

**Sermon on Trinity United Church, It's Building and Memorial Windows**  
**Rev. David Hamilton**

I wonder how many present here today can tell me how old our church is? It was officially dedicated on August 12, 1894, with the corner stone laid a year earlier. When it was built it cost \$5500. Today it is insured for \$3,500,000. The windows are insured for \$500,000. The organ is insured for \$350,000. The organ was installed in 1909 for \$2,900. The pews are insured for \$15,000

In 1893, there was excitement all over PEI. For the laying of the church's corner stone, there were special trains from Tignish and Souris, picking up more passengers along the way. Nothing naughty or mischievous would occur as they were all Methodists.

The fund raising for the church organ was spear headed by the Epworth League, the church's first Youth Group, and at the same time in 1909, the very first electric lights were financed by the ladies of the Church.

Now let's talk about the windows. There are fifteen in all; 5 placed by The Allen's, 3 by the Strong's, 2 by the Women of the Church, one by the returned soldiers of World War II, and single windows by the Campbell's, the MacFarlane's, The Arnett's and the family of Dan MacLeod.

The major promoter of Memorial Windows was Lucas Allen, who married Winifred Brace Allen of the very prominent Brace MacKay Furniture Store Family. He had moved into Summerside from Wellington. He served as Chapel Steward, a Methodist role of significance, responsible for all matters concerning the care and upkeep of the building. He was also ordained an elder in 1930, serving until his death. He lived in the large square house, opposite the church parking lot on Spring Street. He was a generous giver to his church, very deaf in his later years, dead set against dancing in the church hall and bemoaned the passing of Sunday evening worship.

William F. Strong was another powerful Saint of our past. He was physically big. He operated a General Store where the Credit Union now sits. Hilda Folland who lived above her father's shoe repair shop across the street, would drop in Strong's for penny candy. She was overwhelmed by the size of this giant but found him to be gentle, patient and kind with children. Mr. Strong gained much influence in PEI and Federal politics. The Strong's lived on Central Street, in the house now occupied by John and Joan Waite.

The Strong Family were great benefactors of Trinity, their funds still serving as the base of our Endowment Fund, and provided the largest source of funds for the Strong Memorial Auditorium and Christian Educations Centre. An early family member was Rev. J.B. Strong, who might be called the Father of Methodism in Prince County.

The first window was placed in the South Wing in 1938, being financed from the Estate of Jessie Strong. Her dad had come to Summerside from Alberton to serve as editor of one of our two daily newspapers of the time. It is interesting that in the first 95 years of our history, there were only three organists, Jessie Strong, Mary Geldhart and Jean Sheen. Like our beloved The Late Jean Sheen, Jessie Strong was a most accomplished organist and choir director, a music teacher, lover of children and an artist of note. The window has the theme of “The Road to Emmaus” with the powerful words, “He was known to them in the breaking of bread.”

The second window was placed in the North Wing, unveiled in October 1939, at the commencement of World War II. The window was placed by the women of the church as a memorial of those of the congregation who perished in World War I. It was unveiled by Lieutenant Governor LePage who hadn't yet been installed into office. The church was full to capacity and heavy with emotion as the congregants awaited all the dread that awaited 1939-1945. At the top of the window are the Coat of Arms of PEI and Canada, with the persons of King David, Saint George, the patron Saint of England, and Jonathan, son of King Saul and close friend and advisory of David.

Below this are the serpents standing for the powers of evil to be slain, suggesting “Put on The Whole Armour of God” followed by the well known words, “They shall grow not old as we that are left grow old.”

The most impressive window in the entry is in memory of the Hon. W. G. Strong and his wife Sara June Bousfield. The theme is Christ Appearing to Mary on Easter Sunday Morning. On either side are companion windows, on the left “Christ The Sower” presented by World War II Veterans with Thanksgiving for Their Safe Return Home from War, and on the right “Jesus The Good Shepherd” place by the Woman of the Church in memory of those who died in World War II.

Returning now to the front on the church's North Side;

(1) The Campbell Window (Family of Hon. Alex Campbell) in memory of his parents and Uncle Clair, the theme Saint Andrew, Patron Saint of all Scot's with the scripture, “We Have Found The Messiah”

- (2) Window in memory of Winifred Brace Allen, wife of Lucas Allen. The depiction is of Saint Paul with the scripture quote “Justified By Faith”
- (3) World War I Memorial in the Wing.
- (4) In memory of Lieutenant Colonel Ernest Strong, again with the theme of “Put On the Whole Armour Of God”
- (5) In memory of Harry S. Allen, Dentist with the appropriate theme of “Jesus The Healer” “Jesus Went About Healing all Manner of Diseases”
- (6) The MacFarlane Window in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Silas MacFarlane and son Ralph, devout supporters of this church for so many years.

Going now to the South side of the Church in the cloak room, and along the South Side;

- (1) In memory of Mr. and Mrs. Arnett and daughter Valerie Johnson, presented by Roy Johnson, again with the theme “In Remembrance of Me”
- (2) In memory of J. S. Allen and his wife Charlotte and her sisters, Mary and Caroline Dobson, the Easter theme “He Is Risen” presented by Capt. J.S. Allen
- (3) In Memory of Mildred Archibald with the theme “Come Unto Me”
- (4) In Memory of Dan MacLeod with the theme of “I Am The Way, The Truth and The Life”. Mr. MacLeod was the only person to die while sitting here at worship.
- (5) The very last window to be installed was placed in the south entry way. Recent renovations have made this area the cloak room with that window remaining in the place. With the theme of the window being “The Lords Supper”, this window was placed in memory of Lucas Allen who worked so diligently to see that all of the church sanctuary windows were of the highest quality and beautiful stained glass.

I like to go to a place of where only God is there  
 And bending low upon my knees, I bow my head in prayer  
 No harm or danger can touch me there, My spirit is at rest  
 For I am in my Father’s house, a loved and sheltered guest  
 And when I must go forth again where men indifferent plod  
 I am better for the time I have spent alone with God.

As the Psalmist puts “How Lovely Are Thy Dwellings, O Lord of Hosts”

Rev. David Hamilton