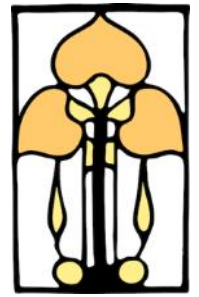


# FRIENDS of HISTORIC SECOND CHURCH

## THE HERALD

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### THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH MEMORIAL WINDOWS *by Nate Lielasus*

The magnificent memorial window “St. Paul Preaching at Athens” - on track to be removed for restoration in the Spring – is one of three windows that were acquired from First Presbyterian Church then located at Indiana and 21<sup>st</sup> streets, and installed at Second Presbyterian in 1927.



“St. Paul Preaching at Athens”  
Photo credit: Martin Cheung

Calvary Presbyterian Church began the planning and construction of the church building on Indiana. They hired John C. Cochrane, architect of the Illinois State Capitol, to design the new church. The erection of the building started in 1870 and was significantly under way – with the west, north and south exterior walls completed and roof trusses in place - when the Great Chicago Fire ravaged the city. The fire spared the incomplete church but destroyed most of the

center city, including First Presbyterian Church on Wabash between Van Buren and Congress.

The congregation of First Presbyterian found itself homeless while the congregation of Calvary found itself in need of completing construction on the new church at a time when many members had lost their homes and possessions. It was decided to merge the two congregations to complete the building. The new congregation would be known as First Presbyterian Church and the pastor of First Presbyterian, Rev. Arthur Mitchell, would take the helm.

Upon the dedication of the church on February 9, 1873, the *Chicago Tribune* described “the building, in its fine red Philadelphia brick, relieved with brown stone, and its tall, shapely spire, the highest in the city, is an ornament to that part of the city.” Making note that the building was begun by a modest congregation and completed by a merger with one of the wealthiest in the city, the *Tribune* pointed out that “the exterior was already well developed at the time of the fire, and represents what was a grave undertaking for the Calvary Society, while the advanced character of the interior marks quite as strongly the accession of material wealth, the result of the union.”

First Presbyterian was a well-to-do congregation, and they showed their devotion by lavishing the church with costly memorial windows and an expensive organ by Hooks and Hastings. There are three significant stained glass windows mentioned in



First Presbyterian Church at 21st and Indiana Avenue

the First Presbyterian Church record, *Pulpit and Choir*, and in the *Tribune* – the Spencer, Humphrey, and Mitchell Memorial Windows.

On November 13, 1892, *Pulpit and Choir* records that “a window built by the Louis Tiffany Co. of New York in memory of Mr. and Mrs. F. F. Spencer was exhibited today. The inscription reads: “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.”

The *Tribune* has two articles on the Humphrey Memorial Window, dedicated September 10, 1893. The article describes the window as “one of the most remarkable pieces of glass work that has ever been placed in any church in the country. It is composed



Photo of Rev. Mitchell



Face of St. Paul in stained glass window

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. This window is surrounded by a border having all the richness of a silk Persian rug.”

The Mitchell window is described in a June 2, 1895 entry in *Pulpit and Choir*: “A magnificent window in memory of Dr. Mitchell displayed this morning; the work of the Tiffany and Co, N.Y. Subject, Paul Preaching to the Athenians.” Rev. Arthur Mitchell, who was the pastor at the time of the construction and dedication of the church, was used as an inspiration for the face of St. Paul.

A fire in the church in 1896 caused considerable damage. The *Tribune* reports that “all of the smaller windows in the edifice were smashed by firemen in efforts to quench the blaze . . . Three windows in particular, the F.F. Spencer, the Dr. Arthur Mitchell, and the Z. M. Humphrey memorials, valued at \$15,000 each, were threatened by the advancing

flames.” Thankfully, damage was mostly localized in the floor below the sanctuary and the memorial windows were spared.

Starting before the Great Chicago Fire and accelerating afterwards, there was a trend of churches moving south away from the increasingly commercial core of the city to outlying residential neighborhoods. Calvary purchased the land for their new church in 1870. At the same time, Second Presbyterian was planning to move closer to their congregants. A merger between Second Presbyterian and Olivet Presbyterian allowed the new Second Presbyterian congregation to purchase a prime corner lot on Michigan and 20<sup>th</sup> Street (now Cullerton). When First Presbyterian merged with Calvary after the Great Chicago Fire, there were four of the city’s largest Presbyterian congregations housed in two church buildings only two blocks apart.

In 1895 the *Tribune* published a small article about the possibility of First Presbyterian again relocating further south. In the article, Rev. Dr. J. H. Barrows is quoted “The First Church was on this field before the Second Church. Both of them lost their houses in the great fire and moved to the locality soon afterward. But the First Church came first owing to its union with the Calvary Church, which had then partially built our present house of worship. Still, if either of us is to move, it seems to be best for the First Church to do so, because the

Second Church is located on a fine boulevard and is well endowed. If a removal should occur the neighborhood of Drexel boulevard and Forty-Seventh street, which has been spoken of, would leave plenty of leeway for other churches.” John Alling, a trustee of First Presbyterian, was less enthused about the idea of relocating: “if there has ever been any proposition to move the First Church farther south, I have not heard of it. I do not believe there is any thought of such a thing. I believe more than one-half of our people live north of Twenty-Second street, or at least north of Thirtieth street, so that I see no reason for a change of location.”

The possibility of a merger between the two congregations was contemplated in 1900 after the fire at Second Presbyterian. In 1911, the issue was raised again. The *Tribune* reported that the potential merger was complicated by the fact that if Second Presbyterian shed its identity in a merger with another congregation, it could be forced to forfeit its considerable endowments. Instead, the merger would require that First Presbyterian Church, the parent congregation of all Presbyterian churches in Chicago, be folded into Second Presbyterian.

The issue seems to have been resolved the next year when the *Tribune* reported on the merger of First Presbyterian with Forty-first Street Presbyterian Church on Grand Boulevard. First Presbyterian had helped found the Forty-first Street church and had helped financially support the church as it grew. In the merger, the Forty-first Street church was consolidated with First Presbyterian under the First Presbyterian name. The combined churches would meet at the 41<sup>st</sup> street church while a new building was planned. The article notes “several beautiful memorial windows and an expensive organ will be moved to the new location.”

*Article continues on page 3*

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The last service was held at the red brick church on December 29, 1912 with members of Forty-first Street Presbyterian Church in attendance. Funds were disbursed to make improvements to the church at Forty-first and Grand Boulevard and an adjacent house was purchased as a residence for the pastor. The *Pulpit and Choir* records that “the memorial windows and tablets, and the organ from the old edifice at Indiana Avenue and Twenty-first Street have been removed to the new home of the Church at Forty-first Street.”

In 1925, the idea of a merger between First and Second Presbyterian churches was again considered. The merger went as far as gaining approval by a committee of thirty leading Presbyterians. At the time of the proposed merger, First Presbyterian still owned the church at 21<sup>st</sup> and Indiana, then being used as a factory. The Chicago Tribune reported: “the plan is part of a policy to create three strongholds of Presbyterianism, one on each side of the city. The Fourth church will represent the north side, the Third church, Ogden and Ashland avenues will represent the west side, and the new merger the south side.”

For unknown reasons, the merger never moved forward. First Presbyterian relocated to Woodlawn and began construction on their current home, designed by Tallmudge & Watson, in 1927. The prized memorial windows from First Presbyterian came to Second Presbyterian and were installed in their current locations in that same year. The Spencer window is now more commonly called “Christ Blessing the Little Children,” while the Humphrey window is known as the “Jeweled Window.” The Mitchell window, soon to be restored, is “St. Paul Preaching at Athens.”

#### References:

1. Otis, Philo Adams. *The First Presbyterian Church, 1833-1913: A History of the Oldest Organization in Chicago, with Biographical Sketches of the Ministers and Extracts from the Choir Records*. United States: F. H. Revell Company, 1913.
2. Chicago Tribune Archive (1849-1990), accessed through Chicago Public Library



### ***Friends of Historic Second Church gratefully acknowledges the following memberships, donations, and contributions from August 20, 2020– November 8, 2020.***

#### **\$100,000 and up**

In memory of Mae B. and James D. Hinchliff

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

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#### **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.

### WELCOME TO OUR NEW BOARD MEMBER DR. CLIFFORD CRAWFORD



Friends is delighted to welcome Dr. Clifford Crawford to his second term as the church governing body's representative to the Friends' Board. Cliff is a retired surgeon from the Cook County Health and Hospital System where he served as Chief Medical Officer and Chair of Surgery at Provident Hospital. He and wife Barbara have been members of Second Presbyterian Church for over 14 years. Their involvement with Second Presbyterian began when they read an article in the Chicago

Tribune about the church's wonderful stained glass windows. He says that they "were wowed by the windows, but stayed for the people of the church." He added, "Friends is a vital part of the well-being of the church and the wider community." He is pleased to contribute to the work of Friends' Board.

### WELCOME TO OUR NEW BOARD MEMBER SHARON SYLVESTER



Friends is happy to welcome Sharon Sylvester as the newly-elected Docent Representative to the Board of Directors. Sharon recently earned her 10-year service pin as a docent for Friends; she is also a docent at Clarke

House. In addition to her new board duties, Sharon volunteered to act as the new Group Tour Coordinator for Friends.

Since the mid-1990s, Sharon has been a professional tour guide. She has served as a tour director, taking groups to many destinations including New York, Washington D.C., San Francisco, Europe and most states in the Midwest. Sharon is a member of the Chicago Tour-Guide Professionals Association (CIPA) and previously served as its vice-president and is currently treasurer. Her first encounter with Second Presbyterian Church came while serving as a tour guide for groups.

### RESTORATION WORK ON "ST. PAUL PREACHING AT ATHENS" WILL BEGIN IN MARCH 2021

In early spring, the church will be abuzz as the "St. Paul" window begins its fourteen month restoration. All 23 window sections will be removed and driven to the Venturella Studio in New York. Each section will be documented through rubbings and photographed in reflected and transmitted light. Glass will be cleaned and the broken pieces will be edge-glued back together. If glass needs to be replaced or prior non-Tiffany repairs do not match the rest of the section, glass will be obtained from other recycled Tiffany Glass windows or a reputable studio. The significant paint loss in the flesh areas will be in-painted. Glass will be re-leaded. A new steel frame and protective glass covering will be installed with the window. In addition to the window restoration, work will include exterior masonry repair and after the window's reinstallation in 2022, interior plaster repair and re-painting.

### TAX INCENTIVE MAKES GIVING EASY

Federal legislation provides tax incentives for seniors over 70 ½ to donate to their favorite non-profit without triggering any federal income taxes. A person can make a Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) from an individual retirement account (IRA) directly to a charity rather than withdrawing the money and paying taxes on it. Seniors can plan their giving over the course of a year and avoid paying taxes on charitable giving. We hope our supporters who are seniors will keep Friends in mind as they plan their minimum distributions for 2020. Please consult your financial advisor for rules and further information.

### MEMBERSHIP

There is still time to submit your annual membership for 2020, if you haven't already done so. Just visit our website [www.historicsecondchurch.org](http://www.historicsecondchurch.org) and click "Become a Member" under *Take Action* at the bottom of the homepage. Your membership will ensure that you don't miss any of the exciting restoration projects, newsletters or upcoming programs.

**MAKE A GIFT TO FRIENDS' ANNUAL APPEAL 2020**

Challenges and opportunities await Friends in 2021. While we will still be dealing with the pandemic and restrictions to our tours and in-person programming, we look forward to creating new ways to share Chicago's only National Historic Landmark church with the public and to advancing our restoration work.

Our 2021 restoration calendar is full. We will begin the work on the 1895 Tiffany "St. Paul Preaching at Athens" stained glass window, as well as the long-awaited rewiring and restoration of the electrical system and some light fixtures in the sanctuary. We do hope that before 2021 is ended that we will be able to welcome you back in person.

Please consider a gift to Friends' 2020 Annual Appeal. Help us triumph over these challenging times. Your contribution will enable us to continue the work of restoring this Arts and Crafts jewel and educate an ever-growing audience about its history and significance. Thank you.

**ANNUAL APPEAL FORM**

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

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

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

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

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

Enclosed is my gift to the 2020 Friends Annual Appeal in the amount of:

\$50    \$100    \$250    \$500    \$1,000    \$2,500    Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

My donation is in memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

My donation is in honor of: \_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No Please send me information about membership.

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

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**

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

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- Heather Kendall *Administrative Manager*

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

**WE'RE OPEN AGAIN FOR SMALL PRIVATE TOURS**

Friends is happy to announce that we will offer small private tours to groups of family/friends that number no more than six. If you are looking for an activity that will get you out of the house this fall/winter, please consider making an appointment for a tour of Historic Second Church. Go to the homepage of Friends' website, [www.historicsecondchurch.org](http://www.historicsecondchurch.org), fill out the form under Tours and we will contact you to make the final arrangements. We hope to see you soon.

**WINDOW VIDEOS AND MORE**

As a way of reaching out to our valued guests and supporters while they may wish to stay safely "distanced," Friends of Historic Second Church has created a series of five-minute videos called "Stained Glass Window Stories." In these fourteen videos, knowledgeable docents each share the background, artistry, donors, and importance of their favorite window. You may watch all the videos at our website [www.historicsecondchurch.org](http://www.historicsecondchurch.org) or on our Facebook page.

A new series of videos about the Arts and Crafts design elements and two outstanding women designers of artistic elements in the sanctuary is coming up soon. Additionally, two completed videos in the "Mural Series" will intrigue you with background about Frederic Clay Bartlett, and about Parma Conservation's recent complete restoration of another Bartlett mural. Please check back to the website often to catch up.

**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.*

**SECOND PRESBYTERIAN  
PUBLIC TOUR  
SCHEDULE:  
TEMPORARILY ON HOLD**

Wednesdays:  
1:00-3:00 pm

Saturdays:  
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Sundays: 12:15 pm  
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*Friends of Historic Second Church is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation. All donations are deductible to the extent allowed by law.*