

# ***THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE MEDIATOR***



**AND HER FACETED SLAB GLASS WINDOWS  
IN SOUTHWEST BERRIEN COUNTY**

**14280 RED ARROW HIGHWAY  
HARBERT, MICHIGAN**

## **The Community**

The community that became Church of the Mediator began meeting in homes in the Harbert area in the early 1960s. As their numbers grew, they began meeting in what was then St. Molly's Vineyard; conducting Sunday school in the barreling room, celebrating mass in the owner's office. Growing larger, a dedicated church was built in 1962 at the present location. At the time, the small church was considered the first unit of a larger facility. In 1985, the three large slab glass panels were dedicated along with seven smaller slab glass panels behind the altar.

The church addition in 2010 tripled the space of the church. The entire facility became accessible with the sanctuary and reception area on one floor; the other floors of the original church were made accessible with the addition of an elevator serving the lower Parish Hall, main first floor and the upper floor with Chapel, offices and children's class room. The original three slab glass panels were relocated to the reception room; the smaller slab glass windows remain in what is now the Chapel; a Rose Window was commissioned for the Sanctuary by the same artists and dedicated in 2010.

## **About Faceted Slab Glass**

This thicker stained glass is often called slab glass or dalles de verre from the French who introduced it after World War II when much reconstruction was being done. Each slab is almost an inch thick and is made in a standard 8" x 12" format. In the studio, the artist cuts the slab into smaller pieces to form the design. This is done with a hammer and anvil. Then the glass is faceted selectively to enhance its brilliance. The dalles flash like jewels in the light. The final panels are cast using an epoxy cement, which becomes very strong after curing. The epoxy matrix appears dark against the backlight of daytime. This dark background is important in balancing the richness of the vibrant glass, which glows mysteriously even after the sun has set.



### Sanctuary, above the Altar **Alpha and Omega Window**

Here in this beautiful window, dedicated to the memory of Rev. Charles Frandsen, images of our faith come together. Beneath the arms of the cross, we see the alpha and the omega letters, first within the new greens beginning in spring and then opposite in the rich colors of autumn. This reflects the main theme of the window "I am the Alpha and the Omega..." said our Lord.

The full spectrum of color reminds us of the rainbow linking heaven and earth as in the first covenant "God sent a rainbow..." the deep border below appears to receive and hold the cross like a cup. Radiantly, the sun shines in an arc above. Below, a new moon rises in the spring while an old moon sinks from the autumn into winter. The dance of creation continues around the circle. You will find many shapes and groupings suggesting our abundant earth.

Within the deeper tones of fall and winter, we find a pinecone and fruits. At the foot of the cross is an acorn with a dark heart shape within. Looking with little imagination, we can find hyacinth, passionflower, butterfly, fern and a blue bird. At the foot of the alpha is a sprig of lilacs, while the omega brings forth the shaft of wheat and grapes.

Running the circle is a parade of stars moving up through summer and down into the deeper blues and purples of the sky, finally turning into snowflakes. The fiery crown of Pentecostal flames proclaims our faith, celebrating the presence of the Holy Spirit among us.

The yellow rose is for Ianthe Frandsen, Father Frandsen's wife, the blue bird is for Father Frandsen's daughter, Tina, who was an avid bird lover, and nestled in the spring of the omega is a Shasta daisy for Father Frandsen's daughter Lisa, her favorite flower.

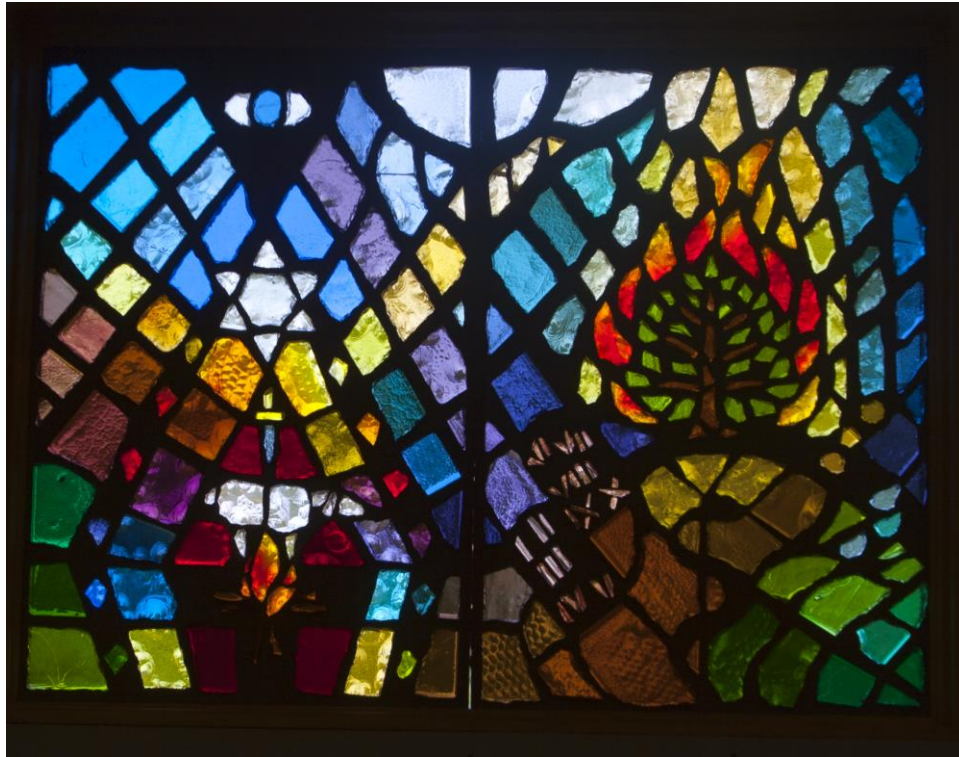


Reception Hall, Left Window  
**CREATION**

The panel on the left was given by St. Molly's Guild  
The panel on the right is dedicated to W. Howard Beemer

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." In the first panel we see the swirl of deep blues, the lamps God made to govern the night - the moon and stars strung out like a necklace glowing in the firmament. Below, the waters divide from the vault of heaven and team with fish and whale. In the sky are the winged creatures.

In the next panel, the larger light governs the day and warms the earth. The many seed-bearing plants grow and multiply over the land. The creation is unfolding - each thing in its true place; and it is good.



Reception Hall: Center Window

### THE OLD COVENANT

The panel on the left (Abraham) was given in Thanksgiving for the family of Mary Lu Price and Robert Abner Miller

The panel on the right (Moses) was given in memory of Olin McCormick 1869-1914, Mary Beattie McCormick 1878-1950 and in thankfulness for Philip and Marina Beggrov Peter

God (the eye) looks down from above. His law is absolute. A covenant has been made between God and man and it calls for man's complete faith and obedience. Abraham's loving trust was rewarded as the ram was sacrificed instead of his beloved Isaac. In this window, we see the Tau shaped Hebrew altar holding the lamb with the sacrificial knife above. There is a tent shape marked by a rainbow of stars, twelve representing the tribes of Israel beneath the star of David. The rich vibrant colors reflect the rainbow of the first covenant between God and Noah, and in the straight, strong lines we feel the purpose and prophetic destiny of Abraham's children under God.

In the top of this center window, we see the cloud, the moving pillar that is God's Spirit that the people followed to find their way out of the desert. In the second panel of the window, we see the coming of Moses and the Commandments, and there is a new 'feel'. The wind of the Spirit is moving across the land and a new hope is with the children of God. The bush burns but is not consumed; the serpent is contained upon the rod; and water and manna sustain the people on their difficult journey. God's plan is being fulfilled, and the New Testament covenant is yet to come.



Reception Hall: Right Window

**CHRIST THE MEDIATOR**

The left panel is in memory of  
Mildred H. Williams 1910-1953  
Marian L. Quick 1897-1952  
Ida Matson Smith 1883-1972

George O. Quick 1894-1957  
Harold Marius Smith 1883-1938

Dominating the center of these two panels we see the golden flower in full bloom - an image of the truth unfolded in the Son of God. The complete circle - the mandala - reflects the unity and the completeness of His truth. It appears like a sun burst behind the cross. Surrounding are images of the Christian story. Beginning in the lower left with the Advent, we see pictured the new moon and Mary, the mother of Christ, waiting in faith and devotion. Beneath the flower is the rising sun: the Son of God is born. The rays lead up and out into the flower. In the upper right is the chalice and the cross, wheat shafts and grapes, and the Chi Rho symbol. Out of the cross grows the lily forming a white cross, like trumpets proclaiming the joyful news of Easter.

Above the golden flower, the Holy Spirit descends. The alpha and the omega symbols are seen at the very bottom of the panels on either side of the manger shape with the rising sun.

Christ the Mediator is the divine point in the center, bringing harmony and love out of all: perfect, contained and yet containing all: Each heart is beckoned by the golden flower within us.

## The Artists:

Joan Hector and Toni Smith were commissioned to create the slab glass windows.

Joan Hector. After graduating from the University of Colorado, travel and other work occupied her time until she came to rest in Three Rivers in 1963. There she began teaching, and has taught at the Carnegie Center for the Arts, Glen Oaks Community College and the Commission on Aging Community Center in Cassopolis. Teaching continues to be a great source of satisfaction for her, while deepening and nourishing her own art as well.

Most importantly, she was introduced to a new form of thick stained glass called “slab glass”. This beautiful glass captured her imagination and soon found herself among friends, making small window pieces, going to fairs and accepting commissioned works. The Nazarene Church in Three Rivers was her first big commission, in 1966. Over the years she has had many windows and glass pieces installed in churches, schools, businesses and private residences through the Midwest and in California.

Toni Smith. Works in art therapy helping others through art. She works in a variety of media and creates not just stunning works in mosaics, but also paintings including mixed media. Toni is a member of Chartreuse co-op Gallery, and also works with The Boys & Girls Club students at the ARS Gallery as well as teaching adult mosaic classes

**Note: The stained glass windows of the Episcopal Church of the Mediator are listed with the Michigan Stained Glass Census, sponsored by the Michigan State University Museum.**

November 2018  
Revised 10-22-2021