

Preservation is Revolutionary

ANNUAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION AWARDS

June 11, 2026 | 521 Overlook at Fenway Park



2026 People's Preservation Choice Award Nominee

St. Luke's Chapel Restoration and Renovation

St. Luke's Chapel, located in John Eliot Square Historic District within the Roxbury Highlands National Register District, is a stunning example of a Gothic Revival building. Originally built in 1901 to support St. Luke's Convalescence Home located in Ionic Hall, the only church in Roxbury designed by celebrated architect Ralph Adams Cram, it was taken over by the Episcopal Diocese in 1966, for the St. John St. James Parish, a congregation of Caribbean and African Americans whose former church buildings had been dispossessed by urban renewal. However, the chapel was rarely used and fell into disrepair, becoming hardly more than a shell. A partially collapsed roof, crumbling walls, vegetation, vandalism, and more left the building uninhabitable. Six decades later, the Episcopal Diocese, along with the St. John St. James Parish, knew the building still had potential and a lot of life left. After a comprehensive restoration project spanning several years, with grants and gifts, the chapel is back open for worship, community events, and more.

Today, the sanctuary has been completely restored with its stunning Kirchmeyer reredos fully restored. The lower level, which was basically a dank, partial hole in the ground, was excavated and now houses accessible restrooms, kitchenette, and storage to support for a variety of events. The entire building is also accessible, with a vertical lift servicing both floors for full universal access. A special aspect of the restoration of St. Luke's Chapel was the restoration and reinstallation of the "Lydia Lyman Paine" stained glass window. A water leak over many years directly above this window had led to its serious

deterioration. The window is the only figural commemorative stained glass in the chapel. Meticulously restored, it now shines proudly once again