



Eye Gate
Sermons in Symbols

First United Methodist Church, Wichita Falls, Texas

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*he hearing ear, and the seeing eye,
the Lord hath made even both of them.*

Proverbs 20:12

*For the invisible things of him from the
creations of the world are clearly seen, being
understood by the things that are made,
even his eternal power and Godhead.*

Romans 1:20

O
God of peace
we turn
aside
from our
unquiet world
seeking rest
for our spirits
and light
for our thoughts

We bring
our work to be sanctified,
our wounds to be healed,
our sins to be forgiven,
our hopes to be renewed,
our better selves to be quickened.

O Thou,
in whom there is harmony,
draw us to Thyself,
fill us with the fullness
of
Thy Truth and Love.

Thou,
whose greatness is beyond praise,
lift us above our littleness
and
our daily imperfections;
send us visions of love that is in Thee,
and of the good that may be in us.
In our Lord's Name,

AMEN

A prayer of Desiderius Erasmus

*For other foundation
can no man lay than
that is laid, which is
Jesus Christ.*

I Corinthians 3:11

Carved on the cornerstone laid
in north face of tower.

EYE GATE

Sermons in Symbols

Third Edition

Text and Original Graphics

by

Eleanor M. Robbins



Published in memory of
Eleanor M. Robbins.

All proceeds are dedicated to the budgeted mission
of the First United Methodist Church.

Photography: Frank Yeager, Wichita Falls, Texas

Production/Design: gII Ad Group, Wichita Falls, Texas

Third Printing: 2011, Copy Craft Printers, Inc., Lubbock, Texas

Foreword

Third Edition, 2011

To the educated Eye, “There is no such thing as a silent cathedral. The voices of minister, choir, organ may be temporarily lost, but in that absence the symphony speaks.” Thus Mrs. Robbins begins this work of love which offers silent sermons to the congregation of this church. “Voices of apostle and martyr, of sacred word and of the Holy Spirit, enter the mind through sight and understanding of the symbols. The eyes are gates, opening the mind...”

The first edition of Eye Gate was researched and printed in 1969 and given as a gift of love to the Memorial Fund of the church. Then, in 1983, at the request of the Administrative Board of the church, the first edition was updated and given to the congregation of the church.

Since 1983 many of the Eye Gates have disappeared from the pews. Now the time has come to open our twenty-first century eyes to the silent sermons all around us. Without knowledge of the symbols, the congregation is deprived of the full worship experience our church building has to offer. Our eyes are gates opening our minds to a whole new faith in the continuity of Christian worship.



Eleanor Manning Robbins
October 20, 1899 – December 9, 1995

This time the family of Eleanor Manning Robbins, together with anonymous donors, are inviting the congregation to join us in publishing a third edition honoring her and celebrating with new photographs the meaningful beauty of our historic church.

Opposite page: Based on the Beatitudes of Jesus in Plant Symbol, this is a reproduction of an original watercolor by Eleanor M. Robbins.

*“Blessed are the merciful (chestnut),
for they shall obtain mercy.” (holly-oak)
Matthews 5:7*

Dedication

*Dedicated to Eleanor Manning Robbins
Spring 2011*



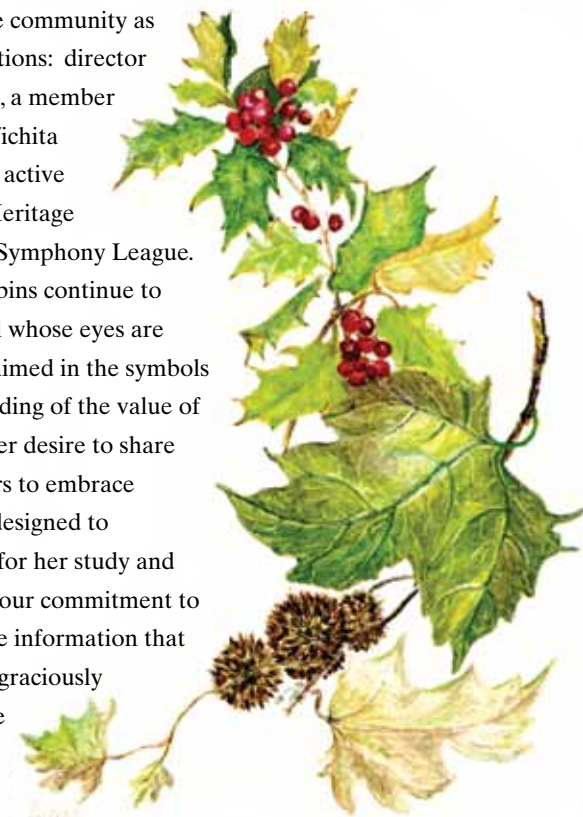
born October 20, 1899, in Dallas, Texas, Eleanor Manning Robbins became an accomplished speaker, writer, and artist. Her commissioned works are displayed in private collections locally and in several other Texas cities.

As an involved member of First United Methodist Church, Mrs. Robbins served on the sanctuary worship committee and the library board. In 1969 she authored and illustrated a book, *Eye Gate*, which identifies and interprets the symbols used in the architecture and furnishings of the church. Copies of the second edition of this book published in 1983 were located in the pews of FUMC.

Her love of painting and research led to an in-depth study of plants mentioned in the Bible culminating in a series of watercolors based on the Beatitudes. Researching and painting plants was not enough; camellias flourished in her green house.

Her talents enriched the community as she served in various organizations: director emeritus of the Criterion Club, a member of the advisory board of the Wichita Falls Museum and Art Center, active member of the Wichita Falls Heritage Society, Woman’s Forum, and Symphony League.

The efforts of Mrs. Robbins continue to enrich and bless the lives of all whose eyes are opened to the messages proclaimed in the symbols of our church. Her understanding of the value of the symbols she defined and her desire to share this information inspire readers to embrace the messages our structure is designed to communicate. With gratitude for her study and generosity, we renew with her our commitment to maintaining and presenting the information that she so carefully compiled and graciously offered to FUMC. We dedicate this third printing in honor of her work.





Contents

Foreword.....	6
The Furnishings of Worship	11
The Rose Window	17
Arcade Windows	26
Liturgical Credenza.....	28
Clerestory Windows	31
East Windows	31
West Windows.....	35
North Wall - Balcony	38
The Narthex	41
Addenda 1983	
Dedication of Paul E. Martin Narthex & Heritage Area ..	46
Stained Glass “Christ for All People”	46
Oil Paintings	47
The Perkins Chapel	51
The Facade	55
Photo Gallery 2011	60

FURNISHINGS FOR WORSHIP



here is no such thing as a silent cathedral. The voices of minister, choir, and organ may be temporarily lost, but in that absence the symbolic symphony speaks. Voices of apostle and martyr, of sacred word and of the Holy Spirit enter the mind through seeing and understanding the symbols. The eyes are gates, opening the mind to a ministry of verity.

Church

Strictly speaking, this building is not the “Church.” It is a “House of God,” that is, a structure dedicated to the worship of Almighty God by people who revere and serve Him. It is the people in the pews, or wherever they may be, the Believers, who are the Church.

Nave and Sanctuary

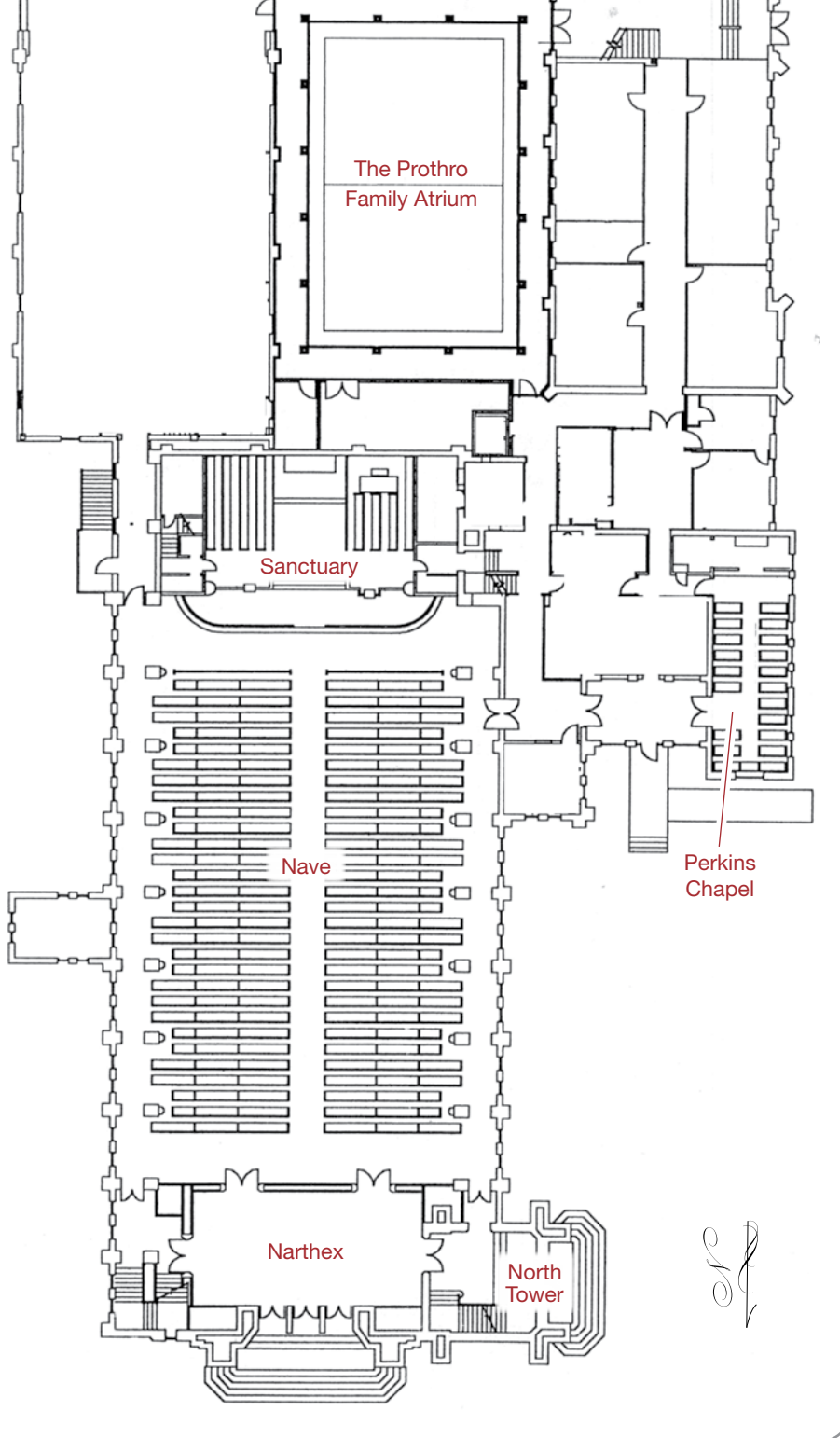
Worshippers find seats in that part of the building called the nave. In a widely spread misuse of the term, people call the nave a sanctuary. Only that portion of the space which surrounds the altar and/or communion table may be properly called the sanctuary. If, however, we continue to call the nave a sanctuary, how deeply reverent should be our deportment therein. What conversation between ourselves can possibly override our need for conversation with our Heavenly Father?

A truly great House of God says, in the empowered silence of its symbolic ministry, “Be still, and know that I am God.” Would you hear this Voice? There is a preparation of heart available here in the antiphonal melodies of the centuries-old symbols, which set to the chords of prayer, will open our eyes.



Chancel Area

A low prayer rail and cushioned kneeling step on either side of the altar aisle designates the chancel area. Here stand pulpit, lectern (reading desk), sedilia (seats for clergy), choir stalls (seats for antiphonal responses), a fenced organ console, the baptismal font, and the altar. The altar occupies a sanctuary (space) raised by two steps from that area where the choir is seated, while the entire chancel area is elevated by stages of five steps from the nave floor.



Tenth Street

Travis Street

Attributes of the Lamb

The original Seven Steps from nave to altar symbolized the attributes of praise voiced by myriad choirs around the throne of God, as described in Revelation 5: 11-12: "And I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne saying with a loud voice, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.'"



Baptismal Font

Under the Monogram of God on the pedestal of the lectern, a silver cup is placed upon a narrow shelf. Held by the minister, the cup is filled with water which, when touched to the forehead of one presented for consecration, becomes a symbol of Holy Baptism, a sacred rite of the Church. "... Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38). "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." Hebrews 10:22.

Lectern

The lectern is a desk from which Scripture is read during a service of worship. On the face of this lectern is carved the Monogram of God, an intermingling of the Greek letters Alpha and Omega. These are the first and last letters, respectively, of the Greek alphabet. "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending," saith the Lord, "which is, and which was, and which is to come." Revelation 1:8.

Pulpit

The pulpit is an especial desk for the minister, a person dedicated to the service of God, from which he delivers his sermon. A Bishop's Cross, emblem of the clergy, is carved into the face of the pulpit.



Altar

The altar is the traditional mensa (table) having a retable (separate, narrow, slightly raised, rear shelf), a carved oak reredos (back frame), and a carved mantle (canopy) which originally suspended a golden damask dossal (curtain). A graded Latin cross (ascending by three steps), and four single candlesticks are set upon the retable. Below the cross, an open Bible rests on the mensa.

Memorial Stands

Helpers of carved oak are set on either side of the altar. Here memorial flower offerings may be placed. Only real flowers are suitable for memorials.

Wounds of Christ

Incised upon the mensa top are five small Greek crosses which serve to remind us of the wounds suffered by our saviour. A cross is set into each corner and into the center.

The Altar Cross

The altar cross is a graded, Latin cross. It is shaped like the one on which our Lord was crucified. The cross bears a crown of thorns and a rayed nimbus. The three "grades" or steps on the base signify the abiding demands laid upon all who would claim the atonement of Christ. "And now abideth faith, hope, and charity (love), these three; but the greatest of these is charity." I Corinthians 13:13.



Altar Frontal

The altar frontal is composed of carved oak panels. In the panels the Latin cross appears again, rising from a flame-of-glory nimbus, accompanied by symbols of the two sacraments professed in evangelical churches.

Chalice and Vine Panel

The chalice (goblet) and vine (grape) represent the Holy Communion. "And as they were eating, Jesus took the bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, 'Take, eat; this is my body.' And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, 'Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.'" Matthew 26:26, 27, 28.

Descending Dove Panel

The descending dove is an emblem of the sacrament of Holy Baptism. “And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him.” Matthew 3:16.

Lilies

When used with the dove, symbol of Holy Baptism, the lilies stand for the cleansing power of the Holy Spirit as experienced in this sacrament. “Wash you, make you clean. . . Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow” (Isaiah 1:16, 18). “John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.” Mark 1:4.

Mantle and Dossal

A lovely mantle (carved canopy of oak) crowns the dossal in a lace of Gothic arches, symbolizing lifted hands, joined in prayer. The dossal is now a red curtain suspended from the mantle and falling within the reredos (carved oak frame) to the mensa.

Mantle Trumpeture

Above the lace of praying hands (arches) rises a delicate trumpeture of blossoming almond rods carved from oak and footed in a garland of pomegranate foliage. The Hebrew word for almond is shaked which means “awake,” “watch,” “hasten.” The almond tree blooms very early ahead of its leaves. The trumpeture might be called a symbol of preparedness. “Then shall they see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels in Heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. . . Take ye heed, watch and pray, for ye know not when the time is.” Mark 13:26, 32, 33.



Pomegranates

The pomegranate has long been accepted as a symbol of royalty. It is used in Christian art as a symbol of Christ. When it is shown in fruit with seeds emerging, it becomes a symbol of the resurrection, our Lord Jesus’ escape from the tomb. “And the angel said, ‘Fear not ye: for I know ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for He is risen, as he said.’” Matthew 28:2, 5, 6.

The pomegranate is also a symbol of the last judgment. “Then answered Jesus, ‘Verily, I say unto you, as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. For, as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.’” John 5:19, 21, 26-29.

Candlesticks

The life and teaching of Jesus is represented by the four candlesticks and the four lighted candles. The four Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and

John) tell us almost all we know about the life and words of Jesus. The four candlesticks are suggested also in the candle-shaped, cusped windows just above the reredos. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.” John 1:1, 4, 12.

Chandeliers

Great bronze chandeliers, amber shaded, are suspended on slender chains from the vault’s apex. They have the likeness of golden censers, and they represent spoken or silent prayers which rise from worshippers in the nave, are gathered into the censers, and presented before the throne of the Lamb as in Revelation 5:8.



Corbels

Vault ribs meet the wall shafts in brackets on which the Cross of Saint Andrew is carved and from which hang banana bud corbels. The banana bud is a symbol of perpetual life renewal, for the bud grows downward and upon reaching earth puts out roots, becoming a new plant, thus endlessly repeating itself in living plants. (Photo, p. 60.)



The Triforium Frieze

A raised triforium frieze runs across both east and west walls of the nave. Here quatrefoils (blessing) in circles (the Father Everlasting) are seen guarding a band of armor shields (“Shields of Faith,” Ephesians 6:16).

It was customary in medieval times for soldiers, upon entering the castle hall of their liege lord, to hang their armor upon the walls before taking seats at the triumphal feast. Designers of Gothic churches adapted this old custom to a symbolism which is intended to suggest the great company of Christians down the centuries who, by faith, are called to the “marriage supper of the Lamb” (Revelation 19:9). Thus this band of shields-at-rest betokens the “Communion of Saints” to which we refer in the Apostles’ Creed. (Photo, p. 61.)

Moreover, there is inspiration here when we remember the words of the Apostle Paul:

I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but to all them also that love his appearing. II Timothy 4:7, 8.

Beneath the triforium band we see the wall lights, lanterns. These are symbols of our own responsibility to take up the fight. We must now carry the Gospel Light. “Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.” Hebrews 12:1.

THE ROSE WINDOW



The great Rose Window hangs like a wonderful tapestry on the chancel wall above the altar. Beneath it, and forming a unified fenestration, are the four tall, cusped *Candle Windows*. To the eye of the uninitiated, the ensemble may be merely a colored glass picture of some men, women, and children put there to decorate the wall and, according to words half hidden by the dossal, honor the memory of the mother of Jerome Stone. (p. 57)

Words of Jesus found in Matthew are silently voiced in Gothic letters across the *Candle Windows*, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." The window tapestry may mean much or little to an observer, depending upon his powers of perception, his education, his religious background. Without the quotation, however, even a very young member of the congregation could tell you that the picture shows Jesus, blessing the little children.

At the level of utmost simplicity, the window tapestry is saying to the adult Christian: "Verily, I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein." Luke 18:17.

Symbols in Wood and Glass

Gothic Arch

The entire outer frame signifies hands, joined in prayer.

Double Trefoil

God in Three Persons, Blessed Trinity. The clover leaf, or *trefoil*, under the apex of the arch, stands for the Trinity of our faith: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It is shown twice to picture the often used Alpha and Omega, a description of God. "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son." Revelation 21: 6, 7.



Double Two-Edged Swords

These symbols, located on either side of the trefoils, stand for the "Word of God." "For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and spirit, of joint and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart." Hebrews 4:12.



The Logos

When used together, these symbols of *Trefoils and Swords* stand for a sign of the *Logos*, or creative life force in the universe being with God from the beginning and becoming incarnate in Jesus. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, And the Word

was made flesh and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father.)” John 1:1, 14.

The Greater Circle of the Rose

The *circle*, having no perceptible point of beginning or of ending, is a symbol of God. (See *Monogram of God*, p. 33.) “To whom will ye liken God? Or with what likeness will you compare him? It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth: and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers: that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in.” Isaiah 40:18, 22.

The Lesser Circle of the Rose

The *circle* is also an emblem of Christ, who said: “I and my Father are one” (John 10:30). Because the *circle* shows no end, it is often used to signify eternity. Here it is used to suggest eternal life through Christ. “These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, ‘Father, the hour is come; glorify the Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.’” John 17:1-3, 17:24.

The Wheel

The *wheel* is an ancient symbol of power. It is applied to religious art through the vision of the prophet Ezekiel, in which he saw winged cherubim having four faces each and moving beside wheels. (See Ezekiel 10:13, 14; 11:19-23.) Here it stands for the glory and righteous judgment of God.

The Great Star

Touching the *Greater Circle* at six points, and contained within it, the *Great Star* is a symbol of the Godhead. The six points, sometimes called “God the Father,” signify the attributes of God: wisdom, majesty, power, love, mercy, and justice.

The Inner Star

A companion to the symbol above, “God, the Father,” this smaller star is the *Star of Prophecy* and represents Christ, the Son. It touches the *lesser circle* at six points. “A Star shall come forth out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel. I am Jesus, the root and offspring of David, the bright morning star.” Numbers 24:17; Revelation 22:16.

Note: A star of five points would be used to represent the birth of Jesus, and also the visit to His manger of the Wise Men. In the latter instance the star of five points is called the “Star of Epiphany.” See Matthew 1:18-21; 2:2; 2:9-11.

The Great Rose

Also touching the *Greater Circle* at six points, and in the same places as the points of the *Great Star*, are the petals of the *Great Rose*. Wherever the rose is used in Christian art it suggests Christ, the Messiah. It is adapted from a passage in Isaiah which predicts the coming of Christ’s kingdom. “The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them, and the desert shall blossom as the rose.” Isaiah 35:1.

The Inner Rose

The *Inner Rose* has twelve petals formed by pairs within the six petals of the *Great Rose*. Each petal stands for one of Jesus’ disciples. The *Inner Rose* is a symbol of the “Great Commission,” the last command given by our Saviour to his disciples. “Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, ‘All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.’” Matthew 25: 19-20.

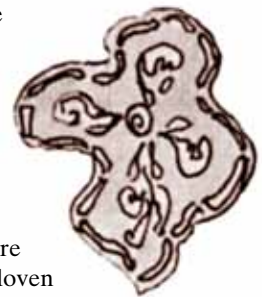
Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Six doves circle the rim of the *Inner Circle*. They signify the gifts of the Holy Spirit. They circle wing spread to wing spread. “And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots: and the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and fear of the Lord.” Isaiah 11:1, 2. (p. 12, Sacrament of Baptism)



The Cloven Tongues

Within the carved frames of the twelve petals of the *Inner Rose* is the *Tongue of Pentecost*.” Pentecost comes from a Greek word meaning “fifty.” The Jewish Feast of Pentecost (or Harvest) was celebrated fifty days after the Feast of Passover. “And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly, there came sound from heaven as of a rushing, mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost.” Acts 2:1-4.



Hereby was the prophecy, voiced by John the Baptist, fulfilled, for he said, “I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, and latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.” Luke 3:16.

Breastplate of Righteousness from the Whole Armor of God

Each point of the *Great Star* holds a richly colored flower. These are anemones, the flowers Jesus called “lilies of the field.”

In an involved but easily followed symbolism, these anemones become *Breastplates of Righteousness*.

The sequence is given below.



Jesus said: “Why take ye thought for raiment?

Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin/ if God so clothe the grass of the field; shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?” (Matthew 6:28, 30). And James wrote: “Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness.” James 2:23.

The lilies (or anemones) are used by Jesus to teach absolute trust in God; Abraham’s trust in God is called “righteousness.” Therefore, the lovely gay flowers become breastplates of righteousness!

Footprints of Feet Shod with the Preparation of the Gospel of Peace

Between the points of the *Great Star* and in the petals of the *Great Rose* are the footprints of the Gospel of Peace.

The preparation is a term frequently used to denote a period of planned activity preceding some religious ceremony. “And that day was the preparation, and the Sabbath drew on” (Luke 23:54). Gospel comes from the Latin evangelium which means good tidings. The good tidings which Jesus brought from His Father are known as the Christian Gospel (Galatians 1:8, 9). Peace is a gift from Christ. John 14:27.



Helmets of Salvation from the Whole Armor of God

Twelve helmet-like symbols appear inside the rim of the *Great Circle* on either side of the petals of the *Great Rose*. The Roman helmet was a protective head covering of leather or metal, often having a spike in the crown.

Salvation is a word cherished in scripture. In the Old Testament it is an earthly help in time of trouble and a covenantal dream of Messianic significance. In the New Testament it is a testimony to the seen and unseen Presence of Christ.



“And Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people, and hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David, as he spake by the mouth of his Holy prophets...” Luke 1: 67-69.

“And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon: waiting for the consolation of Israel and it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Christ. And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, ‘Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.’” Luke 2: 25-30.

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.” Romans 1:16.

Swords of the Spirit of Christ from the Whole Armor of God

Four swords, shaped like daggers, will be seen outside the *Great Circle* in the two outer mullions. The *Sword of the Spirit* moves swiftly, and relentlessly, like the scalpel of a surgeon, to separate diseased tissue from healthy flesh and sever evil from good in human hearts. Jesus said, “No servant can serve two masters; ye cannot serve God and mammon” (Luke 16:13). “He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth.” Luke 16:13.



These are swords of no compromise. There is a sword for each Gospel. “Think not (Jesus said) that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace but a sword. If thy hand offend thee, cut it off; it is better for thee to enter life maimed, than having two hands to go to hell. If thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell. He that findeth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.” Matthew 10:34, 43:45-47, 10:39.

The Two Winged Creatures

These *Angels of the Little Ones* will be found beneath the *Great Circle* beside candle flames in the second and third panels. They remind one that Jesus said, “Whosoever shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven, and whoever shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me. But who so shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better that a millstone were hanged about his neck and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea. Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in Heaven.” Matthew 18:4-6; 10.



The Two Quatrefoils

One figure of four foils is often used to suggest the Four Cardinal Virtues: Justice, Prudence, Temperance, and Fortitude. The *Quatrefoil* repeated presents eight foils which, together, indicate the eight specific virtues blessed by Jesus in His eight Beatitudes. (Note: The quotation spread across the window panels below is the Sixth Beatitude. See Matthew 5:3-10.)



Feathers

Close inspection reveals an astonishing fact. The entire background of this window is formed of feathers which are stained in the lovely glass in many colors, tints and shades. Big and small, plumes and tiny puffs, the feathers fill every space not used by other symbols. They suggest these words from Psalms: "I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge, and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shall thou trust." Psalm 91:2-4.



Four Lighted Candle Panels

Across the lower portion of the window are the four panels which rise in lighted candle-shaped mullions to touch the *Great Circle*. Each has a counterpart in a lighted candle set in one of the four golden candlesticks upon the retable and is echoed in the arcs of the mantle above. These signify the illumination which is revealed in the four Gospels.



Each believer, by prayer and faith with thanksgiving, must light his own candle from the *Gospel Candles*, which in turn have received their kindling from Christ, the Light of the World. Jesus commanded: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven." Matthew 5:16.

The Two Fishes

Around the center frame of the *Candle Panels* are two fish-form glasses. No Christian symbol was more universally used among early believers than the fish. In a time when it was dangerous to be known as a Christian, it was safe to display a fish sign, as there were many fish mongers in the countryside. To the Christian, however, the word fish and the sign had especial significance. In the Greek phrase, "Jesus Christ of God Son Saviour," the first letters of each word, taken together, also make a Greek word, ichthys, which is the Greek for fish.



The fishes therefore signify the Church, or the company of believers in Christ. The word is pronounced "ik-thuce."

Flowers and Sprays

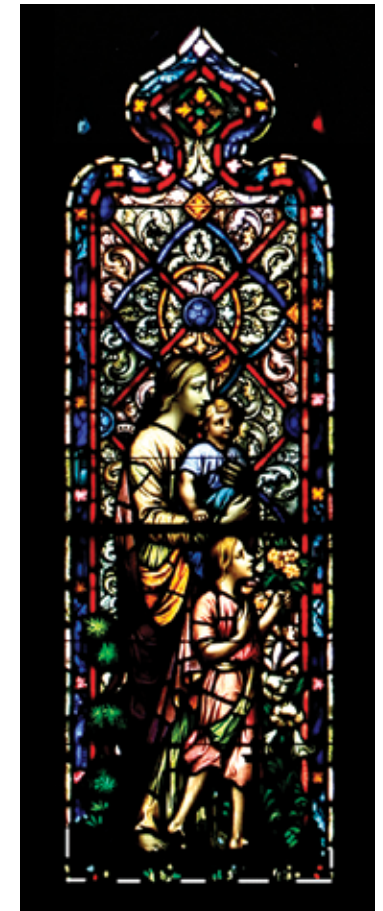
Worked into the glass are sprays of lilies and foliage. The *white Madonna lily* is the signature of Mary, Mother of Christ. It denotes purity.

There is another interpretation in which the lily may suggest the resurrection of Christ. In this case, the lily bulb is likened to the Virgin Womb of Mary, which is likened to the tomb. "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept." I Corinthians 15:20.

Bits and Pieces

These signify the multitude of the Church. A window is no window if even one piece is lost. Every fragment, whatever its size, shape or color is important.

In entirety, the beautiful window tapestry becomes the Church, the Body of Christ. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all members of that body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ." I Corinthians 12:12.





he Whole Armor of God

“Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God.”

Ephesians 6:11.



The Shield of Faith

(No. 5)

At the very center of the circles, stars, and roses, where the hub of the wheel might be, is the *Shield of Faith*. It sustains four winged faces, symbols of the Evangelists. The *Winged Man* represents Saint Matthew, whose Gospel treats most fully of the humanity of Jesus. The *Winged Lion* represents Saint Mark, whose Gospel deals in depth with the kingly or messianic interpretation of Jesus. The *Winged Calf* represents Saint Luke, whose Gospel is dedicated to an exposition of the atoning power of Jesus. The *Winged Eagle* represents Saint John, whose Gospel is dedicated to an exposition of the Divine nature of Jesus.

Emblems of the Evangelists in The Shield of Faith



Saint Matthew



Saint Mark



Saint Luke



Saint John

The White Cincture, Girdle of the Whole Armor of God

(No. 6)

Caught in loops around the *Shield of Faith* (in the glass of the center circle) is a white, ribbon-like cincture. The flowing robes of Eastern peoples need to be caught up by this girdle when swift bodily movement is required. The process is called girding. Saint Paul calls this cincture “Truth.” Jesus said, “If ye continue in my word, ye are my disciples indeed: and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” John 8:31, 32.

The Scourge

(No. 11)

A coil of rope lies against the inner rim of the Lesser Circle, enveloping the *Shield of Faith*. It recalls the trial of Jesus before Pontius Pilate. It was the Roman custom to make a prisoner bend across a barrel-like table, hands and feet tied, while he was beaten with a leather metal tipped scourge. Deep cuts would be opened in the prisoner’s back. “He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.” Isaiah 53:5

The Crown of Thorns

(No. 12)

Next to the *Scourge* lies a wreath of crimson-blotched thorn twigs. “The soldiers of the governor (Pilate) took Jesus into the common hall, gathered unto him a whole band of soldiers. And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe. And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it on his head, and a reed in his hand: and they bowed the knee to him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, king of the Jews!” Matthew 27:28, 29.



Ye are bought with a price;

therefore glorify God in your body,

and in your spirit, which are God’s.

I Corinthians 6:20



ARCADE WINDOWS

A Parable of the Kingdom

Arcade windows in both lower side walls of the nave are centered by vesica piscis, (diamond-shaped) glasses carrying an emblem in which conventionalized ears of wheat rise and fall vertically, and tares extend laterally out of a Gothic rose.

(The tares of the Bible are poisonous weeds known as bearded darnel or rye grass, which look so much like wheat that they often spring up and grow unrecognized alongside the grain until the ears are formed. Both are usually allowed to grow until harvest, after which the lighter and smaller seed of the darnel are blown away by fanning and by sieving.)

This symbol directs meditation to one of our Lord's parables concerning the kingdom of heaven, and to His warning to those "who seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand" (Matthew 13:13). This parable and the explanation of it which Jesus gave his disciples is quoted below.



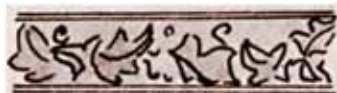
"The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, 'Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in they field? From whence then hath it tares?' He said unto them, 'An enemy hath done this.' The servants said unto him, 'Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?' But he said, 'Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.'" Matthew 13:24-30.

"And his disciples came unto him, saying, 'Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field.' He answered and said unto them, 'He that soweth good seed is the Son of man; the field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.'" Matthew 13:36-43.

THE LITURGICAL CREDENZA

Before the north wall of the nave at the great aisle opening, stands a liturgical credenza on which the Memorial Book is placed within a seated, carved and glazed lectern. The credenza represents many gifts, made and anticipated, to this church of families and friends, all tendered in tribute to those whose names are, or will be in days to come, inscribed upon the leaves of the Memorial Book. (The Memorial Book is now kept in the Heritage Room.)

Rich in meaning, the credenza presents an eye-level profundity of symbolic credence. Any article of Christian memorial must, by its very nature and in all its parts, serve as the declaration of a faith which inspires and strengthens the living while comforting them in their sorrow. It should bespeak confidence that those memorialized are ones departed in that faith.



Ivy Garland: Undying Affection

The tenaciously clinging ivy vine with its evergreen, heart-shaped leaves is an ancient symbol of human devotion.



Grape Clusters on a Running Vine: Christ and His Followers (top rim)

“Jesus said: ‘I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit’” (John 15:5). “...Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord henceforth: ‘Yea,’ saith the Spirit, ‘that they may rest from their labours: and their works do follow them.’” Revelation 14:13.



Bells: Joy (first side panel)

Jesus said: “If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; These things have I spoken unto you that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full” (John 15:5). “Well done, thou good and faithful servant. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.” Matthew 25:21.



Hyacinth: Peace (left front panel)

Jesus said: “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” (John 14:27). “In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” John 14:2, 3.



Springs of Water: The Gospel (center front panel)

“Jesus said (referring to water from Jacob’s well): ‘Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.’” John 4:14.



Sunflower: Glory (right front panel)

“As it is written, there is none righteous, no not one: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:10 and 23). “By faith we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” Romans 5:1, 2.



Cornucopia: Abundant Love of God (second side panel)

“All things work together for good to them that love God . . . neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans 8:28, 38, 39.

Quatrefoil in Circle: Blessing (all panels)

CLERESTORY WINDOWS



here are eight large, arched openings in each long upper side wall of the nave. Although our church is built in modified Gothic style and there is no structural triforium break, since these windows extend to the vault ribs, rising from the arcade ceiling. It has seemed permissible to call them “clerestory.”

Each opening is filled by tall, lovely mullions of intricately stained glass, set in carved oak. The windows rise in matched panels, three to an arch. A symbol is emblazoned upon each center panel which, if one understands, speaks eloquently to mind and heart, enlivening the spirit.

Tympana are filled by carved wood tracery and jeweled cut glasses which resemble a crown and scepter. It is easy to imagine that these windows of rainbow light might suddenly become gates through which the King of Glory would enter.

*Lift up your heads, O ye gates;
even lift them up, ye everlasting doors;
and the King of glory shall come in.
Who is this King of glory?
The lord of hosts, he is the King of glory.*

Psalms 24:9,10.

Selected Scripture References

East Wall of Nave

E.1. **Tablets of the Law**

“And the Lord said unto Moses, ‘Come up to me into the mount, and be there: and I will give thee tables of stone, and a law, and commandments which I have written; that thou mayest teach them’...And Moses was in the mount forty days and forty nights...And the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables... And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, and the ten commandments.” Exodus 24:12, 18; 32:16; 34:28.

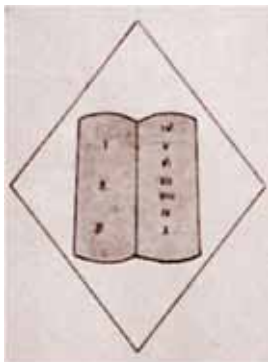
“And it came to pass when Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tables of testimony in Moses’ hand, when he came down from the mount, that Moses wist not that the skin of his face shown while he talked with him.” Exodus 34:29.

“Teach me, O Lord, the way of they statutes; and I shall keep it unto the end. Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart.” Psalms 119:33, 34.

E.2. **Cornucopia of Blessing**

“Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not

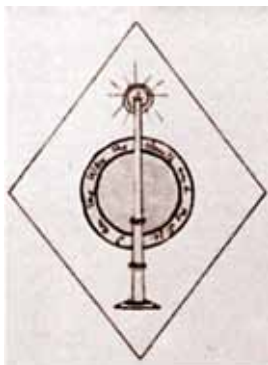
East Wall of the Nave, Reading from Chancel



(E.1) **Tablets of the Law:** Decalogue of Moses; The old Covenant.



(E.2) **Cornucopia of Blessing**



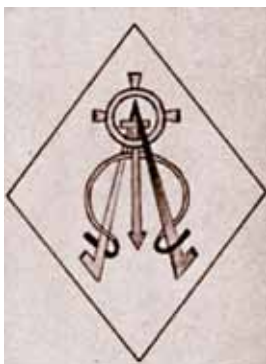
(E.3) **Lighted Candle in Circle:** Christ, the light of the world; The New Covenant.



(E.4) **Three Fishes Swimming in a Circle:** Holy Baptism in the Name of the Trinity.



(E.5) **Phoenix:** Resurrection; New Birth in Christ.



(E.6) **Monogram of God:** Greek letters, Alpha and Omega, with nimbus-crowned Sword.

open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.” Malachi 3:10.

“But woe unto you, Pharisees! For ye tithe mint and rue and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgement and the love of God. . .” Luke 11:42.

E.3. Lighted Candle in Circle

“For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill...I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” John 1:17; Matthew 5:17; John 8:12.

E.4. Three Fishes Swimming in a Circle

“Then Peter said unto them, ‘Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost’” (Acts 2:38). “For ye are all children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” Galatians 3:26, 29.

E.5. Phoenix

(The phoenix is a mythical bird, said to live 500-600 years, which burned itself on a funeral pyre and rose again from the ashes, fresh and beautiful for another long life.)

“Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.” John 11:25, 26.

E.6. The Monogram of God

“I was in the spirit on the Lord’s day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, saying, ‘I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last...’ And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.” Revelation 1:10, 11, 12, 16.

E.7. Burning Torch and Circled Monogram

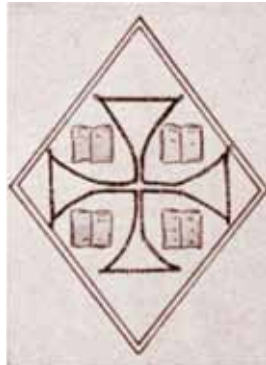
“O, send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill. When the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me” (Malachi 3:2). “But who may abide the day of his coming? And who shall stand when he appeareth? For he is like a refiner’s fire.” Psalms 43:3; John 15:21.

E.8. Cross Bearing Four Open Books

“And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, ‘All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.’” Matthew 28:18-20.



(E.7) **Burning Torch and Circled Monogram:** Refiner's Fire: Truth.



(E.8) **Cross Bearing Four Open Books:** The Great Commission; Evangelical Insignia.



*(E.9) **Cresset:** The Light of the Gospel.



*(E.10) **Pomegranate:** The resurrection of Christ, and the Christian hope in eternal fellowship with Christ.

E.9. **Cresset***

“The light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God.”
I Corinthians 4:4.

“God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” II Corinthians 4:6.

E.10. **Pomegranate***

This triumphant insignia crowns with blessed hope the covenants, both Old and New, which we see set forth in the foregoing clerestory windows. For, the pomegranate, skin broken, showing the emerging seeds, represents the resurrection of Our Lord and the Christian hope in eternal fellowship with Christ. On the night Jesus was betrayed, he prayed, kneeling in the Garden of Gethsemene,

*Father, I will that they also, whom thou
Hast given me, be with me where I am; that they
May behold my glory, which thou hast given me.*

John 17:24

* Unseen from nave, but visible from without, and lighting the eastern stairwell.

West Wall of the Nave, Reading from Chancel



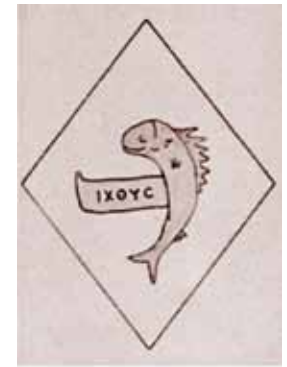
(W.1) **Star of Nativity:** Star of Jacob; Star of Epiphany; Faith.



(W.2) **Descending Dove on a Pyx:** Holy Spirit; Baptism of Jesus; Bread of Life; Hope.



(W.3) **Lamb, Thorns, Hands:** Jesus, the Good Shepherd; Love.



(W.4) **Fish and Banner:** Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour; The Banner of Christ.

Suggested Scripture References

West Wall of Nave

W.1. **Star of the Nativity, representing Faith.**

“I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel” (Numbers 24:17). “Where is he that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him...and lo, the star which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star they rejoiced with exceeding great joy” (Matthew 2:2, 9, 10). “For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, ‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, good will toward men.’” Luke 2:11-14.



(W.5) **Chalice and Serpent:** Triumph over Death; Symbol of Saint John.



(W.6) **Cock Crowing:** Call to Christian Vigilance; Symbol of Saint Peter.



(W.7) **Cluster of Grapes:** The Wrath of God; Divine Judgement; the Atoning Sacrifice of Christ.



(W.8) **Serpent Entwined on a Tree:** Fall of Man; Christian Hope in Christ.

W.2. Descending Dove on a Pyx, representing Hope.

“And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, ‘Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased’” (Luke 3:22). “I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread that I give is my flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world.” John 6:51.

W.3. Lamb, Thorns and Shepherd’s Hands, representing Love.

“I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. I am the good shepherd and know my sheep, and am known of mine” (John 10:11, 14). “And now abideth faith, hope, charity (love), these three; but the greatest of these is charity (love).” I Corinthians 13:13.

W.4. Fish and Banner

The banner (rebus) reads: “IXΘYC,” an acrostic composed of the first letters of each word in the Greek phrase, “Jesus Christ of God Son Saviour.” These letters also spell the Greek word for fish, ICTHUS.

“And Jesus said unto them, ‘Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.’” Mark 1:17.

W.5. Chalice and Serpent

“O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?” I Corinthians 15:55.

W.6. Cock Crowing

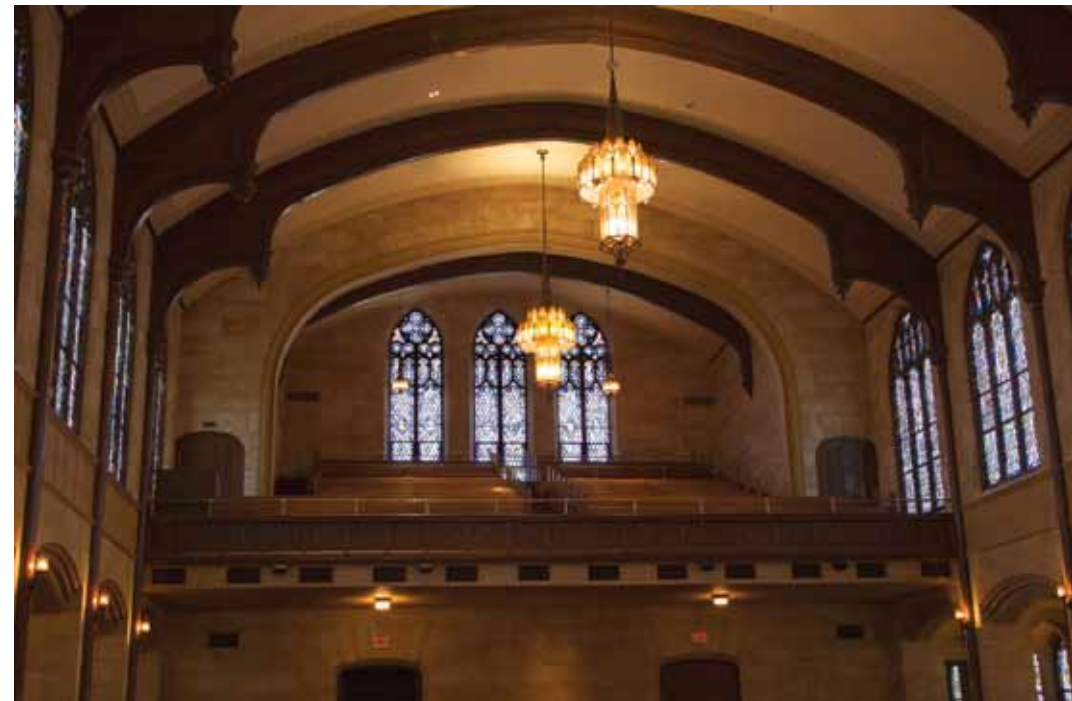
“Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak” (Matthew 26:41). “Awake to righteousness, and sin not.” I Corinthians 15:34.

W.7. Cluster of Grapes

“The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation” (Revelation 14:10). “And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and they all drank of it. And he said unto them, ‘This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many.’” Mark 14:23, 24.

W.8. Serpent Entwined on a Tree

“For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” “And so it is written, ‘The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.’” I Corinthians 15:22; 15:45.



B.1. Rock and Church

“And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. He (Jesus) saith unto them, ‘But whom say ye that I am?’ And Simon Peter answered and said, ‘Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.’ And Jesus answered and said unto him, ‘Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.’” Matthew 16:15-18.

B.2. Sun of Righteousness

“For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up,” saith the Lord of hosts, “that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings.” Malachi 4:1, 2.

B.3. Tree of Life with Morning Star

“I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify you these things in the churches. I am the root and offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. And he showed me a pure river of water of life clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations... I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the root and offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.” Revelation 22:1, 2, and 16.

B.4. Peacock

“For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil” (I Peter 3:12). “Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy. Let thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, according as we hope in thee.” Psalms 33:18, 22.

B.5. Sailing Ship

“And behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with waves; but he was asleep. And his disciples came to him, and woke him, saying, ‘Lord, save us: we perish.’ And He said unto them, ‘Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?’ Then he arose, and rebuked the wind and the sea; and there was a great calm. But the men marveled, saying, ‘What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!’” Matthew 8:24-27.

B.6. Beehive

“Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal. But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” (Matthew 6:19-21). “But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another.” I John 1:7.



(B.1) **Rock and Church:** God the Rock, the Church's One Foundation.



(B.2) **Sun of Righteousness:** Jesus Christ, Redeeming Lord.



(B.3) **Tree of Life with Star:** Bright and Morning Star; Paradise; Tree of Jesse with Star of David.



(B.4) **Peacock:** Immortality (Legendary Symbol); “Feather's Eyes,” symbol of the omnipotent, all-seeing Deity.



(B.5) **Ship, Sailing:** Soul of the Christian upon Life's Sea. Sails are set for the harbor of God's kingdom. The mast is a cross.



(B.6) **Beehive:** Christian Community of Fellowship; Heavenly Storehouse of the Righteous.



THE NARTHEX



Access to the narthex from the north portal is through one of three double-hung, carved oaken doors. Three openings signify the three-fold manifestation of God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Double-hung doors bespeak the dual nature of Our Lord: very God and very man.

This commodious anteroom derives its name from early church custom. In those days, a screen of fennel stalks (called “rods”) was set up between the congregation and unbaptized persons, called catechumens, who were, pending confirmation, allowed to listen and observe through the rod screen. The word narthex means rods. Remembering the origin and use of this vestibule helps in understanding the ubiquitous symbolism one encounters here, a graphic presentation of the cosmic conflict between the forces of evil and good.

The narthex proclaims that all who enter are sinners, being born of flesh and enmeshed in the negative forces of earth. However, the narthex also pictures complete and eternal triumph of the positive forces of Heaven over these evil worldly powers. The unregenerate soul enters the House of Prayer as a willing or unwilling servant of sin; through faith in Christ he is cleansed and empowered to become a son of the Almighty God.

Symbols from Walls and Vault

The High Frieze

A sculptured frieze of devils’ faces, horned and leering, covebands the narthex walls, an horrendous effect, heightened by thorny acanthus leaves, but cancelled by the presence of interspersed *shields of faith*.
Galatians 5:16-21; Proverbs 22:5;
2 Corinthians 6:7.



The Lower Frieze

A formalized garland of mixed foliage, in bas relief, bands the walls within arm’s reach. Entwined leaves of oak (faith and strength) and olive (peace) make this a “*victor’s wreath*.”



The Two Ropes

Two rope-like mouldings circuit the walls, the tympana, and the door jambs. The narrow rope, symbol of satanic power, holds mankind prisoner to sin. The wide rope, symbol of divine power, holds sin prisoner before the grace of our Lord’s liberating love.
Romans 5:1, 2.



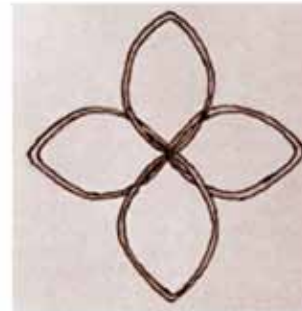
Section of Vault and Tympanum in Narthex

Capitols of Tympana Piles

Crosses of Saint Andrew are found on the capitols. This is the human cross of worldly tribulation from which the Christian may find release. "Come unto me, all ye that are heavy laden," Jesus said, "and I will give you rest." Matthew 11:28.

The Vault

An elaborate and intricately symbolic lattice sculpture extends across the narthex vault. Laid on in high relief, it states the omnipotence of Christ, the Messiah, who prevails eternally over Satan, prince of this world. Symbols explained below may be readily located in the accompanying photograph.



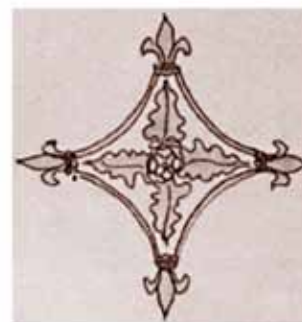
Circle and Square

The geometric figure of a circle denotes eternity and heaven; that of a square, the world and mortal existence.

Mandorla and Continuous Cross

A figure composed of intersecting circle segments, which suggest positive or ascending (right hand) and negative or descending (left hand) cosmic forces.

Four mandorlas, drawn in one continuous stroke, form the cross, which stands for the Omnipotent Divinity of Christ.



Fleur de Lis

The conventionalized presentation of a lily is here used to indicate the Holy Trinity.

Open Arcs Anchored in Fleurs de Lis

A graphic presentation of Heaven's opened windows through which there is a continuous outpouring of Divine Grace.

Rose with Oak Leaves

The gothic rose is a symbol of Messianic Promise. The oak leaves stand for faith and power.



Basilisk Boss

Where the side of each square meets an arm of a continuous cross, there is a medallion (boss) in which a small

animal crouches, half hidden by rush-like foliage. This is a mythological creature, resembling a lizard, which in Religious Art is a symbol for Satan. In the boss, the basilisk is held captive, a prisoner in the arc chain of mandorlas.



ddenda 1983

Paul E. Martin Narthex and Heritage Area

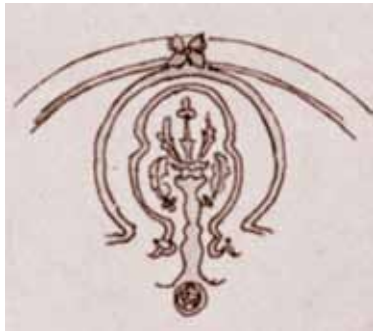
Christ For All People – stained glass window panel

Oil Paintings

Stained Glass Heritage Windows in Educational Building

Perkins Chapel

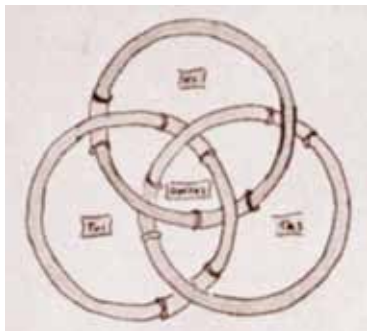
The Facade



Tympana

The space within an arch and over the lintel of a door is called the tympanum. In the narthex tympana we have fountains of flowers within frames of blossoming quatrefoils and rose emblazoned circles. The tympana voice a lilting chant of joy which relieves the somberness of walls and vault: “The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death.” Proverbs 14:27.

The Presbytery Tympana



High on the presbytery wall along the gallery are the Holy Trinity tympana. This is a design of interwoven circles taken from an ancient manuscript.



“Christ For All People”

Dedication of the Paul E. Martin Narthex and Heritage Area

The Narthex was formally dedicated to the honored memory of Bishop Paul E. Martin on September 24, 1978.

Paul Elliott Martin was a unique Christian leader and servant. His longest pastorate was 1938-1944 at First Methodist Church, Wichita Falls. In 1944 he was elected to serve as bishop of the church. As pastor, bishop, and friend, the influence of his ministry was widespread.

He was born on December 31, 1897, in Blossom, Texas. There he met and married Mildred Pryer. To an unusual extent they worked throughout their lives as a team, and they were noted for the warm personal relationship they shared.

Bishop Martin's pastorate was a period of vitality and progress in the life of this church. He came just as the members finished paying for the sanctuary building. During his stay the church membership grew from 2000 to about 2700, the budget doubled, and the traditional Easter Lily Procession was adopted. Because of Bishop Martin's influence the Perkins Lectures were established by Joe J. and Lois Perkins. (This lecture series is presented annually and is a significant series on the Christian Faith.)

The Martins' ministry to church members and the community made an imprint that was well expressed in the church bulletin when they left upon his election as bishop:

Proudly, but with tears in our hearts, we surrender to the church at large the unselfish devotion, consecrated leadership, and human kindness of Paul and Mildred Martin.

Upon his retirement, he returned to Southern Methodist University where he had received his education. There he continued working with aspiring young ministers in the Perkins School of Theology until his death in 1975.

(Adapted from a paper by Walter E. Vernon, author of "Forever Building, the Life and Ministry of Paul E. Martin," S.M.U. Press, 1973.)

Stained Glass Window Pane in Narthex

(Title) *Christ for All People* (p.45)

(Subtitle) "Let the Little Children Come Unto Me, and Forbid Them Not, For Of Such Is The Kingdom Of Heaven."

Pictured in glass, Christ sits, arms extended on either side. Children, whose faces and garments show us that each is from a different country and race, appear to be listening to His words while standing beside Him.

Peering over the shoulder of a child, who stands on Christ's right, is the grinning face of a small ape. Held on the arm of a child, standing on Christ's left, is a crested bird.

In Christian art the *figure of an ape* has been used to symbolize sin, cunning, and lust. It also represents the sinful soul of man.

In the earliest days of Christian art, *birds* were used as symbols of the winged soul. The bird form was a symbol of spiritual as opposed to material.

The total unified symbolism found in the Narthex is "a graphic presentation of the cosmic conflict between the forces of evil and good. The Narthex proclaims that all who enter are sinners, being born of the flesh and enmeshed in the negative forces of earth. However, the Narthex also pictures complete and eternal triumph of the positive forces of Heaven over these evil worldly powers. The unregenerate soul enters the House of Prayer as a willing or unwilling servant of sin; through faith in Christ he is cleansed and empowered to become a redeemed soul."

(quote from *EYE GATE*, page 41)

Christ for All People was presented to our church in memory of Bishop Paul E. Martin by the J.J. Perkins and Charles Prothro families.

Artist Designer: Josef Klotz

Maker: T. C. Essen Glass Studios, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Oil Paintings in the Narthex

Christ and the Doctors

The New Testament story in Luke 2:41-49 is hereby presented. The painting takes a place in our Narthex not only as an exquisite work of art, but as a speaking symbol. If our Lord, as a boy of twelve, declared that He "must be about my Father's business," is it not also required of us who believe?

This oil is a copy made by L. Preusser of Dresden. The original was painted by Henrich Hofmann in 1858.

Christ and the Doctors was given to our church in 1947 by Mr. and Mrs. C.W. Snider.



St. Paul

Paul (Saul) is hereby shown us, not as in a portrait, but by the intuitive likeness. After experiencing a “blinding light from heaven” and hearing the voice of Jesus, as he, Saul, hurried to Damascus with papers directing the arrest of all Christians there, this man was reborn. Acts 9:1-18.

Emerging from an ebony background of darkness comes the bearded face of Paul. Prominently, his facial features both absorb and reflect a mysterious light. His eyes focus on some object we cannot find in the painting. Surely, however, what he is seeing and hearing his strong hands, now holding a frail feather-quill pen, will afterwards record for us in his many epistles.

St. Paul’s epistles proclaim the sacrifice of Jesus of Nazareth as Divine Mercy whereby all who believe in Him and serve Him obtain eternal life.

The artist was Gerbrandt van der Eeckhout, born in Amsterdam in 1621. He was a student of Rembrandt. The painting was owned by the Prince D’Arenburg who was killed in World War I. In 1927 his widow had to dispose of the art collection at public auction. It was purchased by Mr. and Mrs. Walter Cline who gave it to our church.



Immaculate Conception

Here, the Virgin Mary is looking down at a stalk of white lilies, a gift from the angel Gabriel. Following his annunciation of her coming immaculate conception, Mary sits subdued in wonder at this mystery.

Her body is utterly relaxed, symbolically expressing the truth of her acceptance of the angel’s prophecy, and her answer: “Be it unto me according to thy word.”

The painting therefore enters our EYE GATE as a symbol of our Christian believer’s vow, which binds us to faith and service.

The artist was C. Balestren. The *Immaculate Conception* was given to our church in memory of his wife by Mr. Walter Cline in 1955. The Clines had purchased it in 1927 while on a trip to Europe.



A notation in the Cline family file regarding this painting shows “Pictures purchased in Italy under the advice of the President of the National Artist’s Association of Italy.”

Stained Glass Heritage Windows in Educational Building

Every stained glass window found today in the educational building was originally placed in the sanctuary of our parent church, first Methodist Episcopal Church South, which stood on the southwest corner of Tenth and Lamar Streets in our city from 1910 to 1928.

At the dedication of this building, a reporter for The Texas Christian Advocate who covered this service, wrote in December 1, 1910, issue: “The art glass windows are dreams of beauty and loveliness.”

On Entering a Chapel



*Love built this shrine; these hallowed walls uprope
To give seclusion from the hurrying throng,
From tumult of the street, complaint, and wrong,
From rivalry and strife, from taunt of foes
If foes thou hast. On silent feet come in;
Bow low in penitence. Whoe'r thou art
Thou, too, hast sinned. Uplift in prayer thy heart.
Thy Father's Blessing waiteth .
Leave then thy burden, all thy cares and fears;
Faith, hope, and love are thine, for thou hast prayed.*

— John Davidson



Perkins Chapel

PERKINS CHAPEL



An exquisite chapel, corresponding in location to the traditional Lady Chapel, adjoins the Gallery on the west. It was originally neighbor to a cloistered garden, a pleasant feature, since sacrificed to the new presbytery (offices of the clergy).

Benches and chancel fittings are of ashed oak. The original brocade dossal, velvet suchions, carper, and walls are all in shades of dawn rose. Two massive candle shafts and the thorn-nimbus crowned altar cross are of washed gold on silver. Two lighted candles upon the altar signify the Incarnate Christ, "Very God and Very Man."

One of three convenantal symbols is sustained, alternately, on the bench ends. An *oak leaf* (Fig. 1) directs meditation to that remote day when the Patriarch Abraham received the promise of God: "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" (Genesis 22:18). The *Fleur de Lis* (Fig. 2) symbol of the Virgin Mary, stands for the fulfillment of that promise in the birth of her Son, Jesus. The *Tree of Life*, (Fig. 3) symbol of immortality, represents the extension of these covenants into Eternity.

Unique lighting features are found in the trident chains which suspend handwrought fixtures of iron in the form of foliage garlands of oak and acorns, buckled by rose shields. The *oak* stands for faith; the *rose* for Messianic Promise. (Fig. 4)

The *vesica piscis* mullions of the clerestory windows are repeated in the double panels of the north wall. Here one may find the *Sword of the Word* in glass and wood. Fenestration is deeply reset and arched.

The pulpit, rim parapeted and buttressed with pomegranate buds, bears a scallop shell amidst grapes and vine branches. A *scallop shell* represents the "pilgrim evangel" who brings the gospel; the *grape vine* is a symbol of Christ, who said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches, he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit" (John 15:5). A "fruitful" minister not only "abides in the vine," but is upheld by Christ's promise, "Lo, I am with you, always" (Matthew 28:20). *Pomegranates* signify the gospel of eternal life.

A beauty of sacred inspiration rises in crescendo upon the carving on altar and reredos. It springs from the Monogram of Christ, the I H S (first three letters of Jesus in Greek); from the incised crosses on the mensa (the Five Wounds of Calvary); the open Bible; the cross, and the lighted candles. It ascends to a glory of budded almonds (emblems of Divine Approval) which crowns the reredos. The altar pieces proclaim the Passion of Our Saviour. They witness to His redemptive sacrifice of love.

Selected Scriptures

1. **Oak Leaf.** It was underneath an oak tree on the plains of Mamre that the angel of the Lord told Abraham that his wife, Sara, would bear a son. (See Genesis, chapters 18 and 22.)

2. **Fleur-de-Lis.** Luke 1:30, 32. "And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found Favour with God. And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his Father David." The *Fleur-de-Lis*, a symbol of the Trinity, (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) is also a symbol of the Virgin Mary.
3. **Tree of Life.** Revelation 22:1, 2, and 14. "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."
4. **Rose.** Isaiah 35:1, 2. "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly. . .they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God." The rose symbolizes the Messianic Promise.



Figure 1



Figure 2

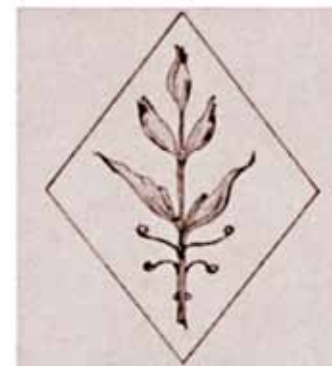


Figure 3

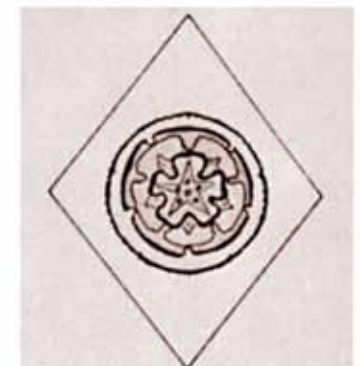


Figure 4



he Facade

EYE GATE would not be complete without a description of the front facade and the chime tower.

The front porch gives access to three deeply recessed, double-hung doors of carved oak, which stand side by side within the vaulted portal of the north wall.

Above each door is a free-standing stone figure of a small angel holding an open book. Side buttresses of the tympanum vault carry bas relief shields which show a winged lion over a fleur-de-lis. The portal vault is crowned by a pedestaled ciborium which bears a pomegranate bud stem.

Ascending above the portal vault is the great clerestory facade of three deeply placed and vaulted windows, overhung by a second pinnaced ciborium, pomegranate crowned.

Right and left buttresses of the facade seat, at clerestory vault level, one on either side, large stone semi-figures of winged beings. These also hold open books.

The Canterbury type tower rises by successively buttressed stories to twice the height of the nave vault. It is pinnaced and almond-bud crocketed. Just below the chime grills a beautiful tracery traverses the tower, displaying formalized foliage interspersed with acorns and grapes. Unlike a closed spire, which is said to represent “one finger pointing a way to God,” the Canterbury tower rises, unclosed, topped by many “fingers” of varying heights, all reaching toward that ineffable Grace which was promised His Church by the Saviour of Men, Jesus Christ.

Eye Gate



here is, we repeat, no
such thing as a silent cathedral.
The Spirit of God assails the
heart and mind, and the soul:
in music, if there be music; by
voice if there be voice; but
always, at all times, through the
gates of the eyes, saying,

*O earth, earth, earth,
hear the work of the Lord.*

Jeremiah 22:29

A Treasured Beneficence

Successive generations of worshipers in this church have, with gratitude, acknowledged their debt to Jerome Stone of our city, who presented the Rose Window as a gift to the Glory of God, and in loving memory of his mother, Florence Seymour Stone.

Historical Sketch

(Excerpts from files in office of the late W. B. Hamilton)

“The First Methodist Episcopal Church South was organized in Wichita Falls in the year 1881. It had no permanent home until 1885, when a framed building was erected on the northwest corner of Scott and Tenth Streets, at a cost of \$300.00. Later improvements brought its value to \$1,000.00. During the period from 1881 to 1912, the membership increased from 6 members to 607 members. In 1910, a second home for the church, located on the southwest corner of Lamar and Tenth Streets, was constructed at a cost of \$39,000.00, including the adjoining parsonage. In 1918 an addition was made to the church building which brought the evaluation up to \$57,000.00. This building was used as a church sanctuary until September 23, 1928. The congregation then moved into its new building, the present sanctuary, at the corner of Tenth and Travis Streets. (Membership at this time was 2,400.)

On June 8, 1925, the church Building Committee voted to employ Mr. William Ward Watkin, formerly a noted church architect of Boston, Massachusetts, and then professor of Architecture at Rice Institute of Houston, Texas, and the architectural firm of Sanguinet & Staats of Fort Worth, to be joint architects for the new building. These architects attended the meeting of the church Building Committee held in Wichita Falls, November 2, 1925. Mr. William Ward Watkin was requested to submit a design for a Gothic structure at his earliest convenience. Messrs. Sanguinet and Staats sold their architectural firm to Wyatt C. Hedrick. The beautiful church edifice is the result of the joint efforts of Mr. William Ward Watkin and Mr. Kappe, designer for Wyatt C. Hedrick.

Although the church sanctuary was completed in 1928, it is still one of the most beautiful and worshipful of any church auditorium in the southwest.

The art glass used in the windows of the sanctuary is of the highest quality. It was manufactured and installed by the same company which installed the art-glass in the Washington Cathedral and the great Saint John the Divine Church of New York City.”

The Artist-Carver

William B. Shieffer of Dallas, Texas, is the creator of chancel fittings in the Perkins Chapel, the present altar and reredos in the sanctuary, and the recently installed liturgical credenza. Mr. Shieffer is widely acclaimed and much

sought after. His highly prized ecclesiastical carvings are to be found in some of America's most beautiful churches.

Our credenza is unique and is particularly treasured because it has been custom built and carved to our own design.



Detail of the liturgical credenza carved by William B. Shieffer.

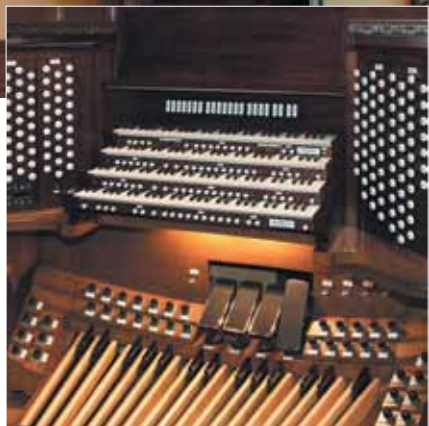
Note: This credenza was actually designed by the author and artist, Eleanor M. Robbins.



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Photo Gallery 2011



The new Garland Pipe Organ was dedicated on Friday, September 19, 2003.



Banana bud corbels grace the vault of the nave.



Pew carving.



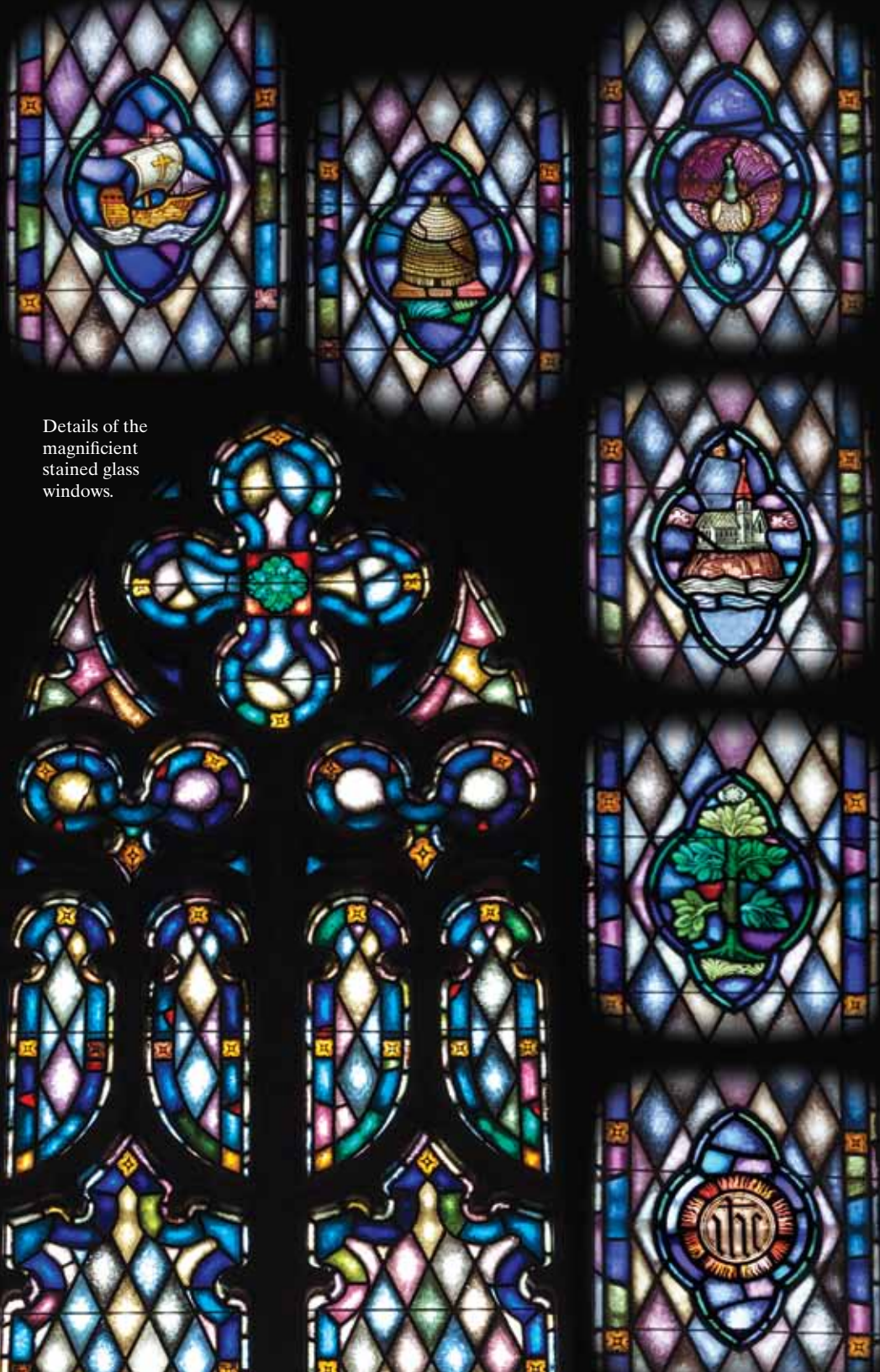
Angel overlooking the entrance on Tenth Street.



Cornerstone carving laid in the north face of the tower, facing Tenth Street.



Shields of Faith on side walls of nave.



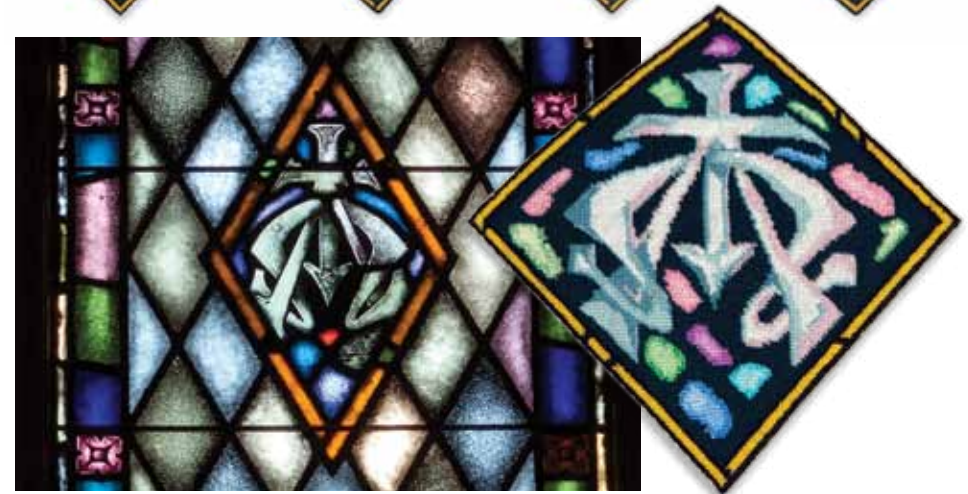
Details of the magnificent stained glass windows.



In the summer of 2004, Dr. Robert Allen challenged the worship committee to begin a project that would result in needlepoint kneelers for our sanctuary.

After months of planning, stitching began in January of 2005, and the Needlepoint Project became a reality. Using icons from our stained glass windows and architectural details from the woodwork of our altar, each of the six designs for a kneeler is original, and perfectly suited to our sanctuary. In the beginning, this project involved the talent and assistance of many people. There was photography, canvas cutting, canvas stitching, pattern making, and yarn preparation. Now, after years of intricate stitching by talented and dedicated members of our church, the twelve individual kneelers are stitched, upholstered, and have reached completion.

Kneelers were purchased by individuals or groups, and were presented to the congregation at a dedication ceremony on May 29, 2011.





The Prothro Family Atrium, through the generosity of Charles and Elizabeth Prothro in honor of their family, was dedicated on May 2, 1999. Tapestry banners are by artist, Helen Webber of San Francisco, California.



First United Methodist Church
909 Tenth Street
Wichita Falls, Texas