

ST MICHAEL AND ST MARY MAGDALENE, EASTHAMPSTEAD. NOTES ON THE STAINED GLASS:

[4] JAIRUS' DAUGHTER, WILLIAM WAILES, 1867.

The Jairus' Daughter window is at the west end of the north aisle to the right of the Annexe doors. The window is one of three in the church by William Wailes. It is in memory of Georgine Samuel who died in 1867 aged 17. Her family were German and of Jewish descent. Her grave lies outside below this window. The window is probably one of the earliest to be placed in the rebuilt church. Further notes on Georgine Samuel can be found elsewhere in the Heritage folder.

The window depicts the story of Jairus daughter in *St Mark 5:22-43*. Although the story is about the death of a 12 year old girl, the two lunettes in the window are surrounded by rambling roses signifying life.

Jairus, an official of the local synagogue, shows great faith in asking Jesus to cure his daughter who is seriously ill. Jesus agrees to heal her. The story is taken up by the lunette on the left. When they arrive the girl has died. In the background is Jairus house. Jairus, dressed in armour as a "ruler of the synagogue", can be seen grieving. A girl is dancing before him. She is a professional mourner. For a mourner her attitude is quite lively, almost joyful, giving a clue as to what is to come next. The signs of new life in flowers and foliage around Jairus and the dancing girl hint of the resurrection which is to come.

In the right lunette the girl's bed is surrounded by Jesus inner circle; St Peter, St James and St John. Jesus looks upon her in compassion. He takes the hand of the girl and raises her to life with the words "*Talitha Cumi*" which is Aramaic for "*little girl, I say to you, arise*".

The loss of a loved one is a wound which time dulls but doesn't heal. Love has a lasting quality which survives the death of a loved one. It is that lasting quality of love in which we hope, God's love for us and our love of God. The resurrection of Jesus, prefigured in that of Jairus daughter, shows that God's love is stronger than death. For those whose journey of faith taken them beyond life and through death we are assured that their "*life is hid with God in Christ.*" *Colossians 3:3*

For Christians the experience of bereavement is to be like Jairus and the dancing girl in the window, alternating between the pain of our loss and the joy of knowing our loved ones are with God. It is in God, and through the fellowship of earth and heaven in the Eucharist, that we still have fellowship with them. This helps us to come to terms with our own mortality and reminds us that our shared destiny lies in God.

GSC