

GUARDIANS  
OF  
WORSHIP  
DUKE MEMORIAL  
WINDOWS  
1886-1986

GUARDIANS  
OF  
WORSHIP

*A Photographic Essay  
Featuring the Stained Glass Windows  
of  
Duke Memorial United Methodist Church  
Durham, North Carolina  
In Celebration of the One-Hundredth Anniversary  
of the Founding of the Church*

*Text by William Arthur Kale*

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of Mr. and Mrs. R. Dillard Teer and their families, Mr. and Mrs. Robb Teer, Mr.  
and Mrs. Roy Teer, and Mrs. Stephen Whilden, Miss Nancy Teer and Miss Lyda Teer.*

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THE STAINED GLASS WINDOWS  
OF  
DUKE MEMORIAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



*"Given by Benjamin Newton Duke and James Buchanan Duke in memory of their father, Washington Duke."<sup>1</sup>*

WINDOWS WITH CHARACTER  
IN HONOR OF  
A MAN OF CHARACTER

The multicolored glass windows which adorn the walls of Duke Memorial United Methodist Church in Durham, North Carolina, are suitable for this one place of worship and no other. They are necessary components of a coherent scheme of design, color and religious symbolism and they contribute substantially to the aura of reverence and dignity which pervades this church.

In addition to their aesthetic and architectural fitness, these windows honor the memory of the patriarch of the Duke family, Washington Duke (1820-1905), entrepreneur of the tobacco industry, leading citizen of Durham, and devout Methodist layman. This rugged-built but kind-looking man was respected for his devotion as a churchman. He was chiefly responsible for founding Bethany Sunday School on May 2, 1886, which met in his own factory. From that Sunday School sprang the movement to erect the Main Street Methodist Episcopal Church, South, on the corner of Main and Gregson Streets, on a lot given by Brodie L. Duke, eldest son of Washington Duke. For twenty years Main Street Church attracted increasing numbers from families living in the area known as the western side of Durham, including students and faculty of Trinity College.

<sup>1</sup> Dixon, Wyatt T., *Ninety Years of Duke Memorial Church*, p. 90.

## MEMORIALS WITHIN A MEMORIAL

When the structure on Main Street was no longer adequate, a more imposing and serviceable building was erected on Chapel Hill Street. Named Memorial Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and built between (1907-1912), it was generally assumed to be a memorial to Washington Duke and the Duke family.<sup>2</sup>

Two members of the family, Benjamin Newton Duke and James Buchanan Duke, desiring to honor their father's memory more explicitly, donated the stained glass windows in his honor, thereby establishing "memorials within a memorial." The hope of the brothers, Ben and Buck Duke, has been realized. The soft glow of the memorial windows has signalized the continuing influence of Washington Duke throughout the three-quarters of a century since the completion of Duke Memorial Church.

Members of the Centennial Planning Committee believe that the memorial windows deserve direct and sustained attention during the year of celebration, 1986. These are windows with character which honor a man of character.

*"Friend of Truth! Of Soul Sincere,  
In Action Faithful, and in Honor Clear."<sup>3</sup>*

## WINDOWS AND WINDOW-WATCHERS

AT

### DUKE MEMORIAL CHURCH

*"How lovely is thy dwelling place, O Lord of hosts!"*

Since their installation in December, 1911, approximately six months before the church was completed, the colorful windows of Duke Memorial United Methodist Church have been seen by countless observers. Clergymen, musicians, janitors and repairmen, as well as thousands of church members and visitors have gazed upon them, both in awe and admiration. The windows have much to share. Their combination of color, design, image and symbol challenges the mind and delights the eye and heart.

As the church celebrates the one-hundredth anniversary of its founding in 1886, the role of the Memorial Windows as guardians of the sanctuary and companions of worshippers takes on added significance. Understanding the windows requires effort and time. One should study them from inside on sunny days, alone or with small groups of interested persons.

## "HOW LOVELY ..."

The most frequent response to the windows is the simple comment, "They are beautiful." Some say, "They are surprising; each time I look at them I see something new." "The word "lovely" as used in the 84th Psalm can be applied to any selected segment as well as to the total display. "How lovely is thy dwelling place, O Lord of hosts!"

<sup>2</sup> Dixon, Ibid., p. 38

<sup>3</sup> Inscribed on the north side of the Washington Duke Monument, East Campus, Duke University.

## "HOW MYSTERIOUSLY VOCAL!"

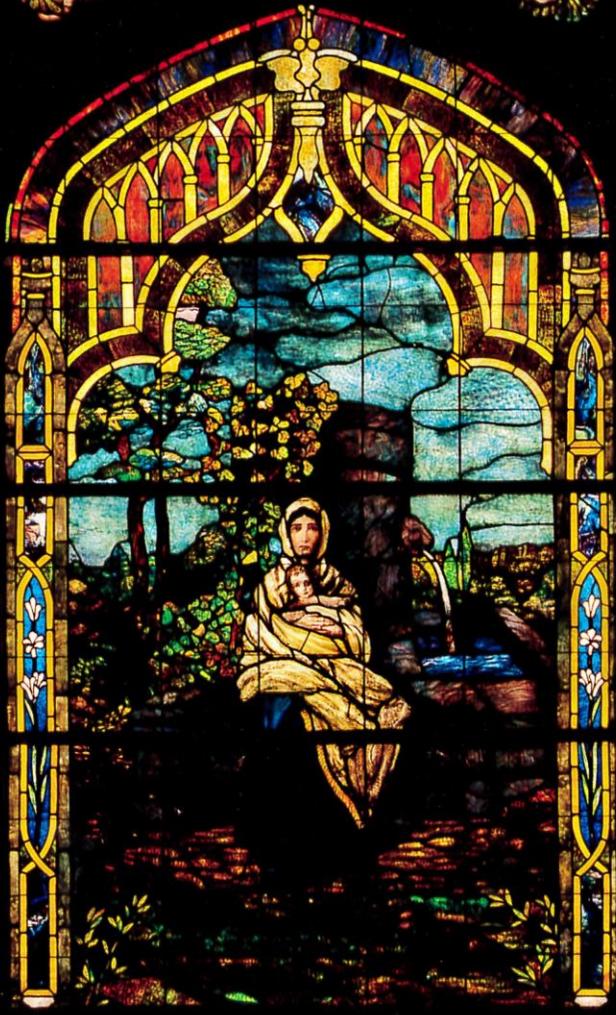
It cannot be claimed that the Duke Memorial windows rank with the magnificent jeweled glass designs in Chartres Cathedral in France, famous since the twelfth century. They play a more modest role than that performed by the stained glass in Washington Cathedral or in the Chapel of Duke University. Nevertheless, they are not lacking in rarity or appeal. Stained glass does not have to be famous to catch the eye, nor aesthetically satisfying to warm the heart.

What is distinctive about the Duke Memorial windows is their remarkable affinity with people who sit in the pews. Although constructed of thick pieces of glass held together by lead comes — truly not flesh and blood — they have become companions of human spirits. They communicate through images and symbols, conveying to twentieth-century minds the abiding relevance of biblical truth and something of Christian theology. Across the spacious nave messages are flashed to each pew and aisle. Distraught men and women, striving to keep faith in an era of disorder and revolution, rejoice in the companionship they feel with the stalwarts of faith whose window images are alive and vocal. Members of the congregation are freed, in great part, from feeling that they are an audience rather than the people of God. How remarkable that windows and worshippers can have such fellowship!

### THE WINDOW DESIGNER, A FORMER BARKEEPER

Not only are the windows lovely and extraordinarily articulate, the story of their construction is surprising. They were designed by a distinguished Atlanta artist and craftsman whose career began in a saloon. As reported by Duke Memorial's historian, Wyatt T. Dixon,<sup>4</sup> the story goes back to the year 1906 when a teenager named Joseph V. Llorens was employed as a barkeeper. Between serving his customers, the sixteen-year-old Joe Llorens spent time drawing sketches of their likenesses. One day he noticed a vandyke beard on the face of a man standing nearby and made a quick drawing. His subject was F.C. Fisher, of Fisher's Empire Glass Company, who was impressed by the sketch and on impulse offered young Llorens a job as an apprentice. This dramatic shift in vocation resulted in a career that lasted more than fifty years. While employed by the Fisher Company he designed the Duke Memorial windows. In 1912 he started his own successful company which continues today. Windows from this firm adorn more than a thousand churches and other buildings throughout the United States, West Indies and Mexico. After retirement, Joseph V. Llorens lived into his ninety-fifth year and died on November 6, 1984. The firm, Llorens Stained Glass Studios, continues in operation in Decatur, Georgia, under the management of Joe Llorens, Jr. In a letter dated December 9, 1985, Llorens Jr. confirmed the information about his father as reported in the Dixon volume. He added, "Mr. Llorens Sr. did meet Doris Duke (daughter of James B. and granddaughter of Washington Duke) when she was a little girl during his visit to the church."

<sup>4</sup> Dixon, *op. cit.*, pp. 94, 95.



## THE EAST TRANSEPT WINDOWS

### *Helping Keep Faith Alive*

The cluster of stained glass units which occupies much of the wall of the East Transept (Duke Street side) is often regarded as one great window, but is a large pattern into which several windows, of varying shapes and sizes, are fitted. At the upper level is a large three-paneled tracery window, forming an immense arch eighteen feet high. The central panel portrays the Virgin Mary holding her Son while sitting on the curbstone of a fountain. From time to time members of Duke Memorial speak of the central panel as the "Mary Window" and express their sentiments of admiration and gratitude.

"Isn't she lovely? And how young she is!"

"I wonder what she is thinking. I wish I could read her mind as she cuddles her Child."

Only rarely does someone mention the fountain which provides the backdrop for the picture of the Virgin and Child. Is this backdrop only the invention of some artist? What biblical root, if any, should be assumed in interpreting the scene? One helpful answer may be found in the drawings of the noted French painter, James Joseph Jacques Tissot (1836-1902).

### FOUNTAIN OF THE VIRGIN

During a sojourn in what was called Palestine in the last century, Tissot located several sources of water supply known as "Wells of the Virgin Mary" and made sketches. In 1895 he published a large three-volume work. Hundreds of drawings and explanatory notes, representing a decade of travel, research and consultation with scholars of the region, enriched the text. In the first volume he placed a drawing inscribed, "Jesus and His Mother at the Fountain."<sup>5</sup> The artist's note near the drawing stated:

In the Holy Land there are a number of *Wells of the Virgin Mary*. The most celebrated is that of Siloam, situated southeast of the Temple in the Valley of Jehoshaphat. ...Another is in Nazareth, which is evidently the one to which the Holy Virgin went most frequently, according to a Greek legend. It was there that the angel Gabriel first appeared to her who was to be the mother of the redeemer.

From what source or sources did the Llorens firm in Atlanta get knowledge of the legends of the Virgin's Fountains? The Tissot volumes? The works of other artists? The common store of patterns shared by manufacturers of stained glass? No one can be sure. A fire in Atlanta wiped out all of the records while the Duke Memorial windows were being made. Whatever influence may lie beneath the pattern of the East Transept cluster of windows, the prominent location of the Blessed Virgin with her Son assures worshipping congregations that they are blessed people.

<sup>5</sup> Tissot, J. James, *The Life of Our Saviour*, Vol. I, p. 37.

"BLESSED ART THOU AMONG WOMEN."

Luke 1:28,42

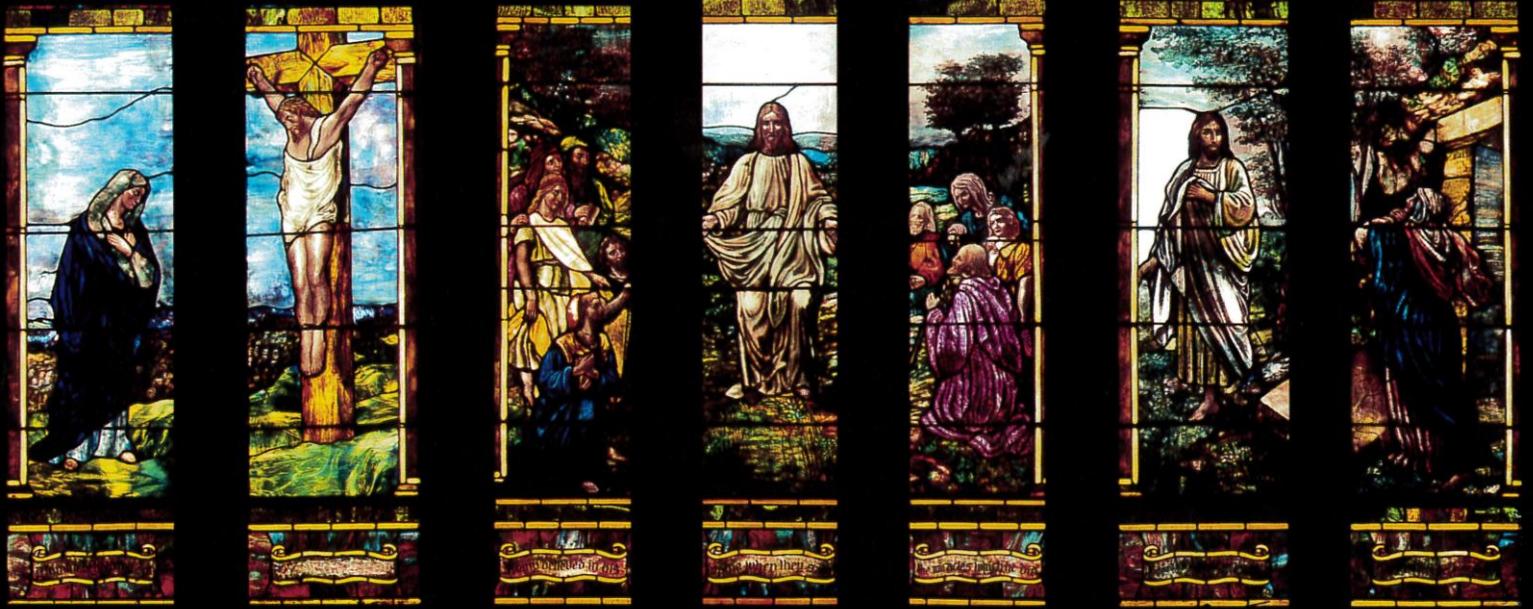
Mary, the mother of Jesus, is the most famous woman in the New Testament and belongs in the center of any account of the Savior's life, whether pictorial or written. To find meaning in the total display of stained glass in the East Transept in which she is a central figure, one must begin with Mary and the Child and move to the left and right, upward and downward at several angles, pausing at segment after segment, until the full story of the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is reviewed. Mary was "blessed among women" not only during the infancy and boyhood of Jesus but throughout the years of watching and waiting until her Son grew to maturity. Then with increasing wonder, she learned that He performed miracles, spoke parables and risked His life in proclaiming that the "Kingdom of God is at hand." Eventually she was confronted with the reality of His suffering and death, and finally the mystery and triumph of His resurrection. Throughout all generations Mary's status as the "blessed woman" has continued, not only because of her unique experience of motherhood but also because awareness of her has helped keep Christ-centered faith alive.

#### MADONNA LILIES, EMBLEM OF THE HOLY MOTHER

In the border around the Mary panel and in the hands of the flanking angels are Madonna lilies, long associated with the Annunciation and the doctrine of the Incarnation.

#### ALPHA AND OMEGA

Above each of the three large panels is an important Christian symbol. In the middle position and slightly higher is the familiar *Cross and Crown*, emblem of the true servants of Christ. Flanking this design are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet, *Alpha* to the left and *Omega* to the right. They refer to the words of the Lord in the final chapter of the book of Revelation, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last" (Rev. 22:13). Usually these letters are either combined into a monogram or separated by a hyphen. Their wider separation in the pattern of this transept is a means of maintaining artistic balance, but they should always be connected in the minds of viewers.



SLENDER PANELS - FAITH'S CHANNELS  
*Three Scenes That Say More Than Tongue or Pen*

On the lower level of the East Transept is a row of seven narrow windows, each measuring 24 inches by 76 inches. They are grouped into three scenes featuring the mature Son of Mary.

The middle three, in combination, picture Jesus, the Miracle Worker, standing erect and confident before a number of needy persons, including several cripples with canes. Beneath is printed, "Many believed in his name when they saw the miracles which he did" (John 11:45).

At the left is a pair of same-sized panels showing a poignant moment during the crucifixion of Jesus. His mother is standing with bowed head and crossed hands before the cross on which her Son is hanging. Below her is printed a statement from His lips: "Woman, behold thy son" (John 19:26a). The word "son" is spelled with a small "s" to indicate the new relationship the mother would have with one of the sons of Zebedee and also the "disciple Jesus loved." In the gospel record John stands near Mary, but he is not shown in this window.

At the opposite, or right end of the row is another pair of panels, showing the Risen Lord on the morning of the resurrection talking with another Mary, the one known as Mary Magdalene. He gave her instructions: "Go to my brethren and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, to my God and your God" (John 20:17). The latter half of this sentence is printed just below the picture. At first glance the risen Christ appears to be standing on one foot, but closer examination makes it apparent that His left foot is hidden in the folds of his long garment and is about one step behind Him. He seems to be walking away from the tomb while talking with Mary Magdalene.



- Deborah -



- Ruth -



- Dorcas -



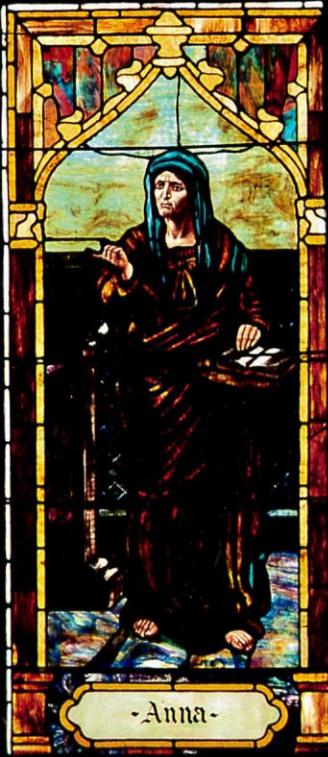
- Lydia -



- Sarah -



- Rachel -



- Anna -



- Elisabeth -

## DEBORAH AND RUTH

Images of two famous women, *Deborah* and *Ruth*, are located in twin panels at the balcony level on the Duke Street side because their stories have a common setting in the period of the 'judges'.

Gifted and successful as a career woman, *Deborah* appeared on the scene at a time of testing for the tribesmen of Israel in their conquest of Canaan. She was also a poetess, whose "Song of Deborah" was Israel's victory chant.

The story of *Ruth* offers rebuke to persons who like to tell unmannerly mother-in-law jokes. It is well-known for the famous sentence that Ruth addressed to the mother of her deceased husband: "...your people shall be my people and your God my God." Its chief significance, however, lies in its report of the later marriage of Ruth, a Moabitess, to Boaz of Bethlehem, who represented Israel's most distinguished family. She became the great-grandmother of King David.

## DORCAS AND LYDIA

The *Dorcas-Lydia* pairing of images represents the surprising fruits of early Christian missions to Gentiles. *Dorcas* was miraculously raised from the dead by the Apostle Peter. Her life and influence have been commemorated in the form of "Dorcas Societies" and comparable organizations of church women devoted to good works.

*Lydia*, a native of Thyatira who had moved to Philippi and whose business was to sell a special purple dye made from shellfish, became a Christian under St. Paul's ministry to women at a meeting one Sabbath day on the bank of a stream just outside the city of Philippi.

## SARAH AND RACHEL

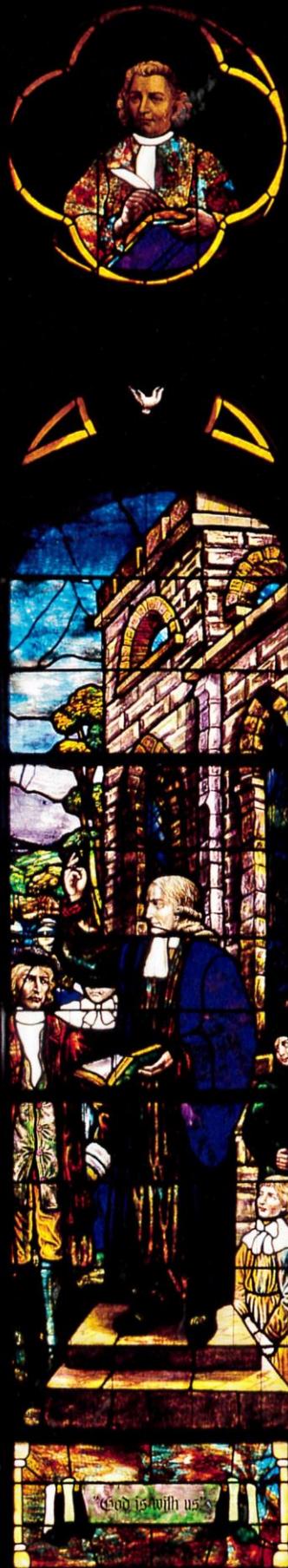
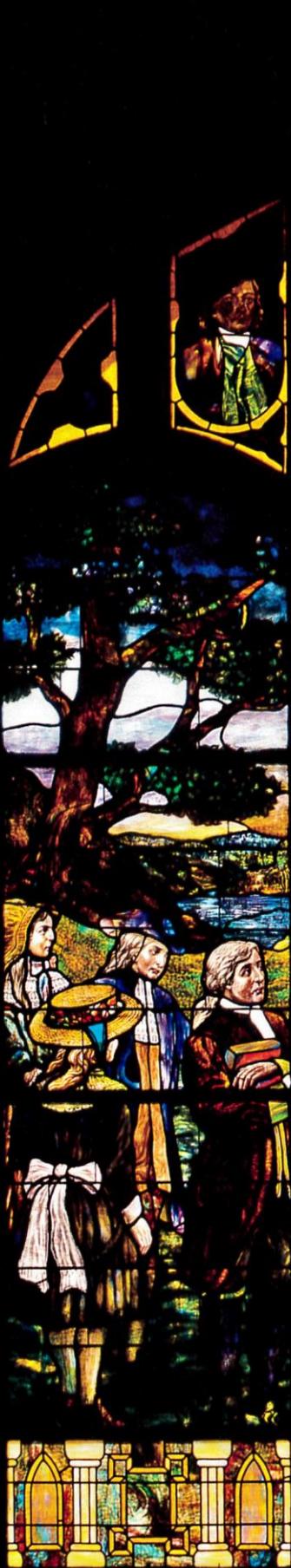
Under the balcony on the Duke Street side are two glamorous women, *Sarah* and *Rachel*, who represent the female members of the Hebrew patriarchal families, and balance the male images on the wall directly opposite — Abraham, the husband of Sarah, and Joseph, the son of Rachel.

## ANNA AND ELIZABETH

In the panels labeled *Anna* and *Elizabeth* are the likenesses of older women who had distinctive and close relationships with the Virgin Mary and her infant Son.

*Anna* was a saintly widow "of great age" who chanced to enter the Temple in Jerusalem at the moment when Mary and Joseph brought their Child to "present Him to the Lord. "Immediately she "gave thanks to God" and witnessed to people around her concerning the redemption of Jerusalem through the arrival of the Holy Child.

*Elizabeth* had the double distinction of being a priest's daughter and a priest's wife. In her old age she became the mother of John the Baptist. Three months before her child was born she was visited by her kinswomen, Mary, who was also pregnant "of the Holy Spirit." Upon feeling the babe in her own womb leap Elizabeth cried to Mary, "Blessed are you among women!" ...and blessed be she who believed there would be fulfillment of what was promised her from the Lord" (Luke 1:41-45).



THE WESLEY WINDOW  
*"God is with us."*

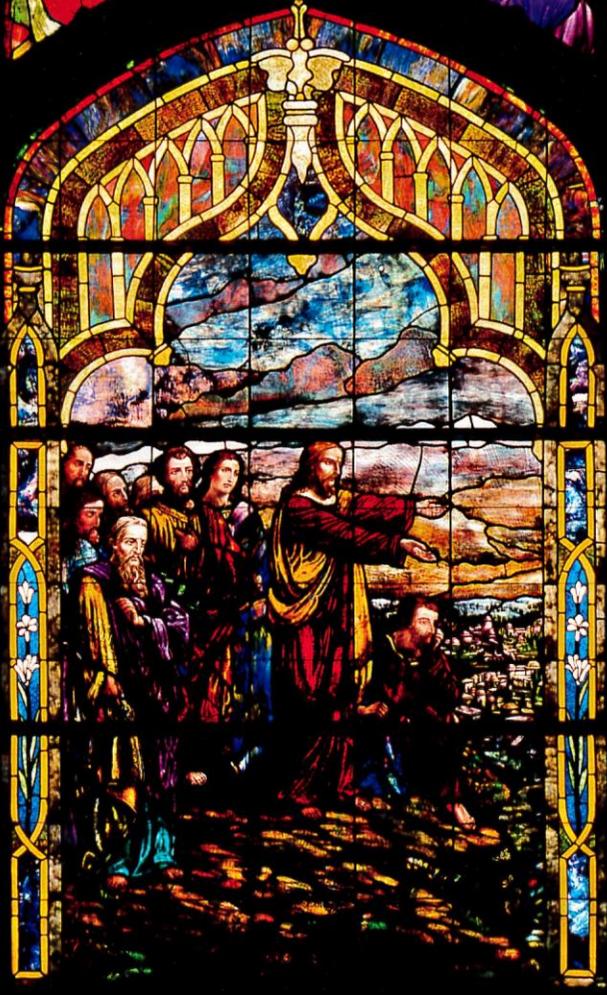
The large window over the balcony, commonly called the Wesley Window, differs from the two transept windows in several details. It has five large panels instead of three and is slightly larger overall. Its images represent non-biblical persons and its geographical setting is rural England instead of the Holy Land. From its position above the balcony it surveys the entire length of the church and does not face windows from the opposite end. It is lighted at night so that passing motorists and pedestrians may enjoy its appeal, a tribute to the Wesleyan influence in individual and societal life in modern times.

The window symbolizes Duke Memorial's rootage in eighteenth-century Anglicanism. It portrays The Reverend John Wesley at the age of thirty-nine in the act of preaching while standing on top of a large, flat tombstone near the east end of St. Andrews Anglican Church in Epworth, Lincolnshire. The tomb is that of his father, who for forty-seven years had been the rector of that church. The date was a Sunday in early June, 1742, and the hour was six in the afternoon. Earlier that day Wesley had been denied the opportunity to preach from the pulpit, despite the fact of his birth and rearing in that parish and his period of more than two years of service as curate under his father's supervision. At that time his reputation as the leader of the "Methodists" made him unacceptable to Anglican bishops and many of the clergy. While Wesley himself was an ordained clergyman he encouraged the use of laymen in preaching and in giving pastoral oversight. He was guilty of establishing "Class Meetings" and "Preaching-houses" for Methodists and engaging in itinerant evangelism and field preaching. These practices, along with the so-called "enthusiasm" of the Methodists, offended the Anglican leaders. Nevertheless, Wesley remained a member of the established church, and instructed the Methodist people to attend Sunday worship in parish churches and to participate regularly in the sacrament of Holy Communion.

The large attendance and hearty response of the people to his message on the text from Romans 14, "The Kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost," encouraged Wesley to return to the same tombstone the following Friday afternoon to begin a three-day series of open-air messages. He later wrote in his journal, "I am well assured that I did far more good to my Lincolnshire parishioners by preaching three days on my father's tombstone than I did by preaching three years in his pulpit."

At the bottom of the Wesley Window these words are written: "God is with us." This is not the text he used at Epworth in 1742; it is a part of his deathbed statement on March 2, 1791. Is not this same statement appropriate as a theme for the full set of Duke Memorial stained glass windows? To all who worship in this church and to countless others, the voice of Wesley continues to say, "God is with us!"





## THE WEST TRANSEPT WINDOWS *"Portraits of Compassion and Hope"*

Conversations about the appeal of the stained glass in the West Transept (Gregson Street side) windows are often lively and, in this Centennial Year, increasingly frequent. The tall figure of Christ in the upper central panel can hardly be ignored. Equally commanding are the artistic portrayals of the Good Samaritan and the Not-So-Good Samaritan Woman being offered the "Water of Life" by Jesus. This triad of scenes can be regarded as a single unit and is sometimes called "The Christ Window."

### UNUSUAL PORTRAITURE

All the scenes have a common theme, namely the compassionate nature of the ministering Christ. His posture of concern is manifest as He stands in the middle panel gazing upon the troubled city of Jerusalem. The Good Samaritan panel highlights the attention Jesus gave to people who suffer. In the Water- of-Life panel He displays His readiness to enlighten and encourage misunderstood and despised persons. Whatever their condition, people in need are offered hope by this Christ and His messengers. Forgotten multitudes in cities are assured that someone cares, a bruised and forsaken traveler on the Jericho road is rescued by a 'foreign' neighbor, and a sinful woman by a well-curb is introduced to a new way of life.

### PORTRAIT OF THE CHRIST WEeping OVER THE ERRING CITY

From St. Luke's gospel and from the designer's sensitive portrayal, the viewer learns of Jesus' deep love for Jerusalem and its people. Luke reported that "when he was come near, he beheld the city and wept over it" (Luke 19:41). Continuing to quote from chapter 19:

"Would that you knew the things that make for peace! But now they are hid from your eyes. The days shall come upon you when your enemies...shall dash you to the ground...because you did not know the time of your visitation" (verses 42-44).

Jerusalem's destruction did not occur until 70 A.D., but Jesus saw it coming. What concerned Him greatly was the blindness of the people. They had not recognized the visitation of God. Like other urbanized people, their feeling of self-sufficiency was to be their undoing.

## PORTRAIT OF A PARABLE

To the left of the central panel is an illustration of the parable of the Good Samaritan. When Jesus told this famous story He knew the Jews of His day regarded the Samaritans as half-breeds and heretics. Jesus made one of the despised Samaritans the hero of His story.

## PORTRAIT OF A CONVERSATION

Jesus apparently was concerned about the relationships between Samaritans and Jews. Once while traveling with His disciples through Samaria, He stopped for a noon period of rest at the Well of Jacob, near the city of Sychar. At the well He met and talked with a Samaritan woman. At the risk of being misunderstood He asked for a drink of water. What a surprise for the woman!

The right-hand panel of this large window is a portrait of that conversation. The water jar illustrates the heart of what was said between Jesus and the woman.

## INTRIGUING DETAILS

At the top of the two outside panels are lines printed in the lobes of quatrefoil designs which might be regarded as titles for the scenes below: "The Mount of the Law" and the "Mount of the Atonement." What did the designer of the windows have in mind?

It must be noted that the line, "The Mount of the Law" stands above the scene of the Good Samaritan's act of mercy and healing. In his show of compassion the Samaritan fulfilled the Second Commandment and in so doing, stood on the "Mount of the Law."

The "Mount of the Atonement" caption may belong above the scene of Christ and the woman of Samaria. She seems to be steadying the water jar and the hands of the two are almost touching. He who knew how close He was to God could feel the genuineness of His *at-one-ment* with the woman.

## THE GLORIFIED CHRIST

In the circle at the top of the great arch of the West Transept stands the triumphant and glorified Christ. Gazing downward upon men, women and children below He extends His arms and open hands, assuring all of His redeeming grace.



#### AUTHORS OF HOLY WRIT

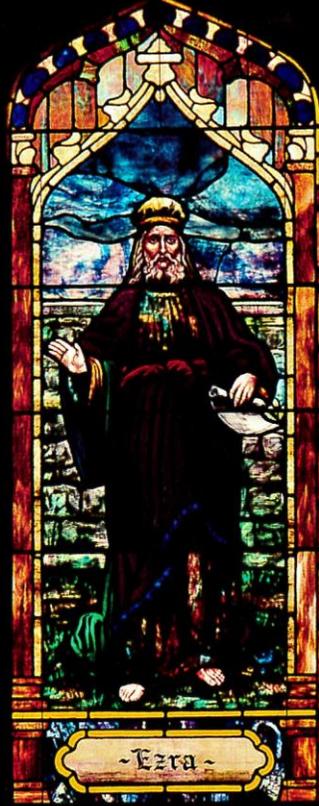
On the lower level of the West Transept are seven slender panels containing images of writers. A group of three stands in the middle position and represent *Isaiah*, *Jeremiah*, and *Ezekiel*, all Old Testament prophets.

On the left, as the viewer faces them, are the gospel writers, *Matthew* and *Mark*, and on the right *Luke* and *John*.

Included in the portraits of the gospel writers are the traditional symbols attributed to them since the seventh century; Matthew appears as an angel, or winged man, Mark as a winged lion, Luke as a winged ox, and John as an eagle. These symbols had their origin in the "vision of four living creatures assembled around God's throne," as described in the book of Revelation, chapter 4, verse 7.



- Moses -



- Ezra -



- Philip -



- Timothy -



- Abraham -



- Joseph -



- John the Baptist -



- Stephen -

### MOSES ANDEZRA

In the two panels at the balcony level on the Gregson Street side are the portraits of *Moses*, the original lawgiver of the people of Israel, and *Ezra*, who helped interpret the Law to people returning to Jerusalem after many years in exile.

### PHILIP AND TIMOTHY

These two men, *Philip* and *Timothy*, had prominent roles in the beginning of the Christian movement, but they were not closely related. Several persons mentioned in the New Testament were named *Philip* but most likely the designer of the Duke Memorial window chose *Philip* the Apostle to occupy the position by the side of *Timothy*, who was the young colleague of the Apostle Paul.

### ABRAHAM AND JOSEPH

Just under the balcony on the Gregson Street side are pictures of two of the most illustrious men of the Bible, *Abraham*, the "Father of the Faithful" and his *great-grandson*, *Joseph*, who became the Grand-Vizier of Egypt.

### JOHN THE BAPTIST AND STEPHEN

The windows showing the images of *John the Baptist* and *Stephen*, the first Christian martyr, are reminders of the cost of discipleship. *John* was beheaded and *Stephen* was stoned to death. Both had direct ties with Jesus.

## THE HOLTKAMPORGAN

*"For the joy of ear and eye,  
For the heart and mind's delight,  
For the mystic's harmony, Linking  
sense to sound and sight . "*<sup>6</sup>

The three-manual Holtkamp organ of fifty-two ranks, a replacement of the well-worn Estey organ which had served the church for sixty years, was used for the first time on December 19, 1971. The selection committee, composed of J.A. McLean, chairman, Mrs. S.J. Angier, organist, W.E. Howard, Mrs. Leland Phelps, Robert T. A Piper, W.E. Whitford, and Thomas S. White, Jr., chose this organ, made by the Holtkamp Organ Company of Cleveland, Ohio, after surveying others and being convinced of its superiority.

The organ casework, made of oak and stained to match the overall woodwork, harmonizes with the appearance and ambience of Duke Memorial's chamber of worship. It complements the windows, the five pew sections, the curved altar rail, the raised pulpit and the choir loft.

Organ music sets the tone for worship, introducing each service, calling members of the congregation to anticipate the benefits of Christian fellowship and to participate in the total order of worshipful exercises. Three sounds on the chimes and an organ postlude terminate the hour of Christian fellowship while extending musical invitations to the worshippers to return again and again.

<sup>6</sup>Stanza 3, of the hymn, "For the Beauty of the Earth," written in 1834 by Folliot S. Pierpont, 1835-1917





*On the corner of Duke and Gregson Streets in Durham, North Carolina, stands Duke Memorial United Methodist Church. Dedicated to the Lord Jesus Christ, the building is also a memorial to Washington Duke. The remarkable windows, dominating three sides of the building, portray Bible times and a major event in the life of John Wesley.*

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