

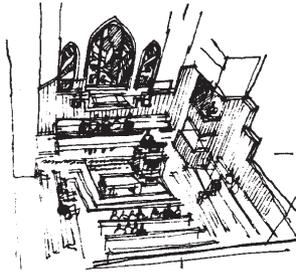
Journey of Faith

Church Home Tour



1946

First Chinese Baptist Church
1 Waverly Place
San Francisco, California
www.fcbc-sf.org



You are invited to tour our historic building by visiting the different places identified in this tour guide.

Historic Overview

The church was organized on October 3, 1880 under the leadership of Dr. J.B. Hartwell, meeting in rented quarters on Washington Street across from Portsmouth Square. The first building on this site was built in 1888, and was destroyed in the San Francisco Earthquake and Fire in 1906. The present structure with two floors and a balcony was erected in 1908 with funds donated by Baptist churches from across the country. In 1931, the top floor was added and the rest of the building received extensive renovation. In preparation for the church's centennial year in 1980, the church sanctuary underwent a major renovation design that you can still see today.



1888

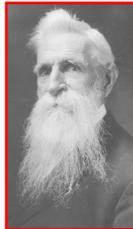


1906



1908

J. B. Hartwell,
founder, 1880



Rev. Tong Kit
Hing, First
Chinese Pastor
1886-1900



First Kindergarten 1898

125th Anniversary Exhibits

To commemorate our heritage, five exhibits were installed in the church in 2005 to provide a historical overview.

First Floor (Vestibule)

Reaching Out to the Chinese: 1880-1925

First Floor (15 Waverly Entrance)

Building Foundations of Faith: 1926-1950

First Staircase Landing

Becoming a Church: 1951-1970

Second Staircase Landing

Moving Beyond the Church: 1971-1990

Fourth Floor (Fellowship Hall)

Going Forward in Faith: 1991-2005

Beginning Outside

1. Cornerstone Marker

On Sacramento Street, the stone marker tells the story of how the American Baptist Home Mission Society—originally in New York City—with the help of Baptist churches around the country rebuilt the “Chinese Baptist Mission” in 1908 after the devastation of the 1906 earthquake and fire.

2. Clinker Bricks

Our church is one of probably a half dozen buildings in San Francisco built with “clinker bricks.” Salvaged from the 1906 earthquake and fire, these unique bricks have glassy surfaces created by intense heat. They serve as a constant reminder that out of destruction, God’s people have renewed hope and new life.

3. Centennial Plaque

In 1980, this bronze historical plaque on Waverly Place was installed to bear ongoing witness to those who walk by the church—of the members’ deep convictions in Christ to serve our community.



1928

4. Raindrop Washers

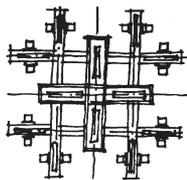
To secure the through-bolts that seismically retrofitted our brick building in 2000, decorative washers were placed outside. If you look closely, you will see that the washers feature a “raindrop.” We are reminded how water is a symbol of washing away all of our sins in baptism, how rain makes all things grow, and how God’s teaching is like rain. See our new “raindrops” encircling our church home with God’s teaching! “May my teaching drop like rain.” (Deut. 32:2)

First Floor



5. Head of Christ Medallion

The Head of Christ stained glass medallion in the image of Rembrandt’s painting *Christ and the Rich Young Ruler* was in the center of the original windows installed when the present building was erected in 1908. The restored medallion is dedicated to James and Marie Chuck in honor of Dr. Chuck’s almost 40 years as Senior Pastor. The medallion is lit 24 hours a day to shine the light of Christ in our darkened world.



6. Jerusalem Cross Sanctuary Lights

High above the sanctuary are lights that form two intertwining interposed symbols. The main cross is representative of the central place of Jesus Christ in the Christian community. The other four crosses represent the four Gospels. The interplay of light and structure reminds us of our spiritual dependence and interaction with the spirit of Jesus Christ.

7. Waverly Place Windows

Originally installed in 1908, the central motif of the center window consists of a round eight-petal design. In the center is Christ the Good Shepherd. “who is willing to die for the sheep.” (John 10:11) The stained glass of varied colors and textures are designed to catch light in such a way as to give a jewel-like radiance. The overall floral design suggests resurrection, and the continuing presence of Christ among his people.

8. The Front Windows

Commissioned and installed in 1979 as a part of the Centennial renovation, these windows are reminiscent of Chinese landscape paintings. In the Old Testament, rock is a symbol for the steadfast and unfailing protection of God for his people. Water is a symbol of life, cleansing, and repentance. Christ is often envisioned as a fountain or spiritual rock from which springs the living water of the Gospel to nourish the souls of those who drink from it. The inscription on the left window reads, “Come...accept the water of life.” (Rev. 22:17)

來取生命的水

The fish, the oldest Christian symbol for Christ, was used by the early Christians as a secret sign by which they identified themselves to each other under conditions of persecution by Roman authorities. In Chinese tradition, the carp struggling upstream signifies courage and perseverance in the face of difficulties.

According to legend, swallows hibernate in the mud of the riverbed during the winter, emerging with the coming spring and fine weather. Thus, they came to symbolize the hope of regeneration, rebirth, and resurrection. Also, as swallows descend from the heavens, their form resembles an anchor, an early Christian symbol for the cross, salvation, and hope. (Hebrews 6:19)

Flowers represent beauty through the circle of life from bud through bloom till death. Together with the birds of the air, they remind us of God’s unfailing and constant care for all of God’s creation. (Matthew 6:25-30)

The right window is reminiscent of Psalm 1, where the pious and righteous persons are likened to “trees that grow beside a stream, that bear fruit at the right time, and whose leaves do not dry up.” In the same way, the life of the Christian is nourished and refresh by his contact with one’s Lord.

(from a brochure written by Dr. James Chuck, 1980)



9. The Unity Quilt

In celebration of the rededication of our church home after the 1999-2000 retrofit/renovation project, the Unity Quilt represents the way in which we all work together to further the ministry of Jesus Christ in our community and in our world.

Centered in Christ, our church name is written in English and Chinese reflecting our bilingual and bicultural family. The stitching on the quilt includes images and symbols of our Christian experience. Jesus said, "I am the vine" (John 15:1), and vines surround the cross and the fellowship group squares, holding the quilt together and making it strong. In the cross we find several images: a dove for peace, butterflies for the resurrection of our Lord, flowers for God's creation, and praying hands lifted up to God in praise.

The quilt fabrics celebrate God's creation and our Chinese heritage. The sage green and burnt sienna cloths represent patterns and colors found in nature. The Asian print border is rich with gold swirls and includes dragons, the animal representing the year 2000 in the Chinese lunar calendar.



Third Floor

10. Chinese Baptist Language School Sign

(Chinese characters)

This old sign once hung over the 15 Waverly Place entrance door to welcome everyone to come and learn English, Chinese, citizenship, and the Bible. The original mission of our church was to have a school for our community.

Chinese
School
Graduating
Class 1934



11. 2005 Church Family Portrait

To remember our 125th Anniversary, our church family numbering 460 people closed down the street and took a family portrait in front of our church building on June 19, 2005.

12. Mrs. Janie S. Chu Christian Education Award Plaque

In recognition of Mrs. J.S. Chu's 68 years of continuous teaching in the Juniors Department, a Christian Education Award was established by the Board of Christian Education to be given to teachers who demonstrate faithfulness and excellence in teaching.



1940s

13. Old Pew

Before the pews with the padded seats were installed after the seismic retrofit in 2000, our sanctuary had solid oak wood pews. These were originally patented on November 22, 1892. This original pew, refinished and donated by long-time church members, serves to welcome all visitors and members to sit awhile in God's house.

14. Brickwork

In all the staff offices as well as in the Library/Reading Room, the exposed bricks reveal the antiquity of our building. Of special significance are the bricks that are exposed in the Associate Pastor's office and the Library/Reading Room. The roof line of the 1908 building before the top floor was added in 1931 is clearly visible.

15. Library/Reading Room

The original "Reading Room" was located on the ground floor for mainly community men to have a place to read daily newspapers, Christian tracts, and find a place for fellowship from their cramped living quarters. Keeping the name, "Reading Room" reminds us of the historical use of our church as a mission in Chinatown.



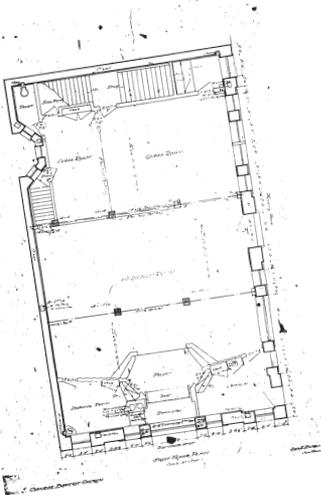
c.1920

16. 110th Anniversary Plaque & Historical Portraits

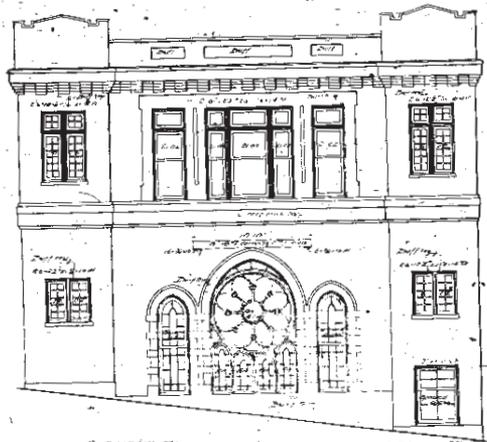
As God continues to bless the First Chinese Baptist Church throughout the years, we took time to commemorate and celebrate God's mighty deeds in the world. These old panoramic pictures capture the faithful ministries of the past and remind us to be faithful in the years to come.

We hope that this brief tour of our Church Home has excited you on how First Chinese Baptist Church continues to be a beacon of Jesus Christ on the corner of Waverly Place and Sacramento Street.

May all who hear the Good News in Jesus Christ come to believe!



Building Plans 1908



The original total cost of this church building in 1908 was \$21,000 (Lot—\$10,000, Building—\$9600; Equipment—\$1400).