

❖ **10. As you walk along the north aisle, look out at the Burying Ground...**

This church was built on a corner of Boston's first burying ground because the city's Puritan citizens refused to sell any other land to Anglicans – the people whose religious oppression the Puritans hoped to escape by coming to America. The headstones in the King's Chapel Burying Ground are often quite elaborate, and the Tapping Stone, found just inside, is famous for its depiction of death and the passage of time. The Burying Ground contains some of the oldest gravestones in the city, including one from 1632. It also has Massachusetts' first governor, John Winthrop; the first woman off the Mayflower, Mary Chilton; the man who rode with Paul Revere on his midnight ride, William Dawes; and the partial inspiration for Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*, Elizabeth Pain. The most recent burial took place in 2003.

❖ **11. Continue down the aisle, stop at the Apthorp monument...**

Charles Apthorp was a prominent Boston merchant, a Senior Warden of King's Chapel and the maternal grandfather of architect Charles Bulfinch. Charles Apthorp's daughter Sarah was a famous poet during her lifetime. The monument was made in London by Henry Cheere in 1759. Like this one, the monuments throughout the church carry on the old English tradition of honoring prominent clergy and parishioners who have passed on. Some of these, like Charles Apthorp, the architect Charles Bulfinch (Apthorp's grandson), Joseph May and Frances Shirley, are buried in tombs in the crypt of the church.

❖ **12. At the head of the aisle is the entrance to the Vestry...**

The Vestry is the room where the ministers and attendants prepare for services. The present room was built in 1858 and is furnished with pieces that have been used in the King's Chapel Vestry for many generations.

❖ **13. The Bede Book...**

Next to the Vestry is a small book where you are invited to enter requests for prayers. These requests are included in the prayers of the church during the week.

You have completed the formal tour of King's Chapel. However there are many details of the church and its fascinating history which this short guide cannot cover. Our guides will be happy to answer your questions. Before you leave, go to the chancel rail and read the sign which begins with the Latin word *Venite*.

**Thank You for Visiting King's Chapel!**

**Worship Services:**

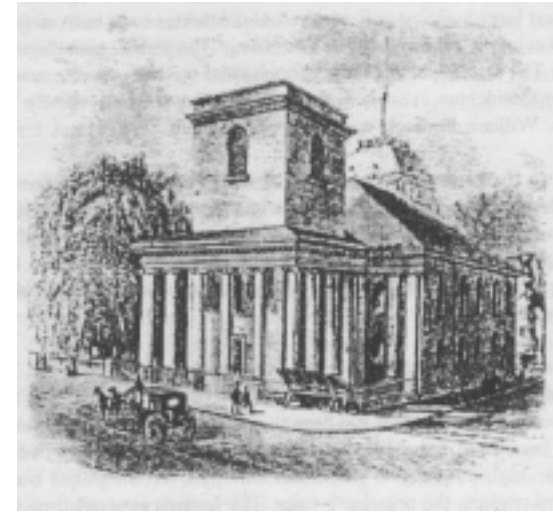
**Sundays at 11:00 a.m.**

**Wednesdays at 12:15 p.m.**

**Special services for Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas.**

**The Rev. Earl K. Holt III, Minister**

**King's Chapel Offices located at  
64 Beacon Street, Boston MA 02108**



## **WELCOME TO KING'S CHAPEL** *A Self-Guided Tour*

*King's Chapel was founded in 1686 by Royal Governor Andros of the Province of New England, under the rule of King James II of England. It was the first Anglican Church in New England. After the American Revolution, it became the first Unitarian Church in America in 1785. Today, we are an independent Christian Church with a Unitarian Christian theology, an Anglican form of liturgy and a congregational form of governance. Worship Services are held regularly throughout the year on Sundays at 11:00 am and Wednesdays at 12:15 pm, with weekly recitals on Tuesdays at 12:15pm. Visitors are welcome to attend!*

*Church School and other activities take place in the Parish House at 64 Beacon Street. Call 617-227-2155 for more information on church activities.*

✘ **1. Begin the tour by entering through the double doors...**

King's Chapel was designed by the first American architect, Peter Harrison of Newport, RI, in 1749 and completed in 1754. It was the first large building in British colonial America to be built of quarried stone and replaced an older wooden church whose pulpit and underflooring are still a part of the current Church. The double Corinthian columns, rare in English churches of the period, are completely unique among American colonial churches. The arrangement of the columns and arches give the sanctuary a spacious feeling. The Corinthian capitals and decorations were individually hand-carved by Boston craftsman William Burbeck and his apprentices in 1758.

✘ **2. Continue up the center aisle and look at the pews...**

The box pews of King's Chapel are the church's original pews. They were built with high sides to keep the worshippers warm in the winter. A small foot-stove could be placed on the floor to provide extra warmth. Most pews were owned by a family who paid "pew rent" and furnished the pew according to their own needs. The pews were decorated according to individual family preferences until the twentieth century. While our upholstery has been redone, the padding beneath is still made of horse hair!

✘ **3. At the front of the church on the left is the pulpit...**

The pulpit was built in 1717 by French Huguenot Peter Vintoneau for the earlier, wooden King's Chapel. It is the oldest pulpit in the United States still in use on its original site. It is called a wine glass pulpit because of its shape. Note the hand-carved balusters that support the railings leading to the pulpit. The canopy is a sounding board that amplifies and projects the preacher's voice. The lessons are read from the Reader's Desk at the second level. Originally a Clerk at the lower desk lead the congregation in singing chants and reading psalms.

✘ **4. In front of you is the chancel...**

The Communion Table was a gift of King William in memory of Queen Mary, given in 1696. The four panels, inscribed with The Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments and the Apostles' Creed were made in London for the church in the same year. The dove and garlands that adorn the frames are the work of William Burbeck. The two marble busts inside the chancel portray the Chapel's first two Unitarian ministers: James Freeman (minister from 1785-1835) and Francis Greenwood (1824-1843). The other busts represent the Revs. Ephraim Peabody (1845-1856) and Henry Wilder Foote (1861-1889). Parishioners still receive communion at the chancel railing made by Ebenezer Messenger in 1758.

✘ **5. Turn right and look to the back of the church. In the gallery you will see the organ...**

King's Chapel was the first church in America to use an organ, bequeathed by a local merchant, Thomas Brattle, in 1713. The present organ, our sixth, was made by C. B. Fisk. It is the first mechanical action organ made in America in this

century. The organ case is a reproduction of the case built for the Bridge Organ made in London for King's Chapel and installed in this building in 1756. The crown and miters and the carvings are from the original Bridge organ case. From colonial times to the present, music has been an important part of King's Chapel and of its contribution to the life of Boston. Heinrich Christensen, Music Director of King's Chapel, heads a list of outstanding composers and organists, including Daniel Pinkham, who have directed the music here since 1714, when William Price became King's Chapel's first musician.

✘ **6. Now proceed up the side aisle as far as the columns...**

Quarrymaster Ralph Allen of Bath, England, offered King's Chapel enough stone for the columns and decoration of the church, but the parishioners couldn't afford the shipping costs or pay for the skilled masons necessary to do the work. Instead, pine trees with the King's Mark from the royal forests in York, Maine, were cut down, rough hewn and turned on huge, water-powered lathes. After they were installed, the hand-carved facades were added. Look down at the bottom of the left side of the pedestal and you can see the central column inside the casing.

✘ **7. Go a short distance up the aisle to the Governor's Pew...**

This large pew was reserved for the Royal Governor, his family and guests. President Washington sat here on October 27, 1789, while attending a concert on his second visit to King's Chapel. He had also attended services when he was a young man as a guest of Royal Governor Shirley while serving in the French and Indian War. The large "Queen Ann" chair on the left is a copy of one belonging to Thomas Hutchinson, Governor of the colony from 1770 to 1774. During the American Revolution, Patriots pulled out the original decorations for this pew in protest of British occupation; it was restarted in 1928.

✘ **8. As you continue up the aisle, notice the memorials...**

King's Chapel has followed the English tradition of mounting memorials of parishioners who have made distinguished contributions to parish and community life. You can see three kinds of memorials here: family memorials, like those to the memory of Frances Shirley, Kirk Boott and Charles Apthorp; parish memorials honoring the memory of people like Charles Curtis, Oliver Wendell Holmes and Joseph May; and war memorials recalling the deaths of sons and daughters of the parish who died serving in various wars. Several of these memorials signify family burials in the crypt beneath the floor of King's Chapel.

✘ **9. Up the stairs in front of you are our balcony, tower, and bell...**

Pleas to the king and the Anglican bishops for money to build the church were never answered, and the parishioners were never able to finish the ambitious design, which included a tall stone spire. They were able, however, to have a bell cast in London in 1772, re-cast by Revere & Sons in 1816 after it fractured in 1814. Weighing over a ton, it is the largest bell ever cast in the Revere foundry and the last made by Paul Revere himself. It is still rung for all our services.