



Friends of Historic Second Church

# THE HERALD



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## REMARKABLE JEWELED WINDOW FROM FIRST PRESBYTERIAN

This window, located in the fifth bay on the north side of the sanctuary, is one of three Tiffany windows originally installed in the First Presbyterian Church, located at the time at the northeast corner of Indiana Avenue and 21<sup>st</sup> Street. Installed in September 1893, the window was moved when that congregation relocated to 41<sup>st</sup> and Grand Boulevard in 1913. When another move was planned in 1926, a number of congregants opted instead to transfer to Second, and the memorial windows were brought with them, with installation complete by June 1927. As the window openings at First were somewhat smaller, it was necessary to add the 15-inch border around the perimeter of the window during the 1927 reinstallation.

The window was a gift to First from Marshall Field, a long-time trustee of that congregation. It was given in memory of Rev. Zephaniah Moore Humphrey, who served as pastor from 1859 to 1868. The installation of the window received a great deal of attention in the newspapers. The *Chicago Tribune* of Aug. 23, 1893 reported that "it is claimed that nothing so elaborate has ever been placed in any Chicago church. The window is to be of the ornamental order and not of the figure delineation, and the design is entirely new." On Sept. 10, the day on which the window was dedicated, the *Tribune* reported that "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

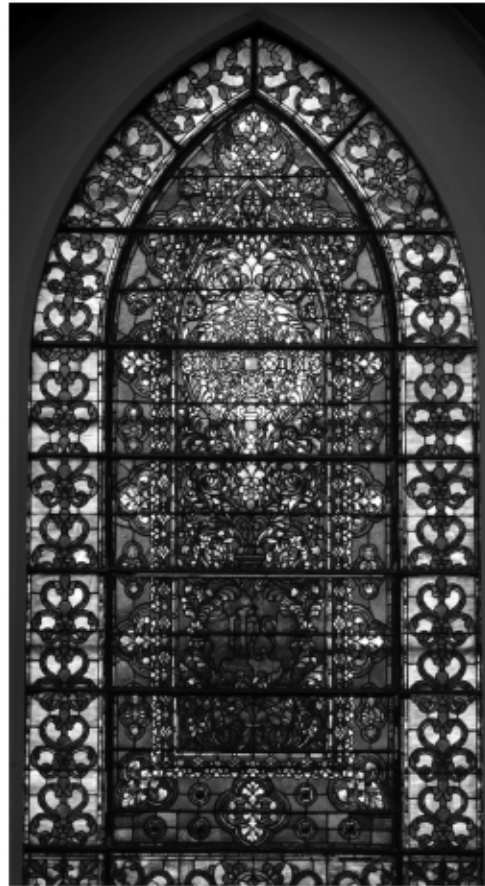


Photo courtesy Martin Cheung.

composed of over 12,000 pieces of glass and each separate piece is artistic in itself, many of them having the value of precious and semi-precious stones. The general design is built upon a floral curve rising up and surrounding a jeweled cross. The cross and its surrounding ornaments springing bulb-like from the frame which contains the holy name of the divine Redeemer. The window is surrounded by a border having all the richness of a silk Persian rug."

The church was filled to capacity for the dedication, and several hundred persons

had to be turned away. Distinguished theologians from around the world, who were in Chicago for the opening of the World's Parliament of Religions (part of the World's Columbian Exposition) attended the service, including representatives from Canada, England, Germany, China and India.

Rev. Humphrey was the son of Dr. Herman Humphrey, second president of Amherst College. After serving several other churches, he arrived in Chicago, and remained with First throughout the Civil War, overseeing building projects and the founding of two successful mission churches on the west side. He died in 1881 and was interred at Chicago's Graceland Cemetery.

As indicated in the 1893 *Tribune* article, the window is remarkable for the individual pieces of glass used. Many of the pieces, the "jewels," are rough cut chunks of glass which capture and refract the light coming through, much as a carefully cut diamond would do. These jewels range in size from quarter-size to more than three inches across. Other pieces of glass with a swollen area at the center are the byproduct of blowing glass, and produce an equally ornamental effect. Unfortunately, this is among the dirtiest windows in the sanctuary, so the exceptional quality of the glass cannot be fully appreciated. When funds permit a full restoration of this window, it will no doubt be among the most dramatic and dazzling of all the windows in the sanctuary.

**TOUR SCHEDULE**

JUNE THROUGH AUGUST

Public tours of Second Presbyterian Church are given at the following times:

First and third Saturday of the month from 11 a.m. – 1 p.m., except July 4th. Cost \$5.

Every Sunday after church at 12:15 p.m. Free.

Every Wednesday from 2 p.m. – 4 p.m. Free.

**FOUNDATION GIFT FUNDS BUILDING REPORT**

Friends of Historic Second Church is delighted to report that it has received a commitment of \$35,000 from a private family Foundation to fund an historic structure report. On Sunday, March 29, representatives from the foundation met with Ann Belletire and Bill Tyre to tour the building and to view the recently restored Bartlett arch mural. During the tour, the critical importance of such a report was discussed, and by the conclusion of the tour,

the foundation had agreed to fund it.

An historic structure report is an essential document which gathers all existing information on the building, and creates a master plan for the restoration. The report will look at the structure, mechanical systems, and decorative finishes, prioritizing the work, and creating cost estimates for the various phases. Anne Sullivan of Sullivan Preservation has

been retained to prepare the report. She has previously prepared reports for a number of significant structures in and around Chicago, including the Glessner House Museum, and Howard Van Doren Shaw's Lake Forest home Ragdale. Friends is excited to be able to move forward with this important first step as we plan the many restoration and preservation projects required.

**125TH BIRTHDAY OF BELL TOWER CELEBRATED**

The bell tower is among the first of Second Presbyterian's treasures to catch visitors' attention as they approach on Michigan Avenue. This year marks the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the completion of the bell tower which has seen numerous changes over time.

Surviving drawings indicate that architect James Renwick originally intended a larger masonry tower with an octagonal plan, much like his design for the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C. This design for the tower was scaled back. Instead, the lower portion of the tower as seen today was completed in 1874 (reference 1874 photo). Then in 1884, the height of the tower was extended to accommodate the belfry and steeple and a single great bell (reference 1884 photo). Funding was provided by the family of the late George Armour of 1945 South Prairie Avenue. He was a prominent grain dealer in Chicago and a leader in the congregation. Unfortunately, the steeple was damaged by strong winds in 1959 and had to be removed.

What we see today (reference 2009 photo) is a four-story, square, bell tower supported by buttresses at its four corners. The belfry is open on all four sides; each side contains two narrow pointed arches supported on slender pillars and set within a larger pointed arch. Under the larger arch a figure of an angel projects from a round niche – a different figure projects from each side of the tower.

At the base of the belfry a gargoyle juts from each corner of the tower. These gargoyles no longer function as water spouts but do contribute to the Gothic character of the structure. Below the belfry are pairs of tall, narrow lancet windows, the lights supported by Gothic Revival wood tracery.

Although the bell tower has evolved over time, a *Chicago Tribune* review holds as true today as when written 136 years ago. Reporting at the time that the first services were held in the new church in 1873, the *Tribune* reported that the church "presents a picture that all who love the beautiful will readily admire. Its monumental proportions, picturesque outlines and well-studied details lift it from the common rank of church edifices, and give it a place in the history of church architecture."

*Top, middle and bottom photos at left depict the bell tower in 1874, 1884 and in 2009, respectively.*



## SCHOOL CHILDREN VISIT HISTORIC SECOND CHURCH

“How is stained glass made? How would you clean the windows? How did you get the dirt off the mural? Why can’t you just superglue the broken pieces back on the (baptismal) font?” These are just a few of the questions asked by interested student tour guests on Monday, May 4, 2009 when 105 seventh graders from Emerson Middle School in Niles visited Second Presbyterian Church.

Docent Al Walavich started the tour for the group with background information on the church and its history. Students then broke into five smaller groups, each with a docent leader. The young guests had the opportunity to visit all areas of the sanctuary and see firsthand the stained glass windows, restored Bartlett arch mural, baptismal font, and carved pews.

Questions centered mostly on how things were made or how preservation and restoration work is accomplished. Friends of Historic Second Church was pleased to host such a curious and courteous group of students.

Encouraging schools, park district classes and other groups of young people to visit the church for a tour is a new and growing objective for Friends. Specific tours and student materials are being developed for varying age groups.



## NPS RUSTIC SUBJECT OF WELL-ATTENDED LECTURE

To a close-to-filled room of guests at the April 25, 2009 Friends’ Tea and Lecture series, historian Robert Blythe presented, *NPS Rustic: The Arts & Crafts Style in National Parks*. Blythe detailed the National Park Services’ (NPS) development of a design program to apply to architecture and related features in the national park system. Through his career with the National Park Service – retiring as Chief of History for the Service’s Southeast Region – Bob studied styles of lodges, shelters, bridges and signage constructed in national parks. He found that most complemented the natural surroundings with designs that make use of wood and stone. As Bob explained, unity of design was sought through efforts that would “create a harmonious whole.”

Bob recounted significant milestones that contributed to the NPS’s adoption of Arts & Crafts design philosophies in the early 20th Century. He referenced the influence of Arts & Crafts Movement founder William Morris, as well as Frederick Law Olmstead. Olmstead’s design concept for Boston’s park system, Blythe said, “essentially became the laboratory where designs for rustic park structures were refined.” The lecture discussed many examples of national park structures, including the Old Faithful Inn in Yellowstone National Park and the El Tovar Hotel in Grand Canyon National Park.

## 100TH MEMBERSHIP SOUGHT

Membership in Friends of Historic Second Church provides support for important preservation and restoration work as well as a foundation for running the organization. More than 90 individuals and families from 13 states have joined the effort to help clean a mural, save a window or protect the font. If you’ve been thinking of joining this endeavor, now is the time: The 100<sup>th</sup> member of Friends will receive a free Tree-of-Life t-shirt. Join today.

### MISSION STATEMENT

*THE MISSION OF FRIENDS OF HISTORIC SECOND CHURCH IS TO PRESERVE AND RESTORE THE INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED ART AND ARCHITECTURE OF CHICAGO’S LANDMARK SECOND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH AND TO EDUCATE A WORLDWIDE AUDIENCE ABOUT ITS HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE.*

**FRIENDS OF HISTORIC SECOND CHURCH GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGES THE FOLLOWING MEMBERSHIPS RECEIVED FROM JAN. 1 THROUGH MAY 31 2009:**

*Shaw Circle (\$500 - \$999):*

Luann Elvey

*Bartlett Circle (\$250 - \$499):*

Dr. John Burns

Wilda Dailey

J. Kevin & Betsy

Hennessy

Janelle Hoekstra &

Jamie McMullin

*Arts and Crafts Circle (\$100 - \$249):*

Anonymous

Christopher

Beukenkamp

Connie Casey

Fourth Presbyterian

Church

Carol J. Hall

William Hinchliff

Sue Barnett Ish

Bob & Sheila Joynt

Walt & Sue Kovalick

*Under \$100:*

Anonymous

Vito & Mary Brugliera

Lloyd & Shirley

DuBois

Mary Hester

Vana Kikos

William & Judith

Locke

Ann Martin

Mary E. Morton

Judy Neiswander

Karen Oliver

David & Lois Rakov

Mrs. W. D. Van

Buren

# UPCOMING BARTLETT LECTURE ON MAJOR ARTS AND CRAFTS DESIGNER CHARLES ROHLFS

**When:** June 18, 2009; lecture at 7 p.m. followed by reception

**Where:** Second Presbyterian Church (use Cullerton Street entrance)

**Cost:** \$10 per person

On Thursday, June 18 at 7 p.m., Friends will present the annual Frederic Clay Bartlett lecture on American Art. Sarah Fayen, curator at the Chipstone Foundation and curator of American Decorative Arts at the Milwaukee Art Museum, will lecture on "Charles Rohlfs, The Aesthetic Movement, and the Roots of his Artistic Furniture." At the time of Arts and Crafts and Art Nouveau, Rohlfs created furniture with dramatic silhouettes and elaborate carving in a style all his own. Premiering at the Milwaukee Art Museum, *The Artistic Furniture of Charles Rohlfs* is the first major study of Rohlfs' career and presents more than 40 of his finest works. Ms. Fayen will focus on his early careers, which include patternmaking, cast-iron stove design, as well as Shakespearean acting. She will locate Rohlfs' roots in Aesthetic Movement ideals and discuss his furniture in relation to the Arts and Crafts Movement.

This will be an exciting opportunity to hear Ms. Fayen lecture about this influential and highly individual designer, while the exhibit is premiering at the Milwaukee Art Museum. She is coordinating curator of the exhibition and a contributor to the accompanying book co-published by Yale University Press. This event is co-sponsored by Glessner House Museum.

*Image credit: Charles Rohlfs (1853 - 1936), Hall Chair, 1904, Oak. 57 in. x 18 7/8 in. x 17 in. Milwaukee Art Museum, Gift of American Decorative Art 1900 Foundation in honor of Glenn Adamson. Photo: Gavin Ashworth © American Decorative Art 1900 Foundation.*



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