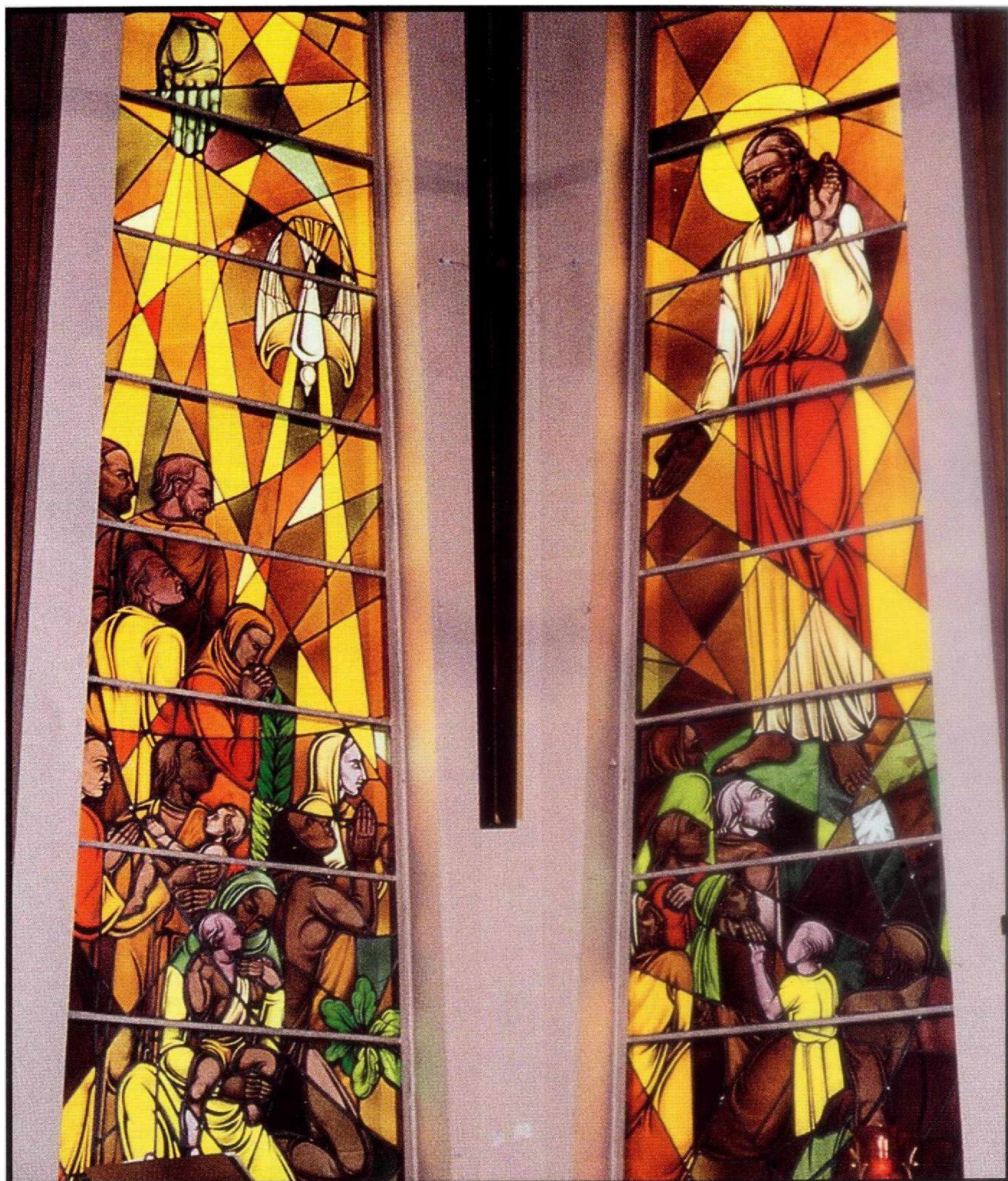




Symbols

*Parma Lutheran Church
Sanctuary Windows*

PREFACE

For thousands of years, symbols have played an important part in the proclamation of God's message of salvation in Jesus Christ. In medieval times the symbolism in the churches helped to keep the faith alive, and yet in our day most people know very little about the real meaning expressed in Christian symbols.

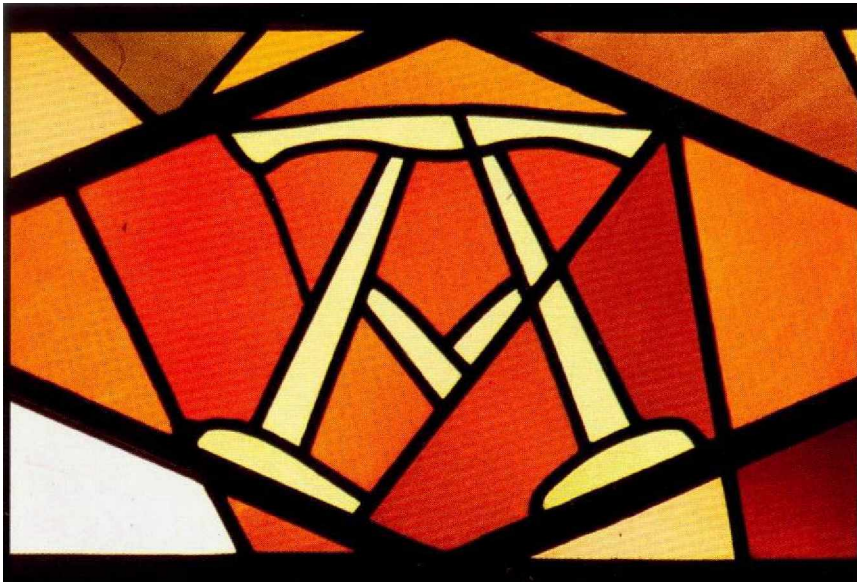
Soon after Parma Lutheran members dedicated their new church on July 10, 1960, people from many places began stopping to view our beautiful windows. One woman from the community, while on her daily walk, asked the pastor to show her the windows from the interior of the sanctuary. As she and the pastor stood in the center aisle, she remarked, "What beautiful decorations you have in your windows." The pastor replied, "Thank you for recognizing their beauty – but really those are not decorations. They are called *symbols*. They tell us what God has done to prepare people to serve Him while they live on earth and the joys of living hereafter with a resurrected Lord Jesus."

The original drawings and designs presented by the architect included many windows in the north wall of the sanctuary. These were shown with plain colored glass. The Pastor R. Wayne Willmann urged the Building Committee to include symbols of the Christian faith. The Building Committee accepted his suggestion and asked him to select the symbols. The glass designer and installer was Rudolph Sandon, the fifth generation of a family which had installed the beautiful windows in many of Europe's churches. The pastor and Mr. Sandon met once a week for almost six months. What you see is the result of their efforts.

North Wall Windows of the Sanctuary

This wall is divided into SIX sections. Each tells what God has done for His people. We like to call this *The Wall of Salvation*.

The Story begins with God. Looking at the upper left-hand corner, we see the *ALPHA* symbol. Then, looking at the lower right hand corner of the Section Six, we see the *OMEGA* symbol. The story ends with God. In Revelations 22:13 and 16, St. John is reminded that God is the beginning and the end of all things – The First and the Last – the *Alpha* and the *Omega*. Let the symbols speak. The worshiper with hearing problems can sit in our sanctuary and receive the message from God's love coming from our church windows. Understanding the symbols is born out of faith and trust in the Word of God.



SECTION ONE ***Alpha***

The first letter of the Greek Alphabet. It was used with the used with the *Omega*, the last letter in the Greek alphabet, to show the eternalness of Christ in God's plan of salvation – *Revelations 1:8*.

The Tau Cross and Serpent



The cross is formed in the shape of the Greek letter *TAU*. It is considered an Old Testament cross. It is the traditional sign made by the Israelites on the door posts of Egypt on the night of the Passover – *Exodus 12:22*. It has also been called the Cross of Prophecy. It foreshadowed the placing of Christ upon the Cross of Calvary. As the Israelites who were bitten by a serpent could look upon the bronze serpent and live, so we find life in the living Christ who died on the Cross of Calvary – *Numbers 21:9; John 3:14-15*.

The Tree and Star



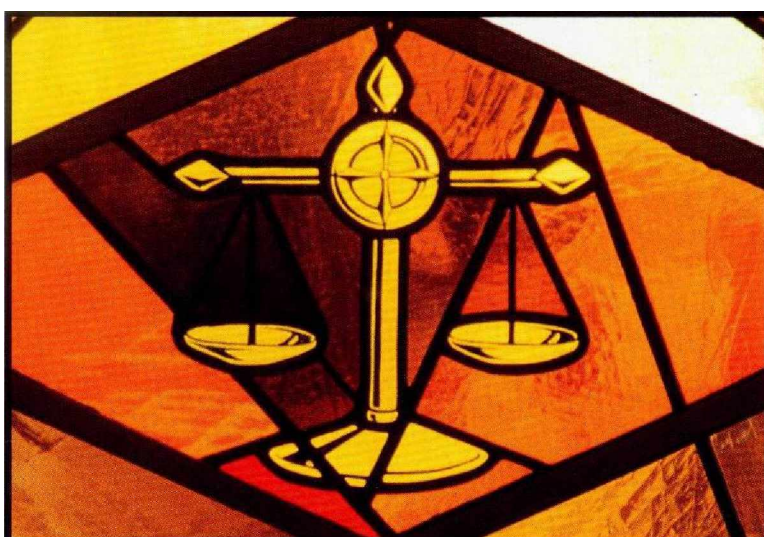
This is the symbol of the prophecy in Isaiah 11:1. The six-pointed star is known as the Star of David. The six-pointed star is also known as the Creator Star. The six-pointed star was often used as an ancient symbol for God the Father, with the six-fold attributes of Power, Wisdom, Majesty, Love, Mercy, and Justice. It has also been used as a reminder of the six days of creation.

The Lamp



The lamp is a symbol for the Word of God. Thought to have come from Psalm 119-105, “Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet.” It is also a New Testament symbol for the knowledge of God as it is revealed in Christ Jesus – *John 1:1*. Jesus said, “I am the light of the world” – *John 8:12*.

The Balances



This is the symbol for justice throughout the world. We use this symbol to represent the justice of God. “A false balance is an abomination to the Lord. But a just weight is His delight” – *Proverbs 11:1*. The balances signify the final Judgment Day. “You have been weighed in the balances and found wanting.” – *Daniel 5:27*.

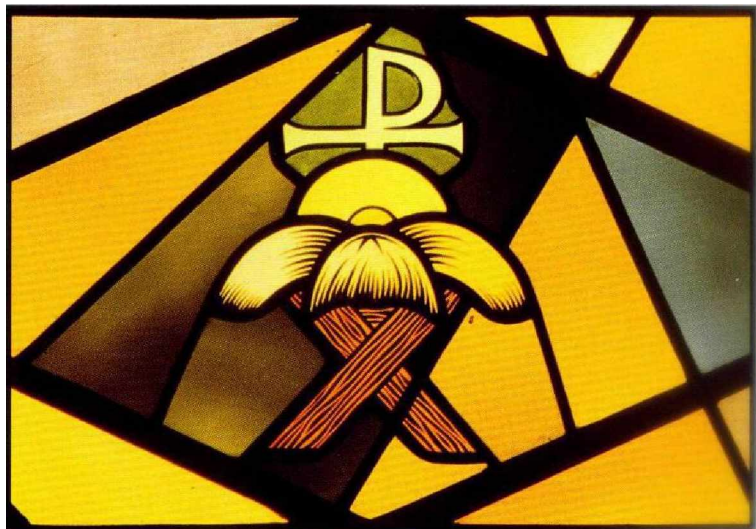
SECTION TWO

The Five-Pointed Star



This is the star of Jacob – *Numbers 24:17*, a prophecy of the birth of the Messiah (Jesus) which finds its fulfillment in His birth – *Matthew 2:2*. It is also known as the Epiphany Star. Jesus identifies Himself as the offspring of David, the bright and morning star – *Revelations 22:16*. It has also been used as a symbol for Mary. The Hebrew form of the name Mary is “Miriam” which means “Star.”

The Manger Scene



This very familiar symbol represents the lowly birth of Jesus in a stable in Bethlehem – *Luke 2:1-20*. The Greek letters X and P are the first two letters of the word *Christ* in Greek: *XPICTOC*.

The Daisy



This is the perfect daisy, selected by the early Christians in the second century as a symbol for purity. It symbolizes the innocence of the Holy Child, Jesus. It gained great popularity toward the end of the fifteenth century.

The Lamb



The lamb as it stands strong, no longer wounded, suggests the victorious nature of Christ's sacrifice for the souls of people – *Isaiah 53.7; I Peter 1:19*. The three-rayed nimbus around the head of the lamb signifies divinity. Lambs without defects were used as sacrifices for the sins of the people. It speaks to us of Jesus as the Lamb of God, without spot and without blemish. It eliminates the need for us to sacrifice lambs for the forgiveness of our sins.

Immanuel



This symbol shows us the angel and the name Immanuel. It recalls the prophecy that “a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel” – *Isaiah 7:14*. The name Immanuel means “God with us” – *Isaiah 53*.

SECTION THREE ***The Escallop Shell***



A symbol of the Lord’s Baptism. It may be used to dip water and pour it as in the rite of Baptism – *Matthew 3:13-17*; *Luke 3:21-22*; *Mark 1:9-11*. It is often pictured with drops of water falling from its edges. A large shell (silver) is often used in Holy Baptisms today.

The Dove



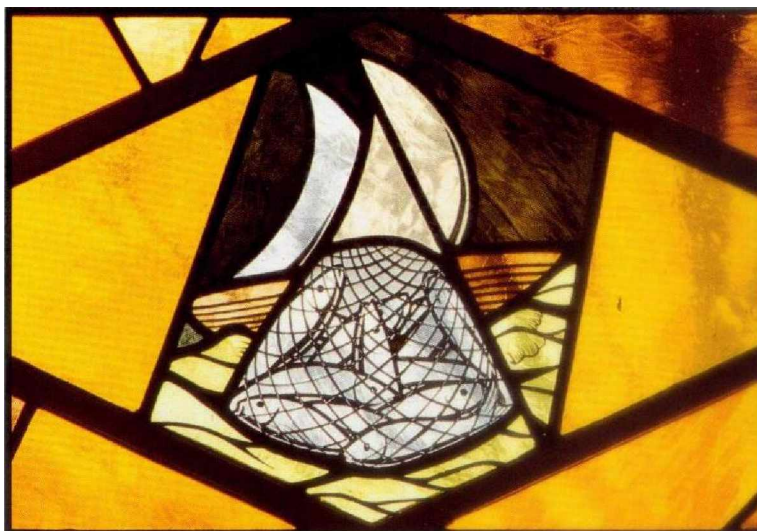
The dove expresses innocence and purity. It is the symbol most widely used for the Holy Spirit. It symbolizes the presence of God descending upon Jesus at His Baptism – *Matthew 3:16; Mark 1:10; Luke 3:22; John 1:32.*

Six Stone Water Pots



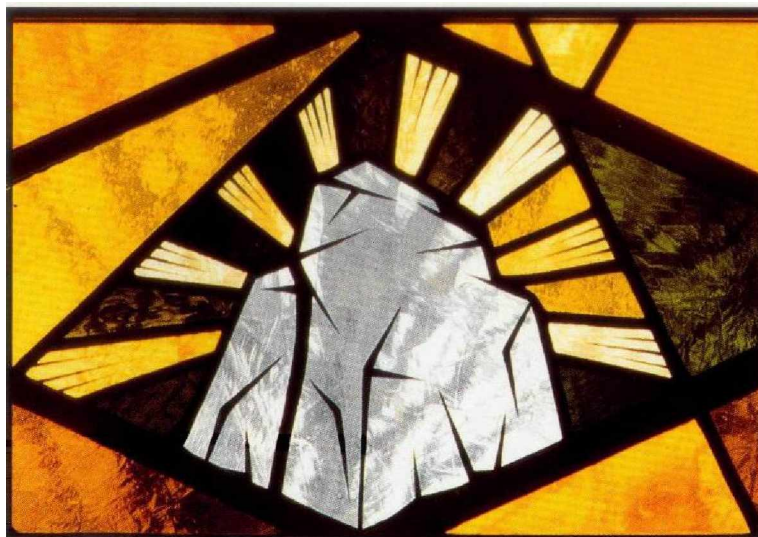
The six stone water pots represent the first miracle performed by Jesus when He changed water into wine at the wedding feast at Cana of Galilee – *John 2:1-11.*

The Miraculous Drought of Fish



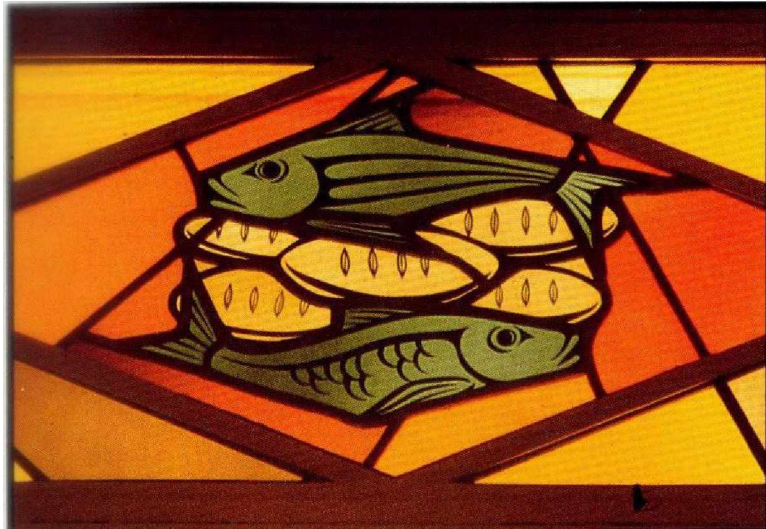
This symbol reminds us of Peter fishing all night, catching nothing, and having Jesus tell him to let down the nets on the other side of the boat. Peter obeyed with the result that more fish were caught than the nets would hold – *Luke 5:1-11*. This was another one of Jesus's miracles.

SECTION FOUR *The Mount of Transfiguration*



This symbol reminds us of the experience of Peter, James, and John, when Jesus took them to a mountain top to observe His transfiguration. On that occasion, Moses and Elijah appeared and spoke with them – *Matthew 1:8*.

Five Loaves and Two Fish



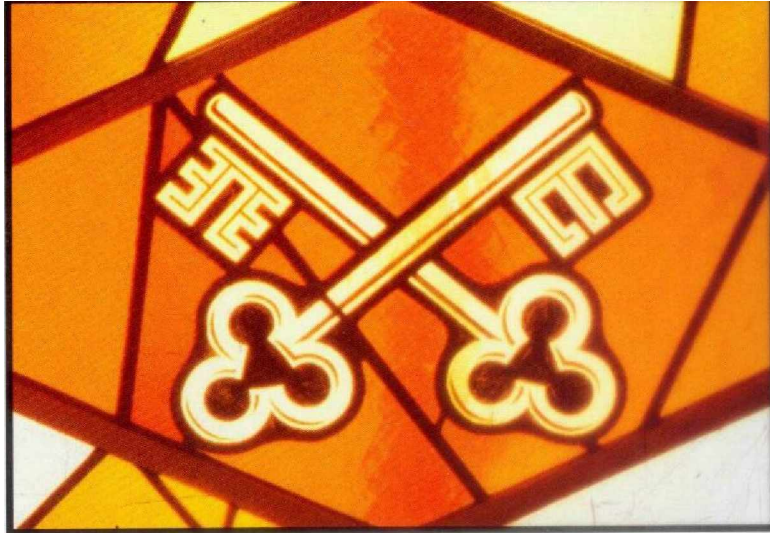
This is the symbol for the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand people when Jesus took the five loaves and two fish from a young boy and fed the entire crowd.

The Parable of the Sower



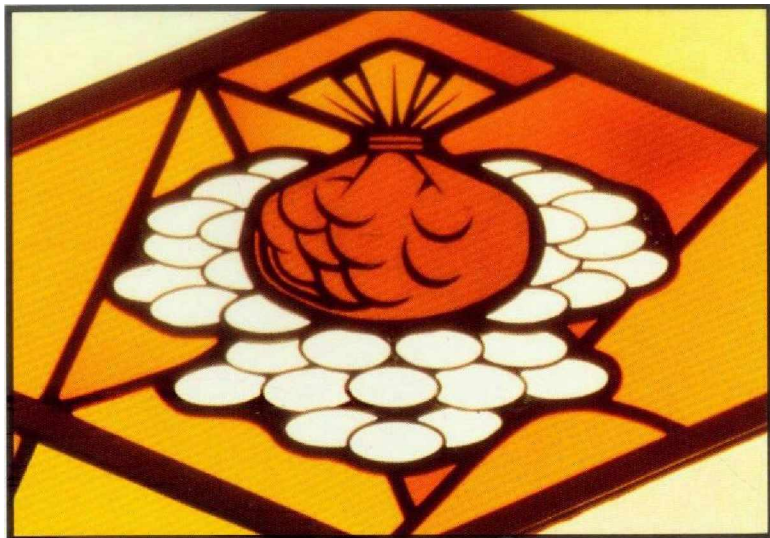
This symbol recalls the four places where seed fell in the parable told by Jesus: (a) by the road where the birds ate it; (b) on stony ground where it sprouted quickly but withered quickly for lack of soil; (c) some fell among the thorns and was choked by the thorns; (d) some fell on good soil where it brought forth fruit a hundred-fold, sixty-fold, and thirty-fold. God's Word is the seed. Human lives represent the different soils – *Matthew 13:3-8; Mark 4:3-8; Luke 8:5-8, 11-15.*

The Crossed Keys



This symbol is for St. Peter. It reminds us of Jesus's gift to Peter of the keys of the Kingdom – *Matthew 16:18-19*. We are reminded of the spiritual authority of the Church, also of Confession and Absolution. The door to God's Kingdom is opened to the faithful who repent and are forgiven.

SECTION FIVE ***The Money Bag and 30 Pieces of Silver***



A symbol for the treachery of Judas and his bargain with the chief priest for the betrayal of Jesus – *Matthew 25:15; Mark 4:10-11; Luke 22:3-6*.

Palm Leaves and Scroll



A symbol for the event of Palm Sunday when Jesus made His humble entry into Jerusalem on the back of a donkey. The *HOSANNA* recalls the praises from people along with roadside who hailed Jesus as the King of Israel – *John 12:12-15*. The palm leaves were regarded as sacred from the early Semitic times. They were carried by the Jews as a sign of triumphant rejoicing. II Chronicles 3:5 and I Kings 7:36 seem to indicate their use was symbolic of paradise.

The Lantern



A symbol of betrayal and arrest of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. Judas with a company of men entered the garden carrying lanterns and torches – *John 18:3*.

The Scourge and Pillar



This symbol recalls the Passion with the whipping of Jesus before He was led to Calvary – *Deuteronomy 25:2-3; Matthew 10:17; Acts 5:40; Matthew 27:26; Mark 15:15.*

The Draped Cross



This is a symbol of God's one great sacrifice, that of His Son Jesus, the Christ, for the salvation of the souls of all people. The letters *INRI* refer to the Latin inscription: *Iesus Nazarenus Rex Iudaeorum* – “Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews.”

SECTION SIX

The Empty Tomb



This symbol is for the miracle of the resurrection of Jesus from the grave. It recalls Christ's victory over the power of sin, death, and the Devil – *Matthew 28:1-6*. This makes Christianity different from any other world religion, and gives us the assurance of eternal life with God.

The Phoenix



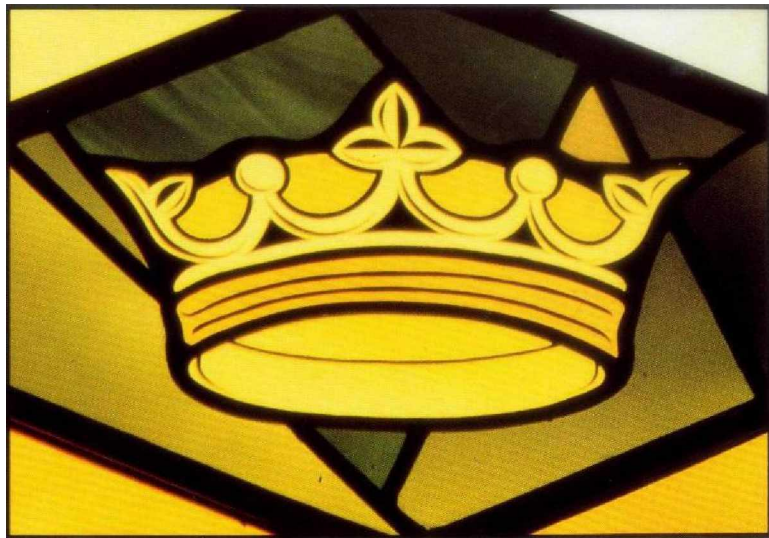
A mythical bird which at death burst into flame but rises from its own ashes. It serves to remind us of Christ's resurrection and His promise of eternal life for the people of God.

The Fiery Chariot



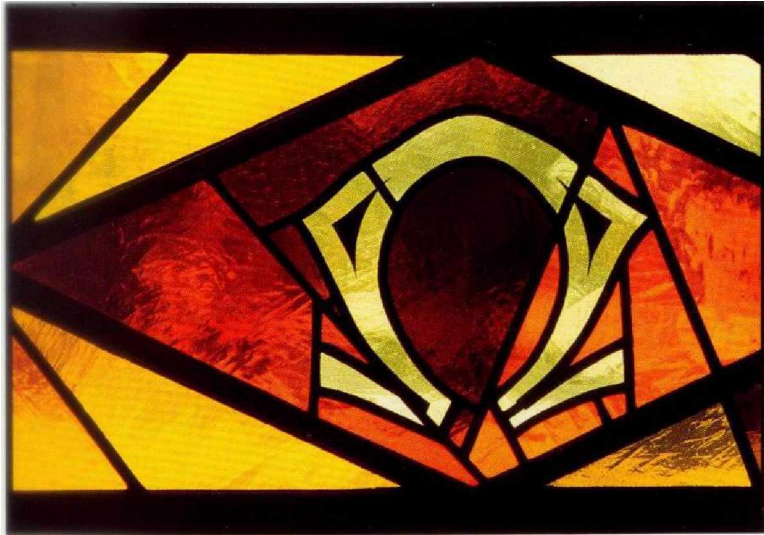
The symbol for Elijah who was carried into heaven in such a chariot – *II Kings 2:1-12*. The tongues of fire remind us of the experience of the disciples on the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came upon them – *Acts 2:1-21*.

The Crown



The crown is used as a symbol of royalty. It is used for Kingship of Christ in His rule over all things – *James 1:12*. It also reminds us that the crown of life awaits us – *Revelation 2:10*.

The Omega

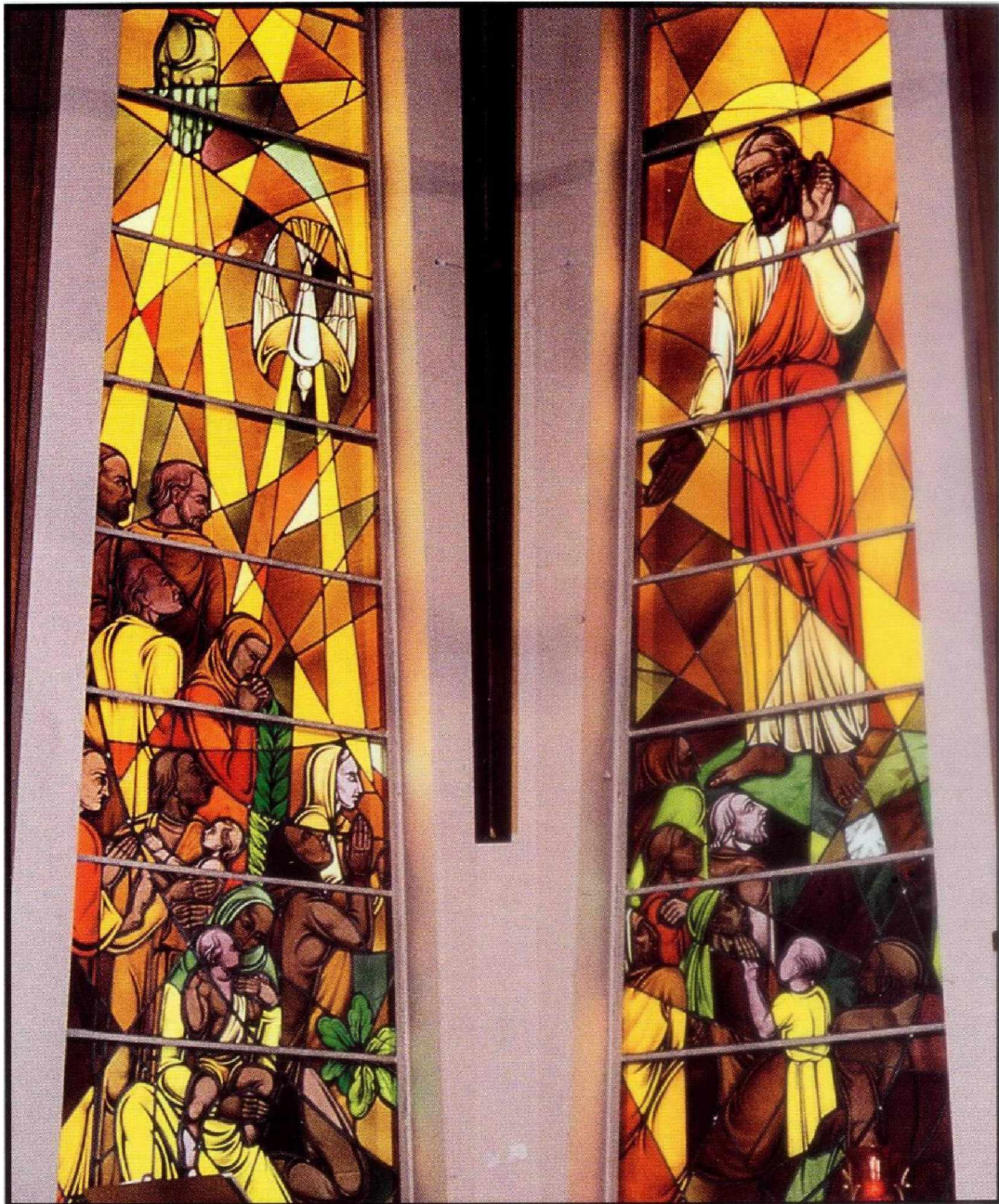


Since the *OMEGA* is the last letter in the Greek alphabet, it therefore signifies the end of time. *ALPHA* and *OMEGA* used together picture our belief that God is the beginning and the end of all things. God has the last word.

The Wall of Salvation...

Our study was divided into six sections – in themselves a symbol of the six days of Creation in which God created all things. We have in these windows in the north wall of the sanctuary the story of salvation.

What a gift and legacy it is from Pastor Willmann to all of us and all the generations to come!

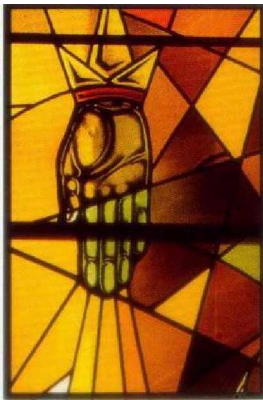


The Altar (Chancel) Window

This is perhaps the most exciting part of our story and book. Pastor Willmann and Mr. Rudolph Sandon worked for a long time for a meaningful design for the Chancel Window. Several designs were rejected by the Building Committee. Then one night, after several months of study and prayer, Pastor had a dream showing God's design for the window. He arose in the middle of the night and sketched the design he had seen. The next day, when Mr. Sandon saw the design, he immediately exclaimed, "That's it – That's it!" So it became the beautiful window you see when you face the altar.

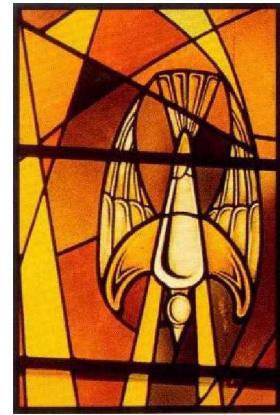
The Figure of Christ

This is the most prominent symbol in the window. It appears on the right side so the morning sun shines through the figures to give light for the Chancel. Jesus said, “I am the LIGHT of the world” – *John 8:12*. In I John 1:7 we read, “If we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, God’s Son cleanses us from all sin.” Jesus has one hand raised in blessing while the other hand is outstretched to serve people of all colors and all ages. They represent the early Christians and ourselves as we have literally and figuratively sat at the feet of Jesus and listened to His Word.



The Hand and Crown

This stands for God Almighty – the King of all Kings. This is the most ancient Christian symbol to represent God’s creative power – *Genesis 1:1; Ecclesiastes 9:1*. “The wise and their works are in the hand of God.”



The Dove

This symbol of the dove has become the most widely recognized symbol for the Holy Spirit. All four Gospel writers describe the descent of the Holy Spirit like a dove from Heaven at the time of Jesus’s baptism.

The People

Their presence in the left side of the window represents the hunger of the human soul for the message of Jesus and the multitudes of people, of all colors – all the youth and older ones, who wait for Christians to share the promises of Jesus with them. Here we have the challenge for missionary work in Jesus’s name.

The Baskets

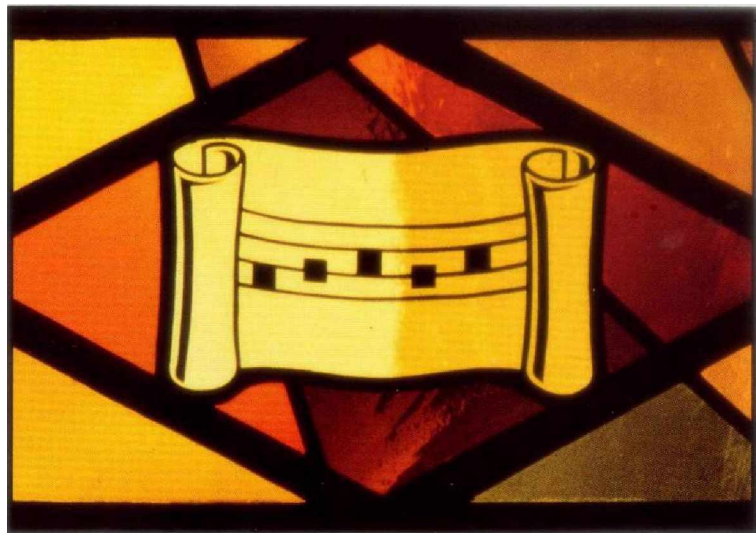
In the lower left-hand corner and in the lower right-hand corner, we find baskets. One basket holds fish and the other has bread. They remind us that Jesus used bread and fish oftentimes in teaching and in performing His miracles. They were easy to obtain when He needed them.

The Music Windows

Then Moses and the sons of Israel sang to the Lord, and said, “I will sing to the Lord, for He is highly exalted” – *Exodus 15:1*. The Psalm writer says, “Serve the Lord with gladness, come before Him with joyful singing” – *Psalm 100:2*.

Vocal and instrumental music have always occupied a prominent place in the lives of God’s people. That is especially true in the Lutheran Church.

The Scroll



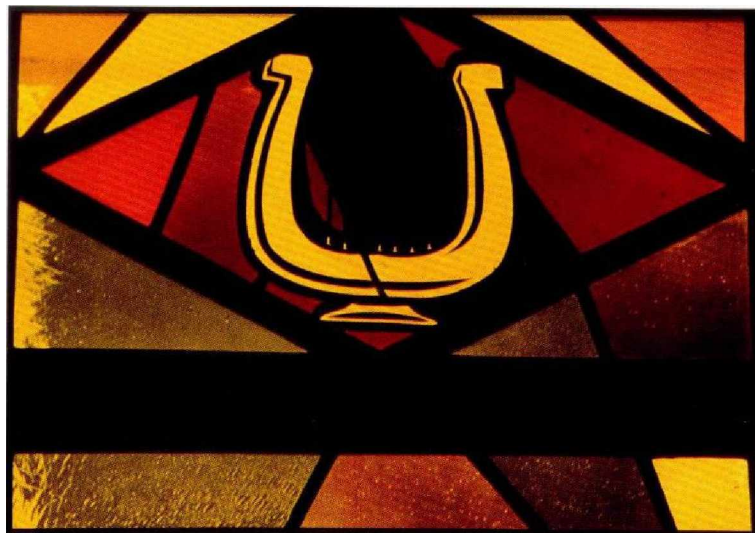
A symbol for St. Ambrose. This famous Bishop of Milan was a great lover of music. He added to the richness of the sacred services with it, and introduced the antiphonal chants which still bear his name. He died in 397 A.D.

The Trumpet and Tambourine or Timbrel



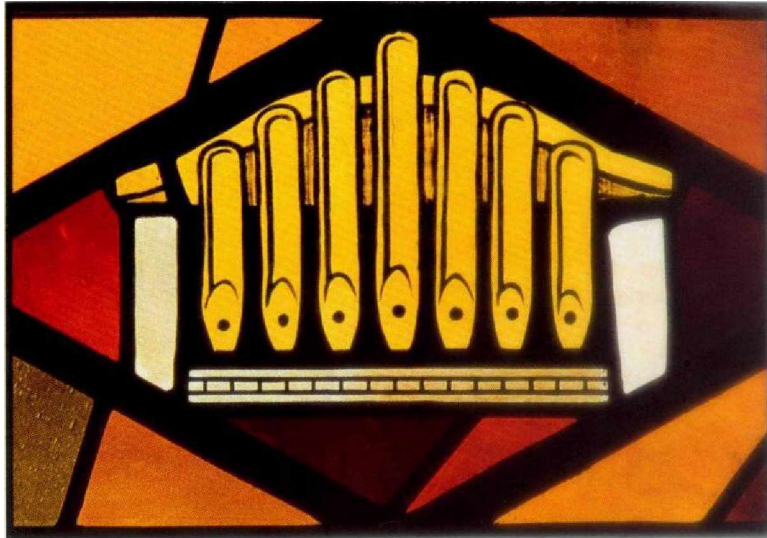
The trumpet is a symbol for the Day of Judgment – *Matthew 24:31*, the resurrection – *I Corinthians 15:52*, and the call to worship – *Numbers 10:10*. The timbrel was one of the smallest musical instruments – *Genesis 31:27*. These instruments were used to praise the Lord – *Psalms 81:1-3*.

The Harp or Lyre



The symbol for music of praise or worship – *Revelations 14:2*. It usually had 8 to 10 strings stretched on a frame and was played with the fingers. It was the favorite instrument of the early Christians to accompany joyous songs – *Psalms 33:2*.

The Organ



A symbol for music used to the glory of God. It is built to inspire and to motivate people to direct their deepest feelings of love towards God and towards their fellowman.

Our music windows serve a two-fold purpose: they inspire the worshiper in the sanctuary, and they serve as a reredos for the outdoor altar in the rose garden.

The Balcony Windows **(Challenges for Christian Living)**

The non-Christian should see justice, courage, and temperance in the daily life of the Christian. The first three symbols remind us of this.

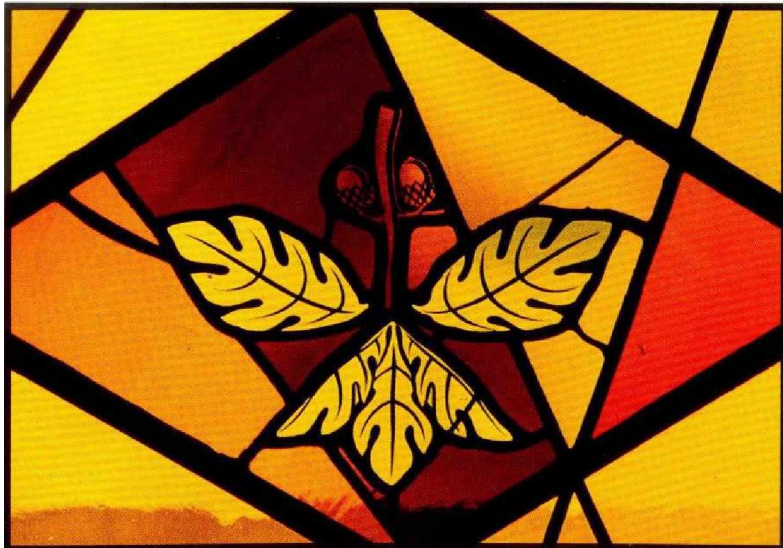
God expects to see what the Christian does with His gifts of FAITH, HOPE, and LOVE. The last three symbols remind us of that.

The Flaming Shield and Arrows



This is the symbol for Justice. Sometimes, it is called the shield of Faith. In Ephesians 6:16, St. Paul speaks of “Taking the shield of faith with which to quench all the flaming darts of the evil one.”

Oak Leaves and Acorns



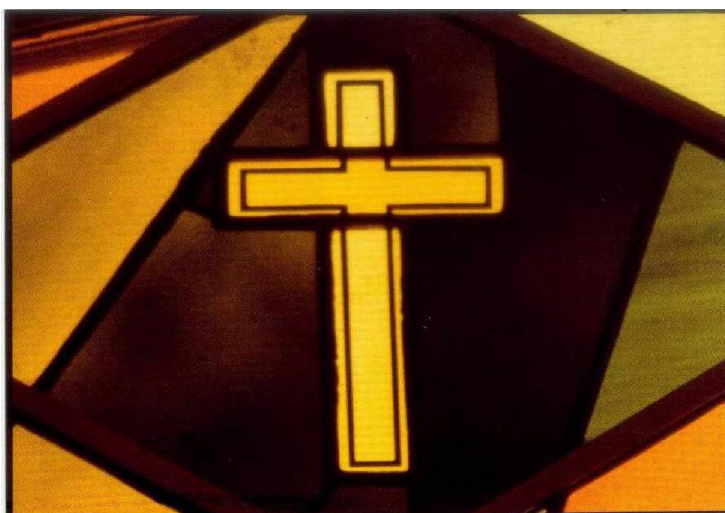
This is the symbol for Christian Courage and Fortitude. The real strength of the Christian is in the Lord – *Psalm 46:1*.

Blindfolded Individual



This is the symbol for Temperance or Moderation. “Let all things be done in moderation” – *I Timothy 2:9, Galatians 5:16*; “Walk by the Spirit” – *Galatians 5:25, I Corinthians 9:25*; “Exercise self-control in all things.”

The Latin Cross



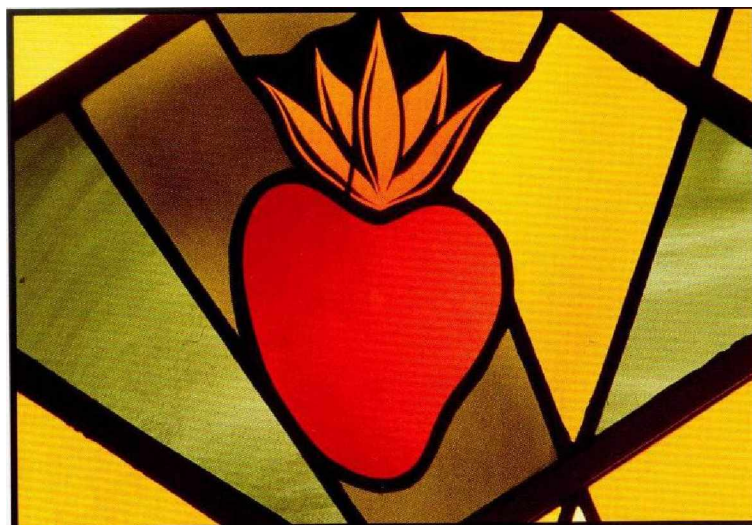
This form of the Cross is to represent the suffering and death of Christ for the sins of the world. It represents God’s gift of FAITH so the Christian can live a life of service to others.

The Anchor Cross



This is the ancient symbol for Christian HOPE – *Hebrews 6:19*. Early Christians used it in the catacombs during periods when they were being persecuted. It speaks of the saving work of Christ in reconciling God and man – *Colossians 1:20; II Corinthians 5:19*.

The Flaming Heart



A symbol for LOVE, the greatest of the Christian virtues – *I Corinthians 13:13*; “So FAITH, HOPE, LOVE abide, these three, but the greatest of these is LOVE.” God expects Christians to love one another.