



For centuries, stained glass windows have been used by congregations as a visual testimony of faith. In Farmington, the congregation of Our Lady of Sorrows (above, left and right) constructed a stained glass window depicting scenes from the life of Mary and her son.

The lilac colored windows bath the church in tinted light even on cloudy days. The round window in the center features the intertwining of the Alpha and Omega, the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet (left). A simpler type of stained glass (right) can be found in Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Farmington Hills.

Staff photos by Harry Mauthe

# Stained glass offers testimony of faith

Stained glass windows which capture the sun and filter light for its own needs are the pride of many congregations.

In Farmington, older congregations point to their windows as evidence of their forefathers' devotion to their faith.

More recent congregations dealing with the higher cost of contemporary living look wistfully at the rosy-hued glass of other churches and settle for more simple but still elegant designs.

Some stained glass windows serve as silent reminders of parishioners who have died. In 1921, when the First United Methodist Church was rebuilding after a fire, Charles Pettibone donated a rose window in memory of his first wife, Gladys Hazellen Pettibone. The rosy shades of the window were to remind the congregation of Mrs. Pettibone's titian hair.

Across the church, a stained glass window in the sanctuary is a tribute to the family of Fred Warner, governor of Michigan from 1905-10. The Warner family donated the window, fondly known by the congregation as the "Four Johns" in 1921. Besides leaving an impressive piece of religious art to the congregation, the Warners, unwittingly left a continuing controversy. Debate still rages among church members over the identity of the men depicted in the window. Some contend that the "Four Johns" include one Paul.

**JOHN WESLEY**, Paul the Apostle, John the Evangelist and John the Baptist are pictured on the window. Some contend the figure identified as Paul the Apostle is really John Wyclif, a 14th century religious reformer.

Mixing traditional depiction of Christ with contemporary style, another of First United Methodist's windows shows Christ leading a boy and girl attired in daily dress of the early 1920s.

But the brilliantly colored window designed to remind viewers of the story of the youthful Jesus in the temple sticks to tradition.

Another church which is a landmark in Farmington is Salem United Church of Christ on Oakland. Inside the church, which was built early in the 20th century are lilac-colored stained glass windows imported from Germany when the church was under construction. Capturing and holding sunlight even on overcast days, the windows filter in a lilac hue over the pews in the small church.

The church's stained glass window which faces Oakland was cleaned and received a new coat of leading last year.

**AGE AND THE ELEMENTS** threatened to shake the window loose from its place above the congregation.

More contemporary windows display modern renderings of religious subjects confine themselves to simple geometric designs.

At Our Lady of Sorrows Roman Catholic Church in Farmington, the stained glass windows depict the life of Jesus and Mary, using sharp angles and heavy leading for dramatic affect.

Built in 1959, the windows use texture to highlight clothing. Ripples in the glass give texture to clothing and hair. Faces are depicted using smoother pieces of glass.

Simple designs are the rule for Prince of Peace Lutheran Church. Instead of ornate stained glass, the attention is focused on the large gold cross with a dove and hands which runs almost from the ceiling to the floor of the sanctuary.

The glass is blue tinted with simple leading in wavy patterns which suggest water in keeping with the church's emphasis on a boat motif inspired by Jesus's instruction to his apostles that he will make them fishers of men.

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