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*AFS: Art Femenella Studios, New Jersey



Shepherd from *The Nativity Window*

Trinity Episcopal Church

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Text from the *Passion Window*

Trinity Episcopal Church

Self-guided tour of windows and furnishings

Welcome to Trinity Church! This guide is an introduction to this historic building and its furnishings. A complete history, published in 1996, is available through the church office.

Trinity is the oldest church in Staunton. Three churches have been constructed on this site. The first, completed in 1763, was 25 by 40 feet. The entrance of that building faced west, with the altar in the east. In the present building, the altar is in the south. The cornerstone of the second church was laid in 1830. The tower now stands on the site of the second church. The present building, the third, was completed in 1855. In the 1870s the building was enlarged when wings were added to each side. The raised chancel was added in the 1890s.

Trinity Church has a rich history. The Virginia General Assembly met here from June 7 to 13, 1781, after fleeing Richmond and then Charlottesville to escape the British Army. Delegates to the first diocesan convention, held in Staunton, chose Alexandria for the site of the Virginia Theological Seminary. During the Civil War, seminary classes were held in Trinity Church. The Church has been a member of all three dioceses of Virginia. In 1920, the first Bishop of Southwestern Virginia was consecrated here.

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The church has a varied collection of stained glass, the earliest dating from the mid-nineteenth century. Thirteen of the windows are made of early 20th century opalescent glass; twelve are by the Tiffany Studios. The opalescent windows differ from the medieval-style English glass and the stenciled, brightly colored American glass. Some of the translucent glass changes color in the manner of an opal, depending on the light conditions, thus the name “opalescent glass”. Tiffany windows are famous for a rich palette of what is literally sculpted glass, often arranged in layers. The windows and other furnishings are enumerated below.

1. In the vestibule, two windows by the Wippell Studios (1970) depict the seals of the Dioceses of Virginia and Southwestern Virginia. The seal of the Diocese of Virginia commemorates the spread of the Christian faith: Jerusalem, Rome, England, and Virginia. The seal of the Diocese of Southwestern Virginia bears a cross, the arms of the See of London, a torch, an open Bible, and the mountains of southwest Virginia.

2. The inner doors were carved in the Passion Flower design, which is repeated in the choir, processional and altar crosses, the altar rail and in one of the windows.

3. Inside the church on the right is a copy engraved in copper of the cornerstone of the previous church building.

30. Communion Window (Wippell Studios, 1948)

31. The Missionary Window (Wippell Studios, 1957)

32—35. Four original windows, covered in a 1950s restoration, reopened and restored in 1999-2000 by John Raynall of Natural Bridge, VA.



Missionary Window



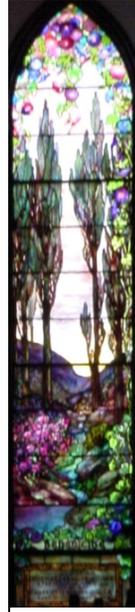
33. The Trinity Organ, Opus #34, was made in the year 2000 by the internationally known Staunton firm of Taylor & Boody. It has 32 stops with 2280 speaking pipes on three manuals and pedal. The instrument has mechanical (or “tracker”) action. All parts of the organ, with the exception of the blower, were designed and crafted by hand in the builders’ workshop. The casework is made from local black walnut, with carvings which include representations of birds of the area and a little lamb. The organ pipes are constructed of hammered tin and lead alloys, with gilded mouths in the façade.



The Nativity

26. *The Nativity* (J & R Lamb Studios, c. 1906). This window demonstrates the delicate opalescent glass produced by this studio. Restored and relocated (changed places with the Easter windows) in 1999 by AFS.

27. *Benedicite (Garden) Window* (Tiffany Studios, c. 1903). Louis Comfort Tiffany was at his best with landscape, and introduced landscape windows into churches (as well as homes) just after the turn of the century. Especially notable in this window is the “confetti” glass, which adds depth, texture and interest to the landscape. This window, unlike any other representational window in the church, contains no painting on the glass. Damper panel restored in 1999—2000 by AFS.



Benedicite Window



The Archangel Michael

28. *The Archangel Michael* (Tiffany Studios, 1914). Of special note in this window is the use of plating to portray translucent clouds. Restored in 1999 by AFS.

29. The Geometrical Window (c. 1873) is a fine example of a nineteenth-century American stenciled glass, possibly by the esteemed Sharpe and Steele Company, who fabricated many of the original windows for the current building.

4. Continuing in a clockwise direction, the Thomas Cranmer Window (also called the Prayer Book Window) by the Wippell Studios, 1950, occupies the left corner. Archbishop Cranmer stands in the center, holding in his right hand the first Book of Common Prayer (1549), which he helped to write. In his left hand, Cranmer holds the staff of his office. Canterbury Cathedral is in the background with the seal of the See of Canterbury and the Coat of Arms of King Edward VI. At the top, Cranmer instructs Edward, his godchild. Cranmer would later read the burial office at Edward’s funeral. Below is a scene of the drafting of the first Book of Common Prayer, and beneath that a scene of Cranmer’s martyrdom.



The Madonna and Child

5. The window depicting the Madonna and Child is the last of the Tiffany windows installed in the church. Dedicated in 1937, it bears the script signature, “Louis C. Tiffany, NY.”

6. The Narcissus window, after 1884, is an interesting example of a late 19th century jeweled American art glass windows. (Restored in 1998, AFS*)

7. *The Praising Angel* (Tiffany Studios, c. 1912). Dressed in a pink gown, she looks heavenward with arms raised in an orant prayer position. A single white star, etched into the blue glass, shines above her head. The ribbed, opalescent glass in the wings is of especially fine quality. (Restored 1998, AFS)



Praising Angel

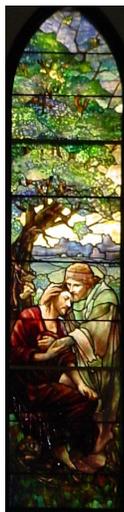
8. The Good Samaritan Window (Tiffany Studios, c. 1912). The drapery and the confetti glass in the tree are particularly interesting.

9 and 10. Easter Windows (Tiffany Studios, c. 1903). These windows were restored and relocated in 1998. Formerly they stood directly across the church on the darker western side; the bright eastern sun makes the window more visible.



Angel with a Script

11. *Angel with a Script* (Tiffany Studios, c. 1914), restored April 2000 by AFS.



Good Samaritan

12 to 14. The Ascension Triptych appears to be the first of the Tiffany windows to be installed in Trinity Church, and is perhaps the finest, incorporating some of the best drapery glass Tiffany ever used. Signed "Tiffany Glass and Decorating Co., New York, 1897". Restored in 1999 - 2000 by AFS.



15. The present altar dates from 1890. The needlepoint kneeling cushions, designed by Margaret Perrit of Richmond, were finished in 1982. The design represents wildflowers indigenous to the Blue Ridge mountains. The bishop's and rector's chairs have needlepoint cushions made by the late Mrs. Howard Holden.

16. *The Beloved Physician, Saint Luke* (Tiffany Studios, c. 1910). Restored in 2000 by AFS.

17. St Columba's Chapel altar cross was a gift to the parish by the Diocese of Bradford, England, our companion diocese. The marble base is from the Scottish Island of Iona, the site of a monastery founded by St. Columba (c. 650).

18. The Harouf Windsor chair in St. Columba's Chapel was used at the meeting of the Virginia General Assembly in Trinity Church in 1781.



Sermon on the Mount

19. *The Sermon on the Mount* (Wippell-Mowbray Studios, c. 1972)

20 to 22. *The Jewels of the Lord* (Wippell-Mowbray Studios, 1959)

23. *Trinity Symbol*, over the door way, 19th century American art glass.



Trinity Symbol

24. The Passion Window (c. 1855) is an especially fine example of American art glass. Note the passion flowers, lilies and Lenten roses.

25. *The Wise Men* (Lamb Studios, 1946), restored and relocated in 1999 by AFS.