

STOP
7

ST ETHELBURGA (AETHELBURH)

An evangelist to a king



THE CRYPT FONT*

As you make your way down into the Crypt, you will see a font on your right. Can you find this image of St Ethelburga of Kent? She was a Christian Princess and when King Edwin of Northumbria wanted to marry her, she agreed on the understanding that she could continue to practise her religion. Their daughter Eanfled was the first infant to be baptised in the North of England. Ethelburga persuaded Edwin to convert to Christianity and he was baptised in 627 AD, building the first Anglo Saxon York Minster to house the baptismal font. Without Ethelburga's influence York Minster may never have been built. After Edwin's death, Ethelburga returned to Kent and founded a Benedictine convent.

**accessible route via the South Transept.*

STOP
8

LADY BEATRICE DE ROOS

15th Century promoter of the arts

ST WILLIAM'S WINDOW

As you make your way out of the Crypt, step onto the ramp and look up at the fabulous St William's Window. Can you spot Lady Beatrice and her dog in the bottom right-hand panel? She is shown kneeling at an altar in a window that celebrates the life and miracles of St William of York. Lady Beatrice used her wealth to fund this iconic window, making her the only female donor of a window and one of the most important medieval patrons of York Minster.



STOP
9

FRANCES MATTHEW

A woman of exemplary wisdom

LADY CHAPEL EAST WALL

Kneeling here you will find Frances Matthew, a well-educated Protestant Christian also known for her excellent needlework. When her husband died in 1628, she donated his library of 3000 books to the Minster to safeguard religious learning for the future. The original plaque described Frances as 'a woman of exemplary wisdom, gravity, piety, bounty ... not only above her sex, but the times' and praised her 'great care to advance learning'.

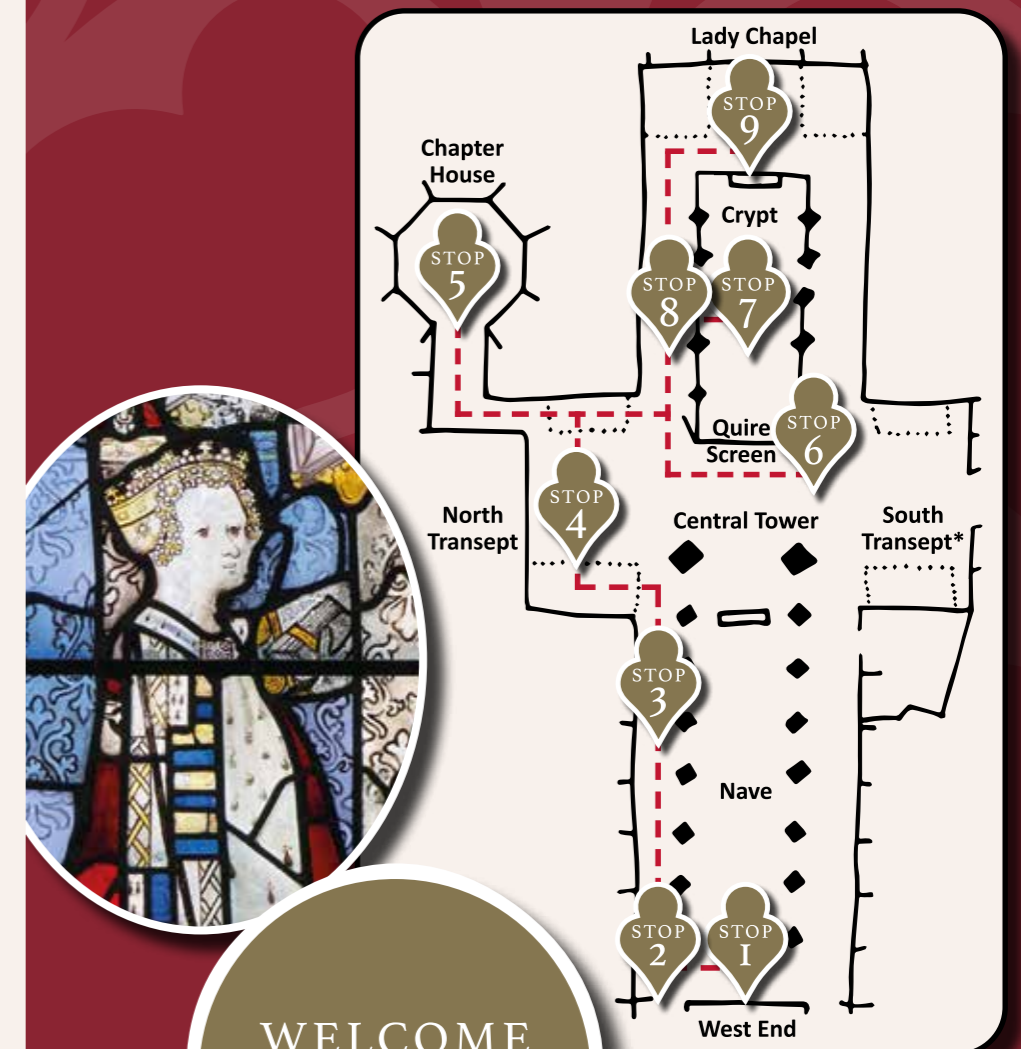


As you finish your tour, think about the women who influence you today and how you in turn might inspire women and girls of the future.

All images and text copyright Chapter of York.

WOMEN IN THE MINSTER

*Following in the Footsteps of
Women of Faith*



WELCOME
TO YORK
MINSTER

We invite you to follow in the footsteps of these inspirational women of faith who have played a part in creating this magnificent building, a little piece of Heaven on Earth. Sometimes as leaders, at other times behind the scenes. Creating exquisite embroidery, designing fabulous floral displays; using their wealth, learning and talents to support the life of the Minster.

**Accessible route to Stop 7*

Created in partnership with the Diocese of York

**DIOCESE OF
YORK**

 **YORK
MINSTER**

YORKMINSTER.ORG



Registered Charity No. 1201499

STOP
1

MARY

The Lord's Servant

GREAT WEST WINDOW

Mary, the Mother of Jesus is a golden thread running through the weave of York Minster. She is elevated in the statues, bosses and windows throughout the Minster. The Angel Gabriel appeared to Mary and told her she would have a son, the Saviour of the world. Mary's response was "I am the Lord's servant, ... may your word to me be fulfilled." Mary can be seen at the top of the Great West Window above you, alongside Christ.



STOP
2

ST HELENA

An Early Christian Pioneer

WEST WALL

The gold statue to the right of the west doors is Helena of Constantinople who lived around 248 to 330 AD. She was Empress of the Roman Empire and mother to Constantine who was declared Emperor here in York. Helena was an influential pioneer of early Christianity and she travelled to Palestine in her 70s where she is said to have discovered the true cross of Christ. Helena's Feast Day is celebrated on 21 May.



STOP
3

BELL FOUNDER'S WINDOW

14th Century Women in Industry

NAVE

As you make your way up the Nave, on your left you will arrive at the Bell Founder's Window. You will see many gold and silver bells in the stained glass and this scene depicts workers at the bell foundry. Can you spot a woman on the right of the panel identified by flowers in her headdress? This little insight into 14th century industrial life reminds us that women were often part of the work force at this time.



STOP
4

HELEN LITTLE

The Sisters' Window for the Sisters

NORTH TRANSEPT

Here you will encounter the immense mountain of glass that is the Five Sisters' Window. Following the First World War, a woman called Helen Little had a dream. She saw this window open out into an exquisite garden where women sat among beautiful flowers. Once awake, Helen declared that this should be 'The sisters' window for the sisters' and raised money to dedicate the window to the women of the empire who died in the First World War. 1400 names are engraved on wooden panels to the right of the Astronomical Clock.



Included on the wooden panels is Edith Cavell who helped 200 British men escape German occupied Belgium. She was sadly executed for War Treason, but her bravery continues to inspire others today: 'Standing as I do in view of God and Eternity, I realise that patriotism is not enough, I must have no hatred or bitterness towards anyone'. Edith is remembered in the Church of England's calendar of saints on 12 October.

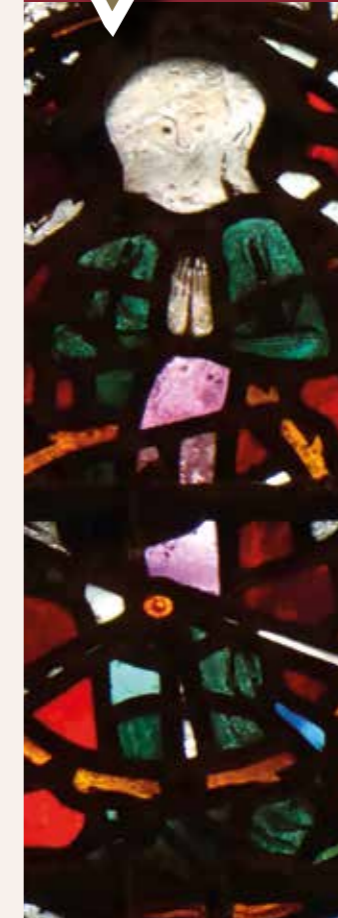
STOP
5

ST CATHERINE OF ALEXANDRIA

Steadfast in Faith

CHAPTER HOUSE

The first large window on your left remembers St Catherine, a young woman who refused to renounce her Christian faith in the 4th century AD. Catherine tried to persuade Emperor Maxentius that persecuting Christians was wrong which resulted in her imprisonment. Maxentius sent 50 of his best pagan philosophers to persuade Catherine to reject her faith but after spending time with Catherine, they all left having converted to Christianity. Catherine was strapped to a wheel used for torture but as she touched it, the wheel shattered and so Maxentius beheaded Catherine around 305 AD aged 17 or 18. If you look up, you can see this image of Catherine and the wheel at the top of the window above you.



STOP
6

ST CECILIA

Sang in her heart to the Lord

SOUTH TRANSEPT

Walk to the Quire Screen and look up. Can you see the beautifully carved angels worshipping God? Continue towards the South Transept and on your left you will find the statue of St Cecilia with her pipe organ. She lived in the 3rd century AD and is known as the patron saint of music and musicians. It is said that Cecilia was forced into marriage but at her wedding she sat apart, 'singing to God in her heart'. She was later martyred and her feast day is the 22 November. Women and girls can now inspire others to worship God as they sing in York Minster's choir today.

