

A Brief Introduction To

Faith Stories and Stained Glass

at

Maxville - Moose Creek
United Church,
Ontario

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Maxville United Church

Stained Glass Windows

The present church building was built in 1926. All of the original windows were of the plain style that still exists in the north wing of the church building. All the windows in the sanctuary have been replaced with memorial stained-glass windows over the years, beginning in 1950. All the windows in the sanctuary (A to G) were designed and installed by McCausland's of Toronto.

An Overview

As early as 1948, Rev Hamilton was exploring the cost of replacing the two main East and West windows with stained glass ones. However, it wasn't until 1950 that the first one (window C) was installed. Mrs. A. H. Robertson donated the window, at the back of the choir loft, in memory of her daughter, Ada (Mrs. T. W. Munroe), a talented musician who had been choir director for several years.

In 1951, Miss Tena Aird donated windows B & E, at the front of the sanctuary, in memory of her two sisters Margaret (Mrs. Peter T. Munroe), and Annie (Mrs. Alex McDougall).

Window D, on the west side of the choir loft, was also installed in 1951, by the choir in memory of former members.

In 1964, the window A on the east side of the sanctuary was donated by Mrs. Dora

McDougall in memory of her late husband, Mr. G. H. McDougall (Bert), who had passed away the previous year.

In 1987, all the windows on the west side of the sanctuary (windows D, F & G) were replaced with stained glass. This was made possible through a special fund-raising drive.

Window H, over the main entrance door in the tower was donated in loving memory of Ernest A. & Margaret McEwen by their family in 1992.

The backgrounds of all the windows are rectangles of glass in pastel shades, with occasional rectangles comprised of 2 or three segments of different colours. Notice the difference in the background glass between window A and window C (the first window installed) which has a lot more plain panes in it. Then again notice the differences between the "Sower" (window A) and the "Good Shepherd" opposite it (window F), how much darker the pastel shades are in the newer window F.

About Stained Glass

Just pieces of coloured glass in all different shapes and sizes, with thin strips of lead between them. Some of the earliest stained glass dates from the 9th century, and remnants of those windows can still be found in France and Germany. The art of colouring glass was, however, practised 3000 years before Christ, in Egypt and Mesopotamia.

The art reached its peak around the 13th century, particularly in France. Apart from clear panes, those 9th century remnants show the head of Christ and so, even then, they had devised ways to use more than just the shape and the colour of the glass to create a satisfying design.

It is believed that the images captured in the windows of churches and cathedrals in this way, were teaching tools to help the uneducated masses of the day learn the gospel message. The early builders of Protestant churches did not include such decorative elements in their designs. That was because they wanted to create space that was as simple as possible.

The 20th century has changed that and, gradually, many former Protestant churches have replaced their plain windows with stained glass ones.

A - The Sower (East Window)

In memory of ... GEORGE HERBERT McDOUGALL

... he was born in the house that is still in use as a triplex near the former site of the C.N.R. station. His father was Duncan H. and his mother a McEwen. He was born on the day the first train went through the village in 1881. He had two brothers and two

sisters. He married Dora Barrett, whose family lived back near Highway 417 on what is now the Arkinstall farm.

Bert was an active athlete for local teams and worked for J. J. Wightman who had a grocery store here. When Mr. Wightman retired, Mr. McDougall took over the store. The McDougalls lived above the store. The old store burned in 1940, and the warehouse across the street was used to continue the store's operation until the new one was built. The store which Mr. McDougall operated is, today, the only grocery store in town.

Mr. McDougall was active in the village. He was a Mason and the village reeve for a time. In the Church, he was clerk of session, served as Sunday School Superintendent and was at every church service to serve as usher and to take up the collection. He knew everyone, and greeted everyone by name.

Mrs. McDougall served as Sunday School secretary for a long time and was active in the Women's Missionary Society and the Women's Association. Today, she would be called a leader, in those days, some might have called her bossy, behind her back!

The McDougalls retired, first back to the bungalow north of St. Elmo then, later, they moved back to the house between the store & the church.

The McDougalls are believed to have been "well off," and Mrs. McDougall had no problem in financing the windows. It seemed a large sum but, she declared, "he was worth every cent of it."

THE WINDOW

This window was installed in 1964. In 1948 the estimated cost for this window was about \$400, compared to the 1964 price of almost \$3,000.

The window was dedicated at the Anniversary Service on October the 18th, 1964. The bulletin of the day said, the window "depicts the Sower Sowing the Word, the Seed of the Gospel, a task to which Mr McDougall gave the full measure of his devotion and service, for Christ and his church."

The central figure in this window appears to be a blend of Jesus and the sower. In most of the other windows, Jesus is dressed in white with a red over cloak; e.g. the west window which depicts the Good Shepherd who, presumably, is Jesus. Similarly, the sower is also in a white robe with a red cloak (in this case with a light blue on the reverse side), and he has a halo so we might assume the two persons (Jesus and the sower) are merged.

He is carrying a basket or a bowl in his left arm which contains the seed. With his right hand he is letting seeds fall down to the ground. The ground has representations of stony patches, and thorns and a path., perhaps even some good ground. The only bird is the stylized dove at the top of the window, with breath or wind radiating in three

directions, this is meant to represent the Holy Spirit.

The five other panels surrounding it contain "medallions." Each of the upper ones has a cross behind the medallions, a sheaf of wheat and a cluster of grapes and leaves, with the relevant texts: THE BREAD OF LIFE and I AM THE TRUE VINE.

The lower left and right panels contain circular medallions in blue and red. In the center of each is a symbol and around it the Biblical text. The one on the left has the symbol "ihs" from the old Latin, which represents the Greek letters "ihs", the first three letters of Jesus' name. Around them is the text: JESUS, THE SAVIOUR OF MAN.

The right hand panel has PX, the first two letters of Christ in Greek, and the text: THE KINGSHIP OF CHRIST.

In the middle panel, is a lamb with the crusaders' flag, and underneath the text BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD.

The general inscription is: IN LOVING MEMORY OF G. H. McDOUGALL BY HIS WIFE DORA E. BARRETT McDOUGALL 1964

B - Jesus the Teacher and

E - Jesus the Healer - (Left and right front of sanctuary)

In memory of ... ANNIE McDOUGALL and MARGARET MUNROE

... they were sisters of Tena Aird from Athol. The original Airds probably settled the land in the 1820's. It is said that they walked to church in Martintown.

There were six sisters, and at least one brother. Tena stayed home and farmed as much as she was able and then rented out the land. We are not certain that she attended Maxville United Church but must have had United Church leanings. We believe that the Rev. J. H. Hamilton, our minister at the time, encouraged her to donate the windows in memory of two of her sisters.

It is said that, as Tena walked up the aisle in the church for the dedication of the windows, she noted that her sisters' names were on the wrong windows. The name of Mrs. Munroe, a teacher, was supposed to be on the window with Jesus the teacher, while Mrs. McDougall's was to be on the one showing Jesus the healer. Unfortunately a change could not be made.

Annie was a nurse, who became the second wife of Alexander McDougall and the step-mother of four children. In later years, Alex and Annie lived on the home farm which was adjacent to the Morrow farm on the east side. After Alex died, Annie went home to Tena's and died there.

Margaret was a teacher, who became the second wife of "Red" Peter Munroe. The home farm was north west of the village, now owned by Gordon and Neil McIntosh. The Munroes moved to the village following the War and the death of Leonard. Mrs. Munroe was some years younger than her husband and after his death she worked as a house keeper in Ottawa. She then came home to Tena and died on the farm in 1944.

THE WINDOWS

The windows were installed in 1951. In 1948 the estimated cost for one of the large 3 panel windows was about \$400, compared to the 1987 price of almost \$17,000.

"Jesus - The Teacher"

The window has a single elongated rectangle superimposed on a plain cross. In that rectangle there is a side view of Jesus wearing a white robe and red cloak, seated on a grass covered knoll. There is a halo around Jesus' head. Lower down in the picture are three other people, their heads come to Jesus' knee.

In his right hand Jesus holds a scroll and his left hand is raised as if he is reinforcing what he is saying.

The sky in the background is in a very modern stylized form and it is very blue.

At the base of the cross the inscription reads "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

Slightly below this one of the small panes contains a small decorative cross.

The inscription below this window is: In loving Memory of Annie Aird McDougall.

"Jesus - The Healer"

This window is one panel, depicting Jesus the Healer. There is a woman, in a robe of a beautiful deep purple, holding a baby. Jesus has one hand on the baby's head. Again this window has the modern sky design; Jesus is in a white robe with a red cloak over it (in this case the robe has a pink lining); and the usual halo.

This main image is superimposed on a large cross and there is a smaller cross, lower down in a single pane. At the foot of the larger cross is the quotation from the gospel, Luke 4:40, "And he laid his hands on everyone of them and healed them."

Slightly below this one of the small panes contains a small decorative cross.

The inscription below this window is: In loving Memory of Margaret Aird Munroe.

C - Jesus and Children (Behind the choir)

In memory of ... ADA ROBERTSON MUNRO

... she was the daughter of Alex H. Robertson and Mina (Wanamaker). Alex was a descendent of the Robertson family which settled on the first farm north of the village on the east side of the road. He was a notary public, watch maker and in charge of the telephone office next door. They lived in a double house on the north side of the Church. When it burned in 1940, they built the present one and lived there until they passed away. They always seemed to be "well off" and had a maid to help and look after them in later life.

Ada was an only child. She attended Ladies' College in Whitby and earned her A.T.C.M. degree. She had a lovely alto voice and played the piano very well. Ada and her husband Tom lived in the house opposite the church. She gave piano lessons and in the 30's charged 25 cents for a half hour lesson. She may also have given some music instruction in the local schools. They both sang in the Church choir with Mr. Munro singing bass and she was choir director at the church from 1925 to 1935.

THE WINDOW

This first stained glass window installed in the sanctuary in 1950 set the style for all the other windows. There is no indication of why the theme of Jesus and children was chosen for the window, as Ada Munro was a married adult at the time of her death.

Once again Jesus is in a white robe with a red cloak over it and his head is surrounded by a halo. He is holding a young child, whilst a second child stands in front of him. Underneath is the inscription: Suffer the little Children to Come unto Me. This window has the same contemporary sky design as the two small windows on either side of the front of the sanctuary (windows B & E).

In the two windows on either side are symbols of the two sacraments. To the left, a baptismal font with white water lilies on either side of it, to further reinforce the theme of baptismal water. To the right a communion chalice with clusters of purple grapes on each side of it.

The inscription to this window is: In Memory of Ada M. R. Munro A.T.C.M..

D - Musicians' Window (Choir loft, west)

MUSICIAN'S WINDOW

In 1951, just a year after the main window at the back of the choir was installed, choir members contributed to have this two panelled window dedicated "In Grateful Memory of Those Who Served The Congregation In Sacred Song.". There is nothing musical

about the main designs in the window. On the left a circle with a crown around a cross and, on the right a circle around a Bible with the Greek letters "Alpha & Omega". These symbols represent Christ the King, and God as the beginning and the end, the first and the last. In both cases, the circles are superimposed on a cross shape like the two front windows here.

Above the cross/crown, within a single pane is an emblem of crossed straight horns held together with a line of music. Above the Bible in a single pane is a harp of the style that would have been used in ancient times.

F - The Good Shepherd

G - Flower Window (West side)

IN MEMORY OF LOVED ONES

... there are no specific individuals remembered by the installation of the windows on the west side of the sanctuary.

At the Annual Congregational Meeting on the 18th of January 1987, a committee was formed of Gordon Winter, Verna McGregor and Grace McEwen to use money from the Memorial Fund, plus gifts from interested persons, to purchase stained glass windows for the west side of the sanctuary.

Later that year, all these windows were replaced with stained glass. At the anniversary service in September 6th, 1987 Daphne Craig, president of the Ottawa-Montreal Conference, was the preacher and dedicated the windows.

The total cost was \$24,732 and an additional \$1560 was expended to cover all the stained glass windows externally with 1/4" Lexan. This project was financed with \$22,550 in donations and the balance from the Memorial Fund. The names of the donors are inscribed in the Memorial Book displayed at the front right of the sanctuary.

THE WINDOWS

Window F, the good Shepherd window, is designed to be a companion to the main east window. The central upper panel containing a strong figure of Jesus as the Good Shepherd, with medallions and texts, mostly biblical, in each of the adjoining 5 panels.

Jesus - the Good Shepherd. John's gospel is the place where we find a lot of metaphors for Jesus. Jesus as: "the Bread of Life, "the True Vine," that are represented in the east window, or the "Good Shepherd" and "Light of the World", in this window, all come from this gospel.

Again we have Jesus in a white robe with a red cloak and the halo around his head. Under his left arm this time he holds a lamb and there is a crook in his right hand, and there are three sheep by his feet. The whole scene is set in a lush green landscape, in contrast to the soil in the east window, ready and waiting for the coming of the seed of

God's kingdom. Notice the rich red, yellow and purple of the three groups of flowers growing here.

Up above the main image we see the three breaths of wind, like the ones in the west window, this time radiating from a 5 pointed star. And, underneath the image are the words "I am the Good Shepherd."

Top left: A lantern superimposed on the same style of cross as in windows A, B, &E, with the text, "I am the Light of the World."

Top Right: again a cross, with the image of a menorah and the text "Let your light shine before men."

Bottom left: A circle around a cross and the curious inscription, TAKE UP HIS CROSS AND FOLLOW ME. [Representing Matthew 16:24 (parallels in Mark & Luke) this inscription raises the question, what is the meaning of "Take up his cross and follow me"??]

Bottom centre: An open book with the words "Holy Bible" on the pages, and the inscription, THY WORD IS TRUTH.

Bottom right: A circle around an anchor and the inscription, HOPE, AN ANCHOR OF THE SOUL, based on a passage in Hebrews 6:19

Under everything is the dedication of the window: TO THE MEMORY OF LOVED ONES - 1987.

Window G does not have a distinctive Biblical theme. Given the predominance of roses in the right panel and lilies in the left, this should probably be called the Flower Window

This one was installed in 1987 at the same time as Window F, on the west, purchased out of the generous donations of the congregation and community.

Here are two panels and in the middle of both of them is the circular frame typical of many of the other windows, in the centre of each is an arrangement of flowers. Lilies on the right and roses on the left. Behind both of these circles is a cross, framed by the background rectangular panes.

The inscription is repeated between each frame: TO GOD BE THE GLORY - 1987.

H - Semicircular flower window (Tower entrance door)

In memory of ... Ernest A. & Margaret McEwen

... Ernest Alexander McEwen came from a farm on Warina Rd., west of Maxville and, in his second marriage, married Margaret MacLaurin on the 27th of January, 1926. At

the time Margaret was a schoolteacher and Ernest was a farmer. Margaret was born in 1896 and her early life was at Tayside. The family moved to Cornwall during her school years where her father worked in the canal park. In her early teaching days she taught in Ottawa

Ernest died in February 1944, at the age of 61. The family sold the farm and moved to Maxville, living for a few years on Main St North, before settling in to the former Baptist manse, at 15 Peter St. Margaret returned to teaching in several area schools, including Maxville, Bainsville and Dunvegan. Florence McNaughton moved into live with her sister Margaret after the death of Florence's husband. Around 1962 they moved into an apartment at number 10 Peter St. Margaret became a resident of the Manor in 1988, until her death in 1990.

They had three girls. Frances Nelson now lives in Vancouver, Elizabeth Stewart lives at Stewart's Glen, and Marjorie Stewart lives at Airdrie, near Calgary.

THE WINDOW

This, the most recent stained glass window in the church, is located over the main entrance door to the building in the tower.

This window was designed and made by Glass Concepts of Ottawa, and installed and dedicated in 1992. Its uncomplicated design of lilies on a circular emblem with the small rectangular panes in the background, is in keeping with the designs of the other windows inside the sanctuary. The inscription is "Dedicated to the glory of God and in loving memory of our parents Ernest A & Margaret McEwen by their family".

Afterword

This booklet comes out of an interest in these often taken for granted works of art in our churches. In the spring of 2002 I preached a series of six sermons based on these windows and appropriate biblical texts.

Many thanks to Gordon Winter for his welcome assistance in the preparation of this work.

Howard Clark, December 2002