

Shining from Within

“People are like stained-glass windows. They sparkle and shine when the sun is out, but when the darkness sets in, their true beauty is revealed only if there is a light from within.”

These words from Elizabeth Kubler-Ross seem so appropriate for the beautiful glass windows that grace our beloved church building. On a sunny morning the colors of the images that sit in each section of the two windows shine as bright as the sun itself.

After several years of pondering how to replace our very large and weakened old plexiglass windows, an angel of sorts appeared and suggested that colorful blocks of glass resembling images that reflected our congregation was a possible solution.

In 1966, Chicago First Church of the Brethren hosted community meetings with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. who had come to Chicago as part of the Chicago Freedom Movement. The congregation opened the church to him which left a lasting impact on us.

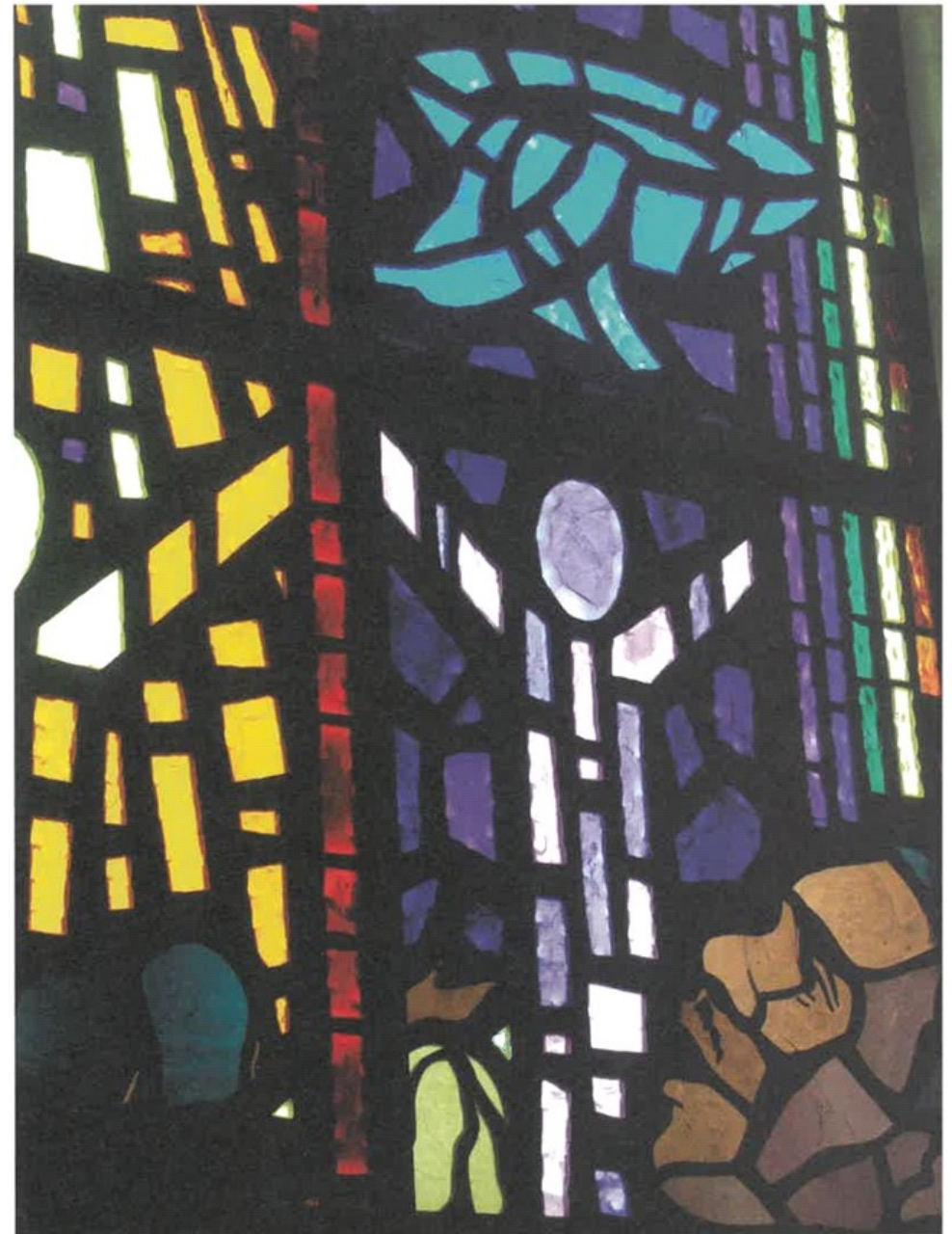
Twenty-five years ago the congregation came together with the windows architect and decided on a design that reflects the faith of the church and our history and community values. The images of Dr. King, children, and faith symbols remind the congregation of what a witness of peace, justice, and love means in our spiritual journey.

We were confident that these new windows would inspire us. But we had not anticipated how the world beyond our walls would experience these beautiful windows. In the darkness of night, as one drives along the expressway next to our building or passes by on the sidewalk, a little light shines from inside our church revealing the beauty that exists in the hearts of our people and the neighborhood.

—Mary Scott-Boria
Chicago, Illinois

“Therefore Eli said to Samuel, ‘Go, lie down, and if he calls you, you shall say, “*Speak, LORD*, for your servant is listening.”’ So Samuel went and lay down in his place.” (1 Samuel 3:9, *NRSVue*). **Today’s Bible readings from the lectionary:** 1 Samuel 3:1-10, (11-20); Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18; 1 Corinthians 6:12-20; John 1:43-51.

January 14, 2024, Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Photo by Cheryl Brumbaugh-Cayford © Church of the Brethren. Living Word Bulletin Series © 2024 Brethren Press. Printed in the USA.



Speak, Lord

SHARING OUR JOYS, CONCERNS, AND HOPES

Please remember our worship is also on Facebook Live and our website.

Please do not share any personal information you do not want to be made public.

An usher will hold the microphone for you while you share.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

HYMN #556

“Lord, thou hast searched me”

[Verse 1]

*Lord, thou hast searched me and dost know
where'er I rest, where'er I go.*

*Thou knowest all that I have planned,
and all my ways are in thy hand.*

[Verse 2]

*My words from thee I cannot hide;
I feel thy pow'r on ev'ry side – oh,
wondrous knowledge, awful might,
unfathomed depths, unmeasured height!*

[Verse 3]

*Where can I go apart from thee,
or whither from thy presence flee?
In heav'n? it is thy dwelling fair.
In death's abode? lo, thou art there.*

[Verse 4]

*If I the wings of morning take,
and far away my dwelling make,
the hand that leadeth me is thine,
and my support thy pow'r divine.*

[Verse 5]

*If deepest darkness cover me,
the darkness hideth not from thee.
To thee both night and day are bright;
the darkness shineth as the light.*

RESPONSIVE SCRIPTURE READING #823

Psalm 139:1-18

One: O Lord, you have searched me and you know me.

All: You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar.

One: You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways.

All: Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely, O Lord.

One: You hem me in – behind and before; you have laid your hand upon me.

All: Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain.

One: Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?

All: If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.

One: If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea,

All: even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.

One: If I say, “Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me,”

All: even the darkness will not be dark to you; for the light will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you.

One: For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb.

All: I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.

One: My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body.

All: All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.

One: How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them!

All: Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand. When I awake, I am still with you.

MESSAGE

“The Creator Knows”

Pastor Twyla Rowe

*HYMN #553

“I am weak and I need thy strength”

[Verse 1]

I am weak and I need thy strength and pow'r to help me over my weakest hour.

Help me through the darkness thy face to see. Lead me, O Lord, lead me.

[Chorus]

Lead me, guide me, along the way, for if you lead me, I cannot stray.

Lord, let me walk each day with thee. Lead me, O Lord, lead me.

[Verse 2]

Help me tread in the paths of righteousness. Be my aid when Satan and sin oppress. I am putting all my trust in thee. Lead me, O Lord, lead me.

[Chorus]

Lead me, guide me, along the way, for if you lead me, I cannot stray.

Lord, let me walk each day with thee. Lead me, O Lord, lead me.

[Verse 3]

I am lost if you take your hand from me. I am blind without thy light to see.

Lord, just always let me thy servant be. Lead me, O Lord, lead me.

[Chorus]

Lead me, guide me, along the way, for if you lead me, I cannot stray.

Lord, let me walk each day with thee. Lead me, O Lord, lead me.

***BENEDICTION**

After the Benediction, you may be seated.

Please continue in a spirit of worship as we listen to the Postlude music.

***POSTLUDE**

“Walking With the Master”

(Smith)

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

*Please rise — in body or spirit — as an act of worship

Thank you for joining us in worship today.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~