

The Windows of St. Michael's

A brief history about those who donated the stained glass windows of St. Michael's, or in whose memory they were given.

Window Symbol: Pelican

According to legend, in times of famine the mother pelican pierced herself with her beak drawing blood in order to feed her young and save them from death, but in turn lost her own life. Early Christians used this legend to symbolize Jesus Christ, who sheds his blood for our redemption. We are saved from death through the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ with which we are fed in the Holy Eucharist.

Given by: Bridget McGlynn

A number of Bridget McGlynn's were in the parish at the time. Research leans toward this being the one on this window. If anyone knows this to be incorrect, please let us know.

The Bridget McGlynn who donated this window appears to be one of four Irish immigrant sisters who lived together at 64 Liberty Street, the house next to the church, during the 1860s through the early 1900s. The four sisters (Maria, Bridget, Ellen and Elizabeth "Lizzie" McGlynn) remained unmarried throughout their lives, although a number of their siblings had families who lived in the parish. Bridget McGlynn was born around 1840 in Drumlish, parish of Killoe, County Longford, Ireland, daughter of Owen McGlynn and Anna McGlavin. She may have immigrated about 1855 with some of her sisters and brothers, most of whom settled in Pawcatuck and Westerly.

Bridget spent many of her years working as a housekeeper and servant in some of the more affluent homes in Westerly and Pawcatuck. She also worked at times in the local mills. In 1905 her sisters Maria, Ellen and Lizzie all succumbed to tuberculosis and died within four months of each other, leaving Bridget alone in the house next to the church. She continued to live there until about 1909 when the house passed to the McMahan sisters.

Sometime around 1909 Bridget McGlynn may have died and is likely buried with other family members in St. Michael's Old Cemetery. In the cemetery there's a fairly large monument to the McGlynn family of County Longford. In addition to this McGlynn window in the church, there was also a window donated by or in memory of a Bridget McGlynn in the convent. It's not clear at this point if these windows are dedicated to the same Bridget or if they were given by different women.

Descendants

Descendants of the McGlynn family may include members of the **McGlynn, Ahearn, Burns, Cook, Craddock, Jacob, Lynch, McCaffrey, McGrath, and Purtill** families. The McGlynn sisters and brothers were housekeepers, servants, millworkers, stonecutters and drillers in the quarries. A brother, Patrick McGlynn, was a benevolent and caring supporter of other Irish immigrant families in the parish and was often referred to by many parishioners as "Daddy" McGlynn.

