

Concert series draws attention to churches

BY C.W. LATTIN 4-7-11
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The second concert in the 2011 Eastman at Albion Courthouse Concert Series, "From Times Square To Red Square," will take place 3 p.m. May 1 in the First Presbyterian Church of Albion.

The program will consist of Russian and American music for flute and piano, with Sophia Gibbs Kim and Irina Lupines.

In using our historic churches for musical venues we come more fully to appreciate our cultural heritage in Albion. Therefore, let us focus in particular on the stained glass seen at the First Presbyterian Church. This massive Gothic Revival church, reminiscent of a 14th century cathedral, was designed by Rochester architect A.J. Warner and was built in 1874.

All the original stained glass windows were removed in 1910 and replaced with then-popular Tiffany-style windows when the sanctuary was redecorated.

Three figural windows are noteworthy to point out.

The first, facing south, was created by Henry Keck in 1911 when he worked for the Pike Stained Glass Studio in Rochester. Prior to this, Keck had worked for Tiffany Studios. This was commissioned by Elizabeth Keeney Hart as a memorial to her mother, Ella Beckwith Kenney (1848-82), who was a Sunday school teacher in the Albion Presbyterian Church. The window is



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titled "Teaching The Holy Scriptures" and represents Keeney with her pupils. Colors in a religious scheme of this nature are symbolic. White represents purity, red equals love, green is hope, blue is for truth and gold is seen as God's goodness.

The figural window next to this placed in 1944 is titled "The Agony In The Garden" by the Haskins Studio out of Rochester. It is based on a famous 19th

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century painting by Henrich Hofman, a famous German painter of religious subjects, and was given as a memorial to Arthur McOmber Eddy and Nellie Lettis Eddy.

Dark brooding colors pervade this night scene in the Garden of Gethsemane. The thorny brush in the lower left alludes to the fate of Jesus and his suffering. The beam of light represents the Holy Spirit while the Cyprus trees in the background suggest his ultimate crucifixion. The Cyprus is associated with death because once cut it never sends up new life from its roots.

Our figural subject shown here on the north side of the sanctuary is titled "Mary of Bethany," depicting her in a pose of spiritual adoration. The lower portion of the window depicts the Biblical story found in Luke 10:38-42.

This window came in 1934 as a memorial to Marjorie King Reed (1880-1933). It seems she died of complications after choking on a piece of a skewer in some meat while dining at a restaurant in Rochester. Her bereaved husband, Herbert T. Reed,

and his daughter, Mrs. Mary Martillotta, and Mrs. Marjorie Mahoney commissioned the Pike Stained Glass Studios for the window. It is an excellent example of the Tiffany-style where layers of glass are used to create effects such as shadows in the robes and table cloth. Only the flesh parts are actually painted while most of the window is colored glass. William Pike had once worked for Louis C. Tiffany, who prided himself on creating images in glass without the use of paint.

The three-figural windows at the First Presbyterian Church are noteworthy examples of this style and kind of workmanship which became popularized by Tiffany and emulated by many others.

C. W. Lattin is the Orleans county historian. His column appears every Thursday in The Journal-Register and The Albion-Advertiser.