

ZSJ History-Narthex Stained Glass Windows

The stained glass windows in the narthex were moved or created in 1984 when the narthex addition was added to the church. Memorials in memory of Hannah B, Fred W, Henrietta S and Clinton E, Jr. provided the funds for their creation and installation. The windows were designed and constructed by Mary Beth and Charles S.



The Benediction window, with the “Go in Peace, Serve the Lord” inscribed on it, stands in the place of the original entrance to the 1948 church. The central point of this window is the cross. The ring, symbolizing eternity, interconnects the cross and the four panels that make up the window. At the base of the window are seven lilies, which have long been the symbol of Easter and Resurrection. The butterfly is also a symbol of resurrection, life coming from apparent death. It also symbolizes our own journey from death to life in Christ. A small cross forms the center of the butterfly. The window was created with beveled and handblown antique glass.

The windows in the library are called the Sacrament windows, symbolizing the two sacraments celebrated in the Lutheran church, Baptism and Communion. Again the frames of the window form a cross. The baptism symbolism includes a shell, used by pastor to pour water over the child’s head and three drops of water to remind us of Christ’s command to baptism in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Also seen are a river or water, reminding us of Jesus’ baptism in the Jordan River, and of our own cleansing and rebirth. The descending dove is the gift of the Holy Spirit. The other side of the window depicts Holy Communion. The chalice and wafer have long been the traditional symbols of communion. Below the chalice are grapes and wheat to remind us of the earthly elements involved in the mystery of Jesus’ presence in, under and over the bread and wine. The teal blue background was created with antique cathedral glass. The hills, river, and landscape are opalescent glass. The grapes were formed with seven different shades of purple and the wheat stems use wide soldered lead and copper patina.



The three windows facing west at the narthex steps were part of four original windows that were installed in 1974. They were moved to their current places in 1984 with the narthex addition. The Music window reminds us of the psalms and coming with joy to worship with singing and all kinds of musical instruments. The Baptism window is an emphasis of God’s grace and our adoption into God’s family. The dove is the promised Holy Spirit. The anchor window was one of two that reminds us that we are anchored in Christ, to face the challenges of the world as we leave the church. The other window, which is no longer here, was of a vine, to give us confidence that we are joined to Jesus (the vine) as his branches to do the work of the kingdom.

The last windows are found on the west wall in the usher's area of the narthex. These two windows show a tree planted by the river of life, reminding us of God's everlasting goodness and the cross set in the center of the world. This shows the triumph of the Gospel and the dove is the Holy Spirit which brings us faith and understanding. For many years this was the symbol of the Lutheran church.

These last six (now only five) windows were funded by the George K estate and created by Hauser Studios of Art Glass in Minnesota. Mrs. Philip H, Stan G and Pastor Carls were instrumental in their design and installation.

We are truly blessed with these beautiful creations of art that bring to life the love of God through Jesus Christ!

