

# The Journey of Faith Windows

## at Mayfair Heights United Methodist Church



in Loving Memory of  
Mildred Dye, 1912-1979  
Mike Gleason, 1944-1979  
Mildred Wade, 1903-1978

Dedicated on April 6, 1980

The lovely sanctuary windows have been made possible by the gifts of family and friends of people who were a vital part of the life of this congregation. They are a fitting tribute to the faith journey which they traversed.

The style of the windows is ***Dalle de verre***, so named for the Frenchman who developed it. It is more commonly called "Faceted Art Glass." It is created by cutting and faceting the design and embedding it in epoxy. The creation of the windows is the work of the Hendrix and Downing Studios. They worked closely with our local committee in the research and design of the symbols.

The symbols, beginning with the front window on the east side of the church and ending with the front window on the west, tell the story of our faith.

They depict significant events in the journey of faith from creation, through Old Testament events, New Testament, the Early church, the Protestant Reformation, the Wesleyan Movement, the Early American Methodist Church, the beginnings of the Evangelical United Brethren (EUB) Church, the union of the two churches and our own Mayfair Heights United Methodist Church.



### The Creation Window

"In the beginning, God..." might be a proper title for the first window. From a point of origin hidden in time; life, color, energy, and creation break forth. Hidden within creation is the hand of God -- creating, moving and sending forward the rays of life toward the future.



### The Pre- Kingdom Symbols

The next four symbols depict the history of the faith in its earliest formative stages.

**The Sword Before Eden** reflects the loss of innocence and the beginning of the journey, the search for the God of Abraham. It symbolizes the forward movement of God's calling of God's people and the never-again-ness of the era of Eden.

The next symbol is **The Shepherd's Cane and the Crutch**. They symbolize the wanderings of the nomadic peoples and the encounter of Jacob with the Angel, which left him crippled, but through which he received the blessing of God and a new name - Israel.

The next symbol is **The Altar of Sacrifice**, as the children of Israel begin the evolution of understanding from a God of vengeance to a covenantal God.

**The Burning Bush** symbolizes the beginnings of the movement of the Israelites from the bondage in Egypt to a new nation; the miraculous journey of the Hebrew people continued, sparked by God's call of Moses from the burning bush.



## The Post-Exodus Symbols

The next eight symbols tell of the deliverance and beginning of the formation of the kingdom through the wisdom literature of a well-established people of faith.



**The Ten Commandments Symbol** indicates the establishment of the covenant between God and God's people, as does the next symbol, **The Ark of the Covenant**, which symbolizes the nation under the leadership of God

In **The Tongs and Live Coal Symbol** we are reminded of the establishment of our worship as found in Isaiah. "In the Year that King Uzziah died," says Isaiah, "I saw the Lord, high and lifted up..." (Isaiah 6.1)

**The Yoke Symbol** comes from Jeremiah who reminded the people of their covenant relationship with God, a relationship which they had broken.



From Amos we hear of the image of **The Bowl of Spring Fruit and the Plumline**. "What do you see, Amos?" "A plumb line," I answered, and God said, "I am setting a plumb line to the heart of my people, Israel..." (Amos 7)



The prophetic role was crucial to the development of the faith, calling the people back to the covenant.

**The Lion Symbol** from Daniel reminds us of the demands and risks of faith and the power of God with those who are faithful.



In **The Lyre Symbol** we sense the great poetic literature of David in the Psalms. David was both musician, healer, and king.

In **The Lamp Symbol** we remember the wisdom literature of the Hebrew Testament, shining light on our faith history

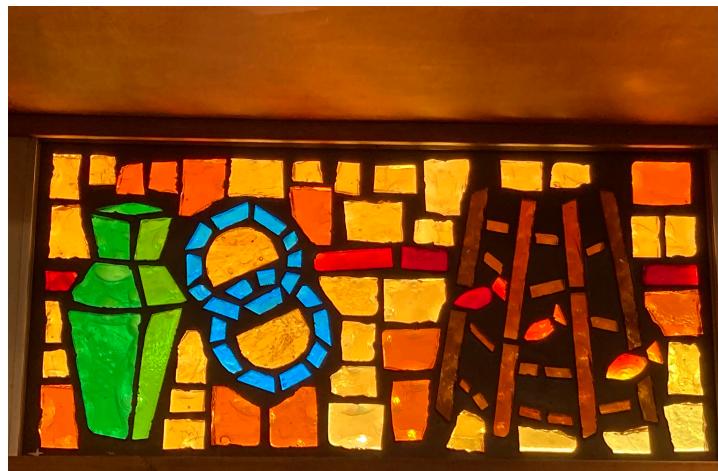
**The Life of Jesus Christ Symbols** - The next nine symbols revolve around the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.



**The Cradle and Star** remind us of Jesus' birth. **The Descending Dove** is symbolic of Jesus' baptism.

The next symbol is **The Fish Net**, for Jesus began his ministry by calling his disciples to become "fishers of people." (Matthew 4.18-20)

The first miracle which Jesus is reported to have done was at a wedding in Cana of Galilee, thus **The Wedding Rings and The Wine Jar**.

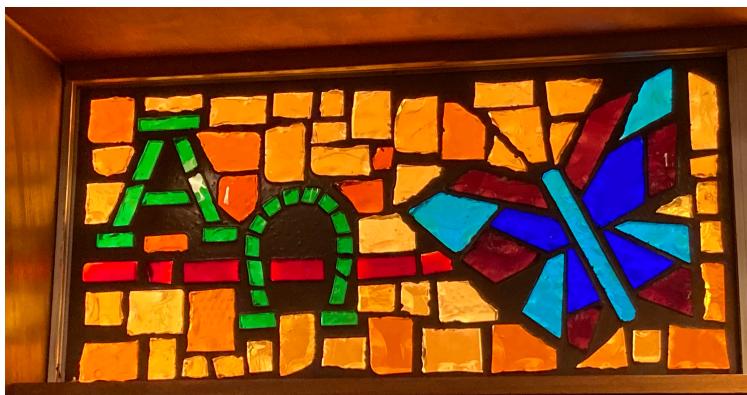


**The Grapes and Wheat** remind us of the institution of the Lord's Supper, the bread and wine.

**The Three Crosses**, of course, symbolize Jesus' death, along with two thieves, on a hill outside Jerusalem.



The next symbol, while not as common as some in the church, nevertheless is an ancient symbol of Resurrection. **The Butterfly** reminds us of the bursting forth of new life which we acknowledge in Jesus' rising from the dead.



The next two symbols deal with Jesus commissioning the disciples. The first **Alpha and Omega**, are symbolic of the whole focus of Jesus' teaching, that God is first and last, beginning and end, and that it is God before whom our lives stand.

The second, **The Jerusalem Cross**, is used to symbolize the commission to take the Gospel to the "four corners of the earth..."



**The Early Church Symbols:** In the next seven symbols we recall the early events of the struggling church. We begin with **The Pentecost Symbol**. The beginning of the church is marked by the event of flames of fire and the Holy Spirit coming to the church in the symbol of a dove.

An early Christian symbol was **The Fish**. The Greek word for fish is "ichthus." The early Christians used this as an acrostic; "I" would have been the first letter in Jesus, "C" for Christos, "th" for Theo or God and "us" becomes the first letters for Son, because in Greek "won" is son. The last letter "s" stands for Savior. Thus a fish drawn in the sand becomes a secret message: Jesus Christ, God's Son, Savior!

After Pentecost the church began to spread. Perhaps the greatest missionary of the first century was Paul. **The Shield of St. Paul** symbolizes for us the growth of the church through his missionary efforts.



But not all was well with the little church. Soon it was in trouble with many groups. Thus, **The Scourge and Chain** and **The Prison Door** are symbols of the high price, paid by some of the early followers of Jesus.



By the end of the second century, C.E. the zeal of the church, as symbolized in **The Heart and Flame**, had moved the church into the Greek and Roman world to stay.

The last symbol of this series is the symbol of the triumphant church, **The Ship**, with full sails, moving into the future.



## The Reformation and Renewal of the Church Symbols

In nine symbols we depict the movement of the faith through the Protestant Reformation to our own congregation.

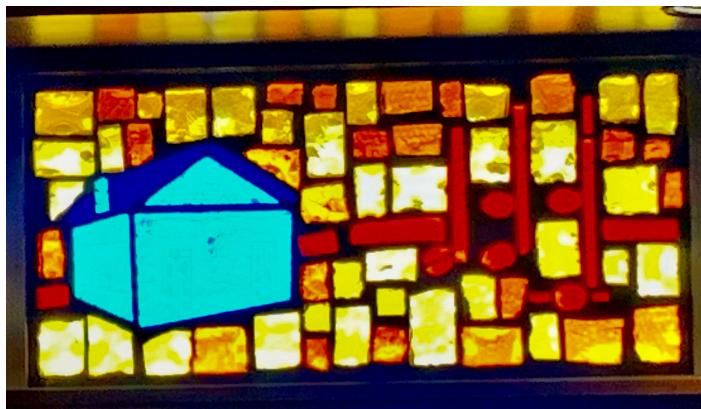
On October 31, 1517, after much protest concerning the sale of indulgences by the church, Martin Luther posted 95 Theses on the door of the castle church in Wittenberg, challenging the practice and inviting debate. This singular act resulted in what we know as the Protestant Reformation. Four years later Luther stood before the officials of the church and refused to recant what he had taught. His words are memorialized in **The Luther Scroll:** "Here I Stand; I can do no other. God, help me!"

The Wesleyan movement was perhaps the last wave of the Reformation, and could be more properly described as a Renewalist movement. Wesley's life spanned almost all of the eighteenth century and from his concern for Holiness of heart and head sprang the Methodist societies and ultimately the Methodist Church. There are many statements and events which we could symbolize quite properly concerning this man. His rescue from the burning parsonage at Epworth which he spoke of as "a brand plucked from the burning..." or the famous Aldersgate experience of 1738 in which he said, "I found my heart strangely warmed," or his comment about the universal kinship of all Christians, "If your heart is as my heart, give me your hand..." or perhaps his statement about the relationship of knowing to being, "Let us unite the two so long divided, Knowledge and Vital Piety..." All would make appropriate symbols of the founder of Methodism.



But his concept of the global dimension of the gospel is caught up in the reply he made to the Bishop of London when told to stay in and preach in only his own parish. Wesley replied, "The world is my parish..." The symbol of **The Globe** seems fitting to describe the scope of Wesley's zeal and dedication.

Alongside John Wesley stood his brother, Charles. In his lifetime, Charles wrote over 6,000 hymns. It is said that the theology of the Wesleyan movement was carried through the hymns they wrote and sang. One of the most popular of his hymns was "*O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing*," the first three notes of which appear in **The Musical Notes Symbols.**



American Methodism began officially with the Christmas Conference of 1784 in a small church in Baltimore, Maryland near the harbor called **Lovely Lane Chapel.** For the first time Methodism began to move away from the complete control of Rev. Wesley. They named the new church the Methodist Episcopal Church. Here Francis Asbury was elected a superintendent or "bishop" as it was later to be known, and also accepted Thomas Coke as a superintendent. Methodism had taken root in American soil!



The symbol of **The Circuit Rider** is appropriate to early Methodism and to Francis Asbury in particular. Asbury rode over a quarter of a million miles in the last forty-five years of his life in his capacity as bishop. He seemed to thrive on the rigors of the life God had called him to and said of it, "Live or die, I must ride."

The founder of what was to become the Evangelical Church was Jacob Albright. Strongly influenced by the early Methodist spirit and organizational style, Albright developed a ministry to German speaking people. It is likely he would have become part of the early Methodists except for the latter church's de-emphasizing the German speaking ministry. Prior to his work in ministry he was a farmer and maker of tile and brick. He became known as "the honest tile maker," so we have chosen the symbols of **The Tile and Cutters** for the founder of the Evangelical Church.

Phillip Otterbein's religious roots went back to the German and Dutch Reform Church and Martin Boehm was of Mennonite background. Otterbein was formal, Boehm, informal. But in 1767 when Otterbein went to the farm of one Isaac Long he heard such passion and spirit in the preaching of Boehm, he went forward after the sermon and, clasping hands with the preacher, said, "Wir sind Bruder," (we are brothers). From this meeting was to emerge the Church of the United Brethren in Christ. **The Cross and Clasped Hands** was the official symbol of that church which, in 1946, united with the Evangelical Church to form the Evangelical United Brethren Church.



In April of 1968 after several years of consultation and common work, the Methodist Church and the Evangelical United Brethren Church united to form the United Methodist Church.

These great churches who had been so closely identified with each other and with the Wesleyan influence since the early days of America, were finally one in organization as well. The symbol for this union is **The Cross and Flame**.

This brings us to the present and the symbol of **Mayfair Heights United Methodist Church**, founded in 1953 as a project of the District Board of Missions of the Oklahoma City Districts. In our short history we have become one of the top churches in size and mission-giving in a state with over 600 churches. But our past is but prologue. The future awaits.



#### **The Symbols of the Call and Challenge to the Future**

The next symbols speak of the future. They do not depict symbols of events that happened. Perhaps some future generation will add new symbols of these. Rather, these symbols are of what we, as the church, must face in the arena of the world, where our faith will be worked out "in fear and trembling."

The first of these symbols utilizes the basic colors symbolic of the races of the earth who all stand within **The Chi-Rho**, the symbol of the Lordship of Christ. The way to the future demands we travel as one people,

brought together in our differences to serve the One who sees not the color of the skin, but the depths of the heart.



In the book of Revelation there are four enemies of humanity which are set loose in the symbols of the four horsemen. They are called war, famine, pestilence, and wild animals, or chaos. Surely these symbolic enemies of humanity must yet be conquered. The first two symbols of these are **The Broken Cross and the Begging Hand.** Can we as a human race meet and defeat these ancient enemies - war, and hunger? If God is calling us to, we can! The second two symbols **The Brambles and the Swirl** call us to stand over against pestilence and chaos which threaten to undo civilization. Certainly in our own strength we could not hope to conquer these ever-present threats. But in the strength which God alone supplies, we can!



The last symbol is like the first, **The Creation Continues.** God has not gone away; God is drawing us into the future by the power of an unseen hand. (you can see it however, if you look closely) We need not fear what is before us, for we have the witness of the One who has been with us in all of the past.

There is yet one other symbol in **The Journey of Faith Windows.** Moving around and through all of the symbols is **The Thin Crimson Line**, the symbol of God's continuous presence in and through the Holy Spirit. It was there in creation, in history, and leads us into the future, unafraid.

*Memorial Window Committee*

*David L. Severe, Pastor*

*Tom Dye*

*Mary Alice Gleason*

*Roy Wade*

*Jacque Hughes*

*Howard White, Worship Committee Chair*