



Friends of Historic Second Church

THE HERALD



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'CHRIST BLESSING THE LITTLE CHILDREN' WINDOW FEATURED

This window, located in the back bay on the south side of the sanctuary, is one of three originally commissioned for First Presbyterian, and installed at Second in 1927. Created by the Tiffany Studios, the window depicts the familiar scene of a seated Christ surrounded by children. (The wide border, not part of the Tiffany design, was added when the window was installed in our sanctuary).

The central motif is based on a popular painting *Let the Children Come to Me* by the German artist Bernhard Plockhorst (1825-1907), who gained immense popularity in the United States beginning in the 1870s. Plockhorst was a member of the Nazarene movement, a German Romantic art school influenced by the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. His numerous religious works were widely reproduced and displayed in churches and homes, and several were recreated in stained glass.

An interesting feature of the window is the effective use of plated glass. Tiffany frequently employed multiple layers of glass in his windows to create effects of coloring and shading. In this window, the vine growing on the wall behind Christ is created in a back layer of glass, clearly making it secondary to the figures in the foreground. Even more interesting is the way in which the arch cut into the wall is treated. A brilliant bright blue sky is seen through the arch, and is executed with a single layer of glass, maximizing the amount of light coming through. The stone arch itself is made up of several layers of glass, which significantly cut down the amount of



Photo courtesy Martin Cheung.

light, creating the illusion of a real arch with light passing through it.

The window was dedicated in November 1892 "To the Glory of God, and in Loving Remembrance of Franklin Fayette Spencer, who died November 1, 1890, and of Rachel Gifford Spencer, his wife, who died March 18, 1887." It was donated by the Spencers' two daughters, Mrs. Augustus (Abby) Eddy and Mrs. Arthur (Delia) Caton, the latter of whom became the second Mrs. Marshall Field in 1905. Spencer was a partner in the huge wholesale hardware

firm of Hibbard, Spencer, Bartlett and Co. and resided at 1601 S. Michigan Avenue. The junior partner in the firm, Adolphus Clay Bartlett, was the father of Frederic Clay Bartlett, who created the series of Pre-Raphaelite murals in our sanctuary.

Today, this window is among the most popular in the church, due to its subject matter and its brilliant coloration.

RECOUNTING BARTLETT LECTURE ON ROHLFS

A captivated crowd listened to Sarah Fayen on June 18, 2009 for the annual Frederic Clay Bartlett Lecture on American Art. Fayen, curator at the Chipstone Foundation and Milwaukee Art Museum, presented the lecture *The Artistic Furniture of Charles Rohlf's*. Fayen outlined Rohlf's early careers (patternmaking, cast-iron stove design, and Shakespearean acting) before discussing his handcrafted furniture and decorative objects. The audience responded well to Rohlf's unique furniture designs, but they were also intrigued with his wife, Anna Katharine Green, the first female detective story writer! As a co-curator of the accompanying exhibition, which premiered at the Milwaukee Art Museum until Aug. 23, 2009 before moving on to various museums across the country, Fayen had the unique perspective of being able to also discuss the installation of the exhibition.



Jan Grimes, director of the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, and Chris Morris, Midwest program officer for the National Trust for Historic Preservation pause for a photo near Second Presbyterian's limestone baptismal font (see story at right about font restoration plans) with Friends Board of Directors Secretary Ann Belletire, during a recent visit to the church by the area preservation leaders.

FUND ESTABLISHED FOR FONT PRESERVATION

The Mary Gene Yee (nee Moy) Memorial Fund has been established through a generous gift from William and Judy Lussie of Dublin, Calif., to be used toward preservation and restoration of the delicate limestone baptismal font of Second Presbyterian Church (see box at left). Judy Lussie started the fund as a memorial to her mother who was a member of the church for many years.

Mary Gene Yee and several of her sisters (last name Moy) were received into membership of the church in 1946 and several of the sisters were married there. Mrs. Yee was an active member of the church until her death in 1988. Ms. Lussie was herself baptized in the font and

became a member of the church.

Judy Lussie's connection with Second Presbyterian was renewed when she received a note from her cousin Martin Cheung written on stationary featuring a photograph of the Sta. Cecilia stained glass window in the narthex. Mr. Cheung is the generous man who has donated his professional photographic skills to Friends of Historic Second Church, and his mother, Cecilia Cheung, is a sister of Mary Gene Yee.

In a note to Friends, Ms. Lussie wrote, "I am so impressed with the work the Friends are doing to preserve the church and historical Chicago art. I recently returned from a Celtic

Spirituality Tour of Ireland with our church. Second Presbyterian can match any church of similar size in Europe in its time. Keep up the good work." Ms. Lussie further honored her mother by writing devotions about her that were published in *These Days, Daily Devotions for Living by Faith*, May 10-16, 2009.

Happily, the fund has already started to grow with an additional gift from Mr. and Mrs. Richard Brune. Pauletta Brune is a niece of Mary Gene Yee. All those interested in preserving this fragile and important work of art that is at great risk of further damage are invited to contribute to the Mary Gene Yee (nee Moy) Memorial Fund.

SERVICE CLUB OF CHICAGO GRANT TO BENEFIT MURAL

The Service Club of Chicago has awarded Friends a grant of \$22,030 for conservation of one mural, as well as the purchase of office equipment that will enable Friends to open an office at the church later this fall. The Bartlett mural selected for restoration is the 4th arch balcony mural on the south side facing the Tiffany Peace window. Dr. Margaret Nowosielska of the Chicago Conservation Center conducted the preservation work utilizing the knowledge she had gained during the testing and partial mural restoration on a north mural in late 2008. The work was conducted during the month of August 2009 using the techniques of dry erasure, mild detergent and solvent described in the Winter/Spring 2009 issue of *The Herald* (Volume III, Number 1). This mural complements the partially preserved mural on the north side in that it shows a much more muted color scheme utilizing blues and greens, tans and golds. The four angels attest to the glory of God with the two on the west side holding books of scripture and the two on the east side singing from the music scripts they hold. At the top of the arch a large tree of life is seen.

An unexpected challenge developed during the cleaning of this arch's scriptures. The blue/green colors used in the original scripture portion of the mural have leached together over the years. Thus, the cleaning process did not clarify the scripture. Therefore, a varnish was applied after the cleaning and then Dr. Nowosielska painstakingly repainted the scripture's lettering using the same blue color as the original. The varnish is reversible and clearly delineates the original from the restoration. The scripture is now clearly legible and reads, "O sing unto the Lord a new song, sing unto the Lord all the earth. Sing unto the Lord bless his name. Shew forth His salvation from day to day." Psalm 96: 1, 2. (west side of mural) and "O God my heart is fixed. I will sing and give praise even with my glory. For Thy mercy is great above the heavens and thy truth reacheth unto the clouds." Psalm 108: 1, 4. (east side of mural). Friends sings a song of thanks to the Service Club. We hope you will visit soon and see this newly restored mural.



Photo courtesy Martin Cheung.

TOUR SCHEDULE

SEPT. THROUGH DEC.

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.
Cost: \$5

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

Every Wednesday from 2 p.m. – 4 p.m., except November 25. Free.

MEMBER MILESTONE REACHED

Friends of Historic Second Church reached a milestone when Rosemary Bell became the 100th member in July 2009. Ms. Bell from South Bend, Ind., was passing by the church and remarked on the stained glass windows to Board member Rowena Rennie who was gardening out front. After a “wonderful tour” by Ms. Rennie, Ms. Bell was so impressed with the church’s art and architecture and restoration efforts that she was moved to help by joining. Friends recognized her for becoming the 100th member by giving her a Tree-of-Life t-shirt. Friends wishes to thank Rosemary Bell and all other members for supporting preservation and restoration of the church.

FRIENDS OF HISTORIC SECOND CHURCH GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGES THE FOLLOWING MEMBERSHIPS AND GIFTS RECEIVED FROM JUNE 1 THROUGH SEPT. 15 2009:

Healy & Millet Circle
(\$25,000 - \$49,000):

Private Family Foundation

McCully & Miles Circle:
(\$10,000 - \$24,999):

Service Club of Chicago

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

William & Judy Lussie

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

Richard E. & Pauletta Brune

Charles & Jean Glasgow

Dale & Diane Hoekstra

Torben Jenk

Tiffany Circle (Under \$100):

Anonymous

Rosemary Bell

Robert Blythe & Madeline Baum

Diane Gartung

Fredi Leaf

Thomas H. Kosel

Alister MacDonald

Ron & Beverly Offen

Karen Oliver

Belle Radcliffe

Bill Wiley

FRIENDS HOSTS PARTNERS FOR SACRED PLACES

On the evening of Sept. 1, 2009, Friends of Historic Second Church hosted the Chicago Region Board meeting of Partners for Sacred Places. Partners is the only national, nonsectarian, non-profit organization dedicated to the sound stewardship and active community use of America’s older religious properties. Founded in 1989 by religious, historic preservation and philanthropic leaders, Partners provides assistance to the people who care for sacred places and promotes a greater understanding of how these places sustain communities. The organization’s Chicago office opened in 2008. The Board meeting ended with a tour of Historic Second Church. Friends looks forward to working with and learning from Partners through their workshops, conferences and information sharing activities.



Partners for Sacred Places Chicago Region Board members display keen interest in Second Presbyterian Church features during a tour following the group’s meeting, which was hosted by Friends.

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.

TOURS WELCOME GLOBAL GUESTS

The Mission Statement for Friends of Historic Second Church (presented at left) boasts of Friends’ goal to educate “a worldwide audience” about the historical and cultural significance of Second Presbyterian Church of Chicago. The past six months have provided ample opportunity to accomplish that goal due to the number of international tour guests who have visited the church. Argentina, Austria, Australia and Azerbaijan start the list, followed by Belarus and Canada, both Quebec and British Columbia. Additional international visitors came from England, Germany, Holland, France, Mexico, Poland, Scotland, Singapore, Turkey and Venezuela. Friends takes particular delight in hosting interested visitors from around the world.

DOCENT ENRICHMENT TRIP A 'MULTI-FACETED' MILWAUKEE VISIT

On August 13, a merry band of docents and friends toured Conrad Schmitt Studios in New Berlin, Wis., before visiting St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Milwaukee and the Charles Rohlfs exhibit at the Milwaukee Museum of Art.

The Schmitt Studios, established 1889, create and restore stained glass, mosaics, and decorative paintings for clients across the country. The tour focused on the stained glass operation. Tour guests saw glass being cut, painted, and fitted into lead coming (*see photo at right*), and watched cement being applied to secure the glass within the comes. Schmitt does not make glass, purchasing it from suppliers like Blenko Glass Co. in West Virginia. Tour guests also observed windows from a California church being disassembled in water baths, an early step in the restoration process. The methods employed are largely unchanged from the middle ages. Kevin Grabowski, tour guide, presented slides that showcased the emotional effects that Louis Comfort Tiffany achieved in Biblical scenes through the manipulation of light, using textured glass and multiple layers of glass. More on the firm's history and work is available at www.conradschmitt.com.



St. Paul's (designed by Edward Townsend Mix, 1884) boasts a number of magnificent Tiffany windows as well as work by McCully and Miles, Connick Studios, and Heaton, Butler and Bayne (an English firm). The work by Tiffany covers a 30-year period, from 1884 to the middle 1910s. The window in the west transept, *Christ Leaving the Praetorium* (1884), is said to be the largest window Tiffany ever made. This window is based on a painting by the French painter Gustave Doré and has considerably more painted glass than a typical Tiffany window. St Paul's has a version of Tiffany's *Angel in the Lilies* that offered an interesting contrast to the version in Second Presbyterian Church. The subjects of the church's four McCully and Miles windows are St. James, St. Paul, and the theme of resurrection (the two windows in the east transept). All of St. Paul's windows can be viewed at the church's web site, www.stpaulsmilwaukee.org/about/our-stained-glass-windows.

The 40-piece exhibit at the Milwaukee Museum of Art is the first devoted solely to the furniture of Arts & Crafts designer Charles Rohlfs (1853-1936). The craftsmanship in his furniture is extraordinary and the designs highly personal. One of the 'Friends' touring described the work as "Black Forest Rococo."

Friends of Historic Second Church

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