

## The Stained Glass Windows of Bayport United Methodist Church



When our sanctuary was built in 1873, the ten windows were clear glass. In 1927, as part of a building project which added more rooms and a kitchen to the rear of the lecture room (which is now called the parlor), the windows were replaced with stained glass. Church histories offer little details about these windows but do state that the cost of the entire building project was \$3,406 and the pastor at that time raised \$3,300 by subscription to help pay for the work.

It is through the generosity of those who came before us that we have a place to worship, learn, fellowship, and become aware of God. God is always with us but we are often not attuned to God's presence. Through reading the Bible, participating in the liturgy of the worship service, and joining in singing together, we focus on God with our senses. We experience God visually through the beauty of the sanctuary with its glowing candles, beautiful banners, and of course the stained glass windows.

Unlike many stained glass windows, Bayport's do not depict Bible stories. They are all laid out in the same pattern, with the only differences being the varied Christian symbols in a circle toward the top of the windows and the dedication or memorial information in a

rectangle towards the bottom of the windows. I invite you to spend some time meditating on the rich symbolism of these windows and giving thanks to those who have left them for us as part of their heritage. They have left a part of themselves in this sanctuary.

“...we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses...”

-Hebrews 12:1



### **Window #1 - Agnus Dei/The Triumphant Lamb**

As you step into the sanctuary from the parlor, you'll see the window dedicated to Sunday school on your

left. The symbol for this window is the Agnus Dei, the Lamb of God. In Christian symbolism, the lamb represents Jesus; when standing with a banner, the lamb represents the risen Christ who is triumphant over death.

John the Baptist said when he saw Jesus coming towards him: "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29) In 1 Corinthians 5:7 we read "Our paschal lamb, Christ, has been sacrificed."

\*As you look at the depiction of The Triumphant Lamb on the window, consider

the great love that Jesus has for us; he was willing to lay down his life for us. What can we do in return? How should we live? What are we willing to sacrifice?



### **Window #2 - The Bible**

As you continue down the side aisle, the next window on your left has the Bible as its symbol and is dedicated "To the

Glory of God and in Memory of Charles F. LeCluse and Jane his wife." When our church was organized on March 8, 1873, Charles F. and Jane LeCluse were two of the original members. They came from France and were Roman Catholics but couldn't find a Catholic Church close by, so they affiliated with our church.

Throughout the ages, Christians have based their faith on the Bible, sometimes called the inspired Word of God. The stories have been passed down from generation to generation, to serve as a guiding light to show us how to live. In Psalm 119:105 we read: "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."

\*What does the Bible mean to you? How would your life be different if there was no Bible?



### **Window #3 – Cross with Easter Lilies**

The next window is in memory of John and Gershum Gerard. It combines two Christian symbols: the cross and the lily. The

symbol of the cross reminds us of the suffering and death of Jesus but also represents the new life we have through Jesus who defeated death through his resurrection. The Easter lily is another symbol of the resurrection. Its white color represents purity and the brightness of day. As a bulb which blooms every year, it also stands for new life.

2 Corinthians 5:17 tells us: “So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!”

\*When we put our faith in Jesus, we are renewed and reborn. Was there a time in your life when you were renewed by God? If so, thank God for the grace that led you to renewal. Do you feel the need for your spirit to be renewed now? If so, pray about it.





#### **Window #4 - Cross and Crown**

This window lists M.R. Bauer and S.M.R. Bogle. There is no further explanation. There are still Bauers in the Bayport area.

Charles R. Bogle, a member of Bayport UMC, passed away in 2008 at the age of 95.

The cross and crown are represented on this window. The cross symbolizes Jesus' death and resurrection; Jesus died on the cross wearing a crown of thorns, a symbol of humiliation and cruelty. Jesus rose and now wears the crown of Christ the King, the King of Kings.

"...and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying, 'Hail, King of the Jews!'" (Matthew 27:29)

\*What does it mean to you that the King of Kings was a poor peasant and belonged to an oppressed group of people? How does this affect how you measure success and set goals?





### **Window #5 - Anchor**

Rather than specific people, this window lists the Official Board. This was the ruling body of the church before we had an Administrative Board

or Church Council.

The symbol for this window is the anchor, which was a popular symbol in the early church. It stands for hope in a future existence and in the present world with Christ as our anchor. An anchor helps a ship to ride out storms so that it isn't blown off course or into rocks. Christ our anchor is there for us in the storms of life.

Hebrews 6:19 states that "We have this hope, a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul."

\*Think about a time in your life when you were facing "rough seas" and "stormy weather." Did your faith in God help you get through those tough times? Did you sense that God's spirit was with you despite outside circumstances?





## **Window #6 - White Lilies**

The next window is the Ladies Aid window. Shortly after the church was formed, the women in the church felt the need for their own

religious society. On December 19, 1873, the (Ladies) Aid Society was formed. This was the precursor of the United Methodist Women. Perhaps this symbol was chosen for this windows because white lilies symbolize chastity and virtue and are one of the symbols for Mary, the mother of Jesus.

In the first chapter of the Gospel of Luke, we have the story of the Annunciation, when the angel Gabriel announced that Mary would be the mother of Jesus, who would be called the Son of the Most High. It is easy to imagine that this message frightened Mary but her answer showed that she trusted God.

She said: "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word."

(Luke 1:38)

\*Have you ever been in a situation where you were afraid to do the right thing or to do something that you felt God was calling you to do? How did you react? Were you able to trust in God? What was the final outcome?



### **Window #7 - Grapes and Vine**

This window is dedicated to another married couple who were involved in founding our church: Warren and Jane Elizabeth Hawkins.

The featured symbol is the grapevine, representing the union of Christians with Jesus and each other. Grapes also represent the blood of Christ, as in the sacrament of Holy Communion.

In John 15:5 Jesus says: "I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing."

\*In what way can you "abide" or connect to Jesus? How can you connect with other followers of Jesus?



### **Window #8 - Dove with Olive Branch**

"In Memory of Rosalie C. Pell, Wife of Albert W. Pell" is the inscription on this window. The name Pell is well-known in Bayport.

A dove with an olive branch, a symbol of peace, is depicted on this window. The dove is also a symbol of the Holy Spirit; when Jesus was baptized the Spirit of God descended “like a dove” on him. The olive branch may represent the one which was in the beak of the dove which returned to Noah and indicated to him that the water of the great flood had receded from the earth.

Matthew 5:9 reads: “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.”

\*God calls upon us to be peacemakers. What does it mean to be a peacemaker? How can you and your church be peacemakers?



### **Window #9 - Open Bible**

This window is in memory of Whitman Overton. Overtons were among those who founded our church so it is probable Whitman

Overton was related to them.

An open Bible is depicted on this window. Some believe that an open book represents truth or revelation.

“All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for

correction, and for training in righteousness..."  
(2 Timothy 3:16)

\*Are you involved in group Bible study or studying on your own? If not, how about joining a study or scheduling a regular time each week for self-directed study?



### **Window #10 - Harp**

The window with the harp as its symbol has the names of John F. and Ann E. Terry on it. Terrys have been a part of the Bayport community for centuries. It was at the

home of James M. and Hannah Terry that a group of people gathered on March 8, 1873, to found our church.

The harp was the national instrument of the Hebrews and the instrument of King David. Psalms of praise to God and psalms of lament were no doubt accompanied by the harp.

In the Book of Revelation, we read about the church in heaven: "...I heard a voice from heaven like the sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder; the voice I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps, and they sing a new song before the throne..."

\*The Psalms express a wide range of human emotions, from joy and praise to God to lament and questioning God about human suffering. How many of the Psalms have you read? Have you prayed through the Psalms? You can read and pray through the Psalms in a month; search online for “monthly schedule for praying through the Psalms.”

**The history of our stained glass windows is an ongoing process. Do you have information about them? About the people they were dedicated to? If so, please contact Debbie Kolacki, our church historian. Call the church office at 641-472-0770 to request Debbie’s contact information.**

## Bayport United Methodist Church

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482 Middle Road

Bayport, NY 11705

Phone: 631-472-0770

Fax: 631-472-0509

E-mail: [secretary@bayportumc.org](mailto:secretary@bayportumc.org)

[www.bayportumc.org](http://www.bayportumc.org)

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