



*Details of the calendar disk and of the main clockwork. We regret that there is no public access to the inside of the clock.*

*St. Mary's Church is the main church of the City of Rostock. It constitutes a prime example of the North German brick gothic style. Construction commenced in the early 13th century.*

## You have never seen anything like this before!

St. Mary's church in Rostock is home to the oldest astronomical clock from medieval times which keeps working with all original parts to this day. It dates from 1472 – Columbus had not yet discovered America! – and displays not just time but also date, lunar phase, and much more.

At the time of its construction it was fairly revolutionary: The cycles of sun, moon and stars had always been considered as the paradigm of perfect regularity, but the invention of mechanical clockwork in the 14th century demonstrated that manmade technical devices can keep time even more precisely. The clock in Rostock is a witness of that period. It is the only clock of this type which has been handed down to us both fully authentic and fully operational.

150 years later it had already become so dear to the people of Rostock that they actually enlarged it while all around them the Thirty Year's war raged. A major interruption of operation then occurred in 1842 when during repair work on the vaulted ceiling, debris fell on and into the clock and damaged it; it took over 40 years to secure the funds for a thorough repair. Later, during WW 2, as a precaution the clock was immured for its protection.

Other than during such times of trouble, the clockworks have been wound every day, and its wheels have been greased, for over five and one half centuries and counting! Where else do you have a machine built to last such that after more than half a millennium it still performs with precision?

Today we stand before a vivid testimony from a distant and almost forgotten past. This clock is a medieval technological marvel, and at the same time a notable piece of art.

When the data on the calendar disk (the fourth set, covering 1885-2017) expired, a new calendar with data for 2018-2150 was ceremonially introduced on New Year's day 2018. That event also marked the beginning of a double commemoration: the 800-year anniversary of the City of Rostock (2018), and the 600-year anniversary of the University of Rostock (2019). The previous calendar remains visible and available on a photography, on display next to the clock.





## INFORMATION FOR YOUR VISIT

### St. Mary's at Rostock

The church is located centrally downtown at Neuer Markt.

### Opening hours

The church is open year-round, but opening hours are subject to changes.

For current opening times please see [www.marienkirche-rostock.de](http://www.marienkirche-rostock.de)

### Admission

Monday-Saturday there is an entrance fee of currently 3 €; reduced rates are available.

For up-to-date information please see [www.marienkirche-rostock.de](http://www.marienkirche-rostock.de)

### Further Information

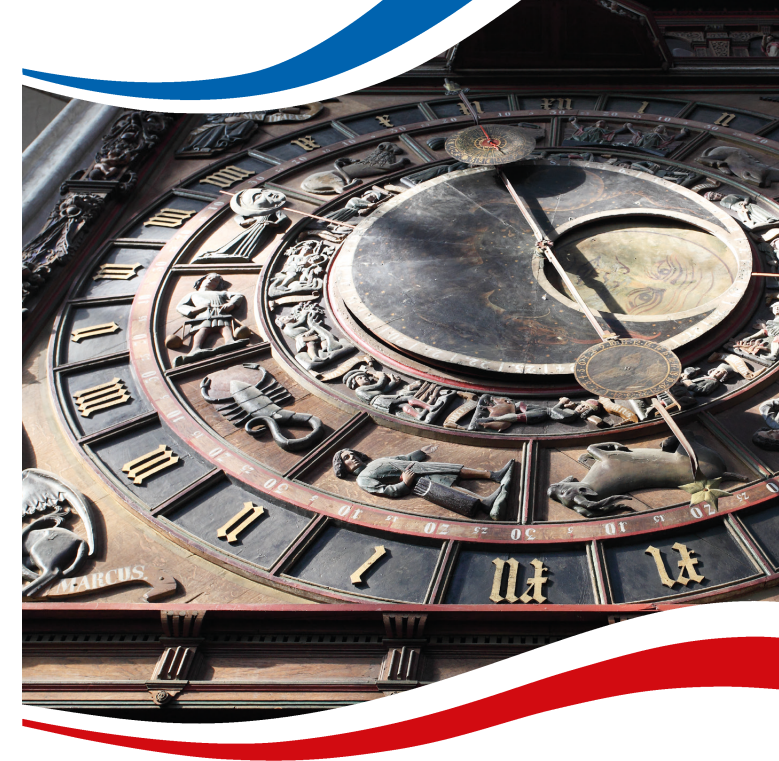
For a brief description of the Astronomical Clock and its history see

[www.astronomischeuhr.de](http://www.astronomischeuhr.de) → English

For a comprehensive collection of documents (text, images, video, sound, literature suggestions) about the Astronomical Clock see

[www.aur.uni-rostock.de](http://www.aur.uni-rostock.de) → English

Brochures, books and souvenirs on the subject are available for purchase inside the church.



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## The Astronomical Clock of 1472 in Rostock

*A witness from a distant past –  
and it keeps going*

3rd edition

