

The Stained Glass Windows of St. Marcus

The extraordinary windows of St. Marcus are in remarkable condition and silently speak the Gospel of our Lord Jesus every day. They are outdoor scenes, and the skies behind the main figures are very sensitive to variations in light outside the church. In winter, with reduced light reflected off snow, the glassy skies seem cold and blue. Early in the morning when the sun is low, they glow fiery orange-pink. When the summer sun shines full force onto the south side, the entire sanctuary is flooded with golden light.

Our glorious windows still glowed each Sunday with light, but after 82 years the lead joints ("comes") had oxidized and weakened and many of the iron bracing bars had popped loose. Individual panes were coming loose and entire panels were bowed and sagging. One of the large upright support posts ("mullions") in the balcony window had cracked.

In 1989 the Altar Guild, with the blessing of the Board of Trustees, organized the plans for a thorough renovation. They selected the Enterprise Art Glass Co. of Wauwatosa, WI. The work was done in phases as funds became available. Many of the north side windows could be repaired in place, but every one of the south side windows and the balcony window had to be removed, disassembled, and re-leaded. Mismatched panes that had been pieced in over the years were replaced. The total cost of the renovation was over \$50,000. The project could be completed thanks to some special gifts in memory of long-time member Dorothy Mueller and in honor of former pastor Rev. Richard M. Seeger.

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ in Pictures

(starting in the southeast corner of the nave)

The Christmas Angel and Shepherds

St. Luke 2:8-12

"Don't Be Afraid"

Original donor: the family of Reinhold Jeske

Next to Mary and Joseph, these humble third-shift workers were the first to hear that God's Son had become incarnate as a human being to be our Messiah. They were also the first worshipers at his manger bed.

Reinhold Jeske, 1863-1939, was in St. Marcus' first confirmation class in 1876 and was the son of one of the congregation's founders, Carl Jeske.

The Flight to Egypt

St. Matthew 2:13-18

"Take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt"

Original donor: Albert Wartchow and sons

The joy of Jesus' birth evaporated as Mary and Joseph were warned by an angel that King Herod ("the Great") had sent soldiers to kill all the boy babies of Bethlehem. The Messiah's family had to hide in Egypt until Herod died.

Albert Wartchow was a plaster contractor who did the plasterwork in the 1914 church.

The Baptism of Our Lord

St. Matthew 3:13-17

"This is My Son, whom I love"

Original donor: Gustave Jeske and son

Anointing in the Old Testament involved applying specially mixed oil to the head of specially chosen men who had important leadership roles to play: prophets, priests, and kings were regularly anointed. Jesus' baptism was not like ours, that is, for the forgiveness of sin. It was rather his public commissioning as our Prophet, Priest, and King. God the Father spoke his approval and the Holy Spirit descended in the form of a dove to strengthen Jesus for his Savior work.

Gustave Jeske, 1858-1940, was the mason contractor who built our present church and school building. He was the brother of Reinhold Jeske. His son Gustave, Jr., was also a St. Marcus member, worked for his father, and eventually took over the construction business.

Emmaus

St. Luke 24:13-35

"Bleibe bei uns" ("Abide with us")

Original donor: Male Choir "Concordia"

The risen Lord gave an extraordinary gift to a man named Cleopas and his unnamed friend. On Easter Sunday afternoon they were given a personal visit with the risen Lord Jesus. Their words of invitation to Jesus to stay with them a bit are ours also: "Abide with us.

A composite picture of the members of the Male Choir from 1911 is hanging in the conference room.

Mary and Martha

St. Luke 10:38-42

"Eins aber ist noth" (Only one thing is needed")

Original donor: The Ladies' Aid

The house of Mary, Martha, and their brother Lazarus in Bethany was a place of rest where Jesus was always welcome. On one occasion his conversation with a busy, bossy sister is a beautiful reminder of what needs to be first priority in our lives. God's Word comes first. Then, of course, Jesus and Mary enjoyed Martha's lunch.

The work of the Ladies' Aid passed to various ministry groups including the Women's Service Guild, Mission Society, and Loving Hearts/Helping Hands.

The Rich Young Man

St. Matthew 19:16-22

"Come, follow Me"

Original donors: Anton Luck and Bernhard Wensch

The previous window narrates a success in Jesus' teaching about priorities. This window narrates a failure: this rich young man loved his money more than God and vainly imagined that he was righteous enough for God. When money becomes a god in someone's heart, the true God cannot live there.

Peter and the Waves

St. Matthew 14:22-33

"Lord, save me"

Original donor: Youth Society "Wartburg"

Peter's story shows us that Jesus' words can make absolutely anything happen for us. Our faith in his words welcomes that power into our lives. When we are sinking in our own seas of troubles, it is good to know that Jesus will haul us out.

Jesus raising his hands in blessing (balcony)

St. Matthew 11:28-30

"Kommet her zu mir alle" ("Come to me, all who are weary")

Original Donor: Mixed Choir "Melodia"

Jesus' hands are used to invite people into his house when they are weary and burdened. He promises to give them rest. His hands also are raised in blessing as they leave, assuring us through the words of the benediction that the love, protection, and peace of God rest on us as we return to our homes, jobs, and lives.

Lancet Window Medallions

Because of the configuration of the balcony and its risers, these medallions are mostly not readily visible and take some effort to discover. There are twelve in all, representing Christian symbols and Bible stories:

1. The Greek letter Alpha, Christ's personal metaphor for being the Beginning
2. The Greek letter Omega, Christ as the End of all things
3. Heilige Schrift ("The Holy Scriptures")
4. The Ten Commandments, carved by God in two tablets of stone
5. The anchor, symbol of Christ's steadfastness
6. The cross and crown
7. The dove of peace
8. A sheaf of wheat, representing the bread in the Communion host
9. The Communion chalice
10. The baptismal font
11. The cross of Christ on rocky Calvary
12. Noah's ark with a dove overhead

Chancel: The Four Evangelists St. Matthaeus, St. Markus, St. Lukas, St. Johannes

Original donor: in memory of Anna Frieseke

The writer of the second Gospel, St. Mark, has given his name to our church. The Latinized form of his German name, St. Marcus, is the spelling that we have inherited and chosen to stay with. He is pictured with the scroll that he wrote, telling the wonderful story of our Savior's life, suffering, death, and resurrection.

Sacristy and Altar Guild Room

Original donor: family of Carl Jeske, 1832-1899

There are three sash windows: one features Easter lilies, the symbol of life and resurrection; one portrays the cross of Jesus, and the third depicts the Wartburg Castle where Dr. Martin Luther translated the Bible.

Carl Jeske was one of the 13 founders of St. Marcus. He emigrated to America in 1867 from Pomerania in northern Germany.

Stairwells

Original donor: family of Anna Friesseke, d. July 31, 1911

The large panels set into the tower walls illuminate the staircases with golden light. They are adorned with Easter lilies.

Atrium Mary Magdalene
20:10-18

St. John

"I have seen the Lord"

Original donor: Mrs. Emilie Trettin

Expanded atrium scene donor: the Lietzke family

This dear woman went from thinking that all was lost to realizing that all was victorious. Her Savior was alive! "Go and tell my brothers."

High up the east wall of the Atrium is the window of the resurrected Christ with Mary Magdalene. The two panels of the center figures used to be in a lancet window on the north side of the church nave. When the lower half of the window was opened up in 2003 to provide a doorway into the Atrium, the panels of Jesus and Mary were hung in the large overhead window at the east end. Andrew Paremski of Enterprise Art Glass in Milwaukee was engaged to design and execute an expanded scene of Jesus' tomb. The eerie periwinkle blue and butterscotch background is called "Kokomo" glass. Mr. Paremski went to the Kokomo Opalescent Glass Co. in Indiana personally to supervise the rolling of the molten glass that became the skies behind Jesus. It took three batches of poured and rolled glass before he was satisfied.

In the pit of the Great Depression, when the congregation in 1932 could not make payroll, Emilie Trettin quietly asked Pastor Dornfeld to meet her at the bank. She gave him a bank check for the congregation for \$500 and told him not to reveal who had given the money until she had passed away.

The Gifts of the Reformation



The beautiful stained glass windows in the Atrium's west wall are a celebration of the faith heritage of St. Marcus Lutheran Church. The upper row tells the stories of eight significant gifts that the Lutheran Reformation gave to all Christians:

- Freedom of the individual Christian's conscience
- Priesthood of the all believers and reception of the Communion Chalice
- The certainty of our salvation
- The story of the Gospel of Christ, the center of our faith
- Restoration of marriage to its high estate, including for the clergy
- Use of all the fine arts for worship and communication
- The Word of God as both authority and content of the faith
- The restoration of congregational singing

The lower row illustrates three significant sites:

- The City Church of St. Mary in Wittenberg where Luther did much of his preaching
- The Wartburg Castle, where Luther first translated the New Testament into German
- The Castle Church in Wittenberg, where Luther posted his 95 Theses and where he is buried

and four remarkable people in 16th Century Europe whom God used to bring great blessings upon his Church:

- Martin Luther, the great reformer—monk, priest, scholar, professor, author, and musician
- Katherine von Bora, Luther's amazing wife and mother of his children
- The young Luther as a monk, attaching his 95 theses to the door of the Castle Church
- Philipp Melancthon, Greek scholar and professor at the University of Wittenberg with Luther, his most trusted translation assistant, and author of the Augsburg Confession
- Frederick the Wise, elector of Saxony, who used his powerful position to keep Luther alive when he had been declared an outlaw by the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V.

The window project began in 2017; planning came from the St. Marcus Art Committee. They entrusted the development of the ideas to Andrew Paremski of the Enterprise Art Glass Studio, now located in Hales Corners. Mr. Paremski prepared rough black and white drawings from the slides given to him, followed by a full set of drawings in color. The committee approved of his designs and signed a contract with Enterprise. Formal work began in late 2019. Mr. Paremski estimates that he has over 1,000 hours of work invested in the project. He was assisted by his portrait painter, Bruce Medema.

These windows are the gifts of 23 individuals and couples who love St. Marcus and want to keep alive the telling and retelling of the great truths of our faith.