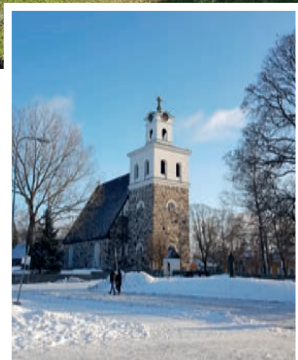




The Church of the Holy Cross

The Evangelical Lutheran Parish of Rauma has a colorful history and a worthy heritage to preach the gospel to new generations.



**RAUMAN
SEURAKUNTA**

Welcome to the Church of the Holy Cross

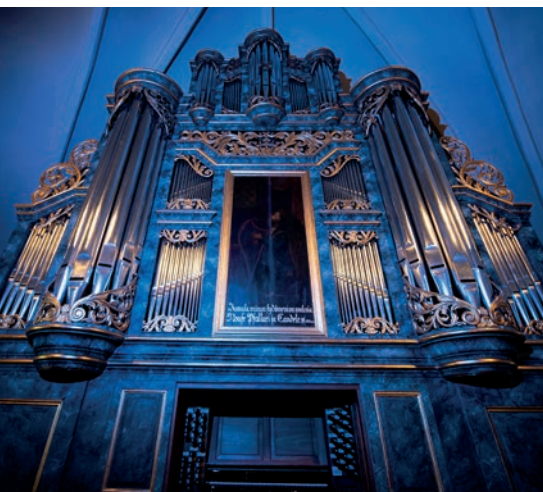
Members of the Franciscan order, founded by the Italian St. Francis of Assisi, came to Rauma most likely by the time of the foundation of the town in 1442. At the end of the 15th century the Franciscans built a church for the convent on the northern shore of the Rauma River. The Church of the Holy Cross was inaugurated in 1512.

The two-aisle ground plan is characteristic for the churches of the Grey Friars. The main nave continues with the same width to the choir and, separated by three pillars to the north of it, is a narrow aisle. The exterior of the church resembles other stone churches built in the province of Satakunta during the Middle Ages.

The Franciscan friars went preaching northwards up along the coast of the Gulf of Bothnia and inland as far as Häme. The two other Franciscan convents in Finland, in Vyborg and Kökar, both date back to the early 1400's.

The Franciscan convent in Rauma was closed in 1538, in connection with the Reformation performed by the King Gustav I of Sweden. A royal manor and royal stables were established in the premises of the convent. The main estate of the convent was donated to the parish as a rectory. Not much is known about what happened to the church building in the 16th century when the convent was closed.

In the 15th century the town replaced its old wooden parish church with one made of stone. This church, the Church of the Holy Trinity, was destroyed in a fire in 1640. You can see the ruins of the church by Kalatori in Old Rauma.



The original organ of the church was made by Nils Strömbeck in 1784. Only the wooden parts of the facade remain from the original organ. The sculptured decorations and a painting showing King David playing a harp and a text from Psalm 108 were added to the facade about a decade later.



The pulpit is one of the most sumptuously sculpted wooden products of the Renaissance in Finland. In the upper part of the pulpit, decorated by sculptures of apostles and saints, there is a text from the Bible in Latin: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." (Mark 16:15) The pulpit was made in Northern Germany in 1625.

The Church of the Holy Cross became a Lutheran church in 1640. Most likely it served as a Lutheran church soon after the departure of the monks in the 16th century.

The Neoclassical west tower of the church was built in 1816 from stones taken from the ruins of the Church of the Holy Trinity. The tower served as a landmark for the seafarers of the Gulf of Bothnia and the church bells invited the people to worship.

Even today you can sense the peace of the sanctuary and see the



My Saviour. Make me an instrument of thy peace. St. Francis of Assisi in 1973.

ancient treasures of the Church of the Holy Cross. The church is open daily for visitors. Everyone is welcome to participate in the morning liturgy celebrated at the Church of the Holy Cross on Sundays at 10 am.

The paintings on the ceiling of the choir vault date from the Middle Ages and present a summary of the biblical history of salvation, in which the Virgin Mary has a central role. The paintings were made during the time of bishop Arvid Kurki. He consecrated the church in 1512 on the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross that is celebrated

on September 14th. It is presumed that the church was completed by that date.

In the choir of the church you can see the oldest votive tablet preserved in Finland. The tablet was painted in memory of Mayor Matts Jonsson's (Jussoila) daughter Margareta. She died of the plague on July 15, 1572. At the bottom of the painting there is an elegy written about her funeral suite.

The brass chandelier in the middle aisle was donated by Johannes Weilanus from Rauma. According to the inscription in the magnificent 24-branched chandelier it was acquired in 1648 to decorate the orthodox home church.



The stained glass window showing the Transfiguration of Jesus Christ on Mount Tabor was made in Berlin. It was donated to the church in 1891 by councilor J. W. Söderlund.



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Pictures: The Rauma Lutheran Parish



The paintings on the gallery railing depict apostles and martyrs. The paintings were painted by Jonas Bergman in 1757.