

The Stained Glass Windows of Clarksville Presbyterian Church

Linda Pulliam, March, 2025

CHRONOLOGY OF THE CHURCH BUILDINGS

Clarksville Presbyterian Church was organized in 1832 by Rev. Samuel Graham. The congregation met in the homes of members until the first church building was constructed in 1861. At that time, a building was constructed at 209 4th Street in Clarksville at a cost \$4,670 in Confederate dollars (approximately \$167,500 in 2025 value.) In 1907, the congregation voted to build a new church building on Virginia Avenue, and the original building was sold in 1907 to the Somerville Family for \$1,000 US Federal Dollars (approximately \$33,500 in 2025 value). In 1920 the Somerville family deeded the property to Second Baptist Church, and that congregation continues after more than 100 years to worship in that building. The new Clarksville Presbyterian church was constructed at 502 Virginia Avenue and was completed and dedicated in 1909. Church records for the period of construction have largely disappeared, but minutes of the meetings of the Ladies Aid indicate that they were responsible for the memorial windows and church furnishings.

HISTORY AND PRESERVATION OF THE SANCTUARY WINDOWS

It is presumed that five of the six stained glass windows were donated at the time of the original construction, 1907-1909. It is also believed that the Christ window, which was created in the late 1800s by a different artist than the other five windows and dedicated to Henry Wood, Esq. (1799-1883) and his wife, Anne Eliza Wood (1806-1886), was moved from the previous church building on 4th Street at the time of sale in 1907 and installed on the east side of the new sanctuary during construction. The stained glass windows are in a Victorian style that was in popular under Queen Victoria's reign in England, 1837 – 1901, and into the Edwardian period after that. The style often has a central figure with strong, defined borders and geometric backgrounds.

Over the years, Clarksville Presbyterian has recognized the value of the windows, both as a significant part of the worship experience and for their value as historic works of art. When financially possible, preservation was made a priority. In 1954, repairs were made by E.L. Morgan of Roanoke Rapids. In 1972, repairs were made by Russell Church Studios which gave

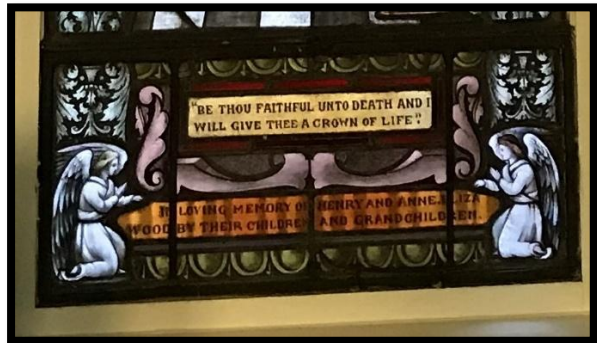
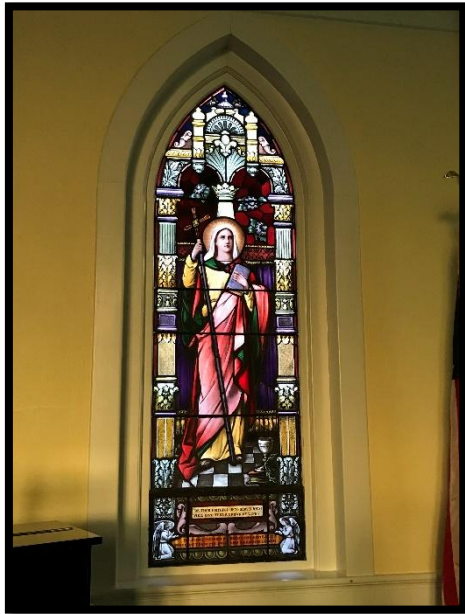
the windows an appraised value of \$10,000. In 1999, the insurance value of the windows was recorded as \$34,000.

The most extensive restoration work on the Sunnyside Window was done in 2014-2015 by Shed-Brand Studios from Charlotte, NC. This project, coordinated by Robert Thaxton and Russ Messier, involved removal of the entire window, re-leading of each pane of glass, and reframing of each panel. Scaffolding was installed from November, 2014, through February, 2015. David Thaxton removed and installed the rotted framework after the window glass was repaired, and Williamsburg Woodcraft of Selma, NC, crafted all of the replacement trim at a cost of \$1,500. The cost of the work done by Shed-Brand Studios was \$8,113. A photo from the Mecklenburg Sun shows the reinstallation of the windows as the project was completed in February, 2015.

In 2022, an appraisal by Lynchburg Stained Glass for all windows was \$67,725, and a minor repair to the Sunnyside window was made at a cost of \$1,175. Upon their recommendation, significant repairs were made 2023 and 2024 on the Sunnyside and Good Shepherd windows to resolve leaking and bulging problems caused by weather. Glass covers were installed on the exterior to preserve and prevent additional damage to both windows at a total cost of \$37,600.



THE SIX WINDOWS



1. The Christ Window – Dedicated to the Wood Family

DESCRIPTION

- Tall, narrow window on east side of church, located to the right of the pulpit
- Measurement - 89"H x 28"W
- Depicts Christ standing, holding a crucifer, surrounded by Christian symbols:
 - Crown – crown of life
 - Chalice – the blood of Christ, the Last Supper
 - Flowers – love, faith, and hope
 - Crown of thorns - worn by Christ at his crucifixion
 - Angels – God's protection
 - Red cape – love, power, the blood of Christ
 - Book – divine authority, wisdom from God
- Predominant colors are lavender/purple

DEDICATION

- "In loving memory of **Henry Wood** and **Anne Eliza Wood** by their children and grandchildren"
- Dedication scripture – Rev. 2:10: "Be thou faithful unto death and I will give you a crown of life." The Crown of Life is found in James 1:12 and Revelation 2:10; it is bestowed upon "those who persevere under trials." Jesus references this crown when he tells the

Church in Smyrna to "not be afraid of what you are about to suffer... Be faithful even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life."

GENEALOGY OF THE WOOD FAMILY

- **Henry Wood, Esq.** – born 1799, died 1883; **Anne Eliza (Flourney) Wood** – born 1806, died 1886. Married – 1832. Children:
 - **Judge Henry Wood, Jr.**, 1843-1915 - VMI grad, Captain in the Civil War, Mecklenburg County Judge, Deacon and Elder of Clarksville Presbyterian Church, Member of the Virginia Legislature. Lived in the Clark Royster House, founder of Clarksville, 105 6th Street. (2 blocks from current church)
 - John Stanhope Wood, 1833-1911
 - Ellen Jane Wood, 1835-1874
 - William Wood, 1838
 - Nannie Wood, 1845
 - Rosa Wood, 1847
 - Alice Wood, 1849
 - Catherine Wood, 1851

HISTORY

It is believed that the Christ Window on the east side of the church might have been removed from the 4th street building, now owned by Second Baptist Church, about 1907 and installed in the new church during the time of construction on Virginia Avenue. The date that this window was created and installed there is unknown. Because of the lack of written evidence, these factors were considered in the conclusion that the window has been relocated.

- The windows on the lower level of Second Baptist Church have the original glass which is a deep purple in color and matches the Wood window. The style is Italian pre-Raphael using a different stained-glass technique than the other five windows. It is hand painted on German mouth-blown glass.
- The east side of the building of Second Baptist Church has been covered by a recent addition of a meeting room so does not show any evidence of whether the stained glass window might have been installed there. However, the upper level exterior shows that two windows have been removed at some point and replaced with newer brick.
- Because the parents, Henry and Anna Eliza Wood, died in 1883 and 1886, it seems likely that the Wood children (all adults who probably had children by then) might have dedicated a window shortly after their parents' deaths. That window would have been installed initially in the old church on 4th Street.

- Henry Wood, Jr., was a Deacon of Clarksville Presbyterian. He served as an Elder during the time of the sale of the old church and was “appointed as a committee of one” to purchase the new lot and to negotiate the sale of the old church.
- It seems possible that, when the decision to build a new church was made in 1907, Henry Wood, Jr., may have leveraged its removal from Second Baptist to be installed in the new church.
- In 2023, a representative of the Lynchburg Stained Glass Company said that this window was created by a different artist, at an earlier time in the 1800s, and in a style and technique that was different than the stained glass artists of the early 1900s would have used. He provided an unofficial estimate of value of \$12,995.

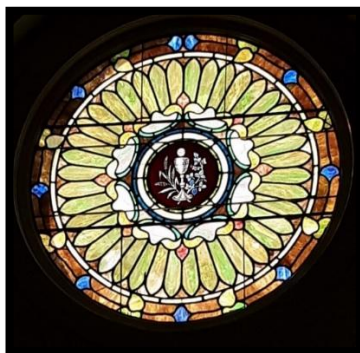
2. The Good Shepherd Window – dedicated to Rev. F. N. Whaley



Inside



Outside



Top



Dedication

DESCRIPTION

- Three panel windows with round window above, facing Virginia Avenue, south side of the church; lit from inside at night.
- Measurements: 2 panels – 115”H x 32”W each; Center – 90”H x 31”W; Round – 48” diameter
- Depiction – Standing Good Shepherd with these Christian symbols:
 - Lamb with two sheep – Christ and his followers
 - Chalice and bread – Christ’s body and blood; Chalice – eternal life
 - Chi Rho – first two Greek letters of Christ’s name
 - Torch – God’s presence; passing of the faith
- Predominant Colors – Panels in shades of green and yellow; brilliant red robe

THE BIBLICAL WORK OF ART

The original painting of the Good Shepherd was done in approximately 1878 by Bernhard Plockhorst, a German artist (1825-1907). It has been reproduced in countless churches, particularly in the United States. Jesus often used word pictures or parables and referred to himself in John 10:14, “I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me.” The key element is our relationship with Christ. The lamb nestles closely to him, showing his deep love and care, particularly for the most vulnerable. The flock represents the people of the world. The ewe on the right looks to Jesus holding her lamb with concern and trust. The Ram on the left looks on with longing, symbolizing the Jesus came for all mankind. (From St. Petersburg First United Methodist Church.)

DEDICATION

- “In Memory of Rev. F. N. Whaley, Beloved Pastor of this Church for Forty Years, 1852–1892”

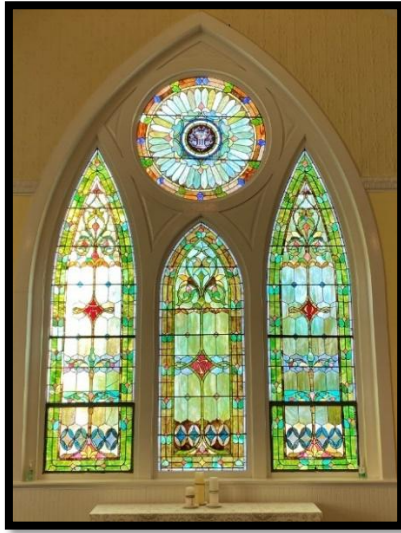
GENEALOGY OF THE WHALEY FAMILY

- **Rev. Frederick Nicholas Whaley (F.N.)** B. 9/7/1819; D. 4/18/1900; Married 2/26/1850: Elizabeth (Bettie) Seymour Hughes Whaley, 1923-1909
 - Frederick Seymour, MD B. 8/5/1856; D. 9/10/1901; Married 1886: Helen Shepherd Owen Whaley, 1860-1937
 - William, 1889; Harry, 1892; John, 1894; Frederick, Jr.-1887;
 - Leigh Carrington Whaley, B. 10/8/1895; D. 9/27/1973; Married 8/20/1925: Cecilia Thomas Whaley, B. 1900; D. 1997
 - Helen Owen Whaley B. 8/23/1931; D. 8/21/2022
 - Leigh Carrington Whaley, Jr., B. 1/9/1928-; D. 6/11/2024
 - Kathryn Whaley Pugh
 - Susan Whaley Walsh
 - Leigh Carrington (Cary) Whaley II

HISTORY

- This window was installed at the time of the construction of the church building, 1907-1909. The congregation was very fond of their Pastor, Rev. F. N. Whaley, who served for forty years, 1852-1892, and dedicated this window to him after his death in 1900. In 2022, the Whaley great-great grandchildren, Kathryn Whaley Pugh, Susan Whaley Walsh, and Leigh Carrington Whaley II, returned to Clarksville for the internment of their aunt, Helen Whaley in 2022, and again for their father, Leigh Carrington Whaley in 2024 in Oakhurst Cemetery. The window was repaired and covered with protective glass in 2024 and backlit in 2025.

3. The Sunnyside Window – dedicated to Sunnyside School and the Carrington Sisters



Inside



Dedication on window sill

DESCRIPTION

- Three panel windows with round window above, rear of sanctuary, west side of the church
- Measurements - 2 panels – 117”H x 32” W each; Center – 90”H x 31”W; Circle – 48” diameter
- Christian symbols:
 - Baptismal font – death to life through baptism (round window)
 - Alpha and Omega – first and last letters of Greek alphabet; God’s eternity
 - Harp – worship, praise, joy; associated with King David
- Predominant colors – green and yellow

DEDICATION

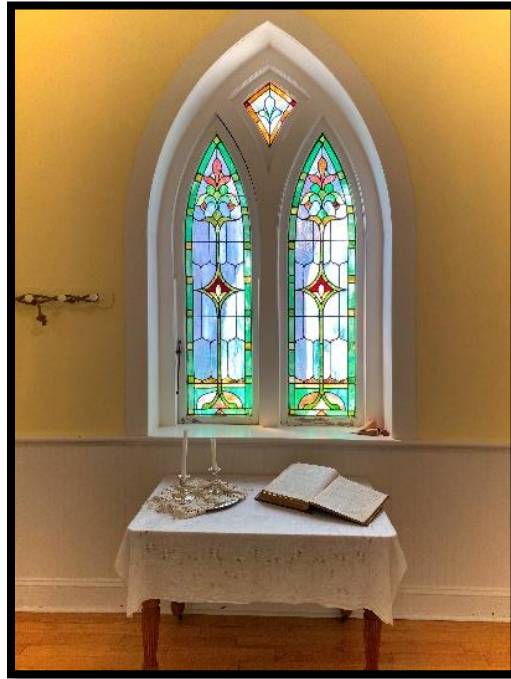
- There was no original dedication in the glass, but a small brass plaque was installed on the window sill in 2023: “A Gift of Love from Sunnyside School, The Carrington Sisters, 1909”

HISTORY

- The Sunnyside School for Young Ladies was founded in 1872 by the four Carrington Sisters, Agnes, Emily, Isabella, Mildred, at their old home on Shiney Rock Road. The “Ladies Carrington” taught academics, morals, and religion to the boarding and day students. They were a constant source of strength, encouragement and hospitality in the community and Clarksville Christian Church, leaving an indelible impression upon the girls in their care. The boarding students were expected to attend worship and were taken by wagon to the first church building of Clarksville Presbyterian

Church on Fourth Street. When the school closed in 1908, after 36 years of operation, they continued to live at Sunnyside until the last sister died in 1926". (*From the DHR Highway marker, dedicated in 2024) The Carrington Sisters were devout members of Clarksville Presbyterian Church and provided strong financial support to the church, including part of the cost of purchasing the church property, purchase of the west stained glass window, and some of the original furnishings of the church, including the pulpit. In the history of the school, it was noted that a room was set aside for visiting pastors.

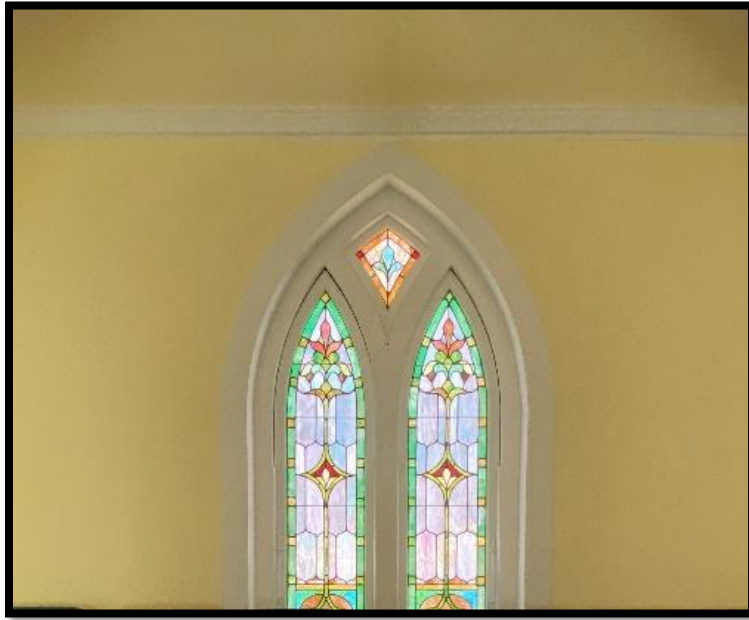
4. The Narthex Window



DESCRIPTION:

- Two panel windows with diamond window above
- 2 panels – 63”H x 16”W; Diamond – 14”H x 12”W
- Narthex, west side
- Green, yellow - decorative
- Identical to the Pulpit Window, east side of building.
- No dedication

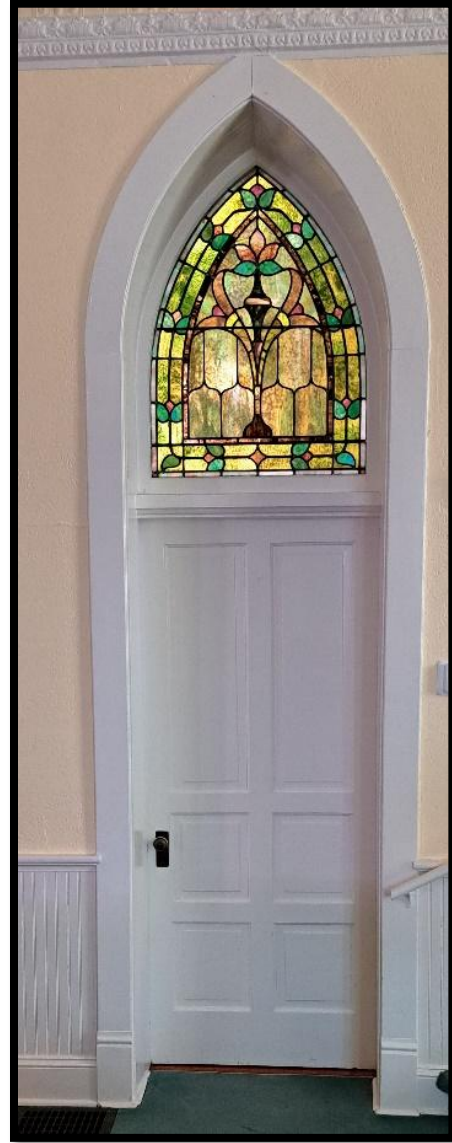
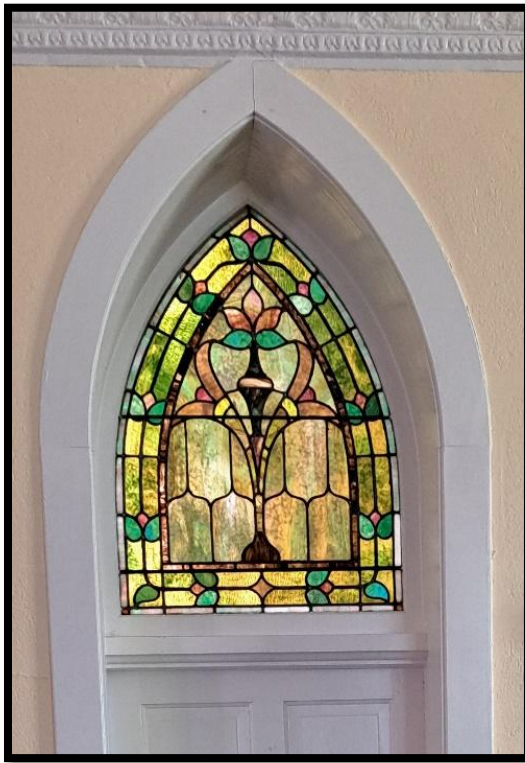
5. The Pulpit Window



DESCRIPTION

- Two panel windows with diamond window above
- 2 panels – 63”H x 16”W; Diamond – 14”H x 12”W
- Behind pulpit, east side
- Green, yellow
- Identical to the Narthex Window, west side of building.
- No dedication

6. The Hallway Window



DESCRIPTION:

- Single window
- 44"H x 32"W Above door to left of pulpit
- Green, yellow
- No dedication
- Lighted from behind

