

STORIES IN STAINED GLASS



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In memory of GRACE JACKSON JEFFERSON

by Brantley M. Jefferson

Reprinted in memory of BRANTLEY M. JEFFERSON 2020

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

This booklet was designed to fulfill the long-desired wish of Grace Jefferson that any person, especially the members of the Farmville United Methodist Church, might have a succinct guide to our lovely sanctuary windows. Grace's wish was that the artistic interpretation be introduced by the scriptural references indicated by each window. Many people have researched these sacred gifts, including Mrs. Grace Hubbard, Dr. Charles Lane, Mrs. Jo Smith, Mr. Homer Springer, and Miss Betty Weaver, a committee which compiled artistic interpretation summaries in the past. Each summary in this pamphlet also includes a brief history of those who sponsored the window and those to whom the window was dedicated. I was honored by having Grace ask me to edit her material and by having Brantley ask me to complete Grace's dream in her memory—a labor of love.

Daphne S. Mason December 2010

Introduction

I have worshipped in many beautiful churches in my life, but none more beautiful than the sanctuary of Farmville United Methodist Church. The stained glass windows are the highlight of its beauty. I have gazed on windows in churches and cathedrals all around the world, but I have found none more beautiful than these.

As a life-long student of the scriptures, I am captivated by the motifs of these windows. To walk into this sanctuary is to step into the world of the Bible. Here, worship is no longer limited to the printed and spoken word. We stand among colorful, living tableaus recalling the life and work of our Savior.

As the morning sun dawns on the service, we are greeted by bright scenes of hope. The central place goes, as it should, to the empty tomb and the Resurrection of Jesus. We cannot come to worship without remembering the victory of Christ, risen from the grave. That victory is also manifest in the Ascension, as our ascending Lord hovers so close that we want to reach out and touch him. Then, our souls are lifted as we stand before the Baby Jesus and his mother Mary. And finally, we are comforted to see Jesus blessing the children.

On the other side of the sanctuary, which is in the shadows on Sunday morning, we see some of the challenging moments from scripture. Peter is sinking after trying to walk on the water. The Rich Young Ruler is being asked to part with his treasured possessions. In the center of it all, is the dark Garden of Gethsemane where Jesus is agonizing in prayer. How could we see this and not bow our own hearts before God?

As we leave this haven of angels ascending and beatitudes spoken, we part with the image of Jesus, the good shepherd, holding the lamb in his arms. We know that through all the trials of life, Christ will be near to comfort us and to keep us in his arms.

If you are like me, some of the most memorable moments in your life have been spent in this beautiful place. May we never forget the touch of God and the love of others that we have known here.



CHRIST BLESSING THE CHILDREN

Mark 10:14-15

"Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily I say to you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein."

Christ recognized children as unique individuals and showed love and compassion for them. He emphasized that those who wish to enter into the kingdom of heaven must become as completely trusting as innocent children.

This depiction reflects a gentle Saviour as he tenderly cradles a young child and lovingly touches an older one in an apparent blessing. The children are dressed, artistically, in purple and gold suggesting their importance to Christ. Flowers are a key image in the window. The young child holds daisies, a symbol of innocence; there are lilies at the feet of Christ, symbolizing purity; and the abundance of blue flowers represents childlike honesty.

This window was given in memory of Mr. and Mrs. William France Burger who were leaders in the church, as well as the community, in the early 1900's. Mr. and Mrs. Burger had no children of their own but adopted two of his nieces, Elizabeth and Frances Burger, after the premature death of their mother. The theme of this memorial window is, therefore, most appropriate. This gift was made by Mr. and Mrs. David A. Jackson (Elizabeth Burger) and Dr. and Mrs. Kermit R. Booher (Frances Burger) in 1963. Local descendants of the Burgers are Dr. Wilbur Burger of Lynchburg and Dr. William Burger of Appomattox.



THE ASCENSION

John 20:17

"I ascend unto my Father and your Father"

Acts 1:9

And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up

Christ promised his followers to prepare a place for them and to return to receive them. After the crucifixion and resurrection, he appeared to his disciples many times during the forty days before his ascension. He promised to sit at the right hand of God the Father and to make intercession for all.

The central figure in this window is Christ, ascending to heaven. He wears the symbolic colors of red (royalty), white (purity), and green (eternal life). His feet are bare, possibly to suggest humility. His open hands appear to bless those below as clouds surround him. Above his head is a halo, and streams of light seem to emanate from the heavens, indicating his holiness.

This window was presented in 1939 in memory of Margaret Burks Kasey Walmsley by her husband, Dr. James Elliott Walmsley. Dr. Walmsley, who was a professor at State Teachers College (Longwood University), was an active member of the Farmville Methodist Church, serving on the board and as a Sunday School teacher.



He Is Risen

Matthew 28:2, 3, 6, 7

... for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow. "He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead"

Mary and Mary Magdalene, along with Christ's disciples and friends, experienced great sadness and emptiness after his crucifixion. In this state of sorrow, they visited the tomb of their beloved. They returned from the tomb rejoicing because the angel of the Lord revealed that Christ was truly alive. Their job was to spread the good news of the resurrection.

The angel is regal in his white garment symbolizing purity. His large white outstretched wings add to his perception of authority. The empty coffin reveals only the cloth, which once wrapped Christ's body, and the cruel crown of thorns. In the far distant landscape, three small crosses are silhouetted against the sky. Artistically, this window is similar to and in balance with the central window on the opposite side of the sanctuary, the Garden of Gethsemane.

At the 1908 consecration of the sanctuary, this window was presented in memory of Charles McKinney Walker by his wife, Mrs. Ella Warren Walker, great grandmother of Susan Harwood Paul, Scott M. Harwood, Sr., and John E. Harwood, Jr. This memorial was noted in the December 18, 1908 edition of *The Farmville Herald*.



THE MADONNA

Luke 1:30, 31, 46

And the angel said unto her, "Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS." And Mary said, "My soul doth magnify the Lord"

Luke 2:7

And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes

This window is laden with serenity and symbolism. Mary, lovingly and proudly, cradles her infant son, Jesus. The spiritual royalty of Mary is depicted in her red garment over which she wears a flowing blue robe, symbolizing love and truth. The virtuous woman and her child have halos which represent holiness and grace. Mary, who has been called "a rose without thorns," is surrounded by roses. At her feet are white doves which symbolize peace and purity. Two caged doves, possibly representing Joseph's offering for the purification of his young chid, are at the bottom of the window. At the top, superimposed over the Epiphany star of the Magi, is a lamp with the flame of the light of faith and fire of spiritual grace from God.

The "Madonna" window was presented in 1953 in memory of William Goodwin Venable and his wife, Virginia Pettit Venable, by their children and grandchildren. Mr. Venable was a prominent banker, and he and his wife were active stewards in the Farmville Methodist Church.



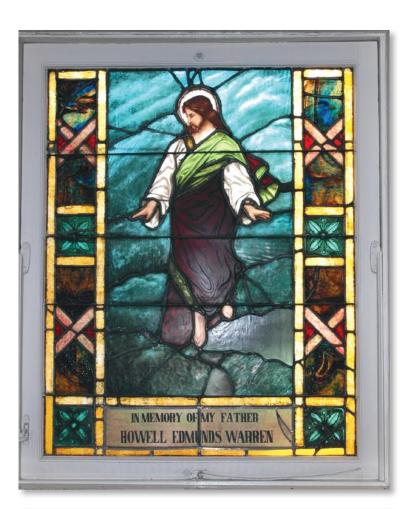
CHRIST HEALING THE SICK

John 5:2, 3, 5, 8

Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water. And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years. Jesus saith unto him, "Rise, take up thy bed, and walk."

Jesus, "The Great Physician," extends one hand to the lame man and commands him to rise. The other hand is raised in blessing. In this striking setting, there are witnesses to an event which addresses not only the spiritual aspect of faith but also the physical and emotional impact of Christ's life. Christ is clothed in white, emphasizing his purity, nobility, and compassion.

The window of healing was given in 1964 in memory of Robert Watkins Mottley by his wife, Mrs. Louise Wiley Borum Mottley. Mr. Mottley founded Mottley Construction Company in the early 1900's and was an active leader in the Farmville Methodist Church.





Noted in *The Farmville Herald* (December 18, 1908) was a panoply of windows on the South wall of the sanctuary. The smaller side windows, "The Ascension" and "The Angel," were given by Mrs. Ella Warren Walker in memory of her father, Howell Edmunds Warren, and her mother, Mahala Booth Warren, respectively. Including the window of the resurrection of the risen Christ, Mrs. Walker generously gave three lovely windows, all dedicated during the consecration of the present sanctuary.

THE ASCENSION

John 14:2

"I go to prepare a place for you."

Reminiscent of the Ascension window on the East wall, this portrayal of Christ rising is simple and fairly stark. The clouds and suggested trees below give a somewhat three-dimensional appearance to an ethereal Saviour cloaked in a dark mantle.

THE ANGEL

Psalm 91:11-12

For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.

Angels are considered to be messengers of God; they serve God in heaven and minister to men on earth. Angels appear in nearly every key situation in the Bible—the annunciation, the birth of Christ, as well as more serious circumstances such as banishing Adam and Eve, warning Lot, or punishing the unbeliever at the end of time. The white-robed angel indicates purity. The key message is conveyed by the palm branch the angel carries. The palm is used as a symbol of victory and triumph, thus this window tells the world the good news that Christ is victorious over the grave.



THE GOOD SHEPHERD

Psalm 23:1

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

Isaiah 40:11

He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom

Centered on the South wall is, possibly, the most familiar picture of Christ. The promise is that Christ as the shepherd will guarantee protection and safety. The lamb, the dual symbol of innocence and the Lord himself, is gently cradled. There is much red, white, and gold indicating royalty, purity, and value. Christ carries his staff depicting his earthly position of protector. The lamb in his right arm is indicative of his heavenly position at the right hand of God.

This striking center window was also presented in 1908. It was dedicated to the memory of Thomas J. Davis by his wife and his son, Hugh C. Davis. Mr. Davis, the elder, was a banker in Farmville and was the first treasurer of Farmville Methodist Church.





The designs of the three windows on the South wall are completed in canopy windows which reach to the height of the balcony. Each window has its own roundel—round section of painted glass. The windows on each side have decorative lilies. The roundel in the center depicts an ornate crown and cross.





CHRIST AND THE RICH YOUNG RULER

Matthew 19:21

"If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me."

There is opulence in the setting of this window which possibly indicates that Christ is at the home of the rich young ruler. The young man's clothes are signs of his obvious wealth—purple undergarment sashed in gold, blue-green mantle, colorful hat, and frivolous slippers with red heels. The self-confident stance of the young ruler contrasts with Christ's gentle beckoning used as an invitation to give up wealth and come follow him.

This window was presented in 1964 in memory of George Almy Newman and his son, Captain George A. Newman, Jr., by Mrs. George Newman, Sr. and her daughters. Mr. Newman was a successful businessman, a Shriner, and a steward of Farmville Methodist Church. Captain Newman was downed over the Mediterranean while he was serving in World War II. Mrs. Lou N. Stanley was the daughter of the elder Mr. Newman and the sister of Captain Newman.



SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Matthew 7:24, 25

"Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock."

The solitary figure of Christ seems to direct a steady gaze at onlookers. In the Sermon on the Mount, he set forth principles, beliefs, and directives to his followers. These basic teachings are uncomplicated demands on those who would follow Christ and seek the kingdom of God. He is clothed in the innocence of white as well as the red and purple mantles of power and royalty. His right hand faces forward as if entreating followers to listen and learn. Around his head is the halo of divinity. In contrast to the simplicity of the central image, the border is full of color and symbols. The colors of blue and green suggest hope and truth; the flowers are four-petaled, symbolizing the cross; and, the grape leaf and cluster represent the blood of Christ used in Christian communion services.

This symbolic window was given in 1948 in memory of Elizabeth Jennings Paulett by her husband, Richard Hoge Paulett. Both Mr. and Mrs. Paulett actively participated in the life of Farmville Methodist Church in roles such as secretary of the official board and life member of the Womens' Society, respectively.



CHRIST IN THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE

Matthew 26:36

Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, "Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder"

Luke 22:44

And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

Christ faced his imminent death as any mortal facing crucifixion would react—agonizing anticipation. Jesus, however, was not just any mortal; and, recognizing this to be God's plan for him, he accepted his fate as foretold. Christ is appropriately the central image of the window. He is, symbolically, clothed in white, red, and gold, indicative of purity, royalty, and passion. His hands are intertwined in prayer and rest on a rock. The ornate halo and the rays radiating from heaven to the sensitive face of Christ strikingly contrast with the dark blue sky of evening. This window balances the "He Is Risen" window on the East wall, even to the three crosses suggestive of Golgotha.

This window was the fifth window to be dedicated during the consecration of the present sanctuary in 1908. It was presented in memory of Richard Singleton Paulett and his wife, Harriet Pearman Clark Paulett, by their children. Mr. Paulett was a successful tobacconist and banker and was the first president of the Prince Edward Bible Society which furnished Bibles to the less fortunate people in the county.



CHRIST AT THE DOOR

Matthew 7:7

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

Christ stands outside a heavy door framed by a sturdy stone arch. His hand is raised as if to knock, and his head is tilted as if waiting for a response. Christ waits to be invited. Doors separate, and the one inside is responsible for opening them and inviting those who are outside to come in.

Christ's white robe and red mantle symbolize purity and royalty. He wears sandals indicating that he may have traveled far, and this is the only window in which he appears wearing foot covering. He carries a rod for protection as well as support for a traveler. There are buildings in the distance which may suggest more travel and more searching for those to invite him in. Symbolic images are found outside the door: blue flowers symbolizing truth, white lilies for purity and chastity. There is an apple in a small tree. The apple is the symbol for sin in the Old Testament; but Christ is referred to as "The New Adam," so in a depiction of the New Testament the apple symbolizes the fruit of salvation.

This window of invitation was given in 1941 in memory of Douglas T. Elam by his wife, Annie Reed Elam. As a member of Farmville Methodist Church, Mr. Elam taught Sunday School, served as a steward for more than fifty years, and was church treasurer for twenty-seven years.



PETER WALKING ON THE WATER

Matthew 14:30, 31

But when he [Peter] saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, "Lord, save me." And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him

This window combines two lessons in artistry. In the foreground, Peter is frightened and sinking. In the turbulent background, two men signal for help to keep from sinking in their small boat. The dark blue clouds are indicative of a storm. The men lack faith and are, therefore, afraid they will die. The sea around Christ seems to be calmer, and he extends his hand for safety and security. There is an indication of a bit of clearing near the horizon, perhaps promising the calm after the storm. This section of the scene suggests that faith in Christ is the real key to safety and security.

It is interesting to note that this window was dedicated on two occasions. In 1958, it was presented in memory of Martha Wainwright Hubbard by her husband, Frank Wilson Hubbard. Mrs. Hubbard worked diligently in the church and the community. Mr. Hubbard was a successful businessman, a leader in local government, and a devoted member of Farmville Methodist Church. After Mr. Hubbard's death in 1968, his two sons, F. Curtis Hubbard and W. Henry Hubbard, installed a new section adding their father's name.

CHRONOLOGY

1908: He Is Risen

THE ASCENSION (South wall)

THE GOOD SHEPHERD

THE ANGEL

CHRIST IN THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE

1939: The Ascension (East wall)

1941: Christ At The Door

1948: Sermon On The Mount

1953: The Madonna

1958 and 1968: Peter Walking On Water

1963: CHRIST BLESSING THE CHILDREN

1964: CHRIST HEALING THE SICK

CHRIST AND THE RICH YOUNG RULER

Professional Photography by Arlene Layden Initial Photography Assistance by the Reverend George G. Henley