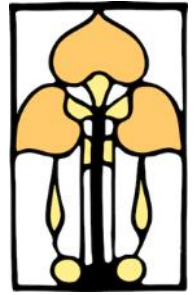


FRIENDS of HISTORIC SECOND CHURCH

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REWIRING THE SANCTUARY: A CONVERSATION WITH ELECTRICIAN BILL LOEDING

by Linda Miller & Heather Kendall

Among the many wondrous Arts and Crafts design elements in Second Presbyterian Church are its many light fixtures – 10 crown chandeliers, 15 rectangular art-glass pendants hanging under the balcony, the collection of various shaped fixtures above the pulpit, the two candelabra flanking the pulpit, the delicate art-glass fixtures along the rear balcony, the large multi-light narthex fixture and the two companion fixtures in the flanking vestibules.

All these fixtures were designed by architect Howard Van Doren Shaw and manufactured by Will E. Lau. They are an incredible collection of beautiful and unique early 20th Century lighting, at a time when the incandescent lightbulb was a new and novel invention and Chicago did not yet have a city-wide electrical distribution grid. (See article in [The Herald, Summer 2014](#)).

Amazingly, all of the fixtures have remained untouched since their installation in 1901, including their cloth-covered wiring! Consequently, a top priority for Friends of Historic Second Church has been to remove this old wiring and replace it with code-compliant wiring, as well as to clean and repair the light fixtures.

Between 2021 and 2023, thanks in large part to support from the Richard H. Driebaus Foundation, Friends raised the funds to rewire and clean approximately 80 percent of the light fixtures. Friends' partners in this work have been B & Z Electrical Contractors, Inc. for the electrical panel and wiring work and Archistoric Products for cleaning, making repairs and rewiring the historic fixtures. For a video interview with Tom Stemen of Archistoric [click here](#). In this article we share with you an interview with Bill

Loeding, the lead electrician on the electric work that Friends has undertaken in the sanctuary.

Q: Please tell us a little bit about your career as an electrician and your B & Z team.

A: Hi, my name is Bill Loeding, I have been working for B&Z Electrical Contractors for over 22 years. I graduated high school in 1984 and began working in the electrical field. I completed my apprenticeship in 1993. My career has included residential service work, new construction, major renovation/ restoration and commercial work. Our



Bill Loeding working on the under balcony lights

team has worked on many phases of Second Presbyterian Church's restoration, from rewiring the large chandeliers to the replacement of electrical panels. Billy, Jake, Jason, Jon, Ryan, Matt, Brian, Darryl, Dave, and Josh all had a hand in whichever phase of the project was being completed.

Q: Cloth covering was used as an insulation on copper wiring from the late 1800's until the 1950-60's when a

thermoplastic coating for wiring replaced the cloth. It is well known that the cloth covering can deteriorate over time and become brittle. Can you describe the condition of the wiring in the sanctuary. Was the wiring and its condition what you expected?



1901 Cloth Wiring

A: The old cloth-covered wiring was actually in good shape for its age. But, of course, it needed replacing. We were blessed that the original installation consisted of steel conduit raceways to the large chandeliers. This made it possible to fairly easily pull out the old wiring and then pull through the new wiring. Conduit was also found at the lower level fixtures on the first floor. In my opinion, the original install (1901) was done professionally. (Editor's note: Thank you, Howard Van Doren Shaw).

Q: A major part of the electrical work involved replacing the four electric panels in the sanctuary. These panels serve to bring electric current into the sanctuary and disperse it to the many light fixtures. What was involved in this work and what was the condition of these electric panels?

A: On the electrical panels, some work done in the years after 1901 was not up to code and presented a possible fire hazard. We removed the existing electrical panels, four of them, and

replaced them with new panel boards, circuit breakers and panel covers. (Editor's Note: the new panel boards are larger than the old ones. Thus, the decorative wood paneling enclosing the panel at the back of the sanctuary had to be removed. Its marred condition necessitated creating a reproduction panel. Take a look next time you are in the sanctuary. It perfectly matches the existing paneling.)

Q: There were many phases of this work. The first step involved the removal of the 10 large chandeliers hanging above the balcony, which also involved the construction of iron scaffolding atop the balcony itself. Can you describe this phase?

A: After detaching the wiring from the chandelier, we tied rope to it. Then four of us, two up on the scaffolding and two on the first floor, carefully lowered the 125-pound fixture. We disassembled the chandeliers into two sections. We then pulled out the old brittle wire and pulled new wiring into place. After the chandeliers were cleaned, repaired and rewired by Archistoric, we reversed the process and hoisted the chandeliers back up into their original place hanging from their angel brackets.

Q: Next came the removal of the 15 rectangular art-glass pendants under the balcony and the collection of fixtures above the pulpit. Did this work present any surprises for you?

A: The fixtures under the balcony were easier to access. All we needed was a ladder and they weighed a lot less. But these fixtures also had cloth-covered wiring that needed replacing. Their placement presented some problems. Some of them were attached to the plaster and not to an electrical box, so we had to rewire and then install these fixtures to new electric boxes in the ceiling. The biggest surprise came

when we worked on the pulpit fixtures. We had found steel conduit everywhere we had worked previously. But the wiring for these fixtures lay directly atop the wooden arch supporting them. Needless to say, we installed new conduit on that wooden arch.

Q: What did you and your team think of working in this historic building?

A: The restoration of the church has been an ongoing process, but as each phase is completed, the beauty of the architecture is revealed. There are so many details that are present. I suggest that you take a seat in a pew and look around. From the ornate plaster angels, to the large stained glass windows, it's beautiful. The newly installed lighting at the pulpit is another sight that needs to be seen. It complements the beautifully restored artwork at the *Tree of Life* mural. Working on all phases of the restoration projects was an unforgettable experience and as each phase is completed, the care and beauty is evident.

Great thanks to Bill and his team for their expert work, as well as their appreciation of the space in which the work is being done. We look forward to welcoming Bill's team back to the church to complete the remaining 20 percent of the rewiring of the sanctuary. That work will encompass the two large brass lantern fixtures in the narthex parlors, the six art-glass fixtures on the east side of the balcony, the stairway wall sconces, and assorted light switches around the sanctuary.



Be&Z Electric works on a crown chandelier.

GOODBYE AND THANK YOU TO MICHAEL SHAWGO



Friends of Historic Second Church would like to offer sincere thanks and express gratitude for the service of outgoing board member Mike

Shawgo. Shawgo joined the board of Friends in 2013 not long after he was hired by the congregation as the current Music Director. Mike had previously been the Music Director from 1990-2000. As Music Director, Mike spends a lot of time at the church and could not help but see the beauty all around. Mike takes a hands-on approach to helping make that beauty shine. As soon as he was back at the church, Mike started replacing mismatched and burned-out bulbs in the sanctuary and eventually lamped all the fixtures with LED Edison style bulbs. Mike arranged for some of those bulbs to be donated by Home Depot. When the old threadbare carpet in the sanctuary needed replacement Mike - along with sexton Marco Alberto - removed the carpet themselves and Mike led the charge to restore the linoleum beneath. Mike has been a long-term member of the committee looking for a replacement organ for the church. There are several magnificent and unused historic organs in Chicago and perhaps one day one can be rehabilitated to Second Presbyterian. There is no one design feature at the Church that Mike loves the most. He says "it's not just the architecture but the story." However, when contemplating future preservation projects, Mike hopes that the original painted decorative scheme of the walls at the rear balcony around the Ascension Window and the plaster ceiling will be restored. Being the Music Director, he hopes acoustics are considered when that work eventually occurs.

HOWARD VAN DOREN SHAW SOCIETY

Friends of Historic Second Church highly values our faithful donors. In order to further recognize those who give generously each year, we have created the Howard Van Doren Shaw Society. Donors who give \$1,000 or more to Friends cumulatively in one calendar year will be named to the Society for the following year. A gift may be a one-time gift of \$1,000 or more, or a series of gifts (e.g., membership, annual appeal and/or support of a restoration project) totaling \$1,000 or more within the year. New members will be announced in February of the following year.

Howard Van Doren Shaw was selected as the name for the new society to honor his role as the architect of the stunning 1901 Arts and Crafts interior that led to our designation as a National Historic Landmark. Shaw had a life-long connection to the church, growing up in the congregation and being called upon by the trustees to advise on a range of architectural and design issues until his death in 1926.

The 2024 Howard Van Doren Shaw Society boasts 42 members. In addition to regular member benefits, all Society members will be invited to exclusive events and behind-the-scenes tours held during 2024. Our thanks to all these generous donors.

2024 Howard Van Doren Shaw Society Members:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Jeff & Annette Adams | MFieldV Chicago Portfolio |
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| Ann & Michael Belletire | Community Foundation |
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DOCENT TRAINING 2024



Architect and Board Member, Nate Lielasus gives the new docent trainees a tour of the Gothic exterior of the church on their second week of training
Photo credit: Jim Peters

Is 2024 the year you decide to become a certified docent with Friends of Historic Second Church? As a certified docent, you will have the opportunity to give tours of Historic Second Church, Chicago's only National Historic Landmark church, and

share its beauty with guests from around the world.

If you love Chicago history and world-class art and architecture, please consider becoming a docent trainee at Historic Second Church. The 2024 five-session docent training begins soon, so now is the time to enroll. Recognized for its significant Arts and Crafts interior, the church features a wealth of beautiful art including stained glass windows, Pre-Raphaelite murals, plaster and wood ornamentation, numerous original lighting fixtures and much more.

Tours of the church are vital to the mission of educating a worldwide audience about the church's historical and cultural significance. The backbone of the tour program is the well-informed corps of docents who enthusiastically share their time and knowledge with thousands of visitors each year.

Spring 2024 docent training will be on Wednesdays - April 24th, May 1st, 8th and 15th from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm, and Saturday, May 18th from 9 am to 12 pm. The training will occur at Second Presbyterian Church, 1936 S. Michigan Avenue.

If you have questions, please email info@historicsecondchurch.org or call 1-800-657-0687. To enroll, visit <https://www.historicsecondchurch.org/docents> Friends requests that trainees commit to attend all five training sessions. There is a \$10 fee payable on the first night of training. Payment is waived for students.

Friends of Historic Second Church gratefully acknowledges the following memberships, donations, and contributions from October 16, 2023-February 29, 2024

<p>\$100,000 & Up <i>In Memory of</i> James D. & Mae B. Hinchbliff</p> <p>\$10,000 - \$49,999 Anonymous (2) Sandra Lancaster Law, Ware, Shedd, Murphy Foundation Mr. & Mrs. Michael Keiser Donor Advised Fund at The Chicago Community Foundation Joan Stinton</p> <p>\$5,000 - \$9,999 John & Joan Blew Jason Kevin Scott Hall Charitable Trust Jeff & Linda Miller William Tyre</p> <p>\$1,000 - \$4,999 Jeff & Annette Adams Michael & Ann Belletire Shaun & Andy Block Jerry & Jan Erickson John Cramer & Nate Lielasus Richard Mach Arthur Mead Martin McCaskey Foundation Stuart Miller Colleen Norton Pat Casler & Jim Peters Darlene Pollard David Marzahl & Anne Reusché Stephen & Mary Kay Wysham</p>	<p>\$500 - \$999 Robert Adamshick <i>In honor of All the Docents of Second Presbyterian</i> Madelon Clymo <i>In honor of Friends of Historic Second Church</i> Clifford & Barbara Crawford Craig & Kelly Dean <i>In honor of Howard & Jane Tiffen</i> Glenn & Donna Gabanski Brad Suster & Hector Hernandez Michael L. Kirk Donna Marie Primas Helen Torelli & Robert Sedgwick Ruth Sharpe</p> <p>\$100 - \$499 Thomas & Carole Ahern Anonymous (2) Lorraine Barba Nancy J. Bothne Richard Peloquin & Mary Bucaro Susan Baldwin Burian Elizabeth Clarke Todd Protzman Davis David Eller Jacquetta Ellinger Jim & Judy Elsass Daniel Erie Tavia L. Frazier M. Coleman & Bonita Gilchrist <i>In memory of Ian F. Gilchrist</i> Margaret Grinnell Marilyn Helmholz Jim & Darleen Jackson</p>	<p>Michael Jarvis Betsy Jenkins Barbara Chasnoff & J. Thomas Johnson <i>In memory of Anne & Joe Chasnoff</i> Charles Katzenmeyer J.K. Sierant & Manon Kavesky <i>In memory of Pauline Kavesky</i> Paul Kendall Curt & Betty Klooster Dr. Sharon Kobak <i>In memory of Dr. Matthew Kobak</i> Elizabeth Rosin & Mark Kenneally Deborah A. Lielasus Robin Nordhues Jane McCahill & Bill O'Connor Polly Poskin Susan L. Rayner, MD Shelley & Elizabeth Reither <i>In honor of Michael & Ann Belletire</i> Marilyn & Stephen Scott Michael Shawgo Lawrence & Maxine Snider William & Ingrid Stafford Merrie Star Marilyn A. Steenwyk Susana Steppan Sharon Sylvester Allan & Angie Vagner Sarah Van Domelen Scott Vandermyde John Vinci Monty Kehl & Craig Wilbanks</p>	<p>Under \$100 Scott Allred Dennis Antowiak Gail Atkins Frank Baldwin Steve & Kathy Belletire Todd Brueshoff Susan V. Carter Susan Fraker <i>In honor of Ester Fraker</i> Barbara Hayler Linda Jebavy Chris & Jane Kerbaugh Devin Klugh Christine M. Landem Teresa R. Maher Heidi Maunder Robert Neuman Robin Paige Aubrey Poojary Roberta Deering & Gregory Ptucha Jeanne Pyrz Susan Ruff Robert Schwendau Melinda Snyder Sue Stealey Mary Strauss Mary Tamminga Paul White</p>
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EXCITING NEWS ABOUT ANOTHER TIFFANY WINDOW RESTORATION



Jeweled Window

We have exciting news to share! We have raised 80 percent of the funds we need to restore Louis Comfort Tiffany's *Jeweled Window* at Historic Second Church. This will be the fourth Tiffany window we have successfully restored in the last six years thanks to supporters like you.

At its unveiling in 1893, the Chicago Tribune stated, "The window is one of the most remarkable pieces of glass work that has ever been placed in any church in the country. It is composed of over 12,000 pieces of glass and each separate piece is artistic in itself." The glass jewels come together to form a masterpiece for the ages – capturing and refracting the light with the brilliance of diamonds.

We hope YOU will be part of this Gems for Generations campaign and help us raise the remaining \$100,000 needed for the restoration of the *Jeweled* window. This is your opportunity to "adopt" one of the jewels in this extraordinary window. We're hoping to bedazzle as many people as possible to reach our fundraising goal. "Adopt" one of the jewels for \$100 or splurge and "adopt" several.

To "adopt" a jewel, [click here](#). Or mail a check to Friends of Historic Second Church, 1936 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL, 60616.

Upon restoration, the *Jeweled* window will be among the most dramatic and awe-inspiring windows in the sanctuary – and will cast a light on all the vital preservation work underway at Chicago's only National Historic Landmark Church.



BECOME A MEMBER

Excitement is building for the return of the completely restored Mount of the Holy Cross window in late June 2024. Venturrella Studio is making frequent fascinating discoveries as well as tremendous progress on getting the window ready for its return to Historic Second Church. At the same time, Friends is growing the funds needed to undertake restoration of the fantastic Tiffany Jeweled window with its 12,000 pieces of glass – our 4th Tiffany window. Your membership helps to support these projects and more: lectures, our newsletter *The Herald*, and smaller restoration projects throughout the building. We hope you will join us as a new member or renew your membership today so that the progress can continue. Please know that Friends appreciates your support and values your membership!

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.



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.

Memberships and gifts are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Friends of Historic Second Church is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization.



**FRIENDS of
HISTORIC SECOND CHURCH**

1936 S. Michigan Ave.

Chicago, IL 60616

Phone: 1-800-657-0687

E-mail: info@historicsecondchurch.org

Web: www.historicsecondchurch.org

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

**MOUNT OF THE HOLY CROSS WINDOW
RETURNS THIS SUMMER**

Tom Venturella and Jim Murphy report that the *Mount of the Holy Cross* window restoration is moving at quite a clip and should be ready for reinstallation in early summer. They both have marveled that while “Mount” appears to be a rather “straight-forward” window, in reality it is extremely complex. In places, it has as many as six layers of glass, many of them in large and fanciful shapes. There are beautifully crafted pieces of glass in the back layers, all of which need to be intricately woven together with the leading. Their view is that the work on this window is as much architecture as it is stained glass restoration. Only a few of the window crates yet remain to be opened and their panels taken apart, cleaned, repaired and re-leaded. All of us at Friends are eager to see the reinstalled window and the light shining through the cleaned glass. The colors will delight us all.



Tom Venturella in the studio.

PROUD TO PARTNER WITH:

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**Second Presbyterian
Public Tour Schedule:**

Fridays:
April 1st to December 31st
1:00 pm to 3:00 pm
Saturdays:
11:00-3:00pm
Sundays: 12:15pm
(after worship service)

Or call
800-657-0687 to arrange a private tour

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.