

THE ROSE WINDOW

The original stained glass was blown out when the church was bomb-damaged in 1944 and post-war shortages meant it had to be replaced by plain glass. The church had to meet in the Sunday School downstairs until 1947.



THE CHURCH CLOCK

It is important in the Reformed tradition that the minister can see how long he is preaching. This prominent clock was installed, with the gallery and the fine Victorian North windows, in 1861, and was a gift from a Highgate "character" of the time, Joseph Clarke.



A short church history – "Highgate Dissenters" – is available, price £9.

POND SQUARE CHAPEL

also known as

Highgate United Reformed Church

UNITED REFORMED CHURCH?

A national union of former Presbyterian and former Congregational Churches dating from 1972. However, the two churches in Highgate united in 1967.

WHEN WAS IT BUILT?

1859, but there were two earlier Congregational churches (1782 and 1822) in Southwood Lane and a Presbyterian meeting-house was built, soon as Nonconformists were allowed to worship openly. The meeting-house was rebuilt in 1809, when it was reopened as a Baptist church. It closed about 1970 and is now the Library of Highgate School. The former Presbyterian church in Cromwell Avenue, with which Pond Square united in 1967, was built in 1888. Pond Square Chapel is now the only Nonconformist church in Highgate.

WHO BUILT POND SQUARE CHAPEL?

he minister who launched the appeal was Rev Josiah Viney, who lived at Fernwood, North Hill, and was a noted local philanthropist. He built twelve model houses for poorer people, for example, which are still standing, with drying grounds and play areas ("Verandah Cottages"). The architect was T Roger Smith. This was his very first commission, but he was noted later for public buildings in India and was twice President of the Architectural Association.

HAS THE BUILDING CHANGED?

Not outside, but very much, inside. In a major refurbishment completed in 1984 the pews were removed, the old very large organ dismantled and all the "ecclesiastical furniture" made moveable, so that use of the church is very versatile. As well as religious services, it is used for musical concerts, lectures, public meetings, exhibitions of painting etc. And the modernised Sunday School downstairs is also used as a secular school, for ballet and yoga, and can be hired, for example, for wedding receptions etc.



THE ORGAN

Not the original, but like the church building it dates from the 1850s. It is a chamber organ probably intended for a country house and has a very sweet tone.



THE COMMUNION TABLE

Came from the Presbyterian church in Cromwell Avenue, with the minister's and elders' chairs, and so dates from 1888. The smaller table, now used as the place from which the Scriptures are read, was the former Congregational Communion Table and dates from 1859.



THE PULPIT

Viney's original 1859 pulpit, made moveable. The fall, in gold thread, was worked by Flora Ogilvie, a life-long church member, and one of her paintings is in the church lounge.



THE STAINED GLASS

The Whight window (below) showing Jesus with the children, was installed in 1906. The enclosures and windows are a good example of arts and craft design. The window on the left, 1912, depicts Mary at Lazarus's tomb, and is a memorial to the wife of the minister of the time who had died after nursing one of her children through scarlet fever.

THE CROSS

Specially commissioned for the refurbished church in 1984, using pipes and wood from the original organ. It is by Brian Falconbridge and won an award from the E Vincent Harris Fund for Mural Decoration. It was a condition that it should be non-figurative, in the Reformed tradition.

