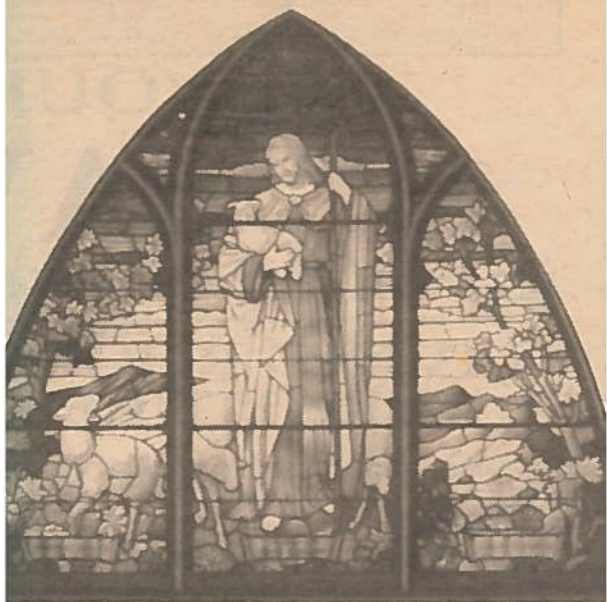


Bethinking of Old Orleans

C.W.Lattin • County Historian



STAINED GLASS WINDOWS

"I am the Good Shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep. The hired man, who is not the shepherd, who does not own the sheep, deserts the sheep and runs when he sees the wolf coming; then the wolf tears and scatters them. The hired man runs away because he is a hired man and does not care about the sheep.

"I am the Good Shepherd and I know my own. My own in turn know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life on behalf of the sheep. I have other sheep also that are not in this fold; those I must lead as well, and they will listen to my call, so that there will be one flock, one shepherd." John 10: 11-16

This article is a second in a series on stained glass windows in Orleans County Churches. The window shown here of "The Good Shepherd" is from the First Baptist Church in Medina, N.Y. The above quotation from John is certainly an appropriate Biblical reference which gives background to the subject matter of this scene. Several other churches in the county also have windows showing similar views of Jesus with sheep.

This window is divided into three basic panels in the Gothic Style. The figure in the center is life-size and dressed in a robe that is a rich ruby color which denotes divine love, the Holy Spirit; royalty and creative power. The outer cloak or mantle is white which symbolizes faith, joy, life and religious purity. Artistically, this contrasts dramatically with the ruby robe. The main portion of the sky is a vibrant sapphire blue color which signifies heaven, fidelity, constancy and truth. The other colors used in the trees and mountains are greens and browns while the sheep are buff colored. Note the bell around the sheep's neck in the left panel. Frequently there are incidental little details in windows which really add to their charm and character. In early church symbolism the bell was supposed to exorcise demons.

This beautiful window, now seventy years old, is located in the front of the Baptist Sanctuary in an arch above the Baptistry. It is a dynamic focal point of the interior, being illuminated from behind by artificial lighting. The window has three names in three separate banners in the base of each panel. The names are: in the left panel, Annette E. Stearns; in the center panel, In Memoriam Emma A. Stearns and in the right panel, Frances N. Stearns. The window was installed in 1919 and paid for by Annette Stearns in memory of her mother, Mrs. Emma Stearns and her sister, Miss Frances Stearns. It was at this period of time that the church was redecorated and modifications made to the front of the Sanctuary and Baptistry.

The present First Baptist Church edifice in Medina was built in 1872 and dedicated on Jan. 8, 1873. The contract for building this church out of grey Medina Sandstone was given to Patrick O'Grady and cost about \$45,000 to construct. The original Baptist Church, a wooden structure, dedicated in 1832, was located further down Center Street in Medina. It was in 1870 that the trustees purchased the present site at West Center and West Avenue to build a larger church. The First Baptist Church of Medina was actually founded in May 1829. This followed a preliminary meeting which was held in February 1829 to discuss the feasibility of establishing a Baptist Church. Therefore, 1989 marks the 160th anniversary for this church on the pages of local history.