

Introducing the new coat of arms for The Churches of St. Matthias and St. James the Apostle with many thanks to Denby Evans. The cross itself symbolizes all that we know it to symbolize, and the cross with a ring around it is called the cosmological cross, and the ring represents the celestial sphere, which is an idea developed from the writings of the Church Fathers. Also according to Wikipedia, it is well represented in the early history of Christian Britain and Ireland, and therefore quite apt for the Anglican Church.

The scallop shell is a symbol of Saint James the Apostle partly because he was a fisherman before he abandoned his life to become one of the twelve apostles. Also, legend has it that when his body was cast to sea after he was martyred, and the boat washed up on the shores of Galicia, a horse and rider went into the sea to retrieve him. When they emerged from the water, they were covered in scallop shells (there are several versions of this legend, but in all versions someone emerges from the water covered in scallop shells.) From <http://caitlinbrehm.com/the-scallop-shell/>

As for Saint Matthias, he was noted for his deep knowledge of Scripture, which is the reason that the Bible is often used as one of two symbols to represent him, and I have used the Alpha and the Omega to represent the Scriptures for what they mean to Christians. The other symbol of Saint Matthias is the axe, because it is said that after he was crucified, his body was dismembered with an axe, and is therefore a symbol of his martyrdom.

Finally, the treble clef represents the importance of music brought from the worship traditions of both St. James the Apostle and St. Matthias. More than that though, it represents the importance of music to the Christian community from the very beginning, since the early Christians used the Psalter as their hymn book, and there are indications in the letters of Paul that such passages as Phil 2:5-11, Col 1:15-20, 1Tim 3:16, Heb 1:1-3, and 1 Pet 2:21-25 may very well have had earlier literary lives as hymns, as well as Matthew 26:30 which indicates that hymns were part of the lives of the apostles during the time of Jesus' ministry.

~Denby Evans