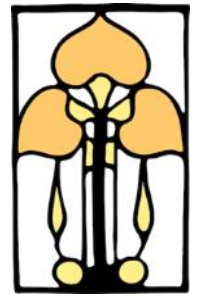


# FRIENDS of HISTORIC SECOND CHURCH

## THE HERALD

Volume XIV, Number 1

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### ARCHITECT JAMES RENWICK JR. *by Nate Lielasus*



*Spotted Church*

When The Spotted Church - the former home of Second Presbyterian was completed at the corner of Washington and Wabash in 1851, Chicago

was a small but growing western frontier town. The arrival of the new church building was a significant step in the development of building construction in Chicago. Not only was the new church building Chicago's first large scale stone building and its first fully realized Gothic Revival design, it was also the work of prominent New York architect James Renwick Jr. (1818-1895).

When he received the commission for The Spotted Church, James Renwick Jr. was known as a skilled practitioner in the Gothic Revival style. Renwick burst onto the scene with his first major architectural commission, the fanciful French Gothic Grace Church in New York City, completed in 1847. Renwick won the competition for the commission in 1843, when he was just 25. Grace Church was widely acclaimed and brought Renwick renown and additional commissions. It also helped fuel the spread of Gothic Revival design in the United States.

At the time of The Spotted Church project, Renwick was early in his

long career, but had already received several large commissions including the Smithsonian Institute Building, Washington, DC (1847-1851), The Free Academy Building, City College of New York (1847-1848, demolished 1927), and Calvary Church, New York, (1847-1849).

Renwick was born in 1818 in the village of Bloomingdale, NY, now a part of the Upper West Side in Manhattan. He had a privileged upbringing. His father, James Renwick, was an engineer and a professor of natural philosophy at Columbia College. James Renwick developed and designed the initial concept for the inclined planes on the Morris Canal. The inclined planes consisted of carriages that lifted boats along inclined railroad tracks. Inclined Planes allowed greater elevation changes than traditional locks. Renwick's mother, Margaret Anne, was from the wealthy and prominent Brevoort family. Renwick and his two brothers followed their father by entering the field of engineering. Renwick attended Columbia College where he studied engineering and, after graduation, he worked as an engineer for the Erie Railroad and later on the Croton Aqueduct.

John Van Osdel (1811-1891), Chicago's first architect, provided an initial unrealized design for The Spotted Church. Van Osdel envisioned an Italianate building constructed of brick, like most of the prominent structures in Chicago at the time. T.B. Carter, a member of the church building committee, was

travelling east on personal business and brought the Van Osdel plans with him in order to consult with East Coast architects on the design. In New York, Carter met Theodore McNamee, a member of the building committee for Church of the Pilgrims on Union Square (1846, demolished). The recently completed church had been designed by Renwick, who McNamee heartily recommended for The Spotted Church project. McNamee introduced Carter to Renwick, who agreed to take up the commission.

Second Presbyterian secured the services of Asher Carter (1805-1877), a builder and architect from Morristown, NJ, to construct the new building. Before relocating to Chicago, Carter reviewed the designs and plans with Renwick.

In Chicago, Asher Carter became a noted builder and architect in his own right. He partnered with Augustus Bauer and later was a principal in the firm of Carter & Drake (later Carter, Drake and Wight). As a carpenter and house builder before coming west, Asher Carter must have used his experience working on The Spotted Church to pursue larger projects. Old St. Patrick's Church (1853-1856) was a notable early commission. The design of the facade has some similarities to The Spotted Church. Both buildings have compositions with a prominent central gable flanked by two narrower bays and two towers.

The Spotted Church shares many details with Renwick's other work of



*Free Academy Building*

the same period. In particular, the church has similarities with the Free Academy Building and Calvary Church. Design hallmarks used by Renwick and shared by the three buildings include tiered buttresses with mini forward-facing gables, piers rising above the roof line with peaked caps and octagonal towers. The lake side of The Spotted Church, which faced a park, and the facade of the gable end of the Free Academy Building are strikingly similar in roofline and window placement. The two buildings also had very similar Gothic window tracery. Calvary Church may be the only extant building to hint at what the interior of The Spotted Church may have looked like. Alas, no interior photos of The Spotted Church exist and so one can only speculate.

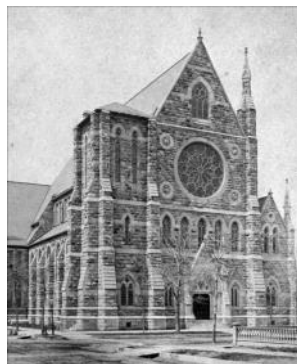
After completing The Spotted Church, Renwick's popularity continued to grow and he soon received his most notable commission - St Patrick's Cathedral in New York (1858-1879). Renwick's involvement in the church would span decades. Besides the church building itself, Renwick also designed the archbishop's house and rectory, completed in 1882.

Renwick preferred Gothic Revival designs for churches, of which he

designed many throughout his career. Additional notable examples include Cathedral of Our Merciful Saviour, Faribault, MN (1862-1869), St. Ann's Episcopal Church, Brooklyn, NY (1866), Church of the Resurrection, New York (1868), Ascension Memorial Church, Ipswich, MA (1869), Saint Bartholomew's Church, New York (1871-1872, demolished), All Saints Roman Catholic Church, New York (1882-1893). Not all of his churches were Gothic Revival. St. Stephen's

Church, New York (1854) had a German Romanesque style. Renwick was also a very skilled designer in the Second Empire style. Major commissions executed in this style include the Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, DC (1859-1871) Vassar College, Main Building, Poughkeepsie, NY (1860) and City Hospital, NY (1861, demolished).

The Spotted Church was destroyed in the Great Chicago Fire of 1871. The flames left nothing but the exterior stone walls standing. Fortunately, Second Presbyterian had already made plans to relocate to the South Side and build a new structure. The congregation again turned to Renwick to design their home and Renwick agreed. The congregation asked Asher Carter to build the new church but Carter was nearing retirement and turned the commission down. Instead, Renwick sent John Addison (1847-1932) from his



*Second Presbyterian Church 1874*

New York office to Chicago to do the job. The new church built for Second Presbyterian at 20th and Michigan was larger than the Spotted Church. The design was more sophisticated, showing Renwick's maturation as an architect. The new

church was taller with clerestory windows and a soaring front gable with massive rose window. The front door has a French Gothic style porch, like those found on Calvary Church and St. Patrick's Cathedral.

The new Second Presbyterian Church stood for less than thirty years before it, like The Spotted Church, was devastated by a fire that left only the exterior walls standing. The building was famously reconstructed by Howard Van Doren Shaw who completely re-imagined the interior but also modified Renwick's exterior. Today, the congregation's history with Renwick is often overlooked but it is an important part of the story of Second Presbyterian's pursuit of



*Spotted Church Post-Fire*

architectural excellence. That story began when an energetic congregation in a small but growing western frontier town persuaded a well-regarded East Coast architect half a continent away to design their new church and in doing so changed the course of architecture in Chicago.

**SUPPORT FRIENDS WITH AMAZONSMILE**

Friends has joined AmazonSmile, a website which allows non-profit organizations to receive donations from a 0.5% portion of sales made on the popular shopping website. To donate via AmazonSmile, visit: <http://smile.amazon.com/> and select Friends of Historic Second Church at the prompt.

***Friends of Historic  
Second Church  
gratefully  
acknowledges the  
following  
memberships,  
donations, and  
contributions from  
September 20, 2019-  
January 30, 2020.***

**\$5,000 - \$9,999**

Anonymous  
Sandra Lancaster

**\$3,000 - \$4,999**

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Jeff & Annette Adams  
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Warren Vik  
Claudia Winkler

**In Honor of Mike &  
Ann Belletire's  
50th Wedding  
Anniversary**

Mary Bucaro &  
Richard Peloquin  
Linda & Bill Lilly  
Jeff & Linda Miller  
Shelley and Elizabeth  
House Reither  
Joan Stinton  
Howard & Jane Tiffen  
William Tyre

**A FOND FAREWELL TO BOARD  
MEMBER RUTH SHARPE**



In December, Ruth Sharpe ended fourteen eventful years as a founding member of the Board of Directors of Friends of Historic Second Church. Ruth was among a handful of church members who, in 2006, saw the wisdom of creating a "friends" group that would extend beyond church membership to seek support for the preservation of their historic and artistically significant church. In those fourteen years, Ruth has been a constant source of sage advice and willing participant in bringing high quality foods to our events. She has been a strong advocate for frequent communication between Friends and the church. We will miss her wise counsel. Thank you, Ruth.

**FRIENDS WELCOMES JIM PETERS TO  
THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**



Friends is excited to welcome incoming board member Jim Peters. Jim Peters is well known and respected in preservation circles and has a long history of working to preserve the built environment. Mr. Peters was president of Landmarks Illinois from 2008-2011 where he oversaw the administration of the \$1 million Richard Driehaus Courthouse Initiative grant for Illinois county courthouse restoration and helped create reuse plans for Cook County Hospital. While working for the Department of Planning and Development, he administered the 10-person staff for the Commission of Chicago Landmarks and he initiated the Michigan Avenue and Motor Row historic districts. Mr. Peters has long admired Second Presbyterian Church. Besides being a long-time member of Friends, he almost always brings out-of-town visitors to see the church interior. When they can, Mr. Peters and his wife, Pat Casler, attend a different historic church in the region for service on the first Sunday of every month. The Board is delighted to include Jim Peters and looks forward to working with him on new and continuing projects.

## BLACK CHICAGO ASPIRES FOR RESIDENTIAL SECURITY: BATTLING THE RESTRICTIVE COVENANT, 1927-1948



Image: May 8, 1948 headline from the Chicago Defender.

This PowerPoint presentation will be given by Dr. Christopher R. Reed, professor emeritus of history at Roosevelt University, and recognized as “the Dean of Black Chicago History” for his numerous books and articles and his work within the Black Chicago History Forum.

Following the presentation, a panel discussion will address issues facing African Americans and other minorities in the real estate arena, both locally and nationally. Dr. Reed will be joined by Courtney Jones and Ronald Branch, current and former president respectively, of the Dearborn Realist Board, the local chapter of the National Association of Real Estate Brokers.

This event, celebrating Black History Month, is sponsored by Friends of Historic Second Church, Glessner House, Second Presbyterian Church, and Quinn Chapel AME Church.

Sunday, February 23, 2020  
1:30 pm to 3:00 pm  
Second Presbyterian Church  
1936 South Michigan Ave., Chicago  
Free Admission, No Reservations Required

## WOMEN, VOTE WITH YOUR DOLLAR FOR BUSINESS AND SUFFRAGE!

*Celebrate Women's History Month with a Women Owned Business Market and special programming commemorating 100 years of the suffrage movement*

Actress and Scholar Leslie Goddard, Ph.D., performs in this living history portrayal of suffragist Alice Paul for our Women's History Month lecture. Paul was one of the most enigmatic leaders in the fight to win votes for women. She arranged parades, organized the first picketing demonstrations outside the White House, lobbied politicians, and endured imprisonment for women's suffrage. She inspires us still in the struggle for equal rights.



### Vendors of the Women Owned Business Market



Join us for our first annual Chicago owned, women owned, entrepreneurial market featuring businesses selling merchandise from natural based products to free trade jewelry. Each of our vendors is co-sponsoring our event to celebrate Women's History this March! Our vendors this year are: Barbara's Basement, Greetings by Jenny, Katherine Anne Confections, Little Buddha, Meli's Mini Verse, Nature's Island, Noonday Collection, and Women & Children First Bookstore.

Saturday, March 21, 2020  
10:00 am market opens, 11:00 am lecture,  
11:45 to 1:00 pm market continues  
Second Presbyterian Church  
1936 South Michigan Ave, Chicago  
\$10 for non-members, \$9 for members  
Purchase tickets at [historicsecondchurch.org](http://historicsecondchurch.org)

## SECOND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH RECEIVES A NATIONAL FUND FOR SACRED PLACES GRANT

Second Church has been accepted into the grant-making program of the National Fund for Sacred Places (NFFSP). The NFFSP is administered jointly by Partners for Sacred Places and the National Trust for Historic Preservation. It is endowed by The Lilly Foundation and makes grants of \$10,000 to \$250,000 to ten or so congregations annually with the aim of enlarging each grantee's role in its community. Second was one of over 220 congregations to file letters of intent and one of only ten to be approved in November. The church, with the active support of Friends, now will conduct a multi-year Capital Campaign to raise \$500,000 to \$750,000 in matching funds to support a program of improvements.

Improvements being considered by the church and its architects include major upgrades to the electrical service to the building and re-wiring in areas still served by older cables, some dating to 1901; installing a new furnace for the gym; improving accessibility to the building; re-building the Cullerton entrance and bathroom facilities; improving the utility, lighting and attractiveness of Fellowship Hall; redesigning and restoring office and meeting spaces on the first, second and third floors.

The goal of all of these improvements is to restore the operating integrity of the building and make it more attractive for multiple uses by members of the surrounding community as well as its congregation. This is a rare opportunity to upgrade the facilities. Friends congratulate Second Church and look forward to working with them to see these visions become a reality.

**BECOME A MEMBER**

2019 was an exciting year in the history of Friends of Historic Second Church with the return of the completely restored Narthex Lunette Murals. It was also a standout year because YOU joined Friends in record numbers-- a sign of your support for the work we are doing to restore the great art and architecture of Chicago's only National Historic Landmark church. We also saw far greater numbers of participants at our programs and events. Now we are poised to make 2020 an even more outstanding year. We eagerly anticipate commemorating 100 years of suffrage on June 24 with the celebration of Chicago history with a presentation by Rachel Bohlmann. More preservation projects are in the works. You won't want to miss a thing. Join now because you believe in preservation as a civic duty or join because you enjoy the events and love seeing restoration come to life. But don't miss out on your chance to be a vital part of living history – the restoration of Historic Second Church.

**MEMBERSHIP FORM**

All members receive the newsletter *The Herald* and are recognized as donors in the newsletter.

**Tiffany Circle:** \$40 Individual; \$55 Family; \$25 Student/Senior (62 yrs.+)

*Benefits include:* Free tours during regular tour hours, 25% discount on Friends' merchandise.

**Arts & Crafts Circle:** \$100 and above

*Benefits include:* Free tours during regular tour hours, 25% discount on Friends' merchandise, and invitations to special members-only tours and programs.

I/we wish to become a member of Friends of Historic Second Church or renew a current membership.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my check for \$\_\_\_\_\_ for membership at the following level:

\_\_\_\_ **Tiffany Circle:** \$40 Individual; \$55 Family; \$25 Student/Senior (62 yrs.+)

\_\_\_\_ **Arts & Crafts Circle:** \$100 and above

\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No You may acknowledge my contribution in Friends' publications.

\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No I prefer to receive my newsletter by e-mail.

\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No I am interested in volunteering for Friends' activities.

If you wish to discuss sponsoring a restoration project, contact Friends of Historic Second Church at 1-800-657-0687.

Please return completed form with check made payable to:

Friends of Historic Second Church 1936 South Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60616.

Or renew online at [www.historicsecondchurch.org](http://www.historicsecondchurch.org).



**FRIENDS of  
HISTORIC SECOND CHURCH**

1936 S. Michigan Ave.

Chicago, IL 60616

Phone: 1-800-657-0687

E-mail: [info@historicsecondchurch.org](mailto:info@historicsecondchurch.org)

Web: [www.historicsecondchurch.org](http://www.historicsecondchurch.org)

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Contributors: Ann Belletire, Heather Kendall,  
Nate Lielasus, and Linda Miller.

**2020 DOCENT TRAINING**

A wonderful way to learn about the world-class art and architecture of Second Presbyterian Church is to join the upcoming Docent Training Class of 2020. Trainees who certify will become official docents for Friends of Historic Second Church, sharing their love of history, art and architecture with guests from around the world or down the street. Training sessions will occur on Thursdays, April 30th, May 7th, 14th, and 21st from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm; and on Saturday, May 30th from 9:00 am – noon. A partial list of topics to be examined includes: The Arts and Crafts movement; architects James Renwick, Jr. and Howard Van Doren Shaw; Gothic Revival architecture; artists Frederic Clay Bartlett and Louis Comfort Tiffany; the church's stained glass windows (both American and English); preservation philosophy and techniques; and a review of completed restoration projects.

Please visit [www.historicsecondchurch.org](http://www.historicsecondchurch.org) under Announcements on the Home Page and click the link to Docent Training to complete the application form on-line.

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**“Too Beautiful Not to be True: Burne-Jones, Morris and Religious Imagery”**

Lecture by Debra Mancoff  
Tuesday, May 5, 2020, 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm  
Admission: \$10 non-members/\$9 members

**Celebration of Chicago History  
“100 Years of Women’s Suffrage”**

Lecture by Rachel Bohlmann  
Wednesday, June 24, 2020, 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm  
Admission: Free

**Marktown Walking Tour**

Led by Architect, Nate Lielasus  
Saturday, September 5, 2020, 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm  
Admission: \$20 non-members/\$18 members

**Hyde Park Walking Tour**

Led by Architect, Nate Lielasus  
Saturday, September 19, 2020, 10:00 am to 12:00 pm  
Admission: \$20 non-members/\$18 members

**Mission Statement**

*To preserve and restore the art and architecture of Chicago’s landmark Second Presbyterian Church and to engage neighbors and the world in sharing our passion for its beauty and significance.*

*Friends of Historic Second Church is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation. All donations are deductible to the extent allowed by law.*