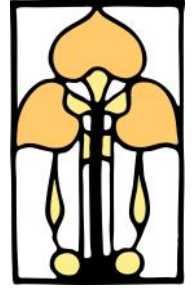


FRIENDS of HISTORIC SECOND CHURCH

THE HERALD

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THE FREDERIC CLAY BARTLETT MURALS *by William Tyre*

Of the 175 angels adorning the sanctuary of the church, the majority - 117 - can be found in the murals of Frederic Clay Bartlett. These murals depict angels placed within natural settings giving praise to God and are among the most beautiful and artistic elements to be found in the church.

Frederic Clay Bartlett was born on June 12, 1873 to Adolphus Clay and Mary (Pitkin) Bartlett. Within a decade, his father became a full partner in the firm of Hibbard, Spencer, Bartlett & Company, one of the largest wholesale hardware firms in the United States. In 1886, the Bartletts moved into their new home at 2720 S. Prairie Avenue, designed by Cobb & Frost.

The World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 changed Bartlett's life. Spending countless hours walking through the exhibits of art from around the world, he made the decision

then and there to devote his life to art. The next year, he became one of the first foreign students to be admitted into the Royal Academy of Munich. After graduating in 1896, he moved to Paris to study with leading artists of the day including Louis Joseph Collin, Edmond Francois Aman-Jean, and Filippo Colarossi. Returning to the United States in 1898, he exhibited his first work at the Art Institute of Chicago as part of their annual American exhibition. He soon returned to Paris, spending time in the studio of James Abbott McNeill Whistler and Pierre Puvis de Chavannes, an important muralist.

Bartlett moved back to Chicago in 1900, the same year that a devastating fire destroyed the sanctuary of Second Presbyterian Church. His good friend, Howard Van Doren Shaw, was hired to rebuild the sanctuary, and Bartlett was

brought in to consult on the overall decoration of the space and to create a series of thirteen murals. Bartlett had been introduced to the Pre-Raphaelite school of painting while in Europe and the murals are excellent examples of this style.

The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood was formed in England in 1848 by a group of painters and writers who rejected the Mannerist artists who followed Raphael and Michelangelo. There is a distinct focus on rich colors and detail, and a deep respect for nature.

Bartlett's murals, which are two-dimensional in quality and effect, are respectful of their flat wall surface. Like his teacher, Puvis de Chavannes, Bartlett made his murals subordinate to their architectural surroundings. This is best represented in the huge Tree of Life mural over the organ loft (see page 2) where the symmetrical arrangement of the angels follows the symmetry of the building and the arched arrangement of the composition follows the shape of the ceiling.

The slender, incised figures are depicted with halos and medieval dress, drawing inspiration from the same



period that Shaw drew upon for his Arts and Crafts interior. But the murals also show the influence of other artistic movements upon Bartlett's work. The perfectly rounded shape and simplified leaves of many of the trees are typical of the Symbolist painters. And the use of unnatural colors such as gold clouds and blue-green leaves are reminiscent of the work of the Impressionists, which Bartlett studied extensively during his years in Paris.

Twelve murals are set within the arches above the leaded glass windows lining the north and south walls of the sanctuary. Painted on canvases which were then applied to the plaster ceilings, the murals depict three alternating themes:

- Sacred music with angels playing musical instruments;
- Abundance with angels bearing fruits and flowers;
- Adoration with angels in prayerful posture.

Beneath the arches, smaller wall murals contain scrolls of text in front of grape and vine motifs.

The Tree of Life mural, completed in 1903 and funded by a gift from church trustee Eugene S. Pike, is painted directly onto the cured plaster wall surface and consists of three parts:

- The Garden of Eden with a lush forest of stylized trees;
- A rainbow depicting the covenant between God and Noah; and
- A procession of angels at the top representing the book of Revelations.

An interesting feature of several of the murals is the use of ornamental plasterwork known as parget. This technique involves the application of the plaster to build up areas such as halos and the edges of angel wings which are then accented with gold leaf.

In 1904, the murals were featured in an extensive article by Virginia Robie which appeared in *House Beautiful* magazine. The article provided a detailed iconographic description of each mural.

The murals were the first of numerous commissions for Bartlett, including First Presbyterian Church and the Bartlett Gymnasium at the University of Chicago campus. His largest commission consisted of dozens of ceiling panels and windows for the University Club.

Shaw and Bartlett collaborated on several projects through the years including Fourth Presbyterian Church, Bartlett's own studio on the 10th floor of the Fine Arts Building, and a summer home for

A. C. Bartlett at Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. Writing about the house and other joint undertakings, a journalist noted, "All show an exceptionally happy union of two brains and two pairs of hands acting under one dominant spirit."

In 1926, after the passing of his second wife, Helen, Bartlett donated their important collection of Post-Impressionist paintings to the Art Institute, including Van Gogh's *Bedroom at Arles* and the iconic *A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte* by Georges Seurat. Bartlett died in 1953 at the age of 80.

Friends has funded the restoration of several of the Bartlett murals. With decades of dirt lifted from their surface, the rich colors and designs of Bartlett are fully revealed, providing an insight into his artistic talents and the ways in which the murals are perfectly incorporated into the overall decorative scheme of the sanctuary.



FINAL LECTURE FOR 2016

Join Friends on Thursday, November 17, for the last lecture of the year, when Dr. Amy Mooney will share insights on Chicago's "painter laureate," Archibald J. Motley, Jr. As evidenced in the recent touring exhibition, *Archibald Motley: Jazz Age Modernist*, this artist's unique vision reflects an era of change, from the Great Migration to the Chicago Renaissance to the seeding of the Civil Rights Movement. Focusing on his portraits, Dr. Mooney will discuss how Motley's unflinching investigations of race, class, and gender remain relevant and inspiring.

Amy M. Mooney is an Associate Professor of Art History and Visual Culture at Columbia College, Chicago. Her publications include a monograph on Chicago painter Archibald J. Motley, Jr., volume IV of the David C. Driskell series on African American Art (2002) as well as contributions to anthologies and catalogs including *Archibald Motley: Jazz Age Modernist* (2014) and *Black Is Black Ain't* (2013).

Lectures are \$10, are held at Second Presbyterian Church, and begin at 7:00pm, preceded by a reception with light refreshments and free tours at 6:00pm.



Archibald John Motley, Jr.
American, 1891-1981
Self-Portrait, c. 1920

© Valerie Gerrard Browne / Chicago History Museum /
Bridgeman Images



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***Friends of Historic
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Shelley Reither &
Elizabeth House-Reither
Anne Sullivan
Elizabeth Tempin

In Kind

Jim Jackson

REPAIRS IN THE SOUTHEAST CORNER ARE UNDERWAY

As we go to print, Friends is nearing completion of the much-needed repairs to the southeast corner of the sanctuary balcony. The plaster suffered extensive damage due to a roof leak, now corrected, resulting in the mural delaminating from the wall. In late September, Kelly Plastering spent a week repairing the plaster in this area. Celtic Commercial Painting has completed repainted the window bay in Shaw's original colors. Currently, The Conservation Center conservationists are completing the cleaning and in-painting of the mural. Come take a look.

JOIN US IN RESTORING A TREASURED CHICAGO JEWEL

As reported in the Summer 2016 issue of *The Herald*, Friends has launched its first capital campaign. The goal of the "Restore a Treasured Chicago Jewel" campaign is the restoration of the Tiffany "Peace" window, the stabilizing and repair of one of the Bartlett murals, and the repair and repainting of plaster on the first floor of the sanctuary. Friends invites you to be a part of this campaign. As the late New York architect John Belle noted, "Preservation is one of the highest forms of good citizenship." You can show your spirit of good citizenship by sending a contribution to the campaign today. Contributions can be mailed to: Friends of Historic Second Church, 1936 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60616 with "campaign" in the memo line or by going to our website www.2ndpresbyterianfriends.org and clicking on "Donate." Thank you.



CAMPAIGN TOUR

On Saturday, September 17, 2016, John and Judy Bross and Friedrich and Susan Burian hosted a tour of Historic Second Church to support the "Restore a Treasured Chicago Jewel" campaign. *Photo by Martin Cheung*



Second Presbyterian Church Public Tour Schedule:

Wednesdays
1:00-3:00pm

Saturdays
11:00-3:00pm

Sundays
12:15pm (after worship service)

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

SATURDAY TOUR HOURS EXTENDED

Friends of Historic Second Church is now open two hours earlier on Saturdays. Docents will be available for tours from 11:00am until 3:00pm.

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' 10 Year Anniversary Annual Appeal

As you think about your end-of-year giving, please consider a gift to Friends of Historic Second Church. In the ten years since Friends' founding, your gifts have supported a dozen preservation projects including removing the dirt and grime from Frederic Clay Bartlett's glorious murals, rewiring and cleaning the beautiful opalescent glass sconces on the east side of the balcony, repairing the decorative plaster and repainting the northeast corner of the sanctuary in Howard Van Doren Shaw's original color scheme, and much more. Your contribution to the annual appeal ensures the operation of the organization - our tours, lectures, guided walks, newsletter, website, and other programming. Your gifts keep us going and growing.

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.+)

____ **Art & 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.

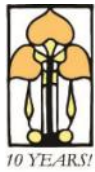
____ Yes ____ No I am interested in volunteering for Friends' activities.

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.2ndpresbyterianfriends.org.



**FRIENDS of
HISTORIC SECOND CHURCH**

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Lisa Napoles, and William Tyre.

FRIENDS 2017 EVENING LECTURE SERIES ANNOUNCED

Friends begins the 2017 lecture series on Thursday February 23, when author Ethan Michaeli will present "The Defender: How the Legendary Black Newspaper Changed America." (For decades, the Chicago Defender was headquartered at 2400 S. Michigan Avenue). Copies of Mr. Michaeli's book of the same title will be available for purchase prior to the lecture. This lecture is co-sponsored by Glessner House Museum.

On Wednesday April 26, Judy Koessel, owner of an 1890s house in Riverside, will talk about what happened when she asked the question, "Who painted the mural on my stairhall ceiling?" What started as a simple question became a detective story as one question led to another and she became immersed in the career of William de Leftwich Dodge and the many murals that he produced throughout the country, including one for the dome of the Administration Building at the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893.

Howard Tiffen will present a lecture on Wednesday September 27, entitled "On the Trail of William Morris."

All lectures are \$10, are held at Second Presbyterian Church, and begin at 7:00pm, preceded by a reception with light refreshments and free tours at 6:00pm.

Mission Statement

The mission of Friends of Historic Second Church is to preserve and restore the art and architecture of Chicago's landmark Second Presbyterian Church, educate a worldwide audience about its historical and cultural significance, and share those resources with the community.

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