

## Trinity's First Organ

The original English-built organ was given to Trinity in 1733 by the famous Anglican philosopher the Rev'd Dr. George Berkeley, who preached here in 1729-31 and later became the Bishop of Cloyne in Ireland. The organ was assembled by Trinity's first organist, Charles Theodore Pachelbel (a son of the great German Baroque composer Johann Pachelbel). The center section of the oak case is original, including the royal crown and two bishops' mitres. These symbols of British authority survived the Revolution, as Trinity was the garrison church for British troops in 1776-79. After the troops left, patriots destroyed a royal coat of arms over the altar.

## Church Windows and Memorials

Many of the small-paned windows throughout the church have the original 18<sup>th</sup> century wavy blown glass. Five memorial windows on the north side covered the original plain glass in the Victorian era. Three similar windows from the Clayton and Bell factory in London illustrate the artists' excellence in the painted-and-fired technique. Unfortunately, the designer was not told they would be placed under a balcony that would obscure the top of the windows and the figures' heads when viewed from across the aisles.

By contrast, the figures in the two Louis Comfort Tiffany windows are seated, so they can be appreciated from all locations. Tiffany's opalescent, drapery and fracture glass techniques are used in both windows.

Since the late 18th century, Trinity families have memorialized loved ones in marble, bronze, silver and slate plaques on the walls of the sanctuary. They honor founders, military heroes, educators, vestrymen, philanthropists and magnates of industry and finance. Naval heroes Oliver Hazard Perry and his younger brother Matthew Calbraith Perry were baptized at Trinity in 1795. Their memorial plaques are found on the ground floor north aisle, and in the south balcony, respectively.



## The Bell Tower

Standing at 150 feet, the tower was built in 1769 to replace the original one damaged by a storm. Called a "wedding cake steeple," it has three distinct tiers that symbolize the Holy Trinity.

Newport clockmaker William Clagett made the first clock donated by Jahleel Brenton in 1733. The current clock (our third) is an E. Howard Round Top clock from the 1890s. It was motorized ca. 1950 and still strikes on the hour.

Topped with a gilded weathervane shaped like a bishop's mitre with ribbons flowing in the breeze, Trinity's tower is an important navigation aid for mariners in Newport Harbor.

*We feel fortunate to have you visit us today.*

*Donations are greatly appreciated.*

*Restrooms are in Honyman Hall across the street, and in the Mary Street parking lot.*

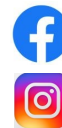


## TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH

The Rev. Canon Meaghan Kelly Brower, *Rector*



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# TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Welcome to  
The Heart of Newport

Parish Founded 1698  
Present Church Built 1726

## Self-Guided Tour



For over 300 years parishioners of Trinity Church have worshipped Almighty God in Newport, with Sunday services held in this building since 1726.

We are a community of Episcopalians, gathering to Love, Know and Serve Jesus Christ through worship, Christian education, and serving each other and those in need. Our historic parish is a living beacon calling all for worship, fellowship and growth in the grace and knowledge of our Lord.

## Worship Services

**Sundays:** 8:00 AM, Holy Eucharist, Rite I  
Traditional language dating from 1548  
10:00 AM, Holy Eucharist (with music)

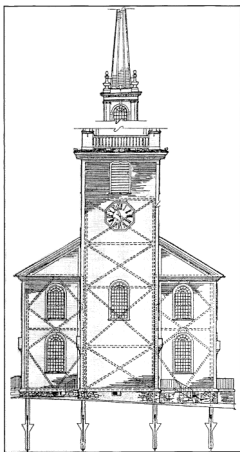
**Wednesdays:** 12:00 Noon, Healing Eucharist

## Historical Information

Trinity Church was founded about 1698, a latecomer to the Newport church community that already included Quakers, Baptists, and Sephardic Jews. The new church was aided by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, an Anglican missionary organization begun in 1701. The early parish membership included several French Huguenots.

The first church was built in 1700, north of the present structure that was built in 1724-26 by American master builder Richard Munday, based on Georgian designs of Sir Christopher Wren, architect of St. Paul's Cathedral in London. To accommodate a growing congregation, in 1762 the church was cut in two, the chancel was moved farther eastward to Spring Street, and 36 pews were added to the intervening space, as it is seen today.

In 1986-87 Trinity Church underwent a life-saving restoration. Its collapse was prevented with hidden steel beams that stabilized the structure in its leaning position. At the same time the interior was restored to its 18th century simplicity.



## The Tower Room

Entry into the church is through the Tower Room that, according to oral tradition, contains Trinity's first steeple bell. Dated 1702, it bears a broad arrow indicating Crown property. Two large black slates list the names and dates of Trinity's rectors since 1698. Memorials of significant donors are also displayed here.

Opposite the doors to the sanctuary are the remaining pieces of a black marble monument sent by King Louis XVI of France as a memorial to the Chevalier de Ternay—the French admiral who in 1780 brought Comte de Rochambeau's 5,000-man army and as many sailors to Newport to fight for American independence. De Ternay died only five months later of typhus at Hunter House on Washington Street. His funeral was conducted by nine Roman Catholic military and naval chaplains and he was buried in Trinity's churchyard, there being no Roman Catholic churches in Newport at the time. Plaques for the unmarked graves of two French officers, buried earlier, were placed nearby and dedicated in 2021.

## Box Pews

The unique wood enclosures in the sanctuary served several purposes in the colonial church. In winter, the high walls and raised floors kept out drafts and held in the heat from foot warmers containing hot coals brought from home by parishioners. Pews were decorated as the owners wished, generally reflecting their home décor. Some large families joined two pews together.

Most importantly in an era before cash donations, the sale of pews was a requirement for membership that provided capital for the parish, plus a regular income from the annual pew tax. For the owner, the privately owned pew offered a permanently reserved seat that could be passed on. Many pews were owned by descendants of original owners well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Now all pews are owned by the church corporation, so visitors and members alike may sit in any pew.

During the 18<sup>th</sup> century, *everyone* attended Sunday services. Household servants and enslaved persons sat in narrow pews, examples of which survive in the north gallery. On the ground floor, legends from various periods ascribe the use of the two raised pews in the back of the sanctuary to prisoners and to nursing mothers. At one point vestry members sat there. The north pew (to the right of the door as you leave) was the original site of the font, where baptisms were performed.

**Pews of Special Interest:** Pew 1 (last one in the north aisle) was owned by Trinity Church's builder, Richard Munday. Pew 81 is called our "Distinguished Visitor's" pew. Although undocumented, our oral history states General George Washington worshiped here during the American Revolution while meeting with General Rochambeau. Other VIPs include Queen Elizabeth II in 1976, Princess Margaret, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, and three US presidents. Two pews reserved for our elected wardens are identified by gold-tipped scepters called "nodding rods" that were once used to wake people who fell asleep during the long services.

Tucked on the floors of the pews and along the altar rail are "kneelers" that are handmade by the men and women of Trinity's Needlepoint Guild. Each one is uniquely stitched with images of Bible stories, church symbols, emblems of the US Armed Forces, and family crests. The kneelers in Pew 81 have the seal of the President of the United States and the monogram of Queen Elizabeth II.

## Candle-lit Chandeliers

Four multi-tiered Colonial brass chandeliers light the sanctuary. The two closest to the tower were made by Thomas Drew in Exeter, England in 1728. The third was ordered in 1763 after the church was enlarged, and the fourth was made and installed in the chancel in 1987. The gilded ceiling medallions that support the ropes contain a rose (symbolizing God's love), plus grapes and wheat (symbolizing the Eucharist).

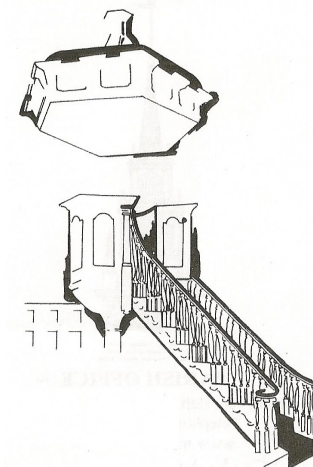
## The Chancel and Altar

The 1728 black and gold painted canvas panels with The Lord's Prayer, Ten Commandments, and Apostles' Creed form the backdrop for the unadorned altar. The original 17<sup>th</sup> century Jacobean altar table came from the earliest church. The round "fisheye" windows at the sides allow natural light to accent the altar.

The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel sent a silver chalice and paten to Trinity in January 1703. Their records indicate it was the first such communion silver the Society sent to any church. These historic vessels, made by a London silversmith, are still used today for special services.

## Triple-Tiered Wineglass Pulpit

The pulpit is the only three-tiered, wineglass pulpit left in America, if not the world, that remains in the center aisle. The sermon is still given from the highest point,



reached by ten steps – one for each of The Ten Commandments. During the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the sermon was the focal point of the service. Later, as the liturgical emphasis returned to the celebration of the Eucharist, other early churches moved their center aisle pulpits to the north side of the altar (at the right hand of God),

An enormous wooden "sounding board" hangs over the pulpit to help project the preacher's voice. In 1855, the rector had it removed because of its "depressing effect" over him. It was replaced in 1859, probably with a new flat under-surface replacing the original paneled one.