

First Trinity's Stained Glass Windows – Dedicated November 7, 1999

Daniel Herman, Stained Glass Artist

The Trinity is depicted in three tall vertical panels, distinctly separate, but unified by line and color. At the center is God the Father – Creator. At the highest point, a sphere represents the creative force, dividing light from darkness. A strong, pure central shaft of light extends from the heavens to the earth, the core of our being and the unwavering foundation of our faith.

At the right hand of the Father is God the Son – Savior (left panel). Seven round jewels call to mind the seven seals of Revelation. The red jewel comes from the windows of the original 1856 church building. The traditional image of a crown of thorns has been turned inside out to become a star-burst or flower, symbolizing the celebration of the Resurrection in our lives. The fluid vertical lines, extending the full height of this pane, remind us that Salvation took on a human form, uniting heaven and earth.

God the Holy Ghost – Sustainer – is represented in the panel on the right. The activity of this panel evokes the joy and energy of the spirit at work. A series of vertical lines suggest the keys of piano or organ, or the musical notes of hymns we raise. Fragments of old glass are scattered throughout the windows. The shards of thick, rich old glass take on new life amid contemporary, lighter clear glass, and remind us that our faith grows out of and is sustained by the history of people and congregations that have gone on before.

All aspects of the Trinity are drawn together at the center of the design in a vessel-like form, hinting at the Chalice or perhaps the Manger. From this central form, the energies radiate back out again toward the bottom of the screen, where each panel depicts a manifestation of the Trinity in our everyday life: the nurture of the earth in mountains and trees, our salvation and sustenance in water, and the warmth and energy of Pentecostal fire.

The cross appears numerous times throughout the design, reminding us that we are constantly sustained through joy and sorrow. In the cross at the center of the windows is a small square of red glass from the old windows, inviting us to reflect on the heart of our faith and our traditions.

Each person will find in the windows other symbols and recollections, and each time we view it, new thoughts will be kindled. Some will see the Ark and Noah's rainbow – God's promise. Some will see a fish – Jonah's trials or the feeding of the five thousand. Some will see the flame of the burning bush or the pillar of fire. Some will see the waters parting as at the Red Sea. Some will see the thorns and Christ's saving blood.

Color and light, forms and energy all combine to be a rich and unending source of joy and inspiration for worship.