

December 16 **Ralph Adams Cram, 1942, and Richard Upjohn, 1878, Architects, and John LaFarge, Artist, 1910**

Ralph Adams Cram and Richard Upjohn were major architects whose influence on the design and decoration of Episcopal churches in the late 19th and early 20th centuries is without equal. Cram was born on this day in 1863 at Hampton Falls, New Hampshire. After an apprenticeship in Boston, Cram established his own firm in 1890, specializing in designing churches. Heavily influenced by Anglo-Catholic principles, Cram was a leading proponent for an “American gothic revival”—buildings that were reminiscent of the ritual and structural dominance of the medieval period. Because of his many commissions for chapels and other buildings on college and university campuses, Cram is also remembered as the originator of the “collegiate gothic” style. Among his works is the great gothic nave of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, New York City. Richard Upjohn was born in 1802 in England, where he trained as a cabinetmaker. He immigrated to the United States in 1829 and eventually took up residence in Boston, where he worked as a draftsman, art teacher, and eventually an architect. His first major commission was for a gothic-style building for St. John’s Episcopal Church in Bangor, Maine, a building that was later destroyed by fire. He was commissioned in 1839 to design and supervise the construction of a new building for the Parish of Trinity Church, Wall Street, New York City. It was completed in 1846 and continues as Upjohn’s most well known accomplishment. Upjohn is also remembered for his sketchbooks of small wood-frame designs for churches in rural towns and villages. These designs were widely copied and adapted. As a result, Upjohn was among the early progenitors of “carpenter gothic.”

Collect Gracious God, we thank you for the vision of Ralph Adams Cram, John LaFarge, and Richard Upjohn, whose harmonious revival of the Gothic enriched our churches with a sacramental understanding of reality in the face of secular materialism; and we pray that we may honor your gifts of the beauty of holiness given through them, for the glory of Jesus Christ; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, in glory everlasting. Amen.

Lessons

Ephesians 2:17–22

So he came and proclaimed peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near; for through him both of us have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. In him the whole structure is joined together and grows

into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God.

Psalm 118:19–29

19 Open for me the gates of righteousness; *I will enter them; I will offer thanks to the Lord.

20 “This is the gate of the Lord; *he who is righteous may enter.”

21 I will give thanks to you, for you answered me *and have become my salvation.

22 The same stone which the builders rejected *has become the chief cornerstone.

23 This is the Lord’s doing, *and it is marvelous in our eyes.

24 On this day the Lord has acted; *we will rejoice and be glad in it.

25 Hosannah, Lord, hosannah! *Lord, send us now success.

26 Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord; *we bless you from the house of the Lord.

27 God is the Lord; he has shined upon us; *form a procession with branches up to the horns of the altar.

28 “You are my God, and I will thank you; *you are my God, and I will exalt you.”

29 Give thanks to the Lord, for or he is good; *his mercy endures for ever.

Matthew 7:24–29

“Everyone then who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell—and great was its fall!”

Now when Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes.