

Messiah Lutheran Church

S E P T E M B E R · 2 7 · 1 9 8 7

16th · Sunday · After · Pentecost

MESSIAH CHURCH REJOICES!

Seven new stained glass windows adorn its nave.

They sing out in praise of God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

We, the members and friends of Messiah, find inspiration and insight in their message and beauty. Together the windows are entitled, *The Seasons of the Church Year*.

The windows are linked one with another by the use of crosses that suggest the various themes of the year. There is also in each window a panel that demonstrates Messiah's own unique liturgical life and practice.

The windows were designed and crafted by the Winterich Studio of Cleveland, Ohio. The artist assigned to the project was Ms. Kathleen Akers.

The addition of *The Seasons of the Church Year Windows* should make Messiah

a special location in Northeast Ohio for the study of Christian symbolism. There are few Churches that offer such a rich resource for the study and appreciation of symbols from the Old and New Testaments and Early Church.

Messiah is truly thankful to the Erwin Gratz Family for this beautiful gift of *The Seasons of the Church Year Windows*. They have been given by the family to the praise and glory of God alone.

Our Prayer:

God of Grace and Beauty,
We pray that these windows will be a witness to the world that those who gather in their light and beauty firmly believe that Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior and wish to reflect this in all they do and say. In Jesus' name. Amen.

PS 96:6 Strength and beauty are in His sanctuary.

a dedication

advent

The Advent Window prepares us for the coming of the Messiah. The use of the *Tau* Cross signifies the cross used by Moses to lift up the serpent in the wilderness making it the "prophetic" cross, "a sign of Him who comes to heal all manner of sickness" (Matthew 10:1).

The *Lamb with a Banner of Victory* represents John the Baptist who prophesied the coming of the Savior, and the latin *ECCE AGNUS DEI* are the words He proclaims as he points to Jesus, "Behold the Lamb of God."

The *Seasons of the Church Year Windows* were planned and executed during the visit of *Halley's Comet*. It is used here to proclaim the second coming of Christ. Luke 21:25 reads "And there shall be signs in the sun, the moon and in the stars," before His coming.

The *Branch* depicted has its origin in the writings of Zechariah 3:8 which says, "Behold, I will bring forth my servant, the branch." Also Isaiah speaks prophesizing of the branch growing from the roots of Jesse.

Messiah's contribution to the Advent window is the *Advent Wreath* consisting of a candle to be lit every week until Christmas.

Blue is the dominant color of the Advent window. Blue is a color of truth, faithfulness and heaven. As the clouds part in the sky, its blue color reveals a promise of events to come.



Christmas

The *Ankh Cross* at the top of the Christmas window is based on the Egyptian symbol for life. The *Star of Bethlehem* shines down on *Christ's birth bed*. Radiating from the manger is the *Chi Rho*, the first two letters in Greek for the name of Christ. The *Chi Ro* forms a nimbus or halo above the manger.

We are reminded through the use of *Two Shepherds' Crooks* of the shepherds to whom the angels of God appeared to announce the good news of Jesus' birth. These shepherds' crooks may also be linked with Christ Himself who referred to Himself as "The Good Shepherd."

The *Burning Bush* is our Old Testament reference from the third chapter of Exodus in which God reveals himself to Moses from a burning bush. This is used as a parallel to God's revealing to man His only Son as a newborn child.

The *Messiah Christmas Tree*, featuring the *Alpha and Omega* (beginning and end) ornament panel, reminds us of the joy of the season and the timeless message of Christmas.

The color *White*, which denotes light, purity and joy, is the feature color. White is a synthesis of all colors. White links us with Christ, the culmination of all things.



Epiphany

The Epiphany season marks the manifestation of Christ to the entire world. The *Cross Crosslet*, which is four overlapping Latin crosses, shows the missionary emphasis of the season, spreading the Gospel to the four corners of the earth.

The *Great Star over the City* was used to guide the Magi who asked, "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East, and we have come to worship Him." (Matthew 2:2) The Star symbolizes the Manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles.

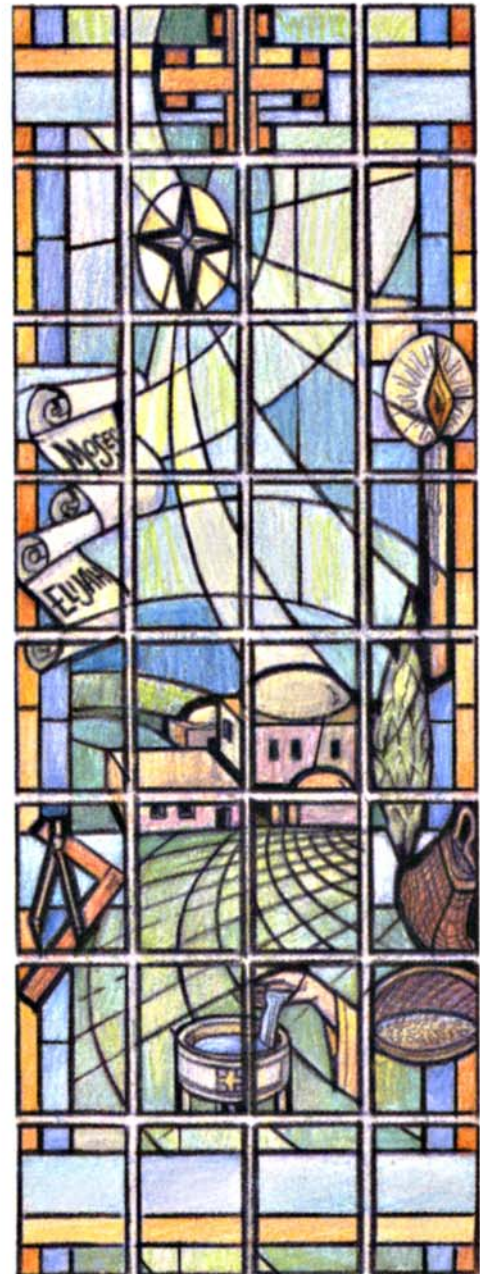
The *Moses and Elijah Scrolls* are symbolic of Christ revealing His unique mission on the Mount of the Transfiguration where these Old Testament figures appear. The large *Candle* reminds us of Christ's words, "I am the Light of the World."

The *City*, could be Nazareth, where Jesus grew to manhood. The tools of His family, a *Square and Compass*, tell us that His father was a carpenter. It suggests we use our own skills as He did in the service of others and to the glory of God.

The Epiphany window also includes both a *Basket of Seed* and a *Bilum*. The planting of seed reminds us of the ministry we have in both feeding the hungry and "seeding" the good news of the Gospel. The Bilum is a means of carrying heavy loads. . .not unlike the load of sin our Savior bore. Both symbols link our message and ministry to the less fortunate of the world.

The *Messiah Baptismal Font* fulfills the command of Jesus in Matthew 28:19 "Go ye therefore and teach all nations baptizing them in the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit".

The color *Green*, seen especially in the field and Cedar of Lebanon tree, is used to signify growth and life.



Lent

The Lenten window focuses on the pain, suffering and death that our Savior experienced in giving Himself for us. The *Passion Cross*, whose ends are sharply pointed, reminds us of those harsh moments at the end of His life. The *INRI* refers to the Latin inscription on Calvary's Cross "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews."

A *Crown with Palms* is used to signify Palm Sunday, the day of Christ the King's entry into Jerusalem. The events leading up to His death are illustrated by: *Grapes and Wheat* representing the Lord's Supper, a *Crown of Thorns and Nails* representative of the pain of crucifixion, and an *Eclipsed Sun* showing the darkened sky at noon during Christ's passion on the Cross.

A *Pelican in her Piety* dominates the window and reminds us of how Jesus gave of Himself to save His children, the faithful.

In ancient legend, the pelican in time of famine was known to have fed her young with her own blood, sacrificing her own life, in order to save the lives of her children.

The *Paten/Plate with Bread* and the *Chalice with Wine* used during Holy Communion at Messiah are also presented to serve as constant reminders of how Jesus gave His body and blood to redeem us.

This period of mourning, repentance and sacrifice is marked by the royal color *Purple*.



Easter

Easter, the Feast of Feasts, is typified by the *Cross of Glory* which includes the rising sun. This suggests the Easter dawn celebration and more, the promise of a new day. . .everyday.

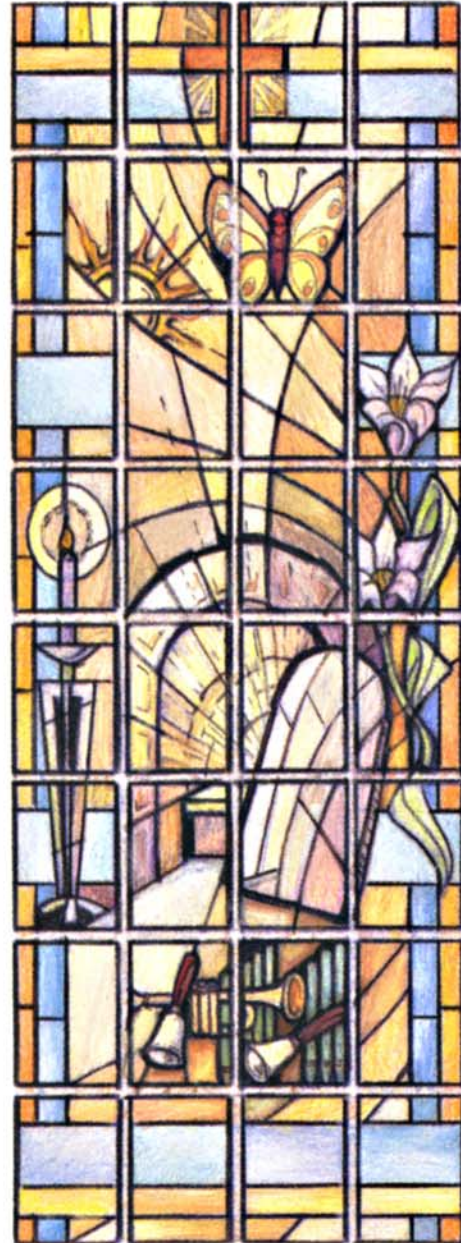
A *Butterfly*, emerging from the chrysalis (similar to Christ rising from entombment) in a glorified body, is symbolic of the resurrection.

Much the same way as life grows anew from a bulb each Spring, the *Lily* is pictured to remind us of the new and glorified life we have in our risen Savior.

The *Paschal Candle* of Messiah which is lit on Easter morn and extinguished at the Ascension, burns to remind us that "He is risen, He is risen indeed!"

The *Bells, Trumpet and Pipes* remind us of the use of music at Messiah to celebrate the victory of Christ over suffering and death.

Gold and White, which signify the brightness and splendor of the triumphant Messiah are the predominant colors of the Easter window.



Pentecost Trinity

This window marks Pentecost, the celebration of the Holy Spirit coming to fill His believers with faith and truth. The *Cross Triparted Fleuree*, at the top is a reminder of the Trinity celebrated the first Sunday in Pentecost.

This Pentecost event is depicted in the window by the *Dove with Twelve Flames* which represents the descent of the Holy Spirit to the twelve Disciples. The union of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost is represented by the *Triquetra* which is a symbol of trinity. It pictures *Three Fishes* interlaced in a triangle.

The *Stone Tablets* depict the giving of the Law to Moses. As followers of Christ we have a new law. (St. Paul declares this in Romans 13:10 "Love is the fulfilling of the law.")

The *Ship* at the top panel symbolizes the spreading of the doctrine of Christianity and the fellowship of the Church as we sail to our home port, heaven.

The *Lamp and Scroll* symbolize education and graduation from school which occurs at this time of year. Christian instruction is an important aspect of the season. The *Fruited Tree* represents confirmation and the fruits of the spirit in the life of faith.

Green is again the dominant color of this window. This color signifies the growth, development and promise of life that results from one's life in the Spirit.



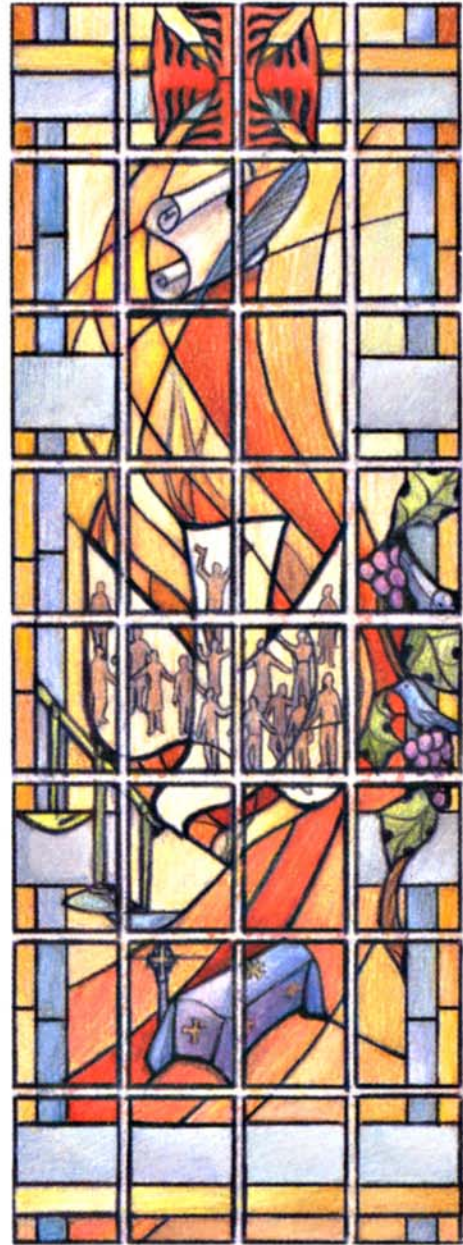
All saints/Reformation

The final window focuses on Reformation and All Saints themes. The cross depicted is the *Cross Flamant* which denotes the religious zeal of all God's saints both past and present.

The *Scroll and Pen* accents a strong Reformation concept: Scripture alone. The *Scale* speaks of judgment. As Lutherans we know we are God's saints and justified by faith. The *Grapes* are the fruits of the Spirit reflected in the lives of the saints. The saints of God, the priesthood of all believers are seen within the *White Dove* of the Holy Spirit. The *Birds* suggest those saints that by God's grace have "flown" to heaven.

Messiah's Pall covering the coffin of one of God's saints, is illustrated to honor those past and present who have taken their place with Christ. Next to it is the Church's *Processional Cross*.

The color for Reformation and all Saints' Days is *Red*. This vibrant red suggests the blood of the martyrs and saints and the flame of the Reformation season.





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