



HISTORY

The first church service was held October 25, 1925, in the chapel at Queens College, in Burwell Hall. (There was no Belk Chapel in those days.) In mid-November, 1925, the congregation purchased the property at the intersection of Queens and Providence Roads, for \$18,000.00, a tremendous sum at that time. A wooden store building was converted into a temporary sanctuary that seated about 200 people. By Christmas time services were held there. Charter membership was closed on December 31, 1925, with 151 charter members.

By November, 1927, a drive was begun to raise money for a permanent place of worship. Louis Asbury, Sr., was named architect. It was estimated the cost would be \$150,000.00. It would seat around 500 and be built of Hillsborough stone. It was the only structure using Hillsborough stone outside the Duke University campus, which was being built at that time.

Ground was broken in March, 1929, with the cornerstone being laid on June 9, 1929. The first service was held in the Sanctuary on Sunday, March 9, 1930. The final cost was \$250,000, well above the first proposal! The design is English-Gothic, and it resembles several cathedral-type buildings in England today. The North Carolina Chapter of the American Institute of Architects in 1930 awarded architect Asbury first place in church buildings erected in our state that year.

Because of the Great Depression that began in 1929, the congregation had difficulty paying off the debt. In March, 1937, Mr. J. Luther Snyder wrote to the church officials, saying that if they would pay off all debt by December 31, 1939, he would give all the money needed to build what is now the Snyder Memorial educational building, immediately behind the sanctuary. They accepted the challenge and the debt was paid by the deadline!

Methodist church law does not allow a building to be "dedicated" until it is debt-free. So, on April 18, 1941, the sanctuary was formally dedicated by Bishop Clare Purcell. (Note: when a new church building is first used and there is still a "debt," it is "consecrated" to God's work.)

In January, 1950, the Official Board worked to make certain changes in the chancel and pulpit areas. The original choir loft was behind the central pulpit. Looking in the hallway beside the senior ministers office, the flight of steps leading up to the original choir loft can be seen, several feet higher than the present choir level. It took a great deal of planning and hard work to redesign the front end of the sanctuary. As might be expected, there were differences of opinion about dividing the choir into two sections facing each other, having the pulpit and a new lectern on either side of the chancel area, and placing the altar high and at the front, instead of using the original Communion table on the lower level of the chancel.

Originally we had a small electric organ. In 1950, the church purchased an Aeolian-Skinner pipe organ for \$50,000.00. It was dedicated at a recital given by noted organist Virgil Fox on May 8, 1950. The organ has 3,617 pipes, more than 50 ranks, and over 100 miles of wire used in all the various connections. The longest pipe is 16 feet; the shortest is only 3/4 of an inch!

In 1996, we learned that the floor beneath the organ was not safe. When workmen began to try to set things "straight," we found it was necessary to remove the organ and have it completely renovated. By the time all the repair work was done and the organ completely rebuilt, we had spent almost half a million dollars! But, the organ consultant tells our Property Committee members that it will continue to be one of the finest church organs in the USA.

Also, in 1996, nine new carillon bells were added to the original 14 in the bell tower which were installed in 1947. All were designed and cast in Croyden, England. The keyboard is placed at the side of the organ so that the organist may play the bells at scheduled times.

At one time they were played to welcome each new baby born of church member parents, but this custom has been discontinued. By the 25th anniversary in October 1950, the organ and the new seating arrangement for the choir was completed. In August of 1951, the dossal tapestry and reredos (wooden frame around the cloth) were ordered. The final installation was completed in January, 1952. The firm of A. Hensel Fink of Philadelphia designed the dossal, which was woven by Talbot Studios of Philadelphia

Jumping ahead to the 50th anniversary in 1975, the original dossal needed cleaning. A local company worked diligently, but the years of dust and smoke from the altar candles made it impossible to restore the dossal to its original beauty. Mrs. Clara Barnes gave the present dossal in memory of her husband, G.T. Barnes. It was woven by Mr. Jose Fumero, a refugee from Castro's Cuba, at his studio in Blowing Rock, N.C. The cloth is woven from threads whose colors range in shades of red to orange. Twisted together, the result is the coral hue we see now. The many crosses woven into the dossal are Jerusalem crosses, which have four equal sides, in contrast to the Latin cross, with a longer central part and two shorter arms.

The kneeling cushions at the communion rail were done in needlepoint by 45 women and one man in our congregation, and the entire project was ready for the 50th anniversary celebration in October, 1975. Mrs. Lucie Dulin, a member in our church, designed all the medallions and made the graphs from which the needlepoint was stitched. The Christian symbols were chosen from more than 100 symbols available. We feel these are among the most familiar and best-loved reminders of our Christian faith.

Wooden carvings around the chancel area show vines and grapes, representing Holy Communion and also the parable of Christ being the vine and with us as the branches. If we do not abide in Him we do not bear fruit. Since we stopped having the ministers kneel at the high altar to lead the Communion prayers with their backs to the people, we now bring the original Communion table from the chapel narthex, place it in the center, with the ministers facing the congregation. This symbolizes we are all "one family."

Symbols at the High Altar:

At the very top of the reredos: Dove, symbol of the Holy Spirit descending, baptism of Jesus, etc.

Just below are four figures (from left to right):

man	Gospel of St. Matthew
lion	Gospel of St. Mark
bull (ox)	Gospel of St. Luke
eagle	Gospel of St. John

Figures on either side of the reredos:

Left:

Rose of Sharon	(for Jesus)
Pelican	Mythology says when young need food and none is available, mother tears her own breast to feed them: dies that they might live

Right:

Cross and Crown of thorns, nails, (INRI):
Crucifixion on Calvary

Pomegranate	When ripe, seeds burst and are scattered, symbol of blood of the martyrs during early Christian persecution.
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On front of the altar:

Center	IHS, first three letters for "Jesus" (Greek)
On either side:	Alpha and Omega, first and last letters of Greek alphabet, Jesus: "I am the first and the last."

Around the top of the altar:

vine and grapes, symbol of Holy Communion and "I am the vine, you are the branches," life in Christ.

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Bronze cross and four candlesticks:

The cross is the central focus of our Christian faith, and it is the central focus of our worship in the sanctuary.

Note: It is an empty cross, "Our Saviour Lives!" We do not emphasize the crucifix hanging on the cross, though that was important, too.

Four candlesticks:

represent the four writers of the four Gospels (remember the figures at the top of the reredos)
Note: when one candle is on either side of the cross, they stand for "Christ is the Son of God and the Son of Man," human and divine. When there are three candles on either side, they stand for the Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Cross:

"budded," on the end of arms and at the top, indicating growth, new life. A plain cross is called a "Latin" cross, like the one in our chapel, etc.
Notice IHS at the intersection of the arms. Also notice on the main trunk of the cross a tiny cross for Faith, anchor for Hope, heart for Love. (Recall 1 Corinthians Chapter 13).

Base of cross and candlesticks is a crown - Christ Is Our King! Row of carvings behind cross. Rose of Sharon and Pomegranates.

Lectern:

place where assistant leaders of worship speak, original meaning in Latin "to read," where the Scriptures were read. Open Bible rests on the lectern. God's Word is important to our worship.

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Pulpit: place where the preacher proclaims The Word; original meaning: "raised platform for a speaker."

Paraments: cloth hangings on pulpit and lectern, colors change five times in the Christian year. Color changes are purple, white, green, red and blue. Symbols on paraments are from the main emphases of our faith.

Baptismal font: contains basin for water used in baptism.
Note: top of the cover is a "Jerusalem" cross (four sides of equal length, like the many crosses on the dossal cloth.)

Advent/Christmas Banners: These hang during Advent.
Ten symbols, five on either side:

Providence Road:

Alpha and Omega
Angel (annunciation)
Manger
"Gloria in excelsis" angels
Star

Queens Road:

IHS (for "Jesus")
Stump of Jesse (ancestor)
Rose of Sharon
Lamb of God
Three crowns (The Magi)

Lent/Easter Banners: These hang during Lent.
Ten symbols, five on either side:

Providence Road:

Empty cross
Towel and basin
Rooster
Crown of Thorns
Lamb of God (with flag):
~ Risen Christ

Queens Road:

Crown (eternal life)
Palm branches
Thirty silver coins
Bread and wine
Butterfly = resurrection

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Kneeling Cushions at Communion Rail (left to right)

- Lyre (Harp) ~ music in worship
- Hand descending ~ God's blessing; Jesus' baptism
- "PHI RO" ~ Greek for Pastor, leader of congregation
- Cross and globe ~ world mission, "make disciples"
- Shell & drops of water ~ baptism
- Latin Cross and crossed keys ~ "keys of the kingdom"
- Rose of Sharon ~ for Jesus
- Pomegranate ~ blood of martyrs
- IHS ~ means "Jesus" in Greek
- Sheaf of wheat ~ "bread of life"; Holy Communion
- "I am the Vine" ~ life in Christ; Holy Communion
- The lamb with flag ~ Risen Christ, after Easter
- Cross and anchor ~ Hope!
- Budded cross and crown ~ eternal life, victory!
- Pelican ~ dies for her young
- IXOYC ~ Greek for "Jesus," like word for "fish," used as code for early Christians
- Grapes ~ Holy Communion
- A and O and Crown ~ "first & last," eternal life
- Butterfly ~ resurrection
- Two tablets ~ Ten Commandments
- Six-pointed star ~ Star of David, O.T. Heritage
- Descending dove ~ Holy Spirit; Jesus at baptism
- INRI ~ inscription Pilate put on Cross "Jesus of Nazareth; King of the Jews"
- "Spiritus Gladius" The Bible is the "Sword of the Lord" Paul
- Five-pointed star ~ Christmas star
- Lamp ~ "learning," "wisdom" ~ "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light to my pathway"

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Note: When the Communion rail is closed for Communion the "extra" kneeler is used. Ordinarily it stays on the middle step at the high altar. It has four medallions for the Four Evangelists, the authors of the four gospels.

Remember the carvings at the top of the reredos (from left to right):

man	~	Gospel of St. Matthew
lion	~	Gospel of St. Mark
bull (ox)	~	Gospel of St. Luke
eagle	~	Gospel of St. John

STAINED GLASS WINDOWS

The beautiful stained glass windows rank among the finest works of art glass in the country. They were designed, created, and installed by A.L. Pitassi of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and are made of antique glass imported from England.

SIDE AISLE WINDOWS: (Total eight)

Providence Road side: five (from front to rear)

Annunciation to Mary by angel Gabriel

Manger Scene ~ Mary, Joseph, Christ Child, and shepherd boy

Angel tells Joseph to flee to Egypt

The Flight to Egypt

Jesus in Nazareth Home, helping Joseph in carpenter shop

Queens Road side: three (from front to rear)

Wise men worship the Christ Child

Presentation of Jesus in the Temple

Jesus at age twelve, with Elders in the Temple



APOSTLES' WINDOWS:

Clerestory Windows (total twelve)

Note: Each window has two scenes from incidents in Jesus' ministry. First scene listed is to your left, second to your right.

Providence Road Side: (from front to rear)

Peter (with key) "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven." The calling of Peter and Andrew; Baptism of Jesus by John.

John (with cup and serpent) Tradition says enemies tried to kill him with poison. He made the sign of the cross and poison disappeared in serpent. Jesus healing the man born blind; Jesus stills the tempest.

Philip (with staff) symbolic of Missionary journey to Phrygia. Parable of wheat and tares (weeds). Parable of the sower.

Bartholomew (with flaying knife and book) Tradition says he was flayed, crucified, and beheaded. Christ and the children; women anointing Jesus' feet.

James the Minor (The Less) (Fuller's bat in his hand). Tradition says he was killed by people beating him to death. Cleansing of the Temple; the Triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

Jude (on the balcony level) holds a ship; symbol of sailing on a missionary journey. Denial by Peter; Betrayal by Judas.



Queens Road side: (front to rear)

James the Major (The Greater) (holds pilgrim staff)
indicating his journeys for Christ. Jesus and woman
at the well; the temptations of Jesus.

Andrew (holds shield with cross)
tradition says he died on such a cross; patron saint
of Scots, cross of St. Andrew on their flag. Jesus
expelling demons; Jesus raising Lazarus from the
dead.

Thomas (holding a spear)
emblem of his martyrdom; also holding a builder's
square, symbol that he took Christianity to India.
The Prodigal son; the lost sheep.

Matthew (holding a battle-ax)
symbol of his crucifixion and beheading; Christ and
the sinful woman; Christ and Zaccheus.

Simon the Zealot (fish lying on the book)
Book is the Christian Gospel; Fish symbolizes
fisher of men. The Last Supper; in Garden of
Gethsemane

Matthias (on balcony level)
after Judas committed suicide, apostles "drew lots"
and thus Matthias was chosen as the twelfth apostle.
He holds a scimitar (sword) and tradition says
he was beheaded. He also holds a book for
missionary work. Jesus before Pilate; The
crucifixion. (Roman Centurion)

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The Balcony Window
WINDOW OF THE SEVEN VIRTUES

At the very top on either side: A and O for Alpha and
Omega.

left: U.S. Soldier; center: U.S. Flag; right: U.S. Sailor

next are ~ left to right: Symbols of Seven Virtues

scales of justice; donkey for humility; angel saying "God
is my strength" for courage; angel saying, "Who is like
unto God?" for Divinity; angel saying, "The sword of the
Spirit" for faith; anchor for hope; and purse for charity
(love).

CENTRAL FIGURES (from left to right):

Justice	Martin Luther, leader of Reformation
Humility	St. Frances of Assisi, founder of Franciscan monks
Courage	Stephen, the first Christian martyr
Divinity	Christ the King (Crown on his head, remember the base on the cross and the candle sticks at high altar)
Faith	Paul the Apostle
Hope	John Wyclif, translator of Bible into English
Charity (Love)	John Wesley, founder of Methodism

FIGURES NEAR BOTTOM (from left to right):

Justice	Solomon ordering the soldier to cut baby in half, when two women claimed to be its mother
Humility	feed the poor, clothe the naked
Courage	David with his sling shot, killed Goliath
Divinity	angel says, "God is Light"
Faith	Ark on the flood waters
Hope	Daniel in the lions' den
Charity (Love)	Helping people in debtors' prison

Note: Above the head of Jesus, "Come Unto Me"
and below His feet: "I am the King of the
World" 13

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