Helsinki Cathedral

**Helsinki Cathedral** ([Finnish](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Finnish_language): *Helsingin tuomiokirkko*, *Suurkirkko*; [Swedish](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swedish_language): *Helsingfors domkyrka*, *Storkyrkan*) is the [Finnish Evangelical Lutheran](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Evangelical_Lutheran_Church_of_Finland) [cathedral](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cathedral) of the [Diocese of Helsinki](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diocese_of_Helsinki), located in the neighborhood of [Kruununhaka](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kruununhaka" \o "Kruununhaka) in the centre of [Helsinki](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Helsinki), [Finland](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Finland) at the [Senate Square](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Helsinki_Senate_Square). The church was originally built from 1830–1852 as a tribute to the [Grand Duke of Finland](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grand_Duchy_of_Finland), [Tsar](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tsar) [Nicholas I of Russia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nicholas_I_of_Russia). It was also known as **St Nicholas's Church** ([Finnish](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Finnish_language): *Nikolainkirkko*, [Swedish](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swedish_language): *Nikolajkyrkan*) until the [independence of Finland](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Finnish_independence) in 1917.[[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Helsinki_Cathedral#cite_note-1) It is a major landmark of the city,[[2]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Helsinki_Cathedral#cite_note-2) and possibly the most famous structure in Finland as a whole when viewed globally

A distinctive landmark in the Helsinki cityscape, with its tall, green dome surrounded by four smaller domes, the building is in the [neoclassical](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neoclassical_architecture) style. It was designed by [Carl Ludvig Engel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carl_Ludvig_Engel) as the climax of his Senate Square layout: it is surrounded by other, smaller buildings designed by him.

The church's plan is a [Greek cross](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_cross) (a square centre and four equilateral arms), symmetrical in each of the four cardinal directions, with each arm's facade featuring a [colonnade](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colonnade) and [pediment](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pediment). Engel originally intended to place a further row of columns on the western end to mark the main entrance opposite the eastern altar, but this was never built.

## **History[**[**edit**](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Helsinki_Cathedral&action=edit&section=2)**]**

After Helsinki was made into the capital of Finland in 1812, [Alexander I](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_I_of_Russia) decreed in 1814 that 15 percent of the salt import tax were to be collected into a fund for two churches, one Lutheran and one Orthodox.[[5]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Helsinki_Cathedral#cite_note-kirkkojakaupunkiuspenski-5) The cathedral was built on the site of the smaller 1724–1727 [Ulrika Eleonora Church (Helsinki)](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Ulrika_Eleonora_Church_(Helsinki)&action=edit&redlink=1) [[fi](https://fi.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ulrika_Eleonoran_kirkko_(Helsinki))], which had been dedicated to its patroness, [Ulrika Eleonora](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ulrika_Eleonora_of_Sweden), [Queen of Sweden](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Queen_of_Sweden).[[6]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Helsinki_Cathedral#cite_note-ulrikamemorial-6) [Helsinki Old Church](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Helsinki_Old_Church) was built between 1824 and 1826 in nearby [Kamppi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kamppi) to serve the parish while the Ulrika Eleonora Church was being demolished and until the consecration of the new cathedral. The bells of the old church were reused in the cathedral.[[7]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Helsinki_Cathedral#cite_note-kirkontarina-7) Construction of the cathedral began in 1830, although it was only officially inaugurated in 1852.[[8]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Helsinki_Cathedral#cite_note-yle-8) Engel died in 1840.

The building was later altered by Engel's successor [Ernst Lohrmann](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ernst_Lohrmann), whose four small domes emphasise the architectural connection to the cathedral's models, [Saint Isaac's Cathedral](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saint_Isaac%27s_Cathedral) and [Kazan Cathedral](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kazan_Cathedral,_Saint_Petersburg) in [St. Petersburg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St._Petersburg).[[9]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Helsinki_Cathedral#cite_note-kirkkojakaupunkihelmi-9)[[10]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Helsinki_Cathedral#cite_note-helsinginseurakunta-10) Lohrmann also designed two extra buildings to the sides of the steps: looking from the square the left building is a [bell tower](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bell_tower) and the right building a chapel.[[11]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Helsinki_Cathedral#cite_note-tilat-11) He also erected larger-than-life sized zinc statues of the [Twelve Apostles](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Twelve_Apostles) at the apexes and corners of the roofline in 1849.[[12]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Helsinki_Cathedral#cite_note-12) They were sculpted by [August Wredov](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=August_Wredov&action=edit&redlink=1) and [Hermann Schievelbein](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hermann_Schievelbein) and cast by [S. P. Devaranne](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=S._P._Devaranne&action=edit&redlink=1) in [Berlin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Berlin) in 1845–1847.[[13]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Helsinki_Cathedral#cite_note-kaksitoistaapostolia-13) The altarpiece was painted by [Carl Timoleon von Neff](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carl_Timoleon_von_Neff) and donated to the church by Emperor [Nicholas I](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nicholas_I_of_Russia).[[14]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Helsinki_Cathedral#cite_note-14) The cathedral crypt was renovated in the 1980s by architects [Vilhelm Helander](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vilhelm_Helander) and [Juha Leiviskä](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Juha_Leivisk%C3%A4) for use in exhibitions and church functions; Helander was also responsible for conservation repairs on the cathedral in the late 1990s.

Today, the cathedral is one of Helsinki's most popular tourist attractions. In 2018 there were half a million visitors.[[15]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Helsinki_Cathedral#cite_note-seurakuntalainen-15) The church is in regular use for services of worship and special events such as weddings.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Helsinki Cathedral** | |
| ***Helsingin tuomiokirkko*, *Suurkirkko* (in Finnish) *Helsingfors domkyrka*, *Storkyrkan* (in Swedish)** | |
|  | |
| [Wikimedia](https://foundation.wikimedia.org/wiki/Maps_Terms_of_Use) | © [OpenStreetMap](https://www.openstreetmap.org/copyright) | |
| [60°10′13″N 024°57′08″E](https://geohack.toolforge.org/geohack.php?pagename=Helsinki_Cathedral&params=60_10_13_N_024_57_08_E_type:landmark)[Coordinates](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geographic_coordinate_system): [60°10′13″N 024°57′08″E](https://geohack.toolforge.org/geohack.php?pagename=Helsinki_Cathedral&params=60_10_13_N_024_57_08_E_type:landmark) | |
| **Location** | [Kruununhaka](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kruununhaka), [Helsinki](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Helsinki), [Finland](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Finland) |
| [**Denomination**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_denomination) | [Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Evangelical_Lutheran_Church_of_Finland) |
| **Website** | [helsinkicathedral.fi](http://helsinkicathedral.fi/) |
| **History** | |
| **Status** | [Cathedral](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cathedral) |
| [**Dedication**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dedication) | [St Nicholas](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/St_Nicholas) |
| **Architecture** | |
| [**Architect(s)**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Architect) | [Carl Ludvig Engel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carl_Ludvig_Engel); later altered by [Ernst Lohrmann](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ernst_Lohrmann) |
| [**Style**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sacred_architecture) | [Neoclassical](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neoclassical_architecture) |
| [**Groundbreaking**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Groundbreaking) | 1830 |
| **Completed** | 1852 |
| **Specifications** | |
| **Capacity** | seats 1,300 |
| **Administration** | |
| [**Diocese**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diocese) | [Helsinki](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diocese_of_Helsinki) |
| **Clergy** | |
| [**Bishop(s)**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bishop) | [Teemu Laajasalo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Teemu_Laajasalo) |