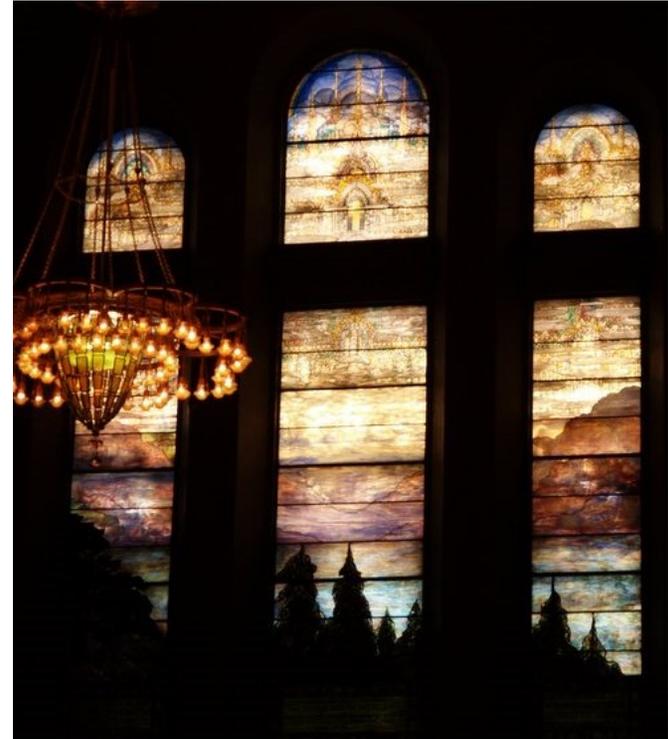


FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BUFFALO, NY



SELF-GUIDED STAINED GLASS WINDOW TOUR BOOKLET

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INTRODUCTION

There are four window studios represented in First Church -- Tiffany, Tillinghast, Ford, and Willet. They were installed at different times over a span of almost 60 years with a number being Centennial Gifts in 1912. The Willet windows in Hindman Chapel were installed when the chapel was renovated in 1949 and the three remaining Tiffany windows, originally installed in the Chapel, have been renovated and are displayed in light boxes in Allen Hall and the Historical Hall. Feel free to get up close to any of the windows to see the details if you feel so inclined.

WEST TRANSEPT

If you stand in the main aisle of the Sanctuary facing the communion table, the West transept is on your right. The lancets in the gallery (balcony) were made by the Ford Company of Boston and installed in 1892. "The Ascension" is an excellent example of mercury mosaic windows. The design features many small chunks of glass set in copper foil and an amalgam of mercury. The technique is particularly obvious in the upper portions of the windows. This type of design was popular for about 10 years until it was discovered why the artisans did not live long after creating the windows! Notice the faces - you will want to contrast them with the faces of Tiffany and Tillinghast in the other windows. On the ground level, there is a Tiffany under the gallery staircase. Installed in 1912, it features mottled glass combined with layers of glass to achieve the color effects and lifelike depiction of the faces. The three lancets under the gallery - "The Resurrection" - were made by Mary Tillinghast in 1894. A pupil and one-time partner of Le Farge, she was a talented painter and glass artisan in her own right. Notice the use of layered glass to achieve the dark, rich colors and the exquisite faces of the figures. Again, very typical of her work. (It is somewhat unfortunate that the 1925 addition to the building requires that these windows be lit artificially. Just imagine how more vibrant the colors would be with the afternoon sun coming through them.)

NOTES

ALLEN HALL & HISTORICAL HALL

The “Cherub” window (opposite the Blue Room in Allen Hall) was originally installed in the Chapel circa 1889. This was a stock Tiffany design that would be customized to memorialize a child by painting the child’s portrait into the central cherub. Notice how the eyes of Victor Mitchell follow you wherever you go. Multiple layers of glass give a depth to the colors. The “Peace” window (Historical Hall) is a serene depiction of the dove of peace descending over a lake. This window was installed in the Chapel after 1902. Again, the dominant color is achieved by multiple layers of glass. The last window is a depiction of one of the Gospel writers (St. Matthew perhaps?) Installed in the Chapel circa 1889, it not only uses multiple layers of glass to create color but also uses drapery glass to depict the folds of his robe. An apocryphal story names the origin of the chandelier in Historical Hall as Persia but it is most likely Tiffany. It hung in the apse above the communion table in the Sanctuary until 1968 when it was replaced by a carved cross. It is typical of Tiffany’s ‘modern’ style common around the turn of the century. The remaining chandeliers in the Sanctuary are also Tiffany, patterned after St. Sophia’s in Constantinople.

EAST TRANSEPT

The “New Jerusalem” window in the gallery is one of Tiffany’s finest. Designed by Fredrick Wilson and installed in 1916, it is one of the most popular windows in the Sanctuary. Again, there is a great deal of layered glass - sometimes 6 layers - to produce the desired color effect. He also used jewel glass - large chunks of glass - to achieve a very heavy effect for the base of the lancets. The changing daylight has an interesting effect on this window. With the morning sun, it is brilliant and clear. But in the afternoon, the city almost vanishes into the clouds with nothing left but the trees and the cross at the top. On the ground floor, under the stairs is the figure of Christ the King. Again, matching the window in the west transept, notice the details of the face, the layered glass, and the mottled effect. The three windows under the gallery are symbolic depictions of communion with the face of Christ in the center window. The other windows depict vine branches and challis. Again, all from the Tiffany studios and may date from 1892.

EAST AISLE

These are three more windows from Mary Tillinghast. Forming a unit, “In My House Are Many Mansions” was ordered from her studio in 1894. Notice how the layered glass gives the figures an almost three-dimensional effect. Tillinghast’s signature is barely visible in a fold of the robe in the lower right hand corner of the right lancet.

WEST AISLE

These three windows have not been identified with a specific studio. They are somewhat typical of Tiffany’s ‘pastoral’ scenes, depicting nature with impressionistic use of small pieces of glass and clearly painted figures of animals. They were installed in 1912.

CHOIR GALLERY

(behind organ)

This window is an excellent example of Louis Comfort Tiffany's use of color and favrille glass to create a mosaic effect. The rich combination of blue, deep red, yellow, and gold, is particularly beautiful in the late afternoon. There is a large cross formed by the yellow and gold spread throughout the window. Tiffany's signature can be seen in the bottom right hand corner of the second lancet from the right. The window was erected in 1925.

HINDMAN CHAPEL

(down the main aisle of the Sanctuary, turn left in the narthex)

The Willet windows were installed during a renovation of the Chapel in 1949. The seating was turned around to face its current direction, a center aisle added, and the woodwork was pickled and lightened from the original dark oak. In contrast with Tiffany and Tillinghast, Willet used a medieval approach resulting in figures that are more one-dimensional but with interesting mosaics of color developed through single layers of hand blown pot-metal glass and Norman slabs.

The west nave windows (on your left as you face the communion table) depict the Works of Christian Mercy. Beginning at the rear of the chapel:

1. ***Instructing the Ignorant.*** Left lancet depicts home missions with John Joyce crossing the Alleghenys on his circuit preaching and David Brainerd instructing the Indians. The right lancet depicts foreign missions with Sheldon Jackson in Alaska and John Lowrie bringing light to the superstitious and pagan peoples of India.

2. ***Feeding the Hungry, Giving Drink to the Thirsty, and Clothing the Naked.*** The left lancet depicts feeding the Belgians and Armenians with the Children's Aid Society depicted at the bottom. The right lancet depicts the "Care and Restoration Fund" expressing the Church's involvement with foreign relief, the founding of the Community Chest, and the Lorraine Cross, symbol of the Buffalo Tuberculosis Association.

HINDMAN CHAPEL , CONT.

3. ***Ransoming the Captive.*** The left lancet depicts the Declaration of Independence, the Liberty Bell, the Boston Tea Party, and the Pilgrims landing at Plymouth Rock. The right lancet depicts Lincoln freeing the slaves in the Emancipation Proclamation, the abolishment of Child Labor by contrasting a child in a dark sweatshop against a child going to school, and Woman's Suffrage.

4. ***Harboring the Harborless.*** The left lancet depicts children caught in the slums and the work of First Church's Welcome Hall. The right lancet depicts displaced persons receiving a new home and a new start in the life of the United States.

The two east windows (beginning at the front):

1. ***Visiting the Sick.*** The left lancet shows the Visiting Nurse Society started by First Church, and Clara Barton and Florence Nightingale. The right lancet depicts Youth Organizations, George Washington Carver, and Louis Pasteur.

2. ***Christian Education and First Church History Window.*** The left lancet depicts Christian Education with a teacher conducting Sunday school; work in theological seminaries, and young people at church camp with campfires and candles. The right lancet depicts First Church History with the original church building and the Brick Church, the Raymond Memorial Hospital, which First Church funded in YiHsien, China, and a community Vesper service. The border symbolizes the Open Bible and the Light to the World.

The chancel window above the communion table: The central lancet portrays Christ as "Come Unto Me". The side lancets depict Peter at Pentecost (left) and Paul at Athens (right). The three central predellas show the Last Supper with shields of the Passion in the background and shields of the Twelve Apostles in the foreground. The end lancets depict prayer and praise with Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane (left) and the Temple after the entry into Jerusalem (right).