

## *The Church Buildings of Mary Baker Eddy*

### *The Original Church Edifice*

The original church edifice is a magnificent example of symbolism incorporated into a building. It tells the wonders of God, earth, and heaven. Mary Baker Eddy accomplished all of this, and it was her demonstration alone. We must realize that, "Spiritual teaching must always be by symbols." This is found in *Science and Health*, page 575. Also, in an article in *The Christian Science Journal*, March 1894, page 516, it states, "To us as Christian Scientists, the building is, of course, but a symbol; but let us endeavor to realize what it symbolizes."

A floor plan of the original edifice has been supplied in the back of this book so that the reader may readily understand the magnitude of this building. There are explanations in the corners of the plan to provide a better appreciation of what is being seen.

We begin this journey at the north gallery window. You will find it on the right side of the plan. There is one window, with two sections, in the north gallery. One section has an empty circle in it, and the other section has a circle with the *Science and Health* resting on the Bible. Both of these books are closed. The direction north is symbolic of the Word as found in the city foursquare, *Science and Health*, page 575. We must always start with the Word, and the only way to understand it is to become as a little child. The empty circle symbolizes the statement from *Science and Health*, page 323, that we must show our, "Willingness to become as a little child and to leave the old for the new." This act then, "renders thought receptive of the advanced idea." The closed books repeat the message of the prophets, "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." (John 6:45) As can be seen, the first window, on the north side, is on the vestibule level. It is of a little child. The Bible verse is, "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them." (Isaiah 11:6)

Let us continue clockwise around the floor plan. The three windows, around the Mother's Room, are from *Christ and Christmas* by Mary Baker Eddy. The first window seen is "Star of Bethlehem." It is the representation of old theology. The next window is "Seeking and Finding." This is representative of the new thought unfolding to mankind. Jesus prophesied his second coming as the "spirit of Truth." The third window is the keystone in the design of the Church. Out of the 11 pictures in *Christ and Christmas*, this window is the seventh. It is the only one that does not have a title, but a Bible verse below the picture. This verse is:

I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. – Christ Jesus

Christian Science comes only through the child-like consciousness and the recognition of the Woman. This consciousness must be obtained before we can continue our tour around the windows and understand their significance. This area is the symbol of the east in the city foursquare and coincides with the Christ.

Continuing around, we come to the window entitled, "Jesus and the Samaritan Woman." Was it not said in the Bible, "The woman saith unto him, I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things"? (John 4:25) Do we not say the same words today, as did that woman two thousand years ago, that the Christ, the Comforter, *Science and Health*, has come, and is telling us "all things"? The next window is "The Angel with the Little Book." Are we not in wonder as we read *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, and say to ourselves, the Christ is here, all dreams of error are breaking? This side of the church is the symbol of the south in the city foursquare and coincides with Christianity.

Looking at the front of the church, observe the two magnificent windows on either side of the pulpit. The window on the left side is, "Mary First at The Resurrection," and the one on the right is, "Woman God-crowned." The student now has the opportunity to have the meaning of the symbolic windows revealed to their thought.

The pattern employed by Mary Baker Eddy is always a circle. In the case of the city, the Word is the starting point. Proceeding on is the Christ, then Christianity, and last divine Science. According to this statement from *Science and Health*, page 503, the circle has now been completed:

“Divine Science, the Word of God, saith to the darkness upon the face of error, ‘God is All-in-all,’ and the light of ever-present Love illumines the universe. Hence the eternal wonder, — that infinite space is peopled with God’s ideas, reflecting Him in countless spiritual forms.”

And so these words come to mind:

“And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.”

Genesis 1: 3

Placed in the upper right and left corners of the floor plan are descriptions of the rooms found in the church. The picture of Mary Baker Eddy, placed at the bottom left, is from the 1910 *Science and Health*. It is placed there to show that this is Mary Baker Eddy’s church.

In 1994 the empty circle, in the section of the first window wherein we began, and explained earlier in this section, was changed, and the *Church Manual of The First Church of Christ Scientist, in Boston, Mass.* was placed in the empty space. If only the Board of Directors would have had the spiritual insight to see the true design of this church. It is sad for them to have touched something so holy and pure, and to miss this beautiful message and break the divine design.

In the *Church Center Bulletin* of June 2, 1994, it was stated:

“It is with a great deal of joy and gratitude that we tell you about the installation of a new window in the Original Mother church. It depicts the Manual of the Mother Church and fills what used to be an empty circle in a window in the North Gallery. It is located right next to the window with the Bible and Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures. The new window will be put in place before Annual Meeting.

“The Manual of the Mother Church was not published until September 1895, more than six months after the completion of the Original Edifice, and so was not available as a theme for the window. William Lyman Johnson, son of one of the first members of the board of Directors, recorded that two of the board members at the time told him that if they had the *Manual* in 1894, they would have depicted it in that window.

“It is in keeping with that remark (and the number of other changes made to the windows through the years) that we have accepted an anonymous donor’s gift of this window commemorating the building of the Original Mother Church 100 years ago.”

What arrogance the two members of the 1894 Christian Science Board of Directors display here. It was not their place to put anything in the windows or take anything out. That the present Board would use that as authority for changing the window is beyond reason. The Board of Directors in the past have not had, nor does the current Board have, the spiritual insight possessed by Mary Baker Eddy. If any Board of Directors truly had had the spiritual insight of Mrs. Eddy, there would have been little need for her. This attitude is being shown today by the fact that the beautiful symbols she left are being systematically removed. Referring back to the statement made in 1994, one would wonder what other changes have been made to the windows in both the original edifice and the Extension.

The reader is now left to bask in the spiritual glory of this beautiful church. The church floor plan is untouched and presented in its original form. Oh, the wonders that will be seen by those who have eyes to see the true gift left to us by Mary Baker Eddy.

## *The Extension of The First Church Christ, Scientist*

“The modest edifice of The Mother Church of Christ, Scientist, began with the cross; its excelsior extension is the crown. The room of your Leader remains in the beginning of this edifice, evidencing the praise of babes and the word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Its crowning ultimate rises to a mental monument, a superstructure high above the work of men's hands, even the outcome of their hearts, giving to the material a spiritual significance— the speed, beauty, and achievements of goodness. Methinks this church is the one edifice on earth which most prefigures self-abnegation, hope, faith; love catching a glimpse of glory.”

*The First Church of Christ, Scientist and Miscellany, page 6*

These beautiful words, from the dedicatory speech by Mary Baker Eddy, referring to the Extension of The First Church of Christ, Scientist, are a good starting place for a description of some of the beautiful symbolism in this church.

1. The property, including the original church edifice, is made up of 10 deeds for 15 parcels of land. There are 3 supplementary deeds that include extra trusts for the first 4 deeds. Did not Moses leave the 10 commandments and not the 10 requests? The 10 deeds for the land were, “Deeds of Trust,” left by Mrs. Eddy. They were not requests, but commands that the deeds entrusted to them should be carried out properly. The 3 supplementary deeds for the first 4 deeds demanded even more obedience, not only to man, but also to God.
2. The Extension is contiguous to the original church edifice. It is, in reality, one church joined by a corridor.
3. The cornerstone was laid July 16, 1904. July 16, 1821 was the birth date of Mary Baker Eddy.
4. There are 4000 wooden pillars supporting the foundation. The number 4 is very important in the language of Spirit. The Extension is patterned after the city foursquare in *Science and Health*, page 575.

5. There are 11 bells in the bell tower. That would seem a strange number, and we might ask what the significance of it would be. How many disciples were left at the resurrection of Jesus? There were 11, as Judas hanged himself after he betrayed Jesus. Does the Christ, Truth, not always destroy error? Another clue that Mrs. Eddy leaves is the inscription on the largest bell:

“The First Church of Christ, Scientist  
in Boston Massachusetts  
1906  
Founded on Love”

The 12 disciples were 12 states of consciousness. Judas was the state of consciousness that hated the Christ. That is not a state of thought that is founded on Love as inscribed on the largest bell.

It is sad to report that in *The Christian Science Journal*, July 1994, page 20, we were informed that the bells had been removed. The paragraph reads thus:

“The cupola over the central dome of the Extension houses bells that have not been rung since the bell tower of the Original Church began its chime in the summer of 1984. The old bells will be removed, thus lightening the burden carried by the main structure.”

The glorious words from the Communion Hymn by Mary Baker Eddy come to mind, “Saw ye my Saviour? Heard ye the glad sound? Felt ye the power of the Word?” Once again the spiritual blindness is seen in action, and another symbol destroyed.

6. There are 4 arches that spring from giant stone pillars that support the dome. The symbols that support the city foursquare, found in the Christian Science textbook, are the Word, Christ, Christianity, and divine Science.

7. There are 32 doorways. There are 32 planks in the “Platform” beginning on page 330 of *Science and Health*. The 32 planks in the “Platform” explain the meaning of the Christ, and open the way for a better understanding on the subject to the reader.

8. There are exactly 5,012 seats on the floor and in the galleries. Jesus fed the 5,000, but that did not include his 12 disciples. The Extension is designed to not only feed Mrs. Eddy's students, but to include the whole world. Some of the seats were removed after Mrs. Eddy's passing, thus breaking the divine pattern.

9. There are 7 staircases leading upward to the auditorium and away from the ground floor. The Bible is laden with the symbolism of 7, but to a Christian Scientist it will always stand for the 7 synonyms for God. Do these synonyms not take us, "higher and higher from a boundless basis"? This passage is found in *Science and Health*, page 258.

10. There are 12 exits from the building. There were 12 tribes of Israel, and they went out into the whole world and formed every nation. In the 1970's the Christian Science Board of Directors again took it upon themselves to break the divine pattern and place a portico on the front of the church. It reminds us of the passage from the Bible:

"Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he."

Proverbs 29:18

11. The Extension is built with the city foursquare as its model. The city foursquare has 12 gates, and so the Extension has 12 passageways leading in and out of the main auditorium. There were 12 gates in the city in Revelation on which were written the names of the 12 tribes of Israel. (Rev. 21:12) The walls had 12 foundations on which were the names of the 12 apostles. (Rev. 21:14)

12. The auditorium has 7 galleries, 2 on one side of the auditorium, and two on the other side. There are 3 at the back of the edifice. It is interesting to read the 7<sup>th</sup> plank in the "Platform." The Word of God is always extending out to, "indicate the divine Principle of scientific being, the intelligent relation of God to man and the universe." This is found in *Science and Health*, page 332.

13. These two inscriptions are at the highest point on the back wall of the edifice:

“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.  
Luke”

“To-day the healing power of Truth is widely demonstrated as an immanent, eternal Science. Its coming, as promised by the Master, is for its establishment as a permanent dispensation. The mission of Christian Science now, as in the earlier demonstration thereof, is not one of physical healing only, but to attest the reality of its higher mission, namely the power of Christ, Truth, to take away the sins of the world.  
Mary B. G. Eddy”

14. Around every window in the Extension the glass is framed with blossoms. The words of Mary Baker Eddy ring so true in this passage from *Science and Health*, page 596:

“VALLEY. Depression; meekness; darkness.

‘Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil.’ (Psalm xxiii. 4.)

Though the way is dark in mortal sense, divine Life and Love illumine it, destroy the unrest of mortal thought, the fear of death, and the supposed reality of error. Christian Science, contradicting sense, maketh the valley to bud and blossom as the rose.”

Did we not all enter into the Science of Christianity from the valley of depression, meekness or darkness? Upon understanding the reality of God’s allness, did our way not bud and blossom as the rose? That is the message and lesson that is being sent out to the whole world.

15. There is a pineapple on the very top of the cupola above the dome. The pineapple is a sign of friendship and hospitality. It also represents human warmth and family affection. It was a favorite motif of architects, artisans and craftsmen in the American colonies. How sad that the bells in



the cupola, directly under the pineapple, are removed. We can no longer hear “the glad sound” that rang out to welcome the whole world into the church.

16. The same inscription is placed on the exterior wall of the Extension as is engraved on the outside wall under the Mother’s Room of the original church edifice. This was at the request of Mary Baker Eddy. It is as follows:

THE FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST, SCIENTIST.  
ERECTED ANNO DOMINI, 1894.  
A TESTIMONIAL TO OUR BELOVED TEACHER, THE REVEREND MARY BAKER EDDY:  
DISCOVERER AND FOUNDER OF CHRISTIAN SCIENCE; AUTHOR OF ITS TEXT-BOOK,  
SCIENCE AND HEALTH WITH KEY TO THE SCRIPTURES; PRESIDENT OF THE  
MASSACHUSETTS METAPHYSICAL COLLEGE, AND THE FIRST PASTOR OF THIS DENOMINATION.

The only difference in the two inscriptions is that these words were added to the top of the inscription on the Extension.

THIS EDIFICE ERECTED  
ANNO DOMINI 1904  
IS AN EXTENSION OF  
THE FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST  
SCIENTIST

The new church was only an extension of the original church edifice, as indicated by the inscription. The Extension points back to the place we never left. The apex of the whole church structure is the Mother’s Room. Over the entrance to the Mother’s Room is the inscription, Love. Mrs. Eddy is always pointing back to the capstone of her church. The capstone of all her work never changes. It is always, Love.

The following is an excerpt from *The Christian Science Watchman*, Vol. IV, No. 3:

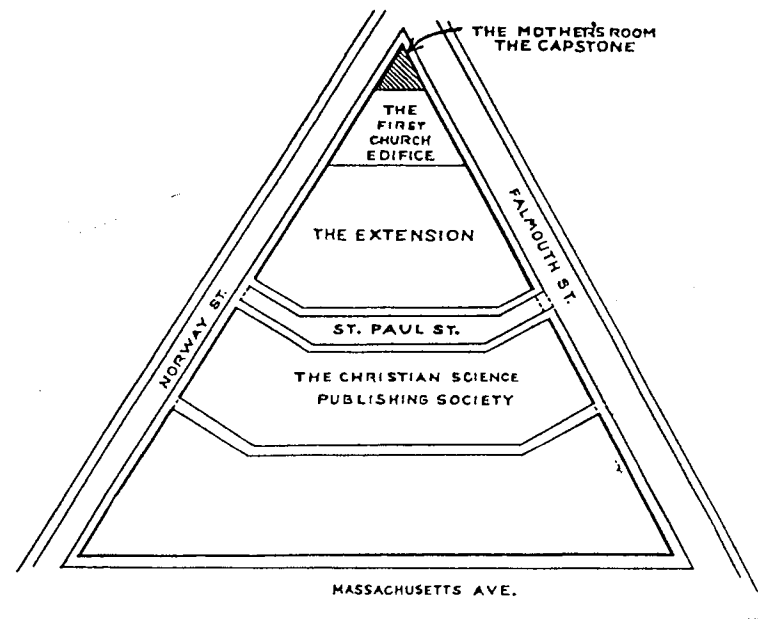
“In the files of the ‘Mother’ Church, in Boston, is Mrs. Eddy’s written order to the Directors to permit a western Christian Scientist to study and trace the symbolic and mathematical analogy between the structural design of the original church edifice and its extension, and “the temple” as symbolically described in the Scriptures by the prophet Ezekiel. She understood clearly how and why every visible embodiment of a spiritual ideal must necessarily provide evidence which,

when translated upon a higher plane, will confirm its inspirational character.

“When Mrs. Eddy recognized that the time had come to erect an edifice for The Mother Church, several sites in Boston were considered. The one finally chosen was regarded at the time as much less desirable than others that were available. Mrs. Eddy’s metaphysical reasons for her final selection were not understood during her lifetime.

“The above ground plan (in the diagram below) from the official plat of the City of Boston hints the true story. The room of the Discoverer and Leader ‘in the beginning’ of the edifice typifies in every period the point of emergence of the new and world revolutionary idea. It is also the ever-recurring ‘capstone’—‘the stone that the builders’ at first ‘reject,’ in the spiritual structure of each unfolding period of humanity’s development. Those who are familiar with the design of the Great Pyramid and recognize its record, humanly conceived as ‘a miracle in stone’ (Christian Healing, pg. 11:12), will be thrilled as they grasp the significance of this further evidence of the ever-present and overruling power of the one universal Mind, ‘underlying, overlying, and encompassing all true being.’”

#### SIGNIFICANT EVIDENCE



This drawing is taken from an official blue print provided by the City of Boston.

17. There is only one text that is repeated in the original church edifice and the Extension. It is found in the corridor between the two churches. The text is:

(The original church edifice)

“Jesus said: ‘These signs shall follow them that believe.’ Jesus’ promise is perpetual. Had it been only for his immediate disciples, the scriptural passage would read ‘you’ not ‘them.’ The purpose of his great life-work touches universal humanity.  
Mary B. G. Eddy”

(The corridor of the Extension between the two churches)

“Jesus’ promise was perpetual. Had it been given only to His immediate disciples, the Scriptural passage would read you, not they. The purpose of his great life-work extends through time and touches universal humanity. Its Principle is infinite, extending beyond the pale of a single period or a limited following.  
Mary B. G. Eddy”

Mary Baker Eddy approved the floor plan of the Extension, and had an absorbing interest in the welfare and progress of the church building. She was aware of every step taken. Mrs. Eddy chose the numerous inscriptions herself. She selected them and understood their fitness for each position they occupied. Some differ in the exact wording from the textbook. Mrs. Eddy rewrote some of the inscriptions upon the walls and sent them to the Board of Directors with a request for the new version.

The following words found in the book, *The Mother Church Extension*, by Margaret Williamson, page 33-34, printed in 1939 and published by the Christian Science Publishing Society, seem to have a hollow ring when we are presented with the facts about the magnificent Extension:

“There seems, too, to have been a general impression that all suspicion of symbolism was to be avoided; although, inadvertently, there did creep in here and there in the ornamentation two or three of the ancient classical designs. Those possessed of more than average perseverance and sharp

vision may discover traces of such designs, but it would be a mistake to suppose that they have any significance whatever.”

This is completely contrary to Mary Baker Eddy’s simple statement; “Spiritual teaching must always be by symbols.” This is stated very simply in *Science and Health*, page 575. Her statement was “must,” not “sometimes.”

Let us end this section with the beautiful spiritual symbol of what the Extension of The First Church of Christ, Scientist really stands for in every age. In the description for the lighting in the Extension, it is stated:

“The church is unusually well lighted, and one of the extraordinary features is the eight bronze chains, each suspending seventy-two lamps, each lamp of thirty-two candle-power.”

*The First Church of Christ, Scientist and Miscellany*, page 69

**Eight** is the symbol for the infinite or Deity. The 8<sup>th</sup> plank in the “Platform,” found in *Science and Health*, page 332, reads thus:

“Father-Mother (marginal heading)

VIII. Father-Mother is the name for Deity, which indicates His tender relationship to His spiritual creation. As the apostle expressed it in words which he quoted with approbation from a classic poet: ‘For we are also His offspring.’”

Why would she have **72** hanging lamps? In the Bible, Jesus sent out **70** to spread His Word. Mrs. Eddy sent out **72** to be a light unto the world. Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount:

“Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

“Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”

Matthew 5: 14-16

Why would there be 32 candles in each lamp? There are 32 planks of the “Platform,” as found in the Christian Science textbook, and the “Platform” is our explanation of what the Christ represents. Let the Christ, Truth, always light our way and go before us as we journey onward. Thus, we have the 70 sent by Jesus, plus you, as an individual, and the Christ. The Christ always goes before, lighting the way. We now have the 72 lamps bringing light into the world so that all may see and exclaim:

“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.”

This is such a perfect statement from the *Boston Globe* and such a testimony to what Mary Baker Eddy founded:

“One thing is certain: for a religion which has been organized only thirty years, and which erected its first church only twelve years ago, Christian Science has more fine church edifices to its credit in the same time than any other denomination in the world, and they are all paid for.”

Again, we come full circle in our study of the original church edifice and its Extension. The golden thread that runs through both churches is, that we must become as a little child. Below is an excerpt from the message written by Mary Baker Eddy for the dedication of the Extension on June 10, 1906. The title of the message is “Choose Ye”:

“The pride of place or power is the prince of this world that hath nothing in Christ. Our great Master said: ‘Except ye . . . become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven,’ — the reign of righteousness, the glory of good, healing the sick and saving the sinner. The height of my hope must remain. Glory be to Thee, Thou God most high and nigh.”

*The First Church of Christ, Scientist and Miscellany, page 4*

Let us now go back to the first window in the original church edifice that contains two sections, each containing a circle. We will concentrate on the one that had the empty circle, before being changed in 1994 by the Christian Science Board of Directors. The message is repeated, "Except ye . . . become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Explaining this empty circle further, the following passages from *Science and Health*, pages 323 and 130, illumines our understanding of this magnificent window.

"Childlike receptivity (marginal heading)

Willingness to become as a little child and to leave the old for the new, renders thought receptive of the advanced idea. Gladness to leave the false landmarks and joy to see them disappear, — this disposition helps to precipitate the ultimate harmony. The purification of sense and self is a proof of progress. "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."

"Children and adults (marginal heading)

You cannot add to the contents of a vessel already full. Laboring long to shake the adult's faith in matter and to inculcate a grain of faith in God, — an inkling of the ability of Spirit to make the body harmonious, — the author has often remembered our Master's love for little children, and understood how truly such as they belong to the heavenly kingdom."

And so the circle is complete. Consider again the seventh picture in *Christ and Christmas*. It brings to mind these beautiful verses from the Bible:

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

"And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

“And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

“And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

“And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.

“And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

“He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.”

Revelation 21: 1-7

Only with that child-like thought does “the new heaven and the new earth” appear to one’s consciousness. Then our thought has the receptivity to understand the “advanced idea.”

Mary Baker Eddy will ever be led by the design of God in every aspect of her work. Truly she is:

“ ... a scribe under orders; and who can refrain from transcribing what God indites, and ought not that one to take the cup, drink all of it, and give thanks?”

*Miscellaneous Writings, page 311*