

Architectural Theology & Practice

Risen Savior Lutheran Church



A church is a place where God's people gather together to worship Him, and how they worship, as well as what they believe, is either reinforced or undermined by the architecture. Church architecture is therefore first and foremost a matter of theology rather than a matter of style.

Lutheran Worship: History and Practice, Concordia Publishing House, 1993

This church building is a declaration of faith. It is an affirmation in wood and stone, steel and glass, of our steadfast resolve to believe, teach, and confess the saving truth of the Bible. At the inception of the planning process for the new building, the congregation voted unanimously to build a distinctly traditional, orthodox Lutheran Church. The design of the building is an embodiment of that which we believe, of our God, His people, and their interaction in the Divine Service. This faith is our legacy, passed on by those who have gone before us whose loyalty to the Word of God and whose willingness to sacrifice for the faith have made this congregation what it is today. We resolve to pass that heritage along to those who come after us. It is our fervent hope and prayer that this church will stand as a witness, not only for today, but for generations to come. May our merciful, one true God bless this House, built to His glory, so that those He calls will come and receive the Word and Sacraments through faith alone in Christ, saved by grace alone, confessing Scripture alone.



The church is built in the ancient tradition of a cross, facing east. Our lives are 'cruciformed,' shaped by a life of the cross by our Lord. We are crucified to Christ (Gal. 2) and to bear crosses in our life (Matt. 16). There are many 'east' motifs in Scripture: how the wisemen found Jesus; Eden was east; Solomon's temple; Moses tents; Ezekiel's worship; tribe of Judah place; Jesus ascension; etc. East keeps coming up the direction of worship and events. We face east as Scripture speaks of our Lord's return from the east for all to see (Matt. 24, Rev. 16); until then, we look east to see the sun rise as another day of creation, another day of our Lord's grace and mercy and gifts are given. (Traditionally many cemeteries also orient bodies east, so the body will rise up forward to meet our Lord.)

A large steeple marks a place of distinction, a beacon along the horizon for all to see and be reminded. Looking at a steeple, spires, its height *pull* the eyes heavenward, as in Psalm 121, "I lift up my eyes" and Colossians 3 "set your heart on things above." It helps separate it from all other structure and architecture. No one will ever suggest our church looks like a bank, gym, barn, office - it is done in sacred reverence for activity done in a Kingdom that is not of this world (John 18). The green patina color denotes aged copper as commonly found on churches. Over the church nave, stands 5 spires, symbolic of the 5 wounds of Christ.



The top of the steeple, bears a rooster, cross, then globe. Roosters on church steeples are not uncommon in many places in the world. In the 9th Century, all churches in the world were to place a rooster on top of it. The symbol of the rooster conveys our vigilance, watchfulness over our Lord's doctrine and the Church He created. The rooster is fixed, facing east for the same reason as the congregation in worship faces east. We proclaim another day of our Lord's grace and are watchful, ready for His return. One of the foremost symbolic points comes from Scripture, given to us by Jesus. In Luke 22, we have the account of Peter denying Jesus before the rooster crows. The rooster reminds us of

repentance for our failures to God. It reminds us that we must be steadfastly confessing Christ throughout the day and night, amid threats and hardships, always, before the rooster crows. Luke 22 is also the time of our Lord's passion, as it draws us to remember Holy Week. The steeple top conveys then a globe (world), the cross of our Lord as He has redeemed the world and is reigning over all creation. Then a small rooster on top, as we confess, proclaim Christ to the world.

Entering onto the church property, you drive in, align directly to the cross, our Lord, our eyes fixed upon Him –as should be all our life. We enter under His feet to learn from Him. Scripture speaks many times of our God as a fortress, a refuge, a stronghold for His people. Historically for this reason, churches are built conveying this place is a fortress, a refuge and stronghold for His people. Above the fortress doors the inscription, Eine Feste Berg Ist Unser Gott, "A Mighty Fortress is our God," the confessing hymn of Martin Luther from the Reformation, from Psalm 46. The structure inside the Nave also conveys the sense of a fortress, a stronghold of the faith of God's people.



Stone floors convey the permanency of the Church, as we stand upon the rock, the solid, firm foundation of faith in Christ that Scripture speaks.





The keystone (and inside the door on the brass historical vault) notes the U.A.C, Unaltered Augsburg Confession. The Augsburg Confession is the central confession of the Reformation, included in the Book of Concord. In 1530, this confession mark the

official separation with Rome, and remains a mark found upon Lutheran Churches for almost 500 years confessing the catholic faith we hold as Lutherans. U.A.C. is a mark to all that we are authentic, confessional Lutherans. The Unaltered version of 1530 we hold to in our Book of Concord, not later versions that compromised Scriptural truths in an attempt to bring unity with Reformed Church. It is confession to all of the catholic faith (that which has been true in all times and places in our Lord's church) we confess.

On April 7, 1908, St. Martin Evangelical Church was founded in the Basehor area. In 1968, Emmaus Lutheran Church was founded in the Bonner Springs area.

On July 20, 2008 the congregations of St. Martin and Emmaus Lutheran Churches formally merged into Risen Savior Lutheran Church.

Groundbreaking for the new church was July 18, 2010 with our first worship service on Christmas Eve, 2011.



The Pulpit, Baptismal Font, and the Altar are the 3 major pieces of liturgical furniture. These bring forth, symbolize the importance of the Word of God, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper. In significance as to the significance our Lord places upon them in His work that is done in these places.

Baptismal Font. Baptism is the major event in the life of the Christian. According to Scripture, Baptism unites us with Christ and gives the gift of faith and the Holy Spirit. A prominent location was selected, not uncommon to Church design over the centuries.

As Baptism is central in our lives, the family of God's people gather around the font where God declares them children and imparts His gift, it is placed in a central location. Every time entering and departing, the font serves as a reminder of our Baptism, as this constant work and daily renewal in the Holy Spirit. It is beautifully in line with the other Sacrament our Lord has commanded and instituted. The very architecture, placement bespeaks to all the importance our Lord has concerning Baptism. There is also a sense of progression, as Baptism is the entrance rite our Lord works, adopting the person as His child into the Church; then the life of faith progresses through the Lord's Word toward the Altar to receive His supper. The "means of Grace" God has given us are in line and the architectural design and placement bespeaks to all our Lord's grace of the Gospel. (The Scriptural truths of Baptism are found in Matt. 28, Mark 16, John 3, Acts 2, Rom. 6, Col. 3, and many more. Other resources are available concerning the Scriptural understanding and practice of what Baptism is, what it does as God's work in us.)



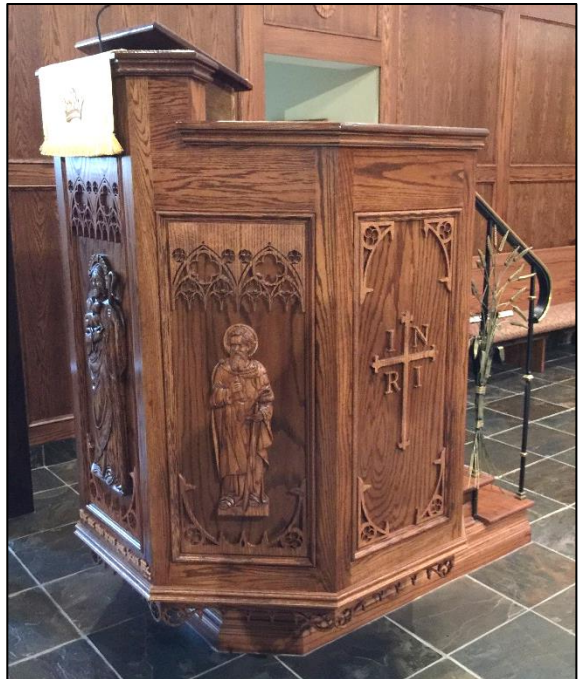
Baptismal Fonts throughout the ages are often 8 sided. As our Lord created in 7 days of the old creation, Christ restores creation, makes us a new creation in an '8th day' we live in now after His death and resurrection. The '8th day' is the day of our Lord's resurrection, as Christians worshipped on Sunday as the day of His resurrection and new life we have in Him. It is made of stone, matching the altar as a connection of the Sacraments. Stone

conveys the permanency of this gift and our Lord's daily work in our baptism. The 4 pillars, as with the altar represent the 4 Gospels of Scripture. The Lord commands baptism of all peoples (Matt. 28) as He calls from the 4 corners of the world to the font.

As we are marked by the cross in our baptism, one may dip their finger in the baptismal font and make the sign of the cross in remembrance of when our Lord made us His child and this constant baptismal work in us.

The Pulpit. "He who hears you, hears me." (Luke 10) is found at the pulpit front, underneath the carving of Jesus as our Good Shepherd. In the historical Church, as well old Lutheran churches in Europe and American, raised pulpits with wood carvings are common. Practically speaking, it aids in hearing the preacher. More importantly, theologically, our Lord has shown us through Scriptures the prominence of the preached word, the proclamation of repentance and good news in His name, thus churches elevate the pulpit. The man in the pulpit is not there of his authority or his own agenda, but to only exercises the authority what has been given to him to do, preaching Christ and Him crucified for the forgiveness of sins. (1 Cor. 2)

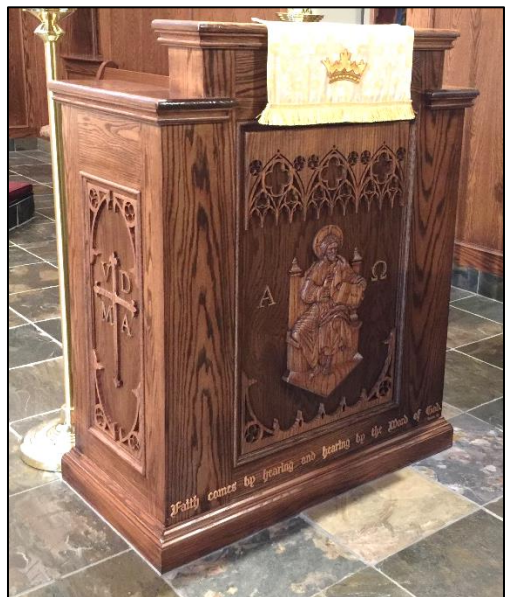
Like the baptismal font, the 8 sides reflect the new day of creation, the 8th day the baptized live and proclaim in Him. The 3 steps up reflects the Holy Trinity in preaching. The iron/brass railing of the wheat reflect the harvest our Lord gathers. (Matthew 9,13) As the apostle Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 1, we preach Christ crucified, the processional cross is stationed next to the pulpit.



Carvings on the Pulpit have Jesus as our Good Shepherds in the center panel, with Moses from the Old Testament side of the church "looking" to Jesus; with St. Paul on the New Testament side "looking" as well to the Christ, as all the Scripture and all God's people look to Jesus. Moses depicted holding the Ten Commandments and St. Paul holding a sword and Scriptures, as he preaches the "Sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God" (Ephesians 6). On each side of the Pulpit is the a cross, with INRI. I=Jesus, N=Nazareth, R=King, I=Jews.



The Lectern. "Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God." (Romans 10) is found at the bottom. Carving on the Lectern depict Jesus upon the throne, holding the Scriptures that bear witness, with the Greek words "I AM" which is the holy name of God; He is the "I AM" the Name given to Moses and noted especially in John's Gospel. On each side of Jesus is the "Alpha and Omega" the title of Jesus. (Revelation chapters 1, 22) as the beginning and end of the Greek alphabet as He encompasses all our language, thoughts and is eternal. The wood carving illustrates the glory of Jesus in His authority and reign over all creation. On each side of the Lectern is a cross with VDMA, the abbreviation of the words, which was the motto of the Reformation taken from 1 Peter 1, Verbum Domini Manet in Aeternum Latin for "The Word of the Lord endures forever."



The Altar is the place where God's people have always gathered. It symbolizes the presences of God among the people both Old, New, in the present/future heavenly worship we see in Revelation, it is the location, center, and focal point of our worship. Even more so, in the New Testament



Church, it also becomes a table for serving the Sacrament where His presence is physically there. The altar in a center, elevated position (like the Pulpit and Lectern) is a visual testimony that the Gospel proclamation of the Church centers on Christ who gave His life for the sheep and reclaimed it that those who were once far from God might be brought near in the blood of His Son (Eph. 2:12). The altar is a symbol of Christ and His perfect sacrifice for sin. The temple curtain is now torn for all to come before the altar. A free standing altar was common in the early church and strongly encouraged by Martin Luther.

It is built upon solid rock, and built of stone, conveying the permanency, foundational work of our Lord. It is 24 feet in circumference as we see the fulfillment on Revelation of the 24 (completeness of God's Old and New Testament church). The 4 pillars are symbolic of the 4 Gospels books. Engraved on the top of the altar is 5 crosses, symbolic of the 5 wounds of Christ. The front stone carving is the Chi-Rho (X and P) with the Alpha, Omega letters as our Lord states His attribute as the beginning and the end with the first and last letters of language.

The altar is: the Lord's table (1 Cor. 10:21); an emblem of sacrifice; a symbol of God's presence. We see throughout the history of Old and New Testament, the altar is central to Christian worship. The place of blessing and sacrifices. Our Lord refers Himself to the altar as a symbol of God in Matt. 5:23, 23:18-20. It is fitting to bow before the altar in reverence to Christ and His Name.

Behind the Altar, coming soon will be the wood carvings on each panel next to the crucifix. This will show the 3 holy days of Holy Week. The panel on the left having the symbols of Holy Thursday, the night of the institution of the Lord Supper. The center is the crucifix of our Lord, Good Friday, when our Lord in His glory dies for our sins. The right panel is the empty tomb, Sunday, the resurrection of our Lord. The vine on each side bespeaks of John 15 as our Lord is the Vine, we the branches, as well the Scriptural motifs of the vineyard, wine.

wood carvings coming soon

wood carvings coming soon



Along the back wall of the Chancel area, spanning across the top wall trim board you see the inscription from Genesis 28, that has adorned our Lord's House since the ancient Church:
"This is none other than the House of God...
And this is the Gate of Heaven."

A Sanctuary Light, to the left of the Altar, on the wall remains constantly lit a lamp. A traditional light from the Old Testament temple as a constant reminder that our Lord is in His temple, that is common in the New testament Church as the ever present Lord is in His House.



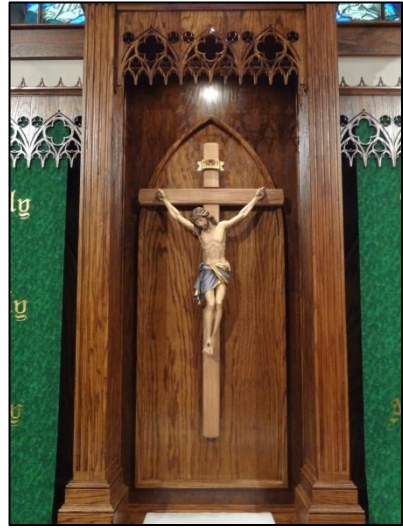
Pews with kneeler.

Kneeling for those who are able, is a natural expression of repentance, humility, and the feeling of one's meekness before God, in His presence, on holy ground. For this reason, it is commendable and fitting posture for: the confession of sins; and the Sacrament of the Altar. This posture of worship is seen many occasions in holy Scripture as people come before God; particularly several occasions when people come before Jesus.



Why crucifixes instead of an empty crosses as found in other churches?

The crucifix is our Lord in His glory for us. The crucifix is a reminder of Christ's suffering and death, but also of His resurrection, ascension and glory in heaven. As it would seem odd to put out an empty manger at Christmas, it is very fitting and proper to have Jesus on the cross. In John 12, our Lord states that He will draw all people unto Himself when He is lifted up in glory; Scripture



notes He was speaking of His death. With a crucifix, according to our Lord, we see Jesus in His glory. We also see the greatest crime of mankind as created creatures kill their Creator, realizing we all took part in this death. We are not ashamed of Christ crucified (1 Cor. 1, 2). As St. Paul commends, we are to preach Christ crucified. Continually in the New Testament, the apostles bring to mind the imagery of Jesus on the cross.

An empty cross is a symbol of the Christian faith, but to see Jesus on the cross is to see God being God for us; and bringing forgiveness and salvation to us. Some may say, the empty cross is a symbol of Jesus resurrection, but this is not the case, as it only shows He is no longer on the cross and doesn't convey a connection to His resurrection. Would it look odd to set out a manger without baby Jesus in it? Why is the cross different? St. Paul tells the Corinthians, "For I decided to know



nothing among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified." (1 Cor. 2:2). If you want to know Jesus, know the Crucified One. He's risen, still bearing those scars – scars given to Him on the cross (John 20:25). So, as you rejoice in Christ risen from the dead, remember what won your salvation – Jesus Christ and Him crucified (Rev. 5:6).

Pipe Organ

This Kilgen Organ was built in 1906 in St. Louis, later dedicated June 15, 1919 for Immanuel Lutheran Church,



Wentzville, Missouri. It was rebuilt and expanded by that congregation in 1996 by Quimby Pipe Organs, Warrensburg, Missouri. In 2010 it was given to Risen Savior Lutheran Church by the congregation of Immanuel. An additional 166 pipes will be added with installation by Quimby Pipe Organs. We are thankful unto the congregation of Immanuel for their generous gift that this instrument continues to be used to the glory of our Lord. The organ now has 21 ranks and 1185 pipes.

While God-pleasing worship is done no less without a pipe organ, pipe organs bring a sound and characteristic to worship that is unique, as the king of instruments as we worship the King. With pipe organs, the sound is authentic, incarnational. The instrument "breathes" with air passing through to make a sound, which is creational in nature. The instrument has a "voice" in bringing sacred, reverent music before the Lord.



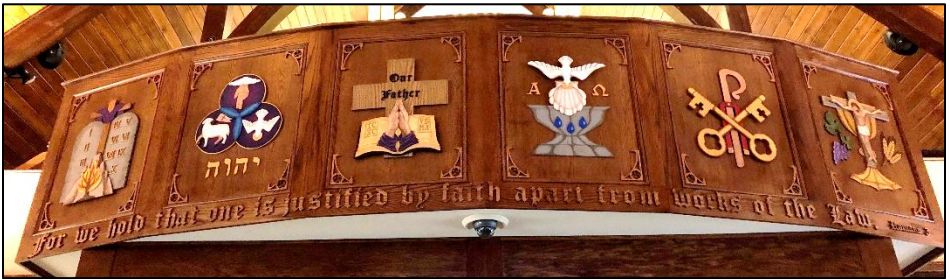
Balcony Artwork



6 Chief Parts of Luther's Small Catechism.

Martin Luther, nor Lutheranism introduces no new teachings. The Small

Catechism: Ten Commandments; Apostles' Creed; Lord's Prayer; Holy Baptism; Confession/Absolution; Lord's Supper. This is all of Scripture alone as the Christian Church has always taught and practiced.



In a tradition from Martin Luther's home church in Wittenberg, Romans 3:28 is along the bottom, "For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the Law."

Stained glass windows

Narthex – Luther's Seal



What a treasure to have one of the most beautiful stained glass windows of Luther's Seal in all the world! Yes, in all the world! (Seriously, do a google search to compare it to any others out there.) As it became more and more plain to Dr. Martin Luther that the cross of Christ and the pride of the world were at odds with each other, he chose for his family a new crest, which has

become the "family crest" of Lutherans worldwide. The best person to explain the meaning of the now famous "Luther Seal" is Dr. Martin Luther, himself.

"First, there should be a black cross set in a heart, which should keep its natural color. This will remind me that faith in the Crucified saves us. Because: "If you believe in your heart, you will be justified." Even though it is a black cross, which kills us and causes pain, yet it allows the heart to remain its natural color; it does not destroy the heart's nature, that is, it does not kill the heart, but keeps it alive. Because "The just will live by faith" - but faith in the Crucified.

Now, although the cross is black, mortified, and intended to cause pain, yet it does not tend to change the color of the heart, does not destroy nature, i.e., does not kill, but keeps alive. "For the just shall live by faith," - by faith in the savior.

But this heart is fixed upon the center of a white rose, to show that faith causes joy, consolation and peace. The rose is white, not red, because white is the ideal color of all blessed saints. And around this groundbase is a golden ring, to signify that such bliss in heaven is endless, and more precious than all joys and treasures, since gold is the best and most treasured metal. Christ, our dear Lord, He will give us grace unto eternal life."

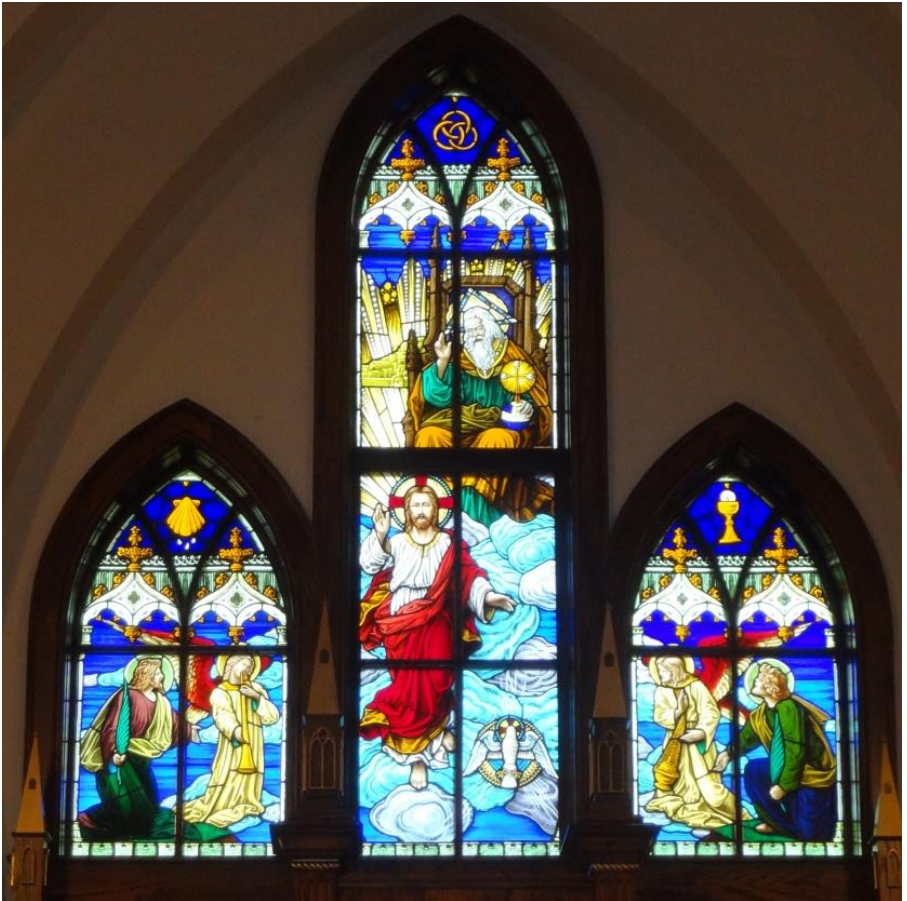
Words around the ring, the Reformation rested upon 3 fundamental principles:

GRACE ALONE, FAITH ALONE, WORD ALONE.

- Our salvation is entirely a gift of **grace** from God, not our own doing.
- We receive grace through **faith** and not by any works we might do.
- The sole norm and rule of all doctrine is the **Holy Scriptures (Word)**.

Altar Windows – Christ’s Return

The center window depicts our One God, in Three Persons. A symbol of the Holy Trinity is at the top. God the Father is upon His throne, holding all things in His hands, with heaven as our true, eternal home. Jesus is shown in His triumphal return from the east amid the clouds, with His nail scarred hands to welcome and bless His people. The Holy Spirit which creates faith and draws us to Jesus is shown proceeding from the Father and the Son. On each of the flanking windows of the Word made flesh, has the symbols of Sacraments are at the top, our Lord’s most precious gifts poured out to us. Angels are shown announcing the presence of God as Scripture shows with incense and trumpets. Saints, on bended knees with palm branches in hand, is the Scriptural account of the totality of God’s people – of the Old Testament and of the New Testament coming together before our Lord and King.



Nave Windows – The Nativity

God becomes man to save us. The Word become flesh and dwells among us. This windows shows the holy family with the shepherds coming in worship after the announcement of Jesus birth. With four shepherds shown as eyewitnesses of the Christ, this is reminisce of the four accounts of the Gospel (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John). By the manger shows what this Child has come to do, with a



lamb and staff. A shepherd staff as He is our Good Shepherd declared throughout the Scripture to lead, guard and care for His people. A lamb by the manger as Scripture shows that He has come to be a sacrifice for us as the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, and our risen, reigning Lamb upon the throne.

Nave Windows – The Baptism of our Lord

John the Baptist, last of the Old Testament prophets is sent to prepare the way for the Christ. The Baptism of Jesus marks the start of His early ministry of fulfilling God's Plan of Salvation. In the Baptism of Jesus, the Gospel writers all record the one true God, in three persons. Jesus who is sinless, says this is to fulfill all righteousness, for us, as our Baptism into Christ is central to who we are as His people and God's work in us. Jesus is tempted in the wilderness immediately following His Baptism and angels attend to Him, thus for centuries artwork of Jesus' Baptism includes angels.

Scripture clearly shows throughout that our Baptism is a work of God in us. We are baptized in Jesus death and resurrection, and God's work of new birth, new life, renewal, and ongoing work of salvation in us, with God's promise of eternal life. The Scriptures are filled with baptismal texts, a few notable chapters: Matthew 3, 28; Mark 1,11,16; John 1, 3; Luke 3; Acts 2; Romans 6; 1 Corinthians 12; Galatians 3, 4; Ephesians 5; Colossians 2; Titus 3.



Nave Windows – Jesus and the children

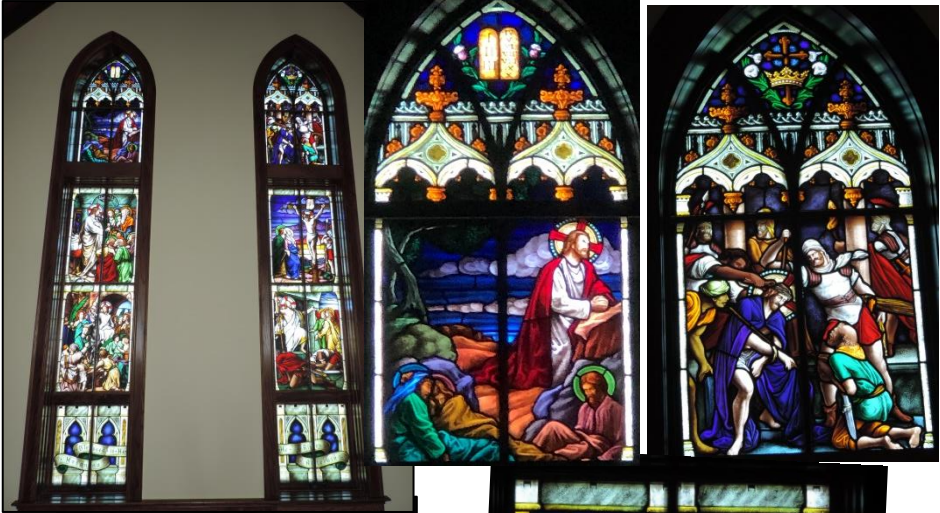


And they were bringing children to him that he might touch them, and the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw it, he was indignant and said to them, "Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it." And he took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands on them. Mark 10.

Our God gives faith, even in infants, in a

family of believers in His Kingdom. Additionally, Jesus will call His disciples, "children" and "little children", the Apostles will also address believers as "children", as in terms of endearment and intimacy of relationship. An angel is shown overhead. God is our fortress, our strength as declared in Psalm 91, also in that Psalm it is written, "For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways" and Jesus declares in regards to a lost sheep, "See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that in heaven their angels always see the face of my Father who is in heaven." Matthew 18. The vine ties in with John 15.

South Transept Windows – Holy Week



Nave Windows – Abraham

The testing of Abraham, with knife, on the mount on the horizon, as he is drawn to obey God and sacrifice Isaac, is the picture of the future son of Abraham, Jesus, who is the ram in the thicket, the Father providing the sacrifice for His people on the mount. Sarah is given a miraculous child in her old age, pointing to God's promise of the greater miraculous birth, even a virgin birth in Mary. They, as we too, worship the God of their salvation before His altar. The promises of God, a future miraculous birth of the future Christ, descendants as the stars and sand, this sacrifice for us is fulfilled in the corresponding Nave window on the south.



God makes a covenant with Abraham, the promise of the Christ to come, that He will be their God and they will be His people. Abraham is the example of faith (God's gift) that St. Paul preaches this example in Romans, that Martin Luther too will preach, the central article of the Christian faith, as it was for Abraham -the gift of faith to believe the promised Christ. We too are justified, not by our works, but counted righteous, by the gift of faith alone in the work of Christ alone. All 4 Gospel writers will record the words of Jesus speaking of Abraham; as well, 7 other New Testament books will speak of God's work unto Abraham, that is also done unto us.

Nave Windows – Moses

Moses leads God's people through the Red Sea (Exodus 14-15). This deliverance from slavery, death, and their enemies is a foreshadow of a greater exodus our Lord brings from the slavery of sin, eternal death, and defeat of our enemies.

The Lord fulfills His promises for deliverance to a Promised Land and provides for all their needs. Moses is repeatedly brought up in the Gospels and by the writers of the New Testament as the Christ and His works are proclaimed.

In the corresponding window on the New Testament (south)

side, Moses, the Torah, and all the happenings of God's people in the stories and festivals are beginning to be fulfilled as Jesus is anointed the Christ and begins His ministry to save mankind in our Lord's Baptism. Our Lord's ministry and passion bring about the greater exodus of a greater deliverance with water, by the great Prophet foretold, with a greater feeding of bread from heaven in the Lord's Supper, leading His children to a greater Promised Land of heaven. Moses, in the glass, is looking to the Baptismal Font and the Christ who has come. At the burning bush (Exodus 3) at the window top, Moses is called into service by our Lord Jesus to begin the Old Testament exodus of God's people. God reveals His Name of "I AM" as our "I AM" from the Jordan River continues to work His salvation in us, as the Red Sea crossing pointed to the greater Holy Baptism given to His children (1 Corinthians 10).

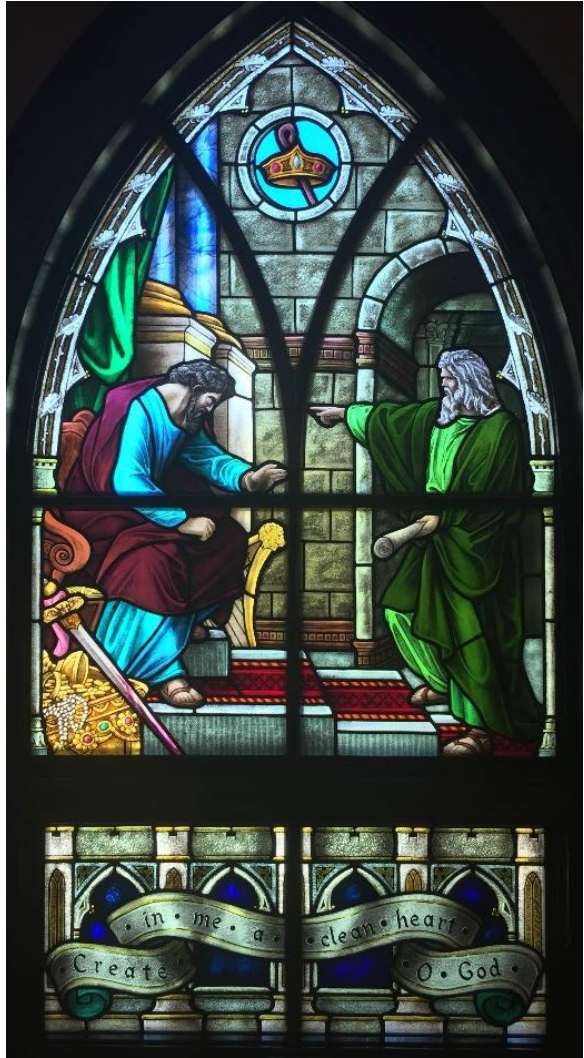


Nave Windows – King David

King David is shown on the throne, confronted by the Prophet Nathan (2 Samuel 12) over David's murder, adultery, and unrepentance. Note the pink sash along with sword. Psalm 51, as noted on the scroll below, is David's response to the Law of God spoken from His servant.

All of us, as well, are confronted by the Law of God preached to us. We respond in repentance with David: "Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions...

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit." This account of David in the Psalm takes a place of prominence in the historical liturgy in the Offertory as God's saints sing with David. David's Lord and promised heir of the Christ corresponds to this window on the New Testament side (south). As David is the shepherd and king who writes many of the Psalms (songs) that bespeak of the Christ; our Good Shepherd and Eternal King bring forgiveness of which David wrote.



North Transept Windows – Patriarchs



Top Center

Tree of Life Ark of the
Covenant

Adam Genesis 2-3

Adam and Eve in the
Garden with God

Elijah

1 Kings 18

Elijah calling down
fire from heaven before
the Baal prophets



Noah

Genesis 6-8

Noah and his family
after the flood

Isaiah

Isaiah 6

Isaiah in the Temple



Joseph

Genesis 49

Jacob (Israel) blessing
his 12 sons

Jeremiah

Jeremiah, Lamentations.

Jeremiah mourning the
people' unrepentance,
destruction of Jerusalem



Bottom Scroll

John 1

Psalm 46

Prophets



Excursus

A Theology of Stained Glass

We see in Scripture the important God places upon order, liturgy, beauty in His house, adornments, of symbols. To see the beauty of stained glass, it must be viewed by those 'inside the Church' with the creational light shining through in artwork that teaches the faith. Beginning in the late Romanesque, early Gothic periods, the advent of stained-glass windows gave Christians a visual imagery that summarized the truths of the Faith; walls of colored sunlight that visualized Biblical, theological, symbolic, historical narratives of teachings in stunning glory to God. Within the walls of the church, in the very place where heaven and earth meet in divine liturgies and devotional exercises, truth itself is narrated in parables of light. God's people throughout the ages knew that their cathedral-church was a symbol within their city of the Heavenly Jerusalem. The place where heaven and earth come together in the glory of our God and the blessing unto His people. Visual and atmospheric beauty that God reveals in Scripture with symbolic theology that captures the eternal truths in windows and images and creational light of the faith.

Courtyard

Adjacent to the Church and Wittenberg Hall sets our Courtyard. A quiet place for prayer and reflection and a gathering place for our many events.

The Courtyard include a water feature of granite boulders. Not only do the beauty and sound of the waterfalls add to the setting, it is also reminiscent of Exodus 17, Numbers 20 as water comes from a rock. Foremost, the water from the rock is of Jesus, 1 Corinthians 10. The motifs in Scripture as Jesus as a rock of our salvation and springs of living waters He gives are many, namely in: Psalm 114; Jeremiah 2, 17; Isaiah 12; Revelation 22; John 4, 7.



Excursus

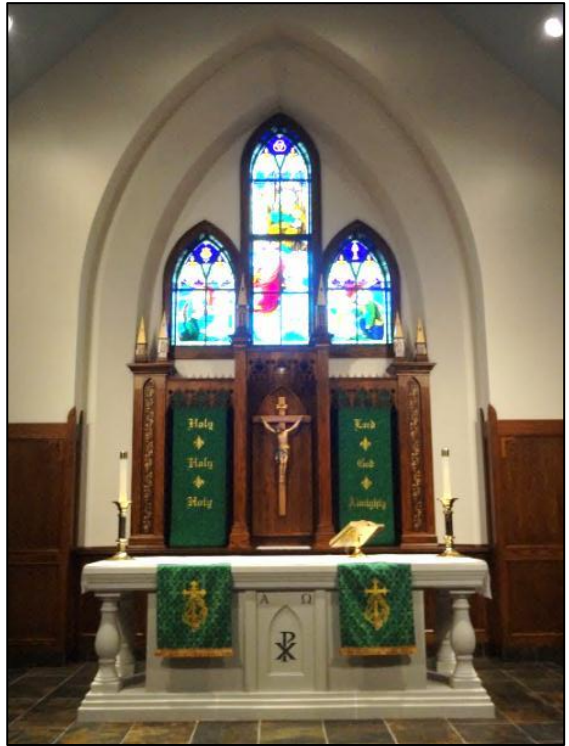
Worship and the Church. The Church is the entrance into the holy city, the Bride of Christ, the New Jerusalem, through which even in this present moment we glimpse the everlasting life and light that is the fruit of His sacrificial self-offering on the cross and His life-giving resurrection. As Ephesians reminds us, Jesus is the source from which all things come and the one in whom all things find their fulfillment, not in the least of which is you and me. Worship is not something that comes naturally to us, although the desire to know God and live in His presence is certainly still with us, though distorted since the Fall.

Therefore God must first teach us, as He has done through His Word, so that we might know where to know Him and where He has made Himself known. And those who know Him in His Word and Sacraments are then given the holy task of teaching this sacred domain and the means of grace to those outside the community of faith and to the children who are nurtured in their young lives of faith within that community.

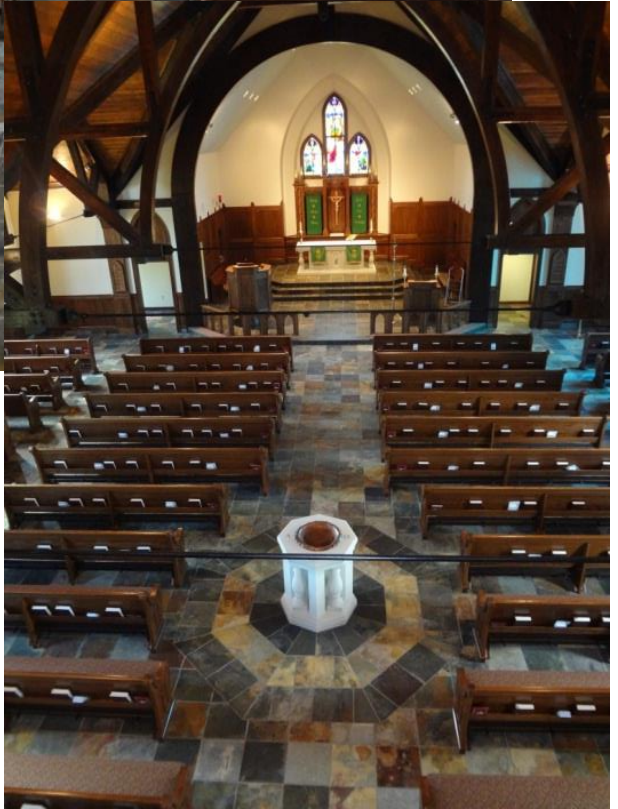
Part of this task is the teaching of reverence. Reverence is the training of the mind and also the body for the holy task and gracious privilege of worship. It is not simply outward ritual, gesture, or posture but uniting both the outward form with the inward posture of the heart (we call it faith). Part of this training in reverence involves learning a pattern of prayer. In this way the rhythm of the Church Year and the uniformity of the liturgical ordinary are powerful tools that both foster and encourage this reverence.

We might say that the same is true of the ritual gestures of the liturgy. We use the liturgy because there is nothing else that is entirely Scriptural, entirely places Christ and His work of forgiveness for worship. This is a pattern of worship from the Old and New Testament. Part of the value of liturgical actions is that they become a part of us, an extension of our inward piety and devotion. When we kneel, when make the sign of the cross upon us at the invocation, benediction, and all the points in between, we express outwardly our constant identity as a baptized child of God. When these gestures become instinctive, then they flow naturally from the prompting of the liturgy or the shape of our private prayer -- reminding us of the grace that first called us to faith and the grace that sustains us. The fruit of these liturgical actions is the posture of reverence.

Good church architecture provides focal points for our eyes in the rich tapestry of liturgical art. It begins with the crucifix where we are repeatedly confronted with the all sufficient sacrifice of Christ that is both the cardinal teaching of our faith and the source of all the gifts of forgiveness, life, and salvation that God has generously bestowed upon us. As one author put it, when the cross is no longer a scandal it no longer speaks of Christ. Part of seeing Him as the Suffering Savior is remembering not only the gift but the scandal through which that gift comes to us. Stained glass with its sacred images and stories framed in a window functions in the same way as prompter and shaper of our thoughts and prayer.



The truth is that when the focus is mostly on what we do or what others do, the worship service is at odds with the sense of reverence that is meant to flow from the place where we enjoin our life together with Christ and all those who bear His name. When the only time we spend in the Sanctuary is time spent "doing worship," reverence is hard to find and, if found, difficult to sustain. For this reason it is a good thing to come early enough for a time in prayer, to look around at the sacred architecture and art, to read through the hymns before we sing them, and to become familiar with the lessons for the day before they are read out loud. This godly preparation bears good fruit for us and for the faith that is nurtured by the means of grace within the context of our life together -- called, gathered, and enlightened by the Spirit at work in this place.



Door Arches - To the Sacristy

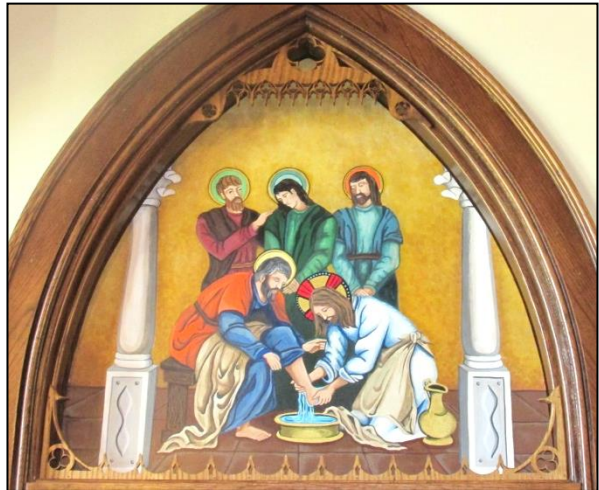
Wedding at Cana

At the wedding feast (John 2), Jesus performs His first sign as He is manifesting His glory leading to His passion "my hour has not yet come." Isaiah chapter 25 speaks of the Christ defeating death in a feast with wine, along with Jeremiah speaking of the New Covenant with wine breaking forth in the Christ. Along with many motifs of wine pointing to the works of Christ, foremost we celebrate the Wedding Feast of the Lamb in the Lord's Supper. If is fitting this artwork is placed over the doorway to the Sacristy, where the Altar Guild serves, and prepares the Sacrament of the Altar.



- To the Vestry Washing the Disciples' Feet

Jesus washed the disciples' feet (John 13) in preparation, anointing them as they deliver the Gospel –the forgiveness of sins, cleaning given by our Lord. He speaks of a "servant not greater than His master" in teaching the humble role of servanthood for the Pastoral Office and for all Christians. St. Paul will speak in Romans chapter 10, echoing Isaiah "And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!" It is fitting this artwork is placed over the doorway to the Vestry, as our Lord's servants prepare to serve His people.



Risen Savior Cemetery

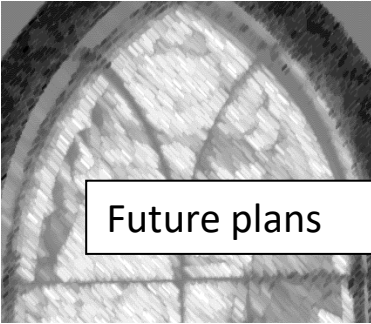
Dedicated Transfiguration Sunday 2015

A Church Cemetery is to serve as a memorial. The burial of the dead is a confession of faith and most fitting for a Church to provide the land. It is an expression that the saints buried there had spent their lives in the service of Christ and now awaited the resurrection on Christ's return. In the truest sense, the last great act of faith that a believer may exhibit from their life is in the funeral and burial. While the believer's soul is in perfect bliss in heaven, we see in Scripture the great care and significance given to the body of the loved one who has died. Notable examples include Abraham burying Sarah, Joseph's body brought to Israel, Lazarus' burial, and the first martyr after our Lord's Ascension, Stephen. The most significant of all burials in the Scriptures is that of our Lord Himself. Within these recorded events we are taught of faith, redemption, inheritance, the promise of Christ, and resurrection. For believers, the grave is a symbol not only of the part they played in history here on earth; they will one day rise from there and be glorified with Christ!



Future Sacred Art

Above the Entryway to the Church



Outside Transept



“The truth is I do not have the foggiest idea how to have a true relationship with Jesus Christ apart from the Word and Sacraments in which Christ has hidden Himself and revealed Himself. Unless I am completely mistaken, the only way to know Christ is to know Him where and as He has chosen to make Himself known. It is for this reason we keep saying “means of grace” — not because it is some confessional mantra. The only grace we know is the grace made known to us in the Words of Holy Scripture, the water of life, the voice of absolution, and the bread and wine of His table.

Consider the witness of the Church, her mission, not as abstract love for and seeking after the salvation of souls but the specific and concrete mission which brings the sinner into the domain of our Lord’s saving mercy through the proclamation of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments, the means of grace that alone deliver Christ’s gifts to the sinner. In other words the mission of the Church is to bring people not into some abstract relationship with Jesus but into the concrete relationship founded not on feeling or choice but upon a specific font, pulpit, and table.”



Upon entering the nave, our Lord calls His people to come to His house and worship Him, namely in receiving the gifts His desires to give us in the forgiveness of sins, His Word, and His Sacraments. The words scribed in gold pronounce:

Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name! For the LORD is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations. Psalm 100



When exiting the Divine Worship Service, on the back wall in gold is the confession made by Simeon at the Temple, that we depart out into life in the world that all is well:

Lord, now You let Your servant depart in peace, according to Your Word. Luke 2



Risen Savior Lutheran Church

913.724.2900 14700 Leavenworth, Basehor, KS 66007
risensaviorlcms.org

