



SIGNS & SYMBOLS
OF
*Sanctuary
Worship*



"Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness," teaches the Psalmist. From earliest times, Christians have sought to respond to this biblical call. Through architecture, painting, sculpture, music, and poetry, artistic expressions of the "faith once given" have helped point to the truth and beauty of God, which have always been beyond words. With Scripture as their guide, Christian artists have expressed their faith in the living Word of God and the glory of Christ's Church.

Some of the most dramatic representations of the Christian faith have been conveyed through the medium of stained glass pictures and symbols. This medieval art form has remained through the centuries, allowing light to express "the love of God found in Christ Jesus our Lord." In our Sanctuary are many symbols. A symbol is a sign that invites us to think of meaningful ideas and beliefs. The word "symbol" comes from two Greek words meaning "with" and "to throw," and means "to put together."

Religious symbolism is a technique of pictorial spiritual language that leads us on to a truth and a duty, and to a meeting with some sense of the greatness of God. The intent is to understand the Spirit of God at work in the events of life.

The making of new symbols seems to have its recurrence throughout history, with each age contributing new artistic expressions. The early Christians absorbed the current symbols of other faiths and created their own.

The fish was a dominant figure until the 10th century. From the 8th to 11th centuries, carved crosses were popular. The 13th century produced the cathedral with its marvelous carvings and elongated figures. The Middle Ages emphasized sculpture, stained glass windows, and pavements of tile.

*Artistic expressions
point to the truth and
beauty of God.*

The windows in our Sanctuary were installed or reinstalled in 1986-1987, when our new Sanctuary was constructed. They are the work of the Laws Stained Glass Studio of Statesville, NC. This booklet provides a description of the windows—and other symbols of worship—in the hope that they will serve as a source of inspiration and instruction in your journey of faith. Their intent is to glorify God and to enhance our worship and praise to the Lord Jesus Christ.



The Rose Window

This beautiful window is one of the oldest windows in our Sanctuary. It was originally an interior window, artificially lighted from behind, until it was placed in our new Sanctuary. Christ was called the Rose of Sharon, and each detail in the Rose Window represents Jesus Christ, of utmost significance in our church, as Christ is the center of all that we seek to do.

*Christ is the center of all
that we seek to do.*



Within the center of the window are the letters IHS, the Latin monogram for “In Hoc Signis,” meaning “In this sign.” The monogram is within a quatrefoil, a stylized flower with four petals representing the four gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. The picture on the glass is the Passion flower, or maypop, often found growing wild in our area, used as a symbol of the suffering of Jesus. Its ten petals are said to represent the ten apostles who fled; Judas, for his betrayal, and John, who went to Calvary and witnessed the Savior’s agony, are not included. The five stamens remind us of the five wounds; the three styles, the three nails; the leaf, the spear; and the tendrils, the cords. The ovary represents the hammer used to drive the nails into the Cross. Also in the window is the Easter lily, which symbolizes the Resurrection. Thus the flora of the Rose window speaks to the suffering and Resurrection of our Lord.

The Greek Pattée Cross, composed of arms of equal length, is found around the outer edges of the window. Intertwined around the Passion Flower and the Easter lily are grapes on a vine, which represent Christ and His disciples.

LARGE PICTORIAL WINDOWS

tell the Story of the Life of Jesus



The Shepherd Window – BIRTH

Shepherds out on the hillside in Bethlehem hear the angels' message: "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." *Luke 2:10-11*



The Fishers of Men Window – MINISTRY

This window depicts the ministry of Jesus. The majority of disciples were fishermen from Galilee and Jesus called them to be fishers of men. The letters of ICHTHUS, the Greek word for "fish," are the initial letters for "Jesus Christ, Son of God, Savior" in Greek. *Matthew 4:18-20*

The Crucifixion Window – DEATH

The cross is empty and the sky is dark. On Good Friday, our Lord, after being crucified for our sins, died upon the cross and was buried in a borrowed tomb. Depicted in the window are the women, a Roman soldier, and those who remained close to our Lord even in death. Notice in this window the pole to which is attached a sponge or sop for the purpose of offering the victim vinegar that had been drugged to reduce the pain and suffering. At the Crucifixion, Jesus refused the sop. The crown of thorns is also visible. John, the disciple whom Jesus loved, and to whom He entrusted the care of his mother, Mary, kneels to the left in the window. "INRI," the title written by Pilate at the top of the center cross, is the initial letters of the Latin inscription, "JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS." *John 19:19*



The Resurrection Window – RESURRECTION

Only the women are present at the resurrection signifying our Lord's return to life after His crucifixion and burial. Each Sunday is a celebration of that first Easter Day. In the Resurrection window can be seen the urn of spices brought to the tomb to complete the burial of Jesus; also in the window are found Easter lilies. Details depicted include visible nail prints and the sun rising in the background over Jerusalem. *Matthew 28:1-10*

The Ascension Window – ASCENSION

The Ascension occurred forty days following Easter, after our Lord gave His disciples the Great Commission: “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to obey all things I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world” (Matthew 28:19-20). Our Lord then ascended to the right hand of the Father, and became truly a living resurrected Lord. *Mark 16:19*

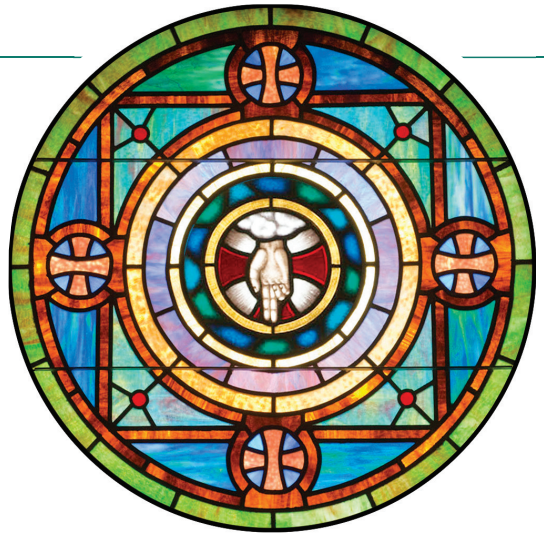


Round Windows

The five windows to the left of the Rose Window represent the Old Testament, the five to the right represent the New Testament. The Four Pattée Crosses are found in all of the round windows.

The Hand of God

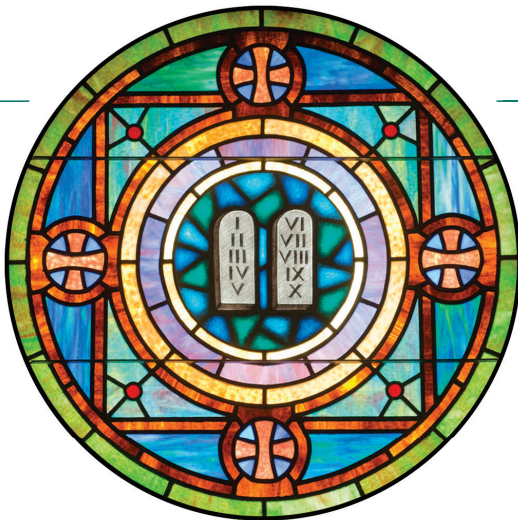
This window represents the Creative power of God, and denotes protection and help. It is often referred to by its Latin name “*Mannus Dei*,” although early Christians refrained from representing God in human form. The addition of the circles signifies eternity. The hand points downward from a cloud of glory. Its location over an entrance expresses to all who worship a message of God’s blessing and benediction. *Proverbs 1:24, Ecclesiastes 9:1, Psalm 139:10*



The Ark and Rainbow

This is one of the oldest symbols of the church, referring to the Ark of Noah in the book of Genesis. The Ark recalls the time of the flood, and the rainbow signifies the covenant God made with Noah. *Genesis 6:11-22, 9:9-17*





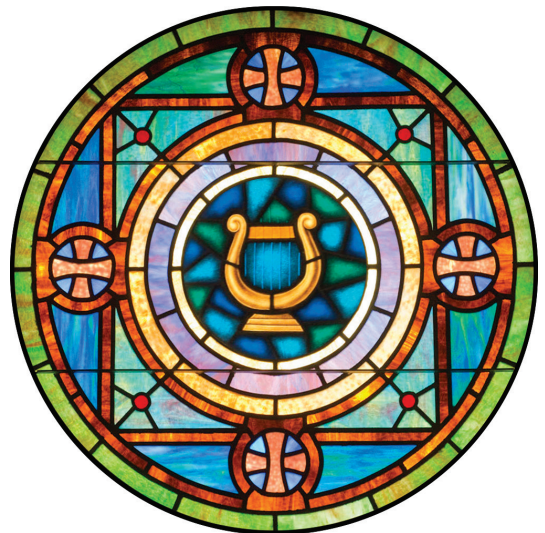
The Tablets or Ten Commandments

This window depicts the Ten Commandments given by God to Moses in the book of Exodus, representing the Law given to God's covenant people. The first four commandments speak of man's relationship to God; the last six speak of man's relationship to man. *Exodus 20:1-17*

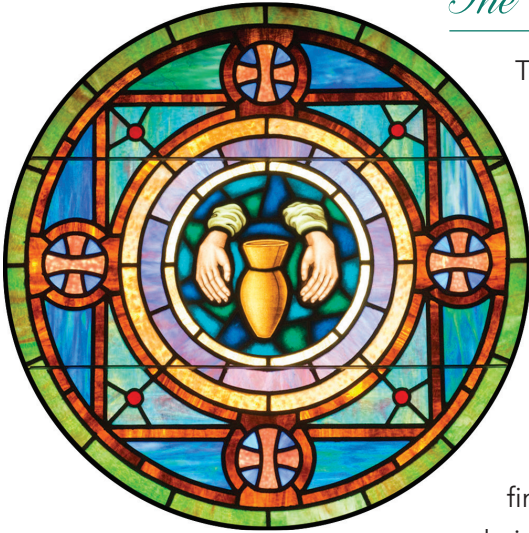
The Harp or Lyre

This window signifies the book of Psalms, as seen in this symbol of sacred music and heavenly joy. Music is essential in our worship, and Psalms is one of the most beloved and comforting books in the Bible.

1 Samuel 16:23, Psalm 33:2



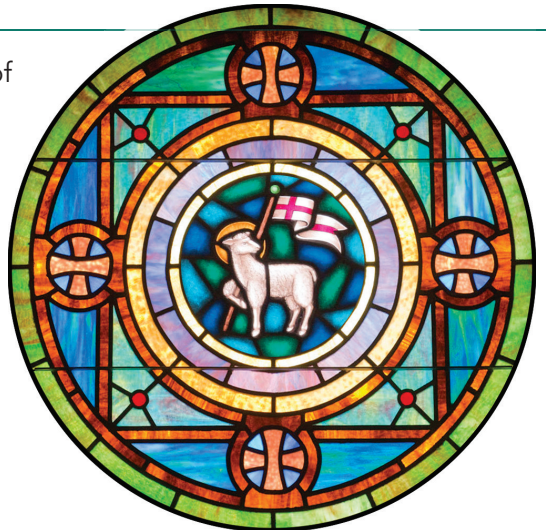
The Potter and the Clay



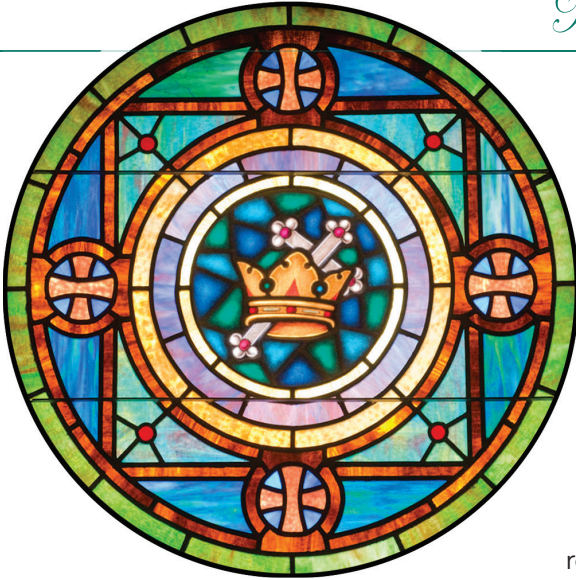
The Book of Jeremiah completes the emphasis in these five windows depicting the Old Testament. Jeremiah speaks of God as the Potter and mankind as the clay. God, the potter, molds wet clay into a pot with tender love. Even though we have been marred by sin, the hands of the Potter can remold and remake our lives. The potter at his wheel is a symbol of the complete sovereignty of God. Men might imagine that they are in control of their own lives and the wider affairs of nations. But they must finally come to terms with God who stands in the same relationship to men as the potter at his wheel stands in relationship to the pot he is shaping. *Jeremiah 18:1-11*

The Lamb of God

The first of the five New Testament windows speaks of the crucifixion of our Lord with an ancient symbol common in Roman catacombs. The lamb, whose head is shown surrounded by a three-rayed nimbus to signify divinity, is wounded and bleeding, but bears the flag of the church triumphantly to symbolize Christ's victory over death. The white pennant bearing a red cross represents Christ's body; it is attached to a staff, signifying his death on the Cross. The flag flying above the lamb insists that God's victory is sure. *John 1:29*



The Cross and the Crown



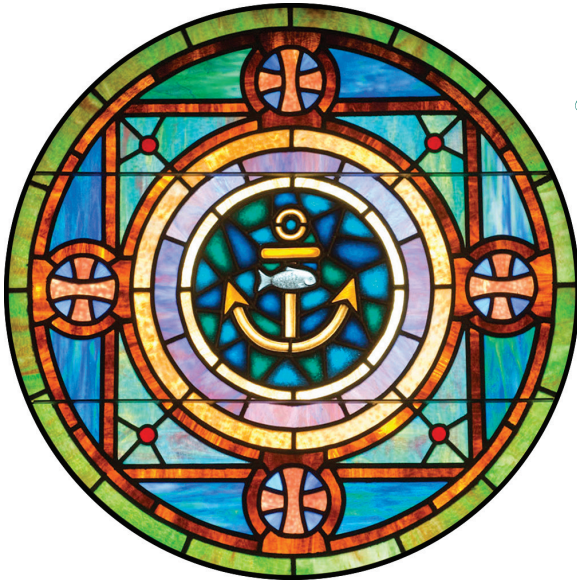
This window represents the Resurrection of our Lord. The Crown symbolizes the kingly office of Christ, “for He is Lord of lords and King of kings.” The “crown of life” is a symbolic expression derived from the book of Revelation referring to eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ. Since ancient times the cross and crown symbolized the victory over the cross and the reward of the faithful after death. The cross in this window, known as the Budded Cross, is a Latin cross with trefoil ends representing the Holy Trinity.

James 1:12, Revelation 2:10, 3:11

The Descending Dove

Representing the birth of the Church as found in the book of Acts, the descending dove signifies the coming of the Holy Spirit with all power upon believers at Pentecost. The dove also symbolizes peace, purity, modesty, humility, wisdom, and gentleness. The beautiful dove is the most used and most authentic symbol of the Holy Spirit. The dove is located in a trefoil signifying the Trinity. *Matthew 3:16*



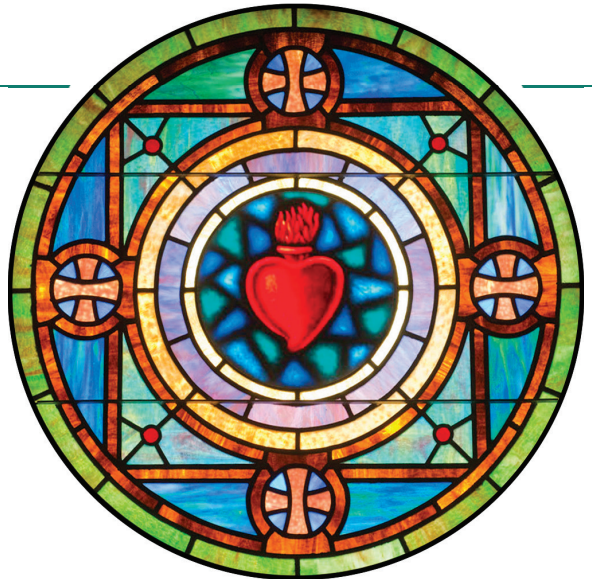


The Anchor Cross and Fish

This window, in the continuing and developing theme of the New Testament, depicts the Church. The anchor refers to the steadfast love of God, which holds the Christian steady even in the midst of storms. It is also a symbol of Christian faith. Christ is our anchor, our hope. The fish is a symbol of the early church. *Hebrews 6:19, Matthew 4:19, 16:24*

The Flaming Heart

Ardent discipleship has as one of its symbols the burning heart, used by John Calvin on his coat of arms. It was Calvin's central hope for himself that his heart would be aflame for his Lord. The Church can never fulfill its function with a cold heart. What a difference would be made in our world should a considerable number of Christians seriously take the burning heart as their symbol. The flame is the symbol of the action of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. *Joel 2:28-31, Acts 2:1-21*





The Large Pattern Window

In the prior Sanctuary, this window was located between the Sanctuary and the annex, one of three originally installed in 1883. This is the only remaining window, having survived for over a century because of the protection it received from the elements when the annex was added. The stenciled glass was designed and made in Germany.

Flowers in the window are the lily and the daisy. The lily signifies purity, innocence, and heavenly bliss. It is a symbol of Easter, as a bulb decaying in the soil produces a new bulb, stem, leaves, and flowers, all rising in glory above the dark soil. The process of death and the release of new life are inseparable.

The Lancel Windows

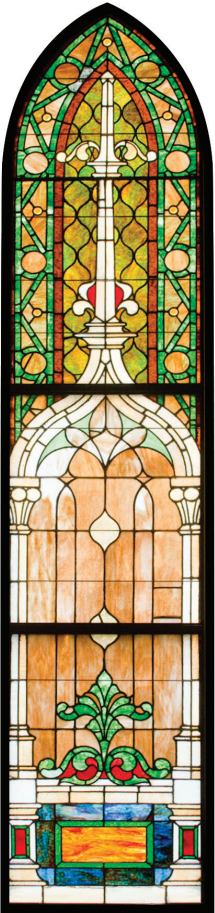
Christ Knocking at the Door

Located near the rear of the church, this window depicts the Shepherd, knocking at the door. The door represents the human heart, with Christ seeking entrance. Notice there is no latch on the outside; the door must be opened from within. *Revelation 3:20*

Christ in the Temple

Between the Crucifixion and Resurrection windows is the lancet window showing Christ in the Temple at twelve years of age. Jesus had gone to Jerusalem with Mary and Joseph, and on the return trip home they discovered that Jesus was not with them. They returned to Jerusalem and found Him in the Temple speaking to the Scribes and religious leaders. When asked why He was there, Jesus replied, "Did you not know that I must be about my Father's business?" *Luke 2:49*

These three windows were installed in the Sanctuary in the 1920s.



Historical Footnotes to Stained Glass Window Selections

Dr. Thomas Wylie Sloan (FPC pastor 1902-1931), who had seen and admired many windows in Europe during his travels, solicited the necessary funds to purchase the Rose Window. This window was originally in a church in Switzerland which was being rebuilt. The window is over 125 years old. The wooden tracery which had existed has now been replaced with aluminum tracery.

The congregation chose the subject of Jesus' Life for the four new windows. The Stained Glass Committee selected Fishers of Men for Jesus' Ministry, The Crucifixion, The Resurrection, and The Ascension.

The Shepherd window features a Christmas scene by the famous German artist, Plockhorst. This window replaced a wooden tracery stencil window in the original building around 1920, and was completely re-leaded in the 1986 renovation. It is the first window to have scenes from the life of Christ.

The Fishers of Men window was installed without the scene around 1920 and featured a small vase of Easter lilies. The window subject was designed by church members to occupy the space available. It was originally installed backward with the rough surface to the outside. It was re-leaded in 1986 and is one of the two windows from the original Sanctuary.

The Crucifixion window is one of the three new windows installed in 1986. It was designed by a church member who diligently researched the many crucifixion details found in the Bible.

The Resurrection window was designed by two church members who remembered seeing a similar painting in Europe. It was installed in 1986.

The Ascension window was designed by church members after viewing two works of art at Bob Jones University. The window was installed in 1986.

The Stencil window was originally installed on the east side of the church facing west. When the annex was added, this window was covered and thus protected. Its lower portion was removed to allow movable panels to separate Sanctuary worship from Sunday School activities. The movable panels were installed in the Parlor. The window was reworked in 1986 and identical lower portions were added. The original window was produced in Germany around 1900. The bottom addition was produced by Laws Stained Glass Studios of Statesville, NC. Glass and stencil techniques were imported from Germany.

Partitions of the original wooden tracery windows were movable to be opened for ventilation.

The Lancet windows, including Christ Knocking at the Door and Christ in the Temple, were installed in the Sanctuary in the 1920s.

The windows in our Sanctuary are the gift of a number of members of the First Presbyterian Church. Through the generosity of the following persons, the windows will glorify God and enhance our worship for years to come.

THE SHEPHERD WINDOW

In memory of Thomas Claghorn Gower.

THE FISHERS OF MEN WINDOW

To the glory of God and in memory of Clarence T. Echols and Laura Peace Echols by Laura E. Dupont.

THE CRUCIFIXION WINDOW

In memory of Mary L. Hipp, the deceased wife, and Mary Elizabeth Hipp, the deceased daughter of Francis M. Hipp.

THE RESURRECTION WINDOW

In memory of Mary Anderson Cochran and Daniel West Cochran by their daughter, Maryann Cochran Abbott.

THE ASCENSION WINDOW

In thanksgiving for the Christian faith and life of our parents, Henry Thomson Mills and Nelle West Mills by Genevieve Mills Gallivan and Henry T. Mills, Jr.

THE FIRST SMALL TRANSIT WINDOW

In memory of James Preston Coleman and Jane H. Coleman.

THE NEXT SMALL TRANSIT WINDOW

In memory of Paul Miller Owen.

Other Symbols of Worship



Chancel

The front of the church, raised by steps above the level of the nave. In our chancel are located the communion table, the baptismal font, the pulpit, the organ, and the choir loft. Note the central place of the Rose Window as the symbol of Christ surrounded by lights, music, Bible, and worship.

Nave

The main body of the church, lying before the chancel. Derived from the Latin word "Navis," meaning ship, the nave symbolizes the ark or ship of the Lord in which Christians sail the sea of life.



Pulpit

Latin for "raised platform," the place from which the sermon is delivered. The pulpit is octagonal, symbolic of the regeneration of the spirit by the Word of God.

Antependium and Book Markers

An antependium, Latin for "to hang before," is a silk or other fine embroidered cloth hung on the front of the pulpit. Colors of white, green, red, and violet depict the various liturgical seasons of the church. The book markers are embroidered and fringed ribbons in the liturgical colors used to reserve pages in the Bible.



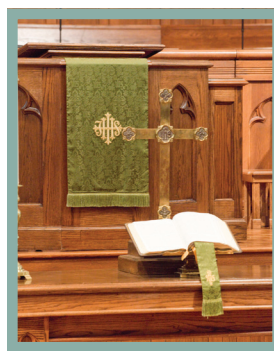
WHITE: Purity and joy for the Christmas and Easter seasons and Communion services



RED: Fire and blood for Pentecost



PURPLE: Penitence for Advent and Lent



GREEN: Hope and peace for Epiphany and Trinity

Chalice

Latin for “cup,” representative of the cup used in the Last Supper of Jesus and the disciples. The goblet used in our Communion service dates back to the original service in which a common cup was used for all those taking communion.



Cross and Open Bible (on Communion Table)

Central to all of our church’s worship and teaching are the empty cross (the living Christ) and the Bible (God’s Word). The cross on the table is known as a Graded cross with three steps at the base representing faith, hope, and love (1 Corinthians 13:13).



Baptismal Font

Latin for “fountain,” this octagonal receptacle of wood contains the water for baptism.





Trefoil

An emblem of the Trinity in modern Christian churches, a modification of three equal circles with the overlapping parts cut out. This widely used symbol in our Sanctuary appears on the choir screens, windows, pews, and woodwork.

Neur-de-Lys (back of pulpit chairs)

French for the "flowers of the lily" is the iris. These chairs are among the oldest items of furniture in our church.





Needlepoint

Through the devotion of many talented artisans belonging to the First Pres Needlepoint Guild, exquisite needlepoint kneelers, chair backs and seats, pew markers, offering plate centers, and wall panels enhance the worshipful atmosphere of the Sanctuary.

The wall panels, located above the crosswalk doors, are given by Mrs. J. P. Lowry to the glory of God in loving memory of her husband, Colonel J. P. Lowry. One wall panel depicts the exterior of the church and educational building. The other depicts the ministries of our church radiating from the central cross: Worship (music notes), Fellowship (people linking hands), Evangelism (world), Spiritual Growth (Bible), Service (bowl and pitcher), and Activities (ball).

Narthex (Vestibule)

The Narthex is an area just outside the doors to the Sanctuary. In ancient Christian churches it was customary to have outside courts where unbaptized catechumens (Jews, converted heathen, and others preparing for admission to membership) were permitted to stand and hear the first portion of the service of Holy Communion.

Gothic

An ornate style of architecture of the Middle Ages. Distinguishing features are pointed arches and vaulted ceilings. The style of our church is known as French Gothic.

Christian Flag

A flag with a body of white and a blue field bearing a red Latin cross. The salute to the Christian flag is: "I pledge allegiance to the Christian flag and to the Savior for whose Kingdom it stands. One brotherhood uniting all true Christians in service and in love."

Photography by Mark Massingill of Ernest Rawlins Photography

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
200 West Washington Street
Greenville, South Carolina 29601

864.235.0496 | *FirstPresGreenville.org*

August 2018