SHORT GUIDE

Dear Visitors,
welcome to the

Protestant Church
## of St. Mary in Dortmund.

It is the oldest of the four medieval churches in the city centre. As you walk around, you will realise that the architects and artists who built the church did not plan for it to be a museum but a house in which to praise Our Lord.

Architecture

During the Second World War, the church was damaged by bombs. It has been well restored.

The foundation stone of this late Romanesque three−aisled basilica *(the nave is higher than the side aisles)* was laid about 1170.

The Romanesque builders chose the square as the foundation for their design ideas. The nave is divided into three square bays with ribbed vaults. Squared pillars separate the side aisles.
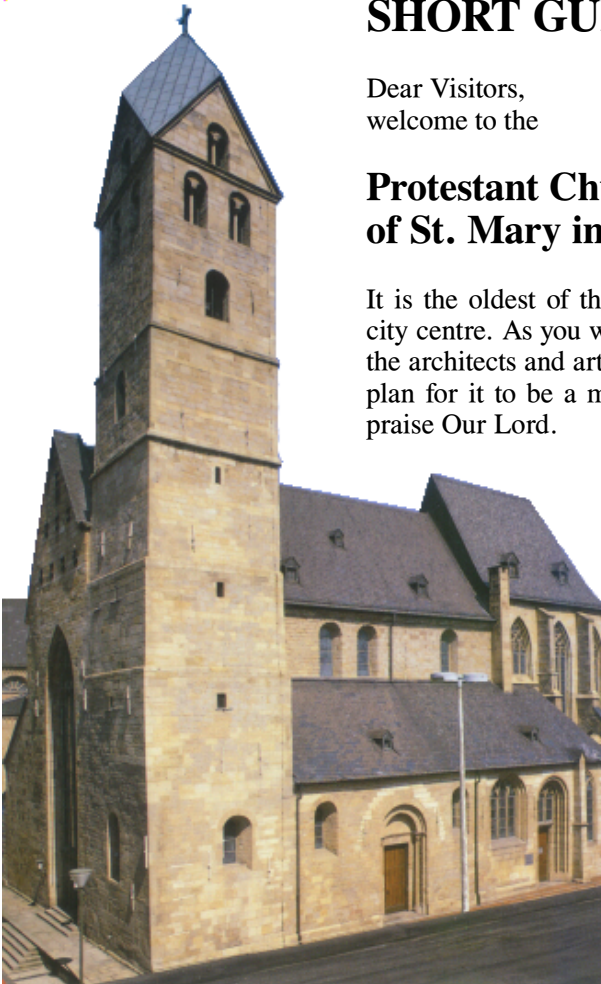
The remaining south tower, of an earlier twin−towered facade, also has a square structure.

The small windows have typical Romanesque arches *(in the south side aisle and the nave)* and the arcades have them as well. Originally three half rounded apses completed the aisles which were lit only dimly by natural daylight. The capitals of the double columns which make up the arcades are interesting because of their floral high reliefs.

A Crucifix hangs in the triumphal arch which separates the congregation from the clergy.

In about 1350 alterations were made to the church, accommodating the new Gothic style. The Romanesque apses were pulled down and the church was further lengthened by the long and high choir. It consists of two rectangular bays with crossed vaults and bosses representing the Holy Trinity. A polygonal space forms the eastern end of the choir. The walls are thin with high lofty windows. The pointed arch with characteristic traceries is typical of the Gothic period.

In about 1350 the north side aisle had to be supported because the walls had started to lean. At the same time the Romanesque windows in the aisles were enlarged and given a Gothic shape.

Later a large window was incorporated into the western facade. In 1805 the northern steeple was demolished.
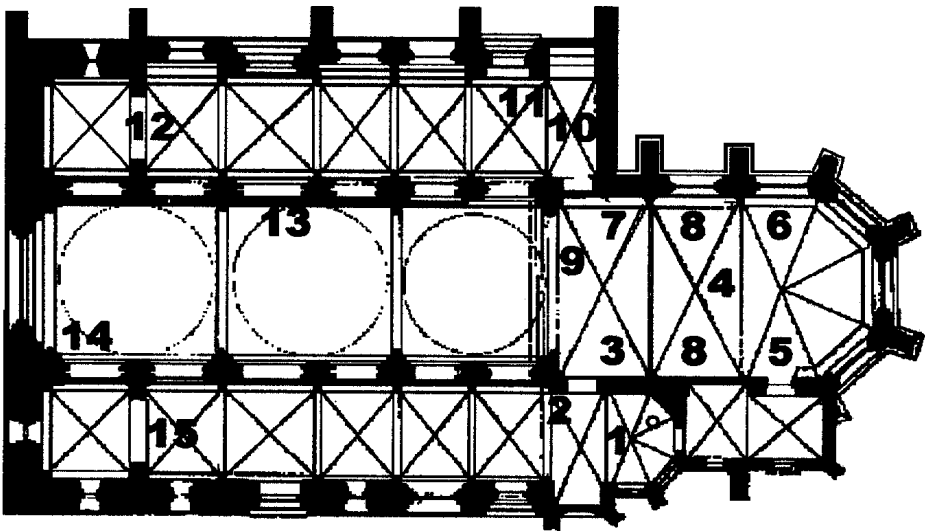
The numbers in this ground plan highlight the fascinating and precious objects in the church:

1. Baptismal Font, Romanesque, c. 1200. Sandstone, with a delicate decoration using the symbols of Christ; roses and grapes.

2. A crowned Gothic Holy Virgin, c. 1420. Sandstone. Our Lady wears a pleated cloak over her dress. Remnants of red, blue and gold pigment show that the sculpture was originally painted.

3. Romanesque Virgin Mary, c. 1230. Wood. The so called "Goldene Muttergottes von Dortmund". Our Lady is seated majestically and is not looking at her child. A characteristic theme of the Romanesque epoch is the emphasis on the distance between Jesus Christ and mankind. Christ is at no one's disposal, not even his mother's.

4. St. Mary's Altar. A Gothic retable, c. 1420. Painted by Dortmund artist Conrad von Soest *(CvS)* for this church, commissioned by the municipal council.
Only fragments remain of the original 6m wide triptych.
In 1720 the panels were disassembled to make a Baroque altar frame. There are paintings on the front and back depicting scenes from the Patroness's life.
Three colours predominate in this valuable, world famous altarpiece. They symbolise the following: gold = light, the universe, the hereafter; blue = heaven, truth, faithfulness; red = blood, fire, love. CvS added angel haloes, some architectural detail and a loving relationship between St. Mary and Christ, in the courtly fashion of that time.
The altar of sandstone, c. 1450, is decorated with blind arches.

5. Archangel St. Michael, c.1320. Wood. Simply dressed, he is shown defeating the dragon. This sculpture symbolises victory, the good are victorious over the evil. Formerly St. Michael stood as a guard near the western portal.

6. Tabernacle, c. 1450. Sandstone. In the style of a High Gothic French cathedral facade. It was used for storing the liturgical goldsmiths' work, e.g. chalice, monstrance, etc. Probably the upper opening contained relics. To the right there is a small older tabernacle in the wall.

7. Jesus Christ, c. 1480. Wood. A rare combination of two normally separate representations of Christ:
    (a)   Jesus Christ as a king with the emblems of an orb and emperor's crown. The sceptre in his right hand has been lost.
    (b)   Jesus Christ as the Redeemer of the World with the globe under his right foot.

8. Choir Stalls, c. 1520. Bought by the parish church for the clergy. The statues, figures and misericords *(on the southern side)* are very interesting. They symbolise adultery, theft, drunkenness, vanity and disobedience.

9. Eagle Lectern, c. 1550. Brass. It was and is used for readings from the Bible. Nowadays it is also used as the pulpit. This work clearly shows the latent naturalism of the Gothic period. The eagle is the symbol of St. John and the symbol of the Ascension of Jesus Christ. The eagle flies to the sun. A small unprepossessing shield on the neck of the Eagle shows the Crucifixion.

10. Berswordt Altar, c. 1390. Named after its donor. The unknown artist painted Christ's Passion on the front of the triptych. The Annunciation is on the back.

The painter illustrates the Crucifixion as described by the Evangelists *(Mt 27, Mk 15, Lk 23, Joh 19)*.
A general observation of the Gothic period is that artists became more and more interested in the individual features of human beings. At the same time things from everyday life were deemed worthy of representation as well *(e.g. the ladder and tongs on the right panel)*.

11. Jesus Christ's Head with the crown of thorns, 1905. Bronze sculpture by Benno Elkan *(b. 1877 in Dortmund, d. in 1960 London)* for the gravestone of the Feuerbaum family.

12. Baptismal Font, 1687. Wood with an inscription for the donor, Hermann Mallinckrodt and his wife.

13. Organ, 1967. Fa Steinmann, Vlotho. This replaces the original Gothic organ dating from 1520 which was destroyed in the last war.

14. Jesus Christ, c. 1400. Wood. It originally stood on the soundboard of the Baroque pulpit which was destroyed in a fire.

15. Bronze Sculpture by Renate Stendar−Feuerbaum, Zurich, entitled
"A thousand years are but as yesterday,
already gone and like a single watch in the night". *(Psalm 90,4)*
It expresses the ephemeral nature of living things. Humans are totally insignificant in comparison with the whole of creation renewed by the Creator every day.

Information about the new stained glass windows and their theological meaning is contained in a separate leaflet. They were designed by Prof. Johannes Schreiter.

Opening Hours:

Tuesday, Wednesday	from	10.00 am	to	12.00 am	and	14.00 pm to 16.00 pm
Thursday	from	10.00 am	to	12.00 am	and	14.00 pm to 18.00 pm
Friday	from	10.00 am	to	12.00 am	and	14.00 pm to 16.00 pm
Saturday	"	10.00 am	to	1.00 pm		
Sunday Service	at	10.00 am	*(You are cordially invited.)*			