfrey Kneller, 1711.

### First A Scientist, Then An Architect

- **A clergyman's son.** Christopher Wren (1632-1723) was born in East Knoyle, Wiltshire, a

small town in the southwest of England (Fig. 5). His father was the parish's rector.

- **Professor of astronomy.** Wren's early professional life was dominated by science. He served as professor of astronomy at Gresham College in London (1657-1661) and later at Oxford (1661-1669).
- **Architecture comes to the fore.** By his early 30s, however, Wren began to take an increasing interest in architecture.
- **Two early works.** Wren's first two architectural projects gave him a foundation that proved critical to his future work, both undertaken in 1663: Pembroke Chapel at Cambridge and Sheldonian Theater at Oxford.
- **A trip to Paris.** He took a six-month trip to architecturally-rich Paris in 1665, only one year before the Great Fire, where he saw the Sorbonne's inspirational new dome and met with the great Italian Baroque architects Bernini and Guarini, as well as France's own François Mansart.

## The Appointment

- **Background.** Wren established a relationship with King Charles II beginning in 1661, soon after the restoration of the monarchy, based on their shared interest in astronomy: at the king's request, Wren made a relief model of the moon's surface based on telescopic observations. Soon after, the king, perhaps sensing Wren's burgeoning architectural and engineering prowess, tried to induce him to travel to Tangier in order to supervise work on the fortifications of this newly-acquired outpost, ceded to the king as part of his wife's dowry. Wren turned him down, but this was not the last opportunity he would have to work on behalf of the king.
- **First step: a member of post-fire rebuilding commission.** Appointed by the king, Wren was one of six members of the rebuilding committee created soon after the Great Fire on 4 October 1666.
- **Surveyor-General of the King's Works.** But the real opportunity for Wren opened up in early 1669: the King's Surveyor-General, John Denham, died. Once again, the king looked to Wren, who recognized this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to serve as the king's chief architect and accepted the appointment. Wren served as Surveyor-General from 1669-1718.

## The Task

- **The fire offers the opportunity.** While Wren's timely appointment was a key precondition, it was the destruction wrought by the Great Fire that created the opportunity for him to leave such a lasting mark on the city.
- **The importance of parish churches.** London's parish churches formed the core of the old city's neighborhoods; they were the centers of public worship and the recorders of baptisms, marriages and burials. For this reason, they were a priority for rebuilding. Only St Paul's cathedral was deemed of greater importance.
- **Financed by coal tax.** The massive rebuilding project was financed in large part by a tax placed on all coal entering the port of London imposed as part of the Building Act of 1670. Keep in mind, however, that church furnishings were not financed by the coal tax, but rather by the parishes themselves.
- **Legacy.** As Surveyor-General, Wren rebuilt fifty-one parish churches and the great St Paul's

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# What To Look For

In this section, we discuss the many characteristic features that you will encounter again and again on our tour of Wren's churches. Together, they make up the "Wren aesthetic."

## Architectural Features

Wren's auditory churches have a number of distinctive architectural features.

- **Material: Portland stone.** Most of Wren's churches are clad in Portland stone, a smooth white limestone from the Isle of Portland, located in the English Channel, just off the coast of Weymouth in Dorset, England. The stone was believed to hold up exceptionally well in London's damp climate.
- **Medieval city yields irregular plans with limited exterior decoration.** With the exception of St Paul's, due to London's tightly-knit medieval city layout, many of Wren's churches sit on irregular plots, which often necessitated slightly askew walls. Further, they are often so hemmed in by buildings that much of their exteriors cannot be seen. Many only have a single decorated facade that faces a small courtyard or the street.

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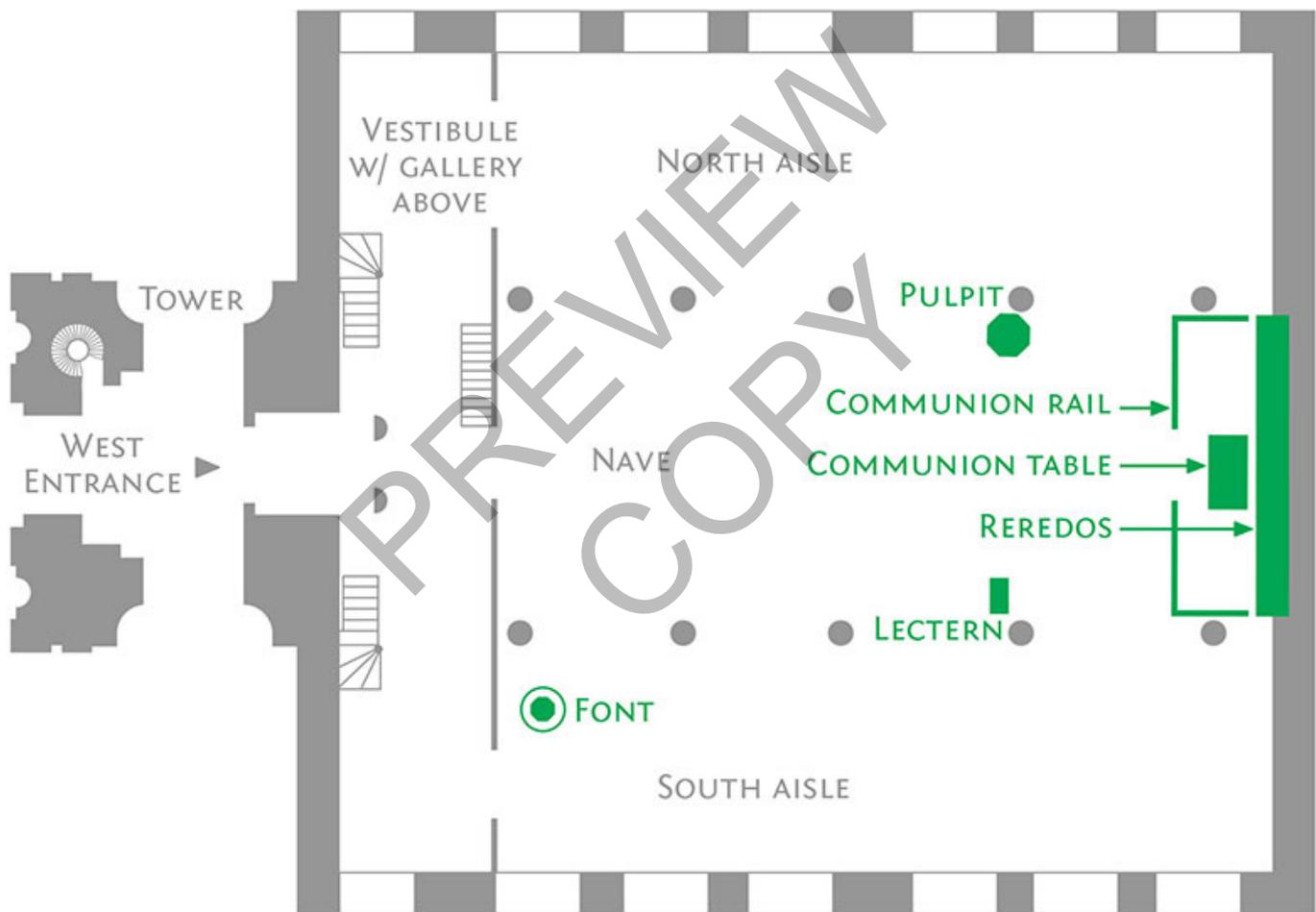


**Fig 6.** Round-headed, clear-glass windows.

- **Round-headed windows with clear glass.** Wren's churches were designed to admit abundant natural light by using clear-glass windows with round tops, a clear break from the stained-glass windows with pointed tops of earlier Gothic churches (**Fig. 6**). That said, windows were translucent enough so that the sacred space of the interior was not exposed from the outside; the sanctity, and separateness, of the interior was a priority.
- **Tower and spire.** Churches have a square- or rectangular-plan tower on their west end (the entrance side). The tower — holding bells, housed in a bellchamber behind louvered openings — is typically topped by an elaborate spire, unique enough to differentiate the church from others in the city. Since Wren's spires were arguably his most inspired and fanciful creations,

we provide a detailed description of the spire for each church on our tour.

- **Simple, clean decoration.** As you might surmise given his preference for natural light, Wren's architectural decoration is conservative, favoring clean lines and white-colored walls and ceilings. He believed that the geometry of the architectural space — unencumbered by decorative distraction — would serve as the most efficient means of tapping into God's divine logic.
- **Black-and-white flooring.** In many churches, Wren's original black-and-white marble flooring survives.
- **Galleries.** Consistent with the auditory orientation of Wren's churches, galleries — elevated seating areas, typically located over the north or south aisle or against the rear wall — were frequently employed to ensure that everyone present could see optimally and participate in the experience.



**Fig 7.** Standard Wren church, showing where furnishings typically reside.

## Furnishings

Wren's churches contain a consistent collection of furnishings. We review what they are and what

function they served, moving from the church's entrance (on the west side) to the altar (on the east). Fig. 7 shows where the most important furnishings are positioned in Wren's churches.



Fig 8. Baptismal font with wooden cover, St Peter Cornhill.

- **Font with wooden cover.** Topped by a wooden cover, the baptismal font is a marble basin that holds water used for baptism, the initiation rite of the Christian faith. It always sits on the west end of the church, by the entrance, symbolic of the start of the journey to oneness with Christ on the east end at the altar (Fig. 7 and Fig. 8).

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# TOUR MAP AND ITINERARY

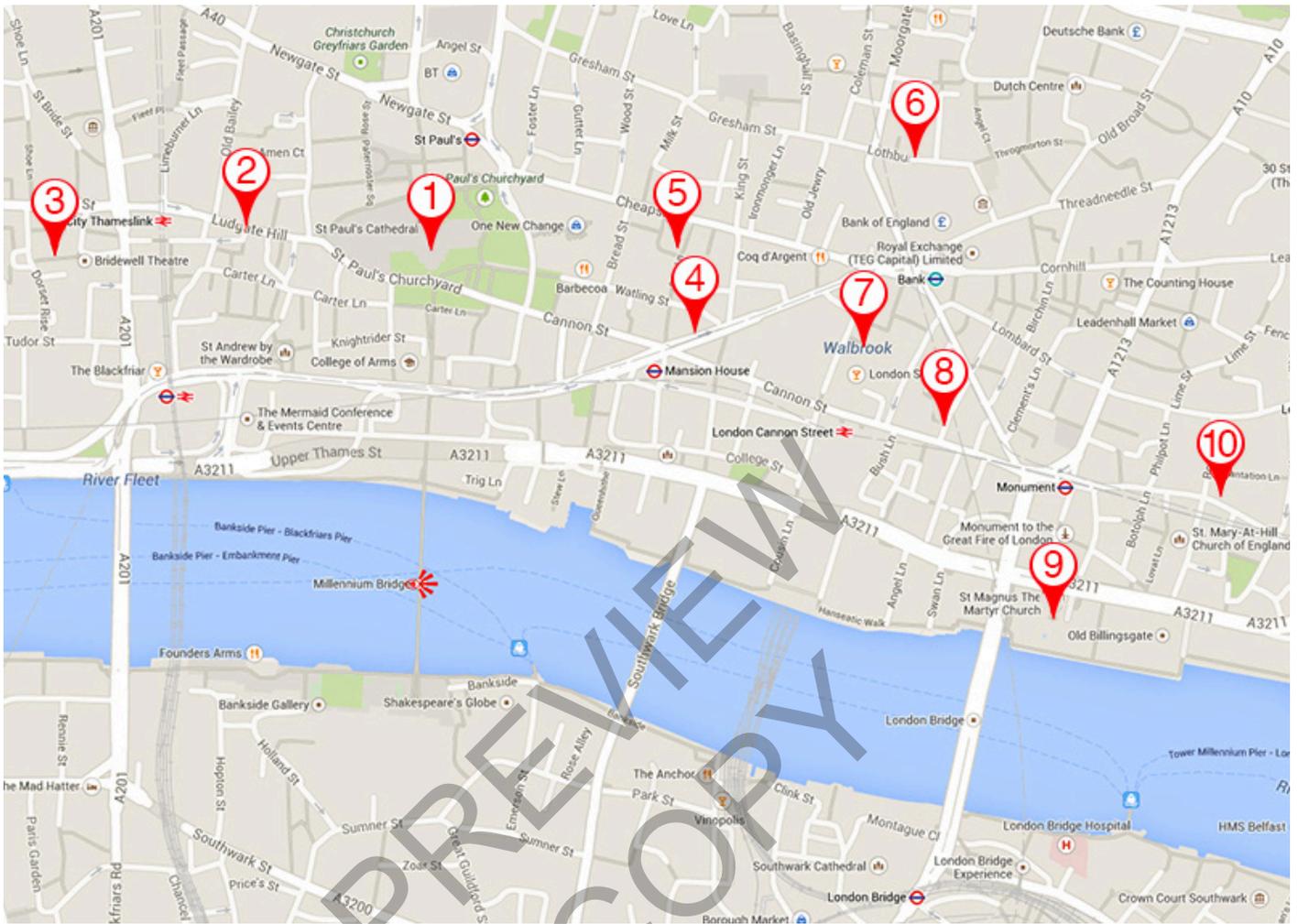


Fig 15. London map with tour itinerary. For more detail, view in [Google Maps](#)

Our tour profiles Wren's ten best churches in London. After a first stop at St Paul's cathedral, Wren's masterwork, the itinerary generally follows a west-to-east walking path across the old city (Fig. 15).

**Author tip: Look for the asterisks.** To make things easier and allow you to focus on the real highlights, particularly if you have limited time, we have marked those churches that we believe are must-sees with asterisks (\*).

1. St Paul's cathedral \*
2. St Martin Ludgate
3. St Bride \*
4. St Mary Aldermary \*
5. St Mary le Bow
6. St Margaret Lothbury \*
7. St Stephen Walbrook \*
8. St Mary Abchurch

9. St Magnus the Martyr \*

10. St Margaret Pattens

**Author tip:** *If you have completed the tour and wish to explore further on your own, we mark the positions of all of the other remaining Wren churches on our [Google Map](#) – simply check the box in the drop-down for “Other Wren Churches.”*

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# 1. St Paul's Cathedral \*



**Fig 16.** Aerial view from the south, St Paul's cathedral.  
Photo by: Mark Fosh.

## Visiting

- **Location.** See our [Google Map](#). The nearest Underground station is St Paul's on the Central Line.
- **Visiting hours.** Open Monday-Saturday from 8.30am - 4:30pm. Last tickets are sold at 4pm.
- **Tickets.** Visitors must purchase a ticket; currently, adult tickets cost £16.50. You can also [purchase tickets online](#).
- **Website.** For more information, visit the [official website](#).
- **Religious services.** See the [schedule](#).
- **Evening prayer and evensong.** The church holds stirring choral evensong — featuring the singing of the [canticles Magnificat and Nunc dimittis](#) — Monday-Friday at 5pm and on Sunday at 6pm.
- **Guided tours.** [Free guided tours](#) are offered at 10am, 11am, 1pm and 2pm.

- **No photography.** Unfortunately, unlike all other churches on our tour, St Paul's does not allow photography inside the cathedral.

PREVIEW  
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## Background



Fig 17. Caravaggio's famous "The Conversion of St Paul."

### Who was St Paul?

- **Conversion.** Born Jewish in the then-Roman city of Tarsus in what is now south-central Turkey, Paul (5-67 CE) was a staunch persecutor of Christians for most of his early life. As a

result, his dramatic conversion in his mid-20s/early-30s — from staunch enemy of the faith to one of its greatest defenders — takes on great consequence and it is often the way the saint is depicted (Fig. 17). St Paul’s conversion took place on the road to Damascus, where he was struck blind by a vision of Jesus, as recounted in Acts chapter 9, verses 3-6:

As he neared Damascus on his journey,  
suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him.  
He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him,  
“Saul [Paul’s Hebrew name], Saul, why do you persecute me?”  
“Who are you, Lord?” Saul asked.  
“I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,” he replied.  
“Now get up and go into the city,  
and you will be told what you must do.”

- **Missionary activities and martyrdom.** After his conversion, he assumed a pivotal role in spreading early Christianity, undertaking missionary activities in Antioch, Cyprus, Greece and Asia Minor. Having finally made his way to Rome, he was beheaded, likely during a series of Christian persecutions initiated by emperor Nero.
- **Writings.** Of the 27 books in the New Testament, 14 have been attributed to Paul. Taking the form of letters (epistles), they emphasize the fundamental tenets of Christianity: Jesus was the son of God; he was crucified to purge the sins of humanity; he rose from the dead and reigns transcendent in heaven; those who believe in him will be granted salvation.
- **Patron saint of London.** St Paul is the patron saint of London. The upright red sword on the city’s flag commemorates the saint’s martyrdom.

## Earlier Churches on the Site

### Five churches

The current St Paul’s cathedral, built by Wren, is the fifth to stand on the site.

- **First church.** The first church was built in the early 7th century (604) under the auspices of Mellitus, a follower of St Augustine and the first Bishop of London. The cathedral — the seat of the bishop, which differentiates it from the city’s other parish churches — was part of an initiative spearheaded by Pope Gregory the Great to reestablish Christianity in paganized England in the wake of the Romans’ departure in 410. It was destroyed by fire in 675.
- **Second church.** St Paul’s was rebuilt but was soon after destroyed by Danish invaders in 961.
- **Third church.** Once again, it was rebuilt by the Norman king William the Conqueror. Despite being built of stone, it was destroyed by fire in 1087.
- **Fourth church: medieval cathedral.** The medieval church was a magnificent edifice, built from 1087-1314. See the detailed discussion below. By the 17th century, the church was in serious decline. A major renovation was begun under Charles I, but it was never completed; and a second attempt at serious renovation under Charles II in 1660 was cut short by the devastating Great Fire, which ended any hopes of its rehabilitation.
- **Fifth church: Wren cathedral.** The present structure, built by Wren, rose from the ashes of the great medieval church. A further distinction: this cathedral held special significance

since it was the first built after the Anglican split with the Roman Catholic church in 1534. It was a symbol of the Church of England's independent identity.

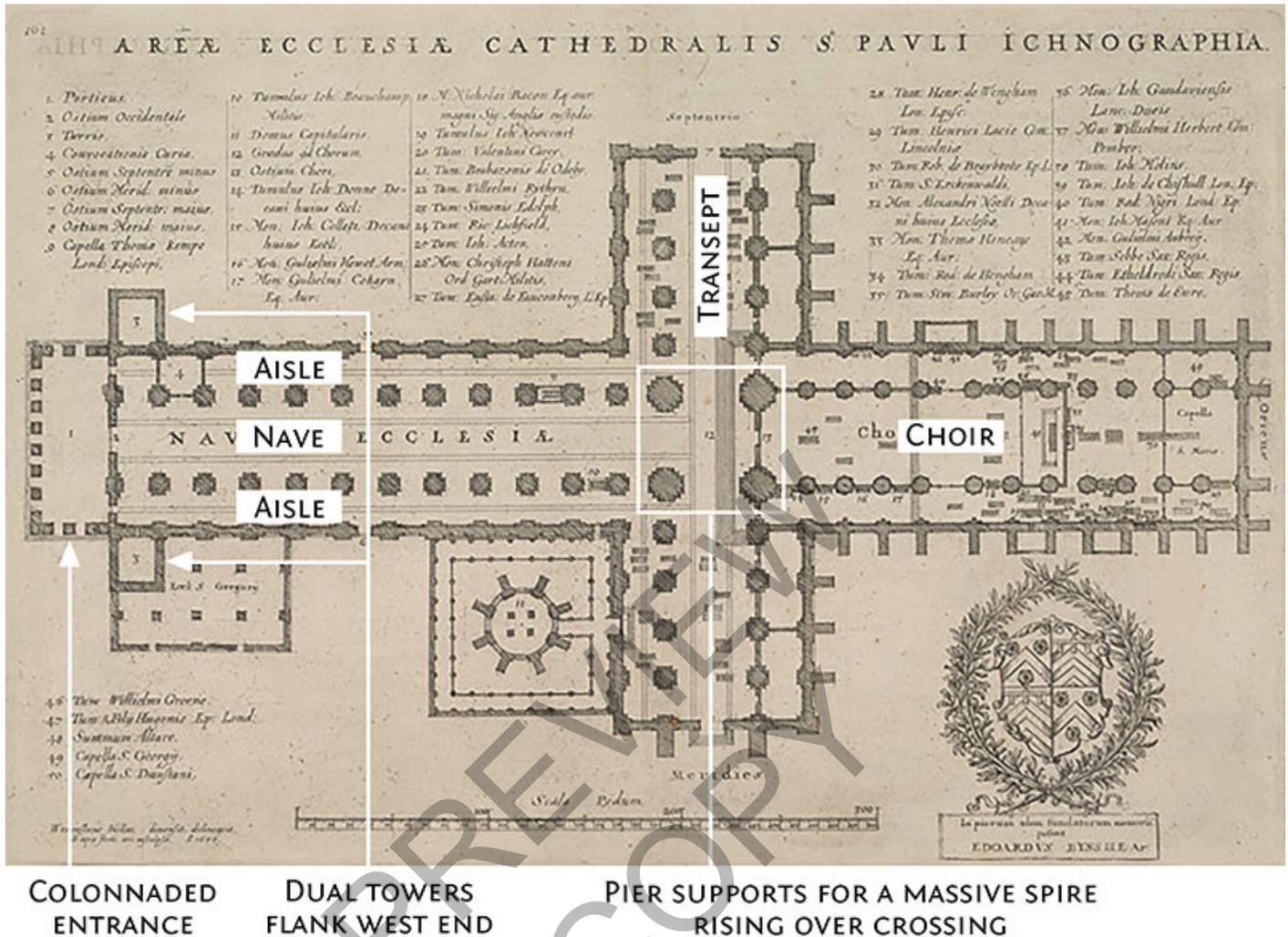


Fig 18. Plan of the medieval pre-fire cathedral. Rendering by: Wenceslaus Hollar.

## Medieval Cathedral

The fourth church — the medieval cathedral — is worth reviewing briefly as its features were necessarily top of mind for Wren as he crafted his replacement.

- **Tremendous scale.** Its dimensions stand up quite well to the present church: 585 feet / 178 meters long (versus 574 feet / 175 meters in the present church); nave 100 feet / 30 meters wide (versus 121 feet / 37 meters); transept 290 feet / 88 meters wide (versus 246 feet / 75 meters).
- **Latin cross plan.** The cathedral had a Latin cross plan: a long nave with relatively shorter transepts and choir (Fig. 18).
- **Colonnaded entrance.** The colonnaded west entrance was flanked by towers (Fig. 18 and Fig. 19).

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# A Renaissance Design

While he certainly wished to maintain a degree of continuity with the great Gothic cathedral that formerly occupied the site, Wren wanted St Paul's to be fresh and firmly anchored in the present. It was to be a modern Renaissance cathedral, first and foremost.

## Gothic to Renaissance

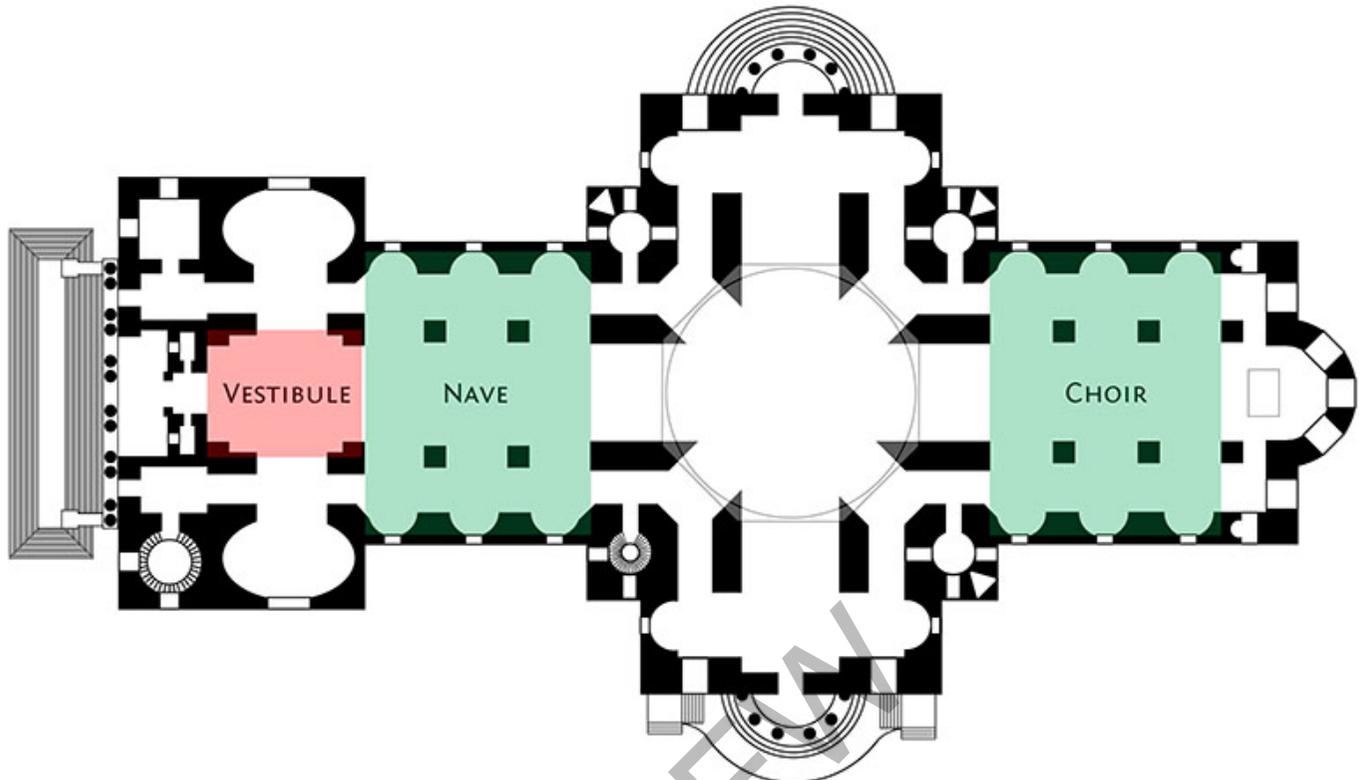
To assure his church's Renaissance appearance, in the spirit of his Great Model, Wren took several critical steps. They are fundamentally important to the architect's vision, and without them, he would likely have viewed his church as a personal disappointment.

### 1. Favors a massive dome over a spire

Instead of the spire employed by the earlier medieval cathedral, Wren wanted a large Renaissance dome to rival those appearing on continental Europe. For Wren, it was the church's most important feature. However, this was a particularly bold aspiration since no such grand domed structure had ever been built in England. In evaluating the ruins of the medieval cathedral on 27 August 1666, John Evelyn records in his [diary](#):

[The building committee] persisted that it required a new foundation,  
not only in regard of the necessity,  
but for that the shape of what stood was very mean,  
and we had a mind to build it with a noble cupola,  
a form of church-building not as yet known in England,  
but of wonderful grace.

We will explore the details of Wren's awe-inspiring dome in a subsequent section.



BY ADDING THE VESTIBULE, WREN EFFECTIVELY SHORTENED THE NAVE, MAKING IT THE SAME LENGTH AS THE CHOIR (3 BAYS), THEREBY CREATING A MORE MODERN RENAISSANCE CENTRALIZED FEEL

**Fig 22.** Equal length nave and choir, St Paul's cathedral.

## 2. Disguises length of nave with entry vestibule

Wren very much favored a centralized plan inspired by Renaissance prototypes, in which the nave, choir and transepts are of approximately the same lengths. However, he was forced — for reasons of liturgy and size of the congregation — to employ a traditional Latin cross plan, consistent with the earlier cathedral. To give the Latin cross a centralized feel, however, Wren took an ingenious step: he created a single non-aisled vestibule between the two chapels on the west end, effectively shortening the nave and making it the same length (3 bays) as the choir (**Fig. 22**).

**Author tip:** Wren's vestibule is extremely effective. When you visit the cathedral, notice that you unconsciously walk beyond the vestibule and stand at the new start of the nave. The view from this point — of a "Renaissance" church with seemingly equal length nave and choir — is the one Wren wanted you to have.

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## Exterior



**Fig 24.** West entrance facade, St Paul's cathedral.  
Photo by: Graham Laddao.

## Facade

While the colonnaded entrance flanked by towers evokes the prior medieval cathedral (compare Fig. 24 above with Fig. 19 of the medieval cathedral), that is where the similarities end.

- **Two-level classical temple-inspired design.** Although Wren originally intended to use massive double-storey columns for his temple-inspired facade, sufficient-sized blocks of Portland stone could not be obtained. So, he opted for an arrangement with two tiers of paired Corinthian order columns, perhaps inspired by those of Paris' Louvre (Fig. 24).
- **Points toward dome.** With six pairs of columns below and four above, the stacked arrangement forms a pyramid, the sharply-angled triangular pediment of which "points" toward the dome above (Fig. 24).
- **Conversion of St Paul.** The pediment relief depicts the conversion of St Paul by Francis Bird (1706), who shows the saint-to-be falling backward off his horse, struck blind by a vision of Jesus. Bird also crafted the statue of St Paul at the apex of the pediment, who is flanked by Saints Peter (with a crowing rooster, reminding us of his famous denial of Jesus) and James (Fig. 24 and Fig. 25). The four evangelists stand in pairs before each of the towers.
- **False frieze.** One of Wren's trademark decorative features, a "false frieze" runs around the entire cathedral. The frieze is considered false because, instead of running above (and being supported by the capitals on the tops of the pilasters), it runs between the capitals themselves. Featuring reliefs of vines and flowers, the false frieze blends with the capitals of the Corinthian pilasters, making them virtually indistinguishable (Fig. 24).
- **Statue of Queen Anne.** In the courtyard before the facade stands a statue of Queen Anne, a critical supporter of Wren and the church. The statue, a replica of the original, is encircled by a wrought iron fence by Jean Tijou.

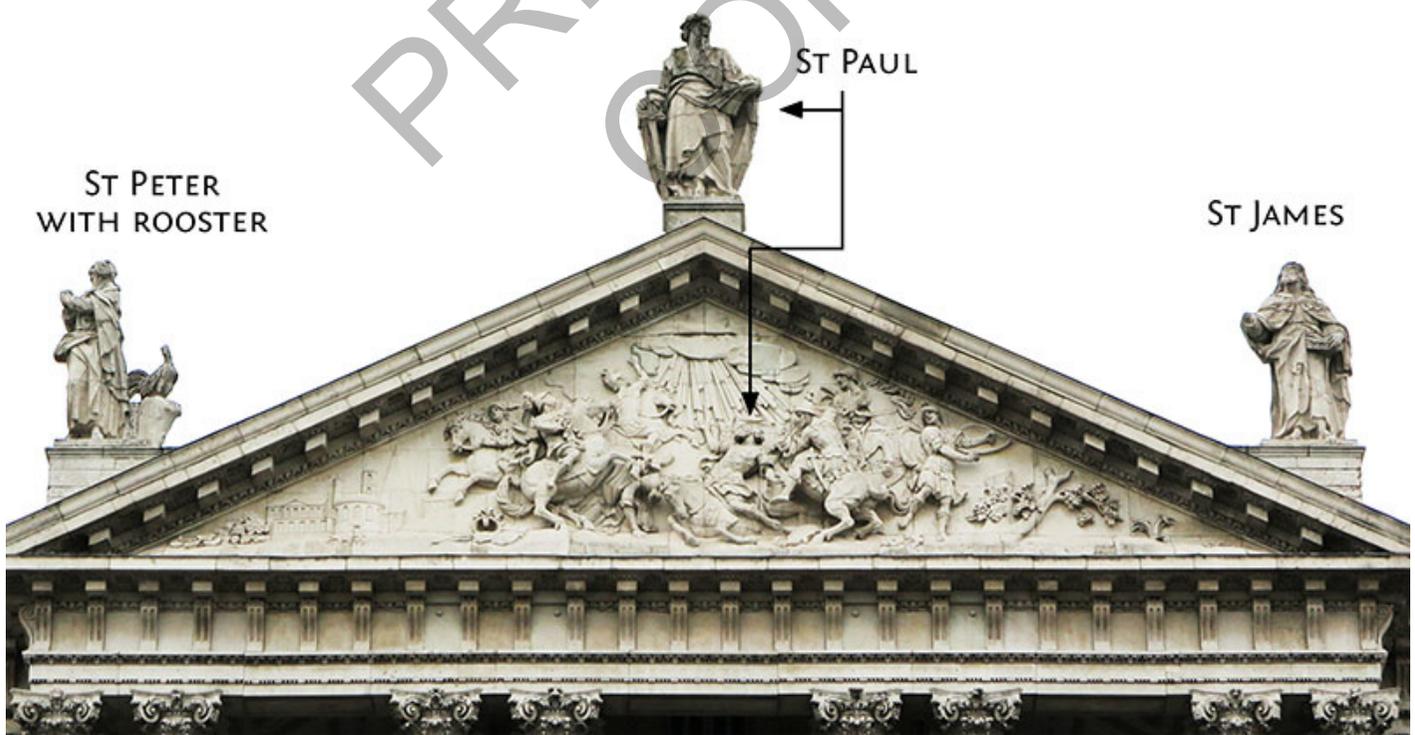


Fig 25. Pediment, west facade, St Paul's cathedral.

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### 3. St Bride \*



**Fig 45.** St Bride.  
Photo by: Tony Hisgett.

## Visiting

- **Location.** Fleet Street, between Salisbury Court and Bridge Lane. See our [Google Map](#). It sits back off of Fleet Street, tightly hemmed in by surrounding buildings.
- **Visiting hours.** Open Monday-Friday from 8:30am - 6:30pm; Sunday 9:30am - 6:30pm. Free admission.
- **Website.** For more information, visit the [official website](#).

## Background

- **Original church.** The original church on the site was likely built in the 6th century under the Saxons, with continuous expansion over time. It was destroyed by the Great Fire.
- **Wren church.** Built 1671-1678; the famed tower was undertaken from 1701-1703. It was damaged in WWII, but repaired from 1955-1957 generally consistent with Wren's design.
- **Name.** The name is likely derived from St Bridget, a 5th century Irish saint known for her quite valuable talent for changing water into beer.
- **The journalist's church.** The church has close associations with the publishing-printing industry given its proximity to Fleet Street, the center of the trade since William Caxton's apprentice, Wynkyn de Worde, set up a printing shop near Shoe Lane around 1500.

# Layout

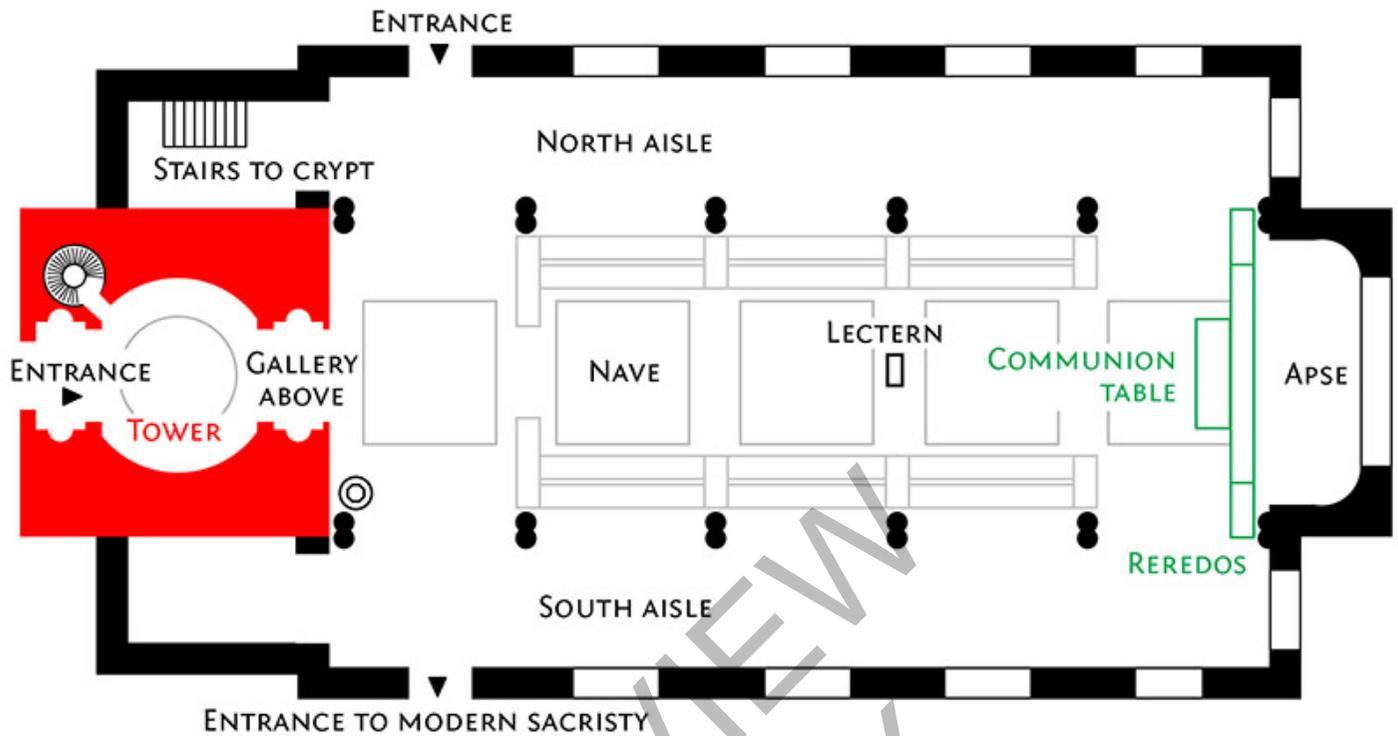


Fig 46. Layout, St Bride.

## Defining Features

- **Tower on west end.** The church's famous square-plan tower projects from the center of the west end (red highlights in Fig. 46).
- **Main entrance.** The tower holds an arched doorway — with a cartouche on the keystone, inscribed with “Domus Dei” (House of God) and topped by a cherub head — that serves as the church's primary entrance. The tower's eastern side has been fitted with a gallery that looks down over the nave (Fig. 46).
- **Nave with flanking aisles.** The nave divides the interior space of the church; it is separated from aisles on the north and south sides by paired Tuscan order columns (Fig. 46).
- **Projecting apse.** The apse projects from the center of the east end, balancing the tower's projection on the opposite side (Fig. 46).

# Exterior

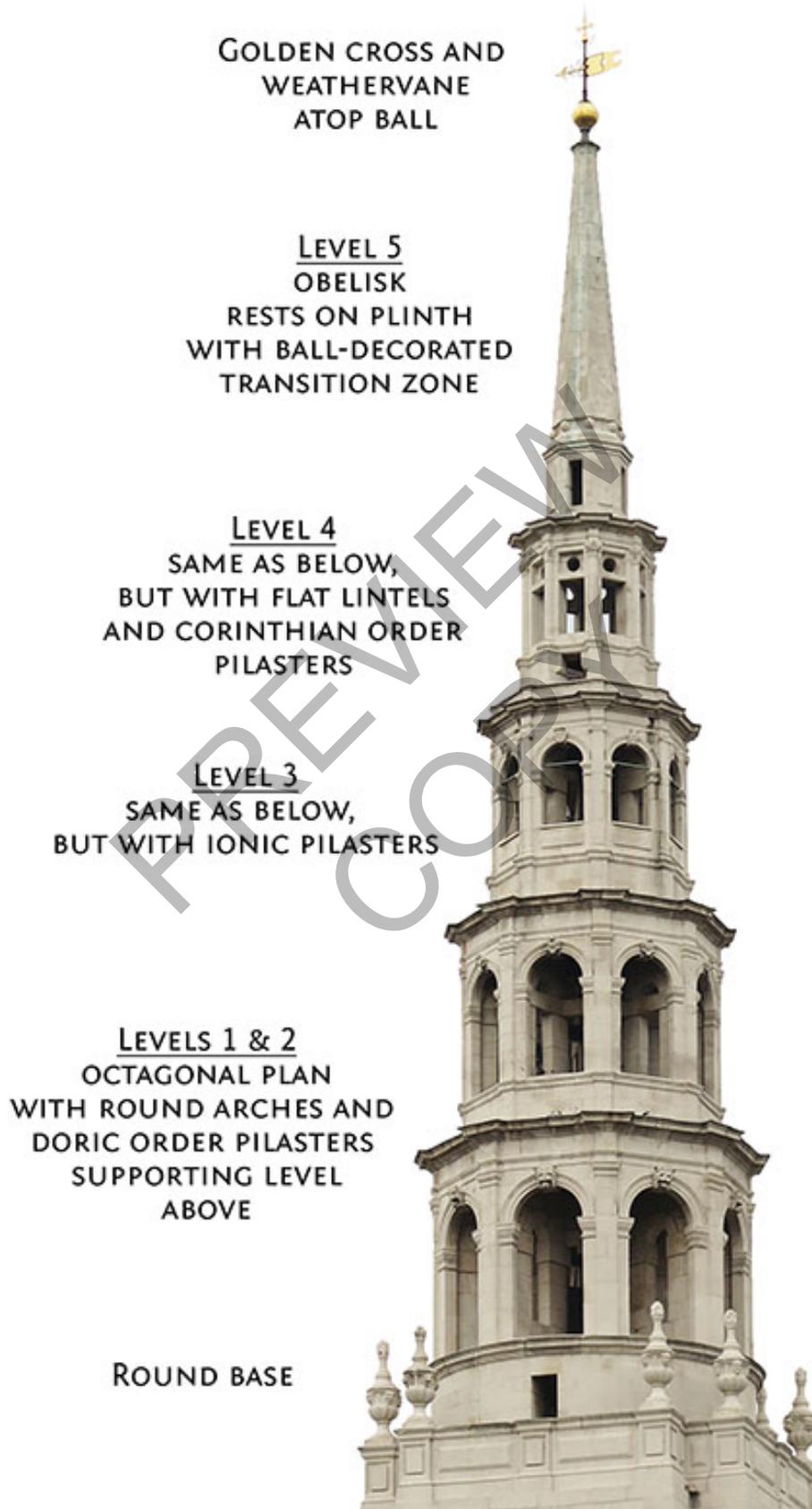


Fig 47. Spire, St Bride.

## Tower and Spire

The three-level tower with a 12-bell bellchamber supports one of Wren's most iconic spires. The spire — sitting on a round base — consists of five levels (Fig. 47).

- **First and second levels.** The first two levels are nearly identical. They are octagonal in plan, with each face holding a round-arched opening with a decorative keystone. Each is nested between larger Doric order pilasters at the angles that support the level above.
- **Third level.** The third level is very similar to the two below, the only change being that the pilaster order changes to Ionic.
- **Fourth level.** Once again similar, the fourth level has two changes: (a) the round arches are swapped for flat lintels; (b) and the pilaster order changes to Corinthian.
- **Fifth level.** On the top level, an octagonal plinth supports — via a round transition zone with small decorative balls — a sharply-angled obelisk.
- **Cross, weathervane and ball.** The spire is topped by a golden cross and ball, separated by a weathervane (the symbolism of which is discussed in the section entitled “Setting the Stage - What to Look For”).

## Observations

- **Wren's tallest tower.** The tower was initially built to a height of 234 feet (71 meters). However, after having been struck by lightning and damaged in 1764, its reconstructed height was reduced to 226 feet (69 meters). Even after its post-lightning diminution, it remains Wren's tallest in the city.
- **Consistent octagonal plan.** Unlike many of Wren's other spires, the plan of each successively higher level remains consistent: an octagon.
- **Adheres to classical precedent.** The column order follows classical precedent: Doric at lowest levels; Ionic in the middle; and Corinthian at the top.
- **Tiered wedding cake inspiration.** It is believed that the spire inspired the 18th century Ludgate Hill-based pastry chef William Rich's design for a multi-tiered wedding cake.

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## Interior



Fig 53. Looking west-to-east along nave, St Mary Aldermary.

## The Space

- **A brilliant Gothic aesthetic.** Anyone stepping into this church after having visited Wren's churches elsewhere in the city is bound to be a little surprised. At St Mary Aldermary, the architect put aside his trademark Renaissance inclinations and worked in a Gothic style, consistent with the earlier church. Although atypical, it is masterpiece, a special addition to our tour.
- **Fantastic nave ceiling.** The high ceiling — featuring plaster fan-vaulting — is unrivaled (Fig. 53). Fan-vaults spring from the tops of thin pilasters supporting the upper (clerestory) level of the nave, forming “fans” with embedded tri-lobed-arch designs. Together with the seven shallow saucer-like domes that run above the nave's centerline, they fill the entire ceiling with elegant tracery. The bright white color affords the interior a glowing, ethereal feel.
- **Stained-glass windows.** Unlike the clear-glass round-headed windows that typically characterize Wren's churches, those of St Mary Aldermary are stained glass. As you might expect, the most impressive of these windows occupy the east wall (Fig. 53). Dating from the 1950s, they are arranged in two tiers of five lights, the lower level with five-lobed tops and the upper with seven-lobed tops. They depict Christ's crucifixion (above) and resurrection (below).

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**Fig 54.** Wooden sword-rest, St Mary Aldermary.

## Highlight Furnishings

We profile the highlights of the interior, moving from west to east; the most noteworthy are marked with asterisks (\*).

- \* **Font.** An octagonal marble font with a ribbed basin sits in the northwest corner. An inscription on the basin reveals its donor: “Dutton Seaman Esq. 1682.” The oak cover has an ogee

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# Churchyard Gardens

Not all of Wren's churches were restored after the Blitz. However, their magic lives on since the ruins of many have been converted into gardens. They are some of the most peaceful spots in the old city.

## Our Favorites

The locations of these gardens are marked on our [Google Map](#).

- **Christ Church Greyfriars.** Perhaps the most evocative garden, it is framed by the surviving tower and broken west and north walls.
- **St Olave Old Jewry.** Although getting access can be tricky, St Olave's is by far the most secluded garden. Only the tower survives.
- **St Mary Somerset.** The original imposing tower rises over this small garden.
- **St Dunstan in the East.** Another highlight, the surviving window frames and walls make the garden a special retreat.

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## Support London's Churches

Aside from St Paul's, none of the fantastic Wren churches on our tour charge admission. But they need your support. Most have no parish and no regular source of income, yet are tasked with maintaining a historic landmark.

We encourage you to give to the churches directly: each church typically has a donation box on location and an electronic system for processing donations on its website.

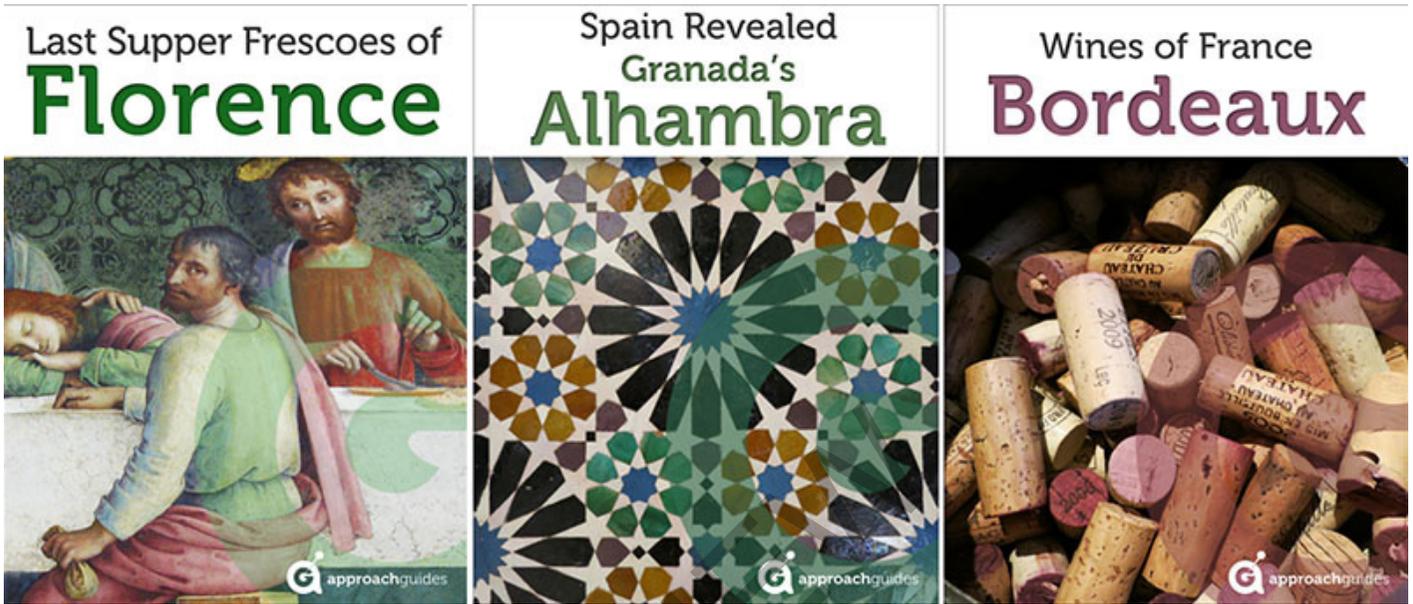
Alternatively, consider giving to [Friends of the City Churches](#), an architectural heritage charity dedicated to preserving the beautiful and unique churches found within the square mile of the City of London.



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Here are just a few of our London recommendations ([see the complete list](#)):

- **84, Charing Cross Road** A charming story and collection of letters between Helene Hanff, a New York writer, and Frank Doel, a London bookseller. *By Helene Hanff.*
- **“My London, And Welcome To It”** An insider’s insightful and humorous look at London. *By A.A. Gill.*
- **London Calls** Just for kids! Fun, rhyming adventure that follows a mother and daughter as they explore all the major sights and sounds of London. *By Gabby Dawnay.*

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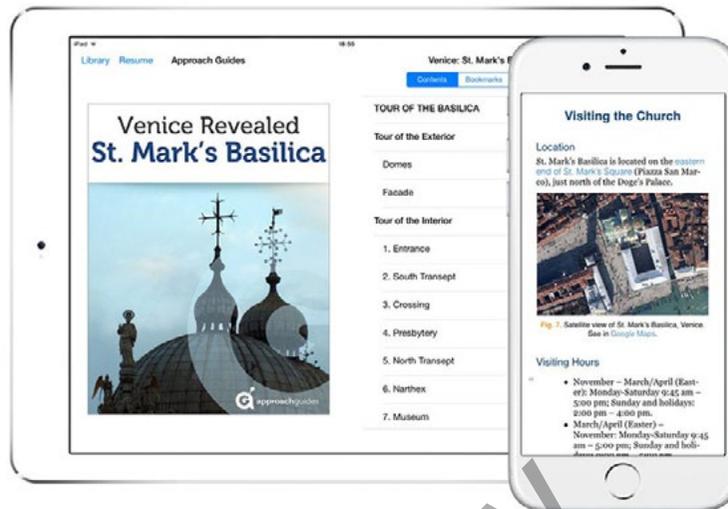
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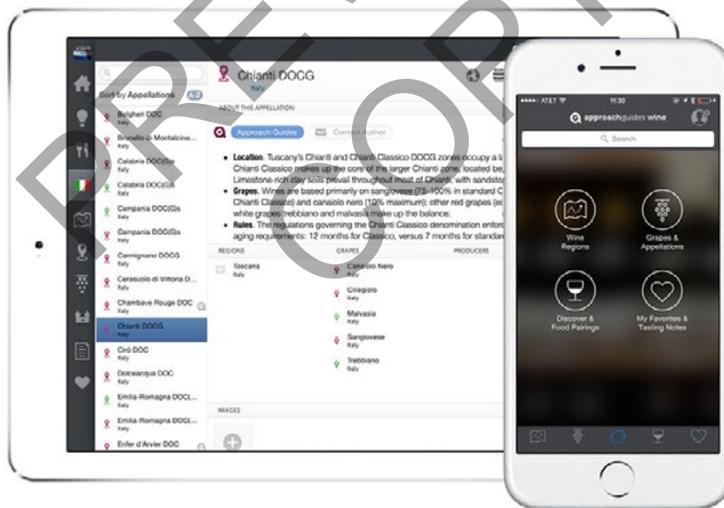
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