A Guide to the
Stained Glass Windows
of the
Martin & Janet Ozinga Chapel
The mission of Trinity Christian College is to provide Biblically informed liberal arts education in the Reformed tradition. Our heritage is the historic Christian faith as it was reshaped in the Reformation, and our fundamental basis of governance and instruction is the infallible Word of God as interpreted by the Reformed standards. The Reformed worldview affirms the Biblical truths that creation is the work of God, that our world has fallen into sin, and that redemption is possible only through the gracious work of Christ.

Introduction

Trinity’s mission statement includes these opening sentences:
The Biblical metanarrative of creation, fall, redemption, and new creation frames our educational approach at Trinity. It is fitting, therefore, that the Martin and Janet Ozinga Chapel, central to the life of our campus, is graced in each direction by a series of four stained glass window compositions reflecting this fundamental Biblical drama: Creation, Creation Subdued, Creation Redeemed, Creation Perfected.
“In the beginning God created...” The primary inspiration for the imagery in this first series of panels is from Genesis 1, verses 1-19. Light is separating from darkness with abstract images of objects in the night sky: stars and planets as well as seeds, plants, and living organisms. All of life finds its source and center in the abundant overflow of God’s goodness and grace. The Spirit hovers over the waters of the deep, stirring into life the beginning of creation’s unfolding. The radiance of God’s light and life flows ever outward, spilling over into vibrant hues of an expanding spectral array.
Unlike the later stained glass windows that are each composed of six panels, this first window, located in the Van Namen Recital Hall, has but four panels. Rather than limiting the scope of creation, however, the visual motion that swirls within these four panels promises that creation has only just begun and awaits the unfolding development of so much more. The waters of these first panels flow outward and stream through the panels of the other windows. God’s goodness and grace endures, even as it unfolds through time. Creation is God’s gift of overflowing abundance, whose goodness and grace never runs dry.
Creation Subdued
West Entrance Windows

In the beginning, God created an ever-expanding cosmos that was vibrant and glorious, culminating with the crowning of his creation, humankind. But instead of continuing to unfold the wonders of creation, our first parents sinned, and the story of creation transitions into a story of disobedience with all needing God’s grace through the person of Jesus Christ.

In the west windows of the Martin and Janet Ozinga Chapel, the stained glass panels depict the goodness of God’s creation subdued. A large panel suspended to the side of the smaller panels gives an illusion of shattered glass and of a perfect world now fragmented, as Adam takes a defensive stance and Eve weeps.
The beauty of the garden has faded, and thistles invade the vegetation; serpents coil around trees and devour their fruit. While humankind’s accomplishments are seen in buildings both rustic and modern, they stand amid what remains of the garden—a reminder that even humankind’s best efforts are tainted. The fall into sin is not a final reality, but it does leave all creatures with pain, brokenness, and separation from the Creator.
Creation Redeemed

South Windows – Ozinga Grand Lobby

In the south windows of the Frank and Grace Ozinga Grand Lobby, Creation Redeemed is set against a background that suggests a waterfall, repeating and enlarging the symbol of God’s constant care and overflowing grace that moves from window to window. God’s good creation comes to form in a variety of figures who participate in God’s reign as they take up vocations associated with a variety...
of academic disciplines. Reflecting the College’s mission statement, the composition emphasizes “that those who teach and learn are called to be coworkers with Christ in subjecting all cultural activities to the reign of God.”

In the panels, we see figures representing the applied disciplines (education, business), the social sciences, the arts, the core studies (philosophy, theology, rhetoric, and history), the life and physical sciences, and the humanities. Symbols of the work of each discipline are depicted within the panels: the artist’s brushes, the student’s books, the scientist’s beaker, and so on. The figures exhibit the wide diversity in God’s creation through differences in their gender, age, ethnicity, and culture. The figures are posed to suggest the dialogue among both individuals and disciplines that is at the heart of college life. The fundamental message of the composition is stated in the quote from Colossians 1:17, which weaves through all six panels: “He is before all things, and in Christ all things hold together.”
Creation Perfected
East Entrance Windows

Displayed in the east windows of the Martin and Janet Ozinga Chapel, Creation Perfected is based on the vision of John in Revelation 21 and 22. Vibrant colors depict the glory of God’s restoring work that culminates in the city of God, filled with the radiant light of the presence of the Triune God, descending from heaven to earth. As with the other compositions, the water of life, a recurring image of God’s life-giving grace, flows through the work. Nothing escapes God’s restoration—the grave is empty, the depths of geological strata, agricultural harvest, the cultural worlds of every tribe and tongue and language become a procession of grateful praise and adoration as they process into the city of God. This holy city comes down out of heaven (Revelation 21:2), a fulfillment of the cultural mandate of Genesis 1:26 (be fruitful and multiply, fill the earth and subdue it) and the great commission of Matthew 28:19 (go
therefore and make disciples of all nations). Every dimension of God’s redeeming purpose has been fulfilled—the garden of God’s good creation, though alienated and scarred by sin, has been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, and has now become the city of God. Once again, God and humans dwell together in unspoiled fellowship in the midst of God’s perfected creation. Within the overabundance of the Triune God, the creation thrives anew.
**About the Artist and His Compositions**

Paul Damkoehler of Altamira Art Glass is an Oak Park, Illinois, artist who has designed, executed, and installed all four stained glass windows in the Martin and Janet Ozinga Chapel over a 10-year period of time (2001 to 2011). For each window series, he worked closely with Trinity’s chaplain and faculty members from the departments of theology and art and design. Each assembly is constructed of transparent smooth and textured “cathedral” stained glass joined with lead that came in various widths, soldered and cemented, then polished to darken the metal. Certain elements of each design are painted and kiln-fired for detailing and shading effects.

**With Gratitude**

The Jacob and Rita Van Namen family provided for the *Creation* composition as part of their sponsorship of the Van Namen Recital Hall in which the work hangs. Jacob served on Trinity’s Board of Trustees from 1969 to 1973, and Rita served on both the Women’s Guild and the Garden Club; their son Jack and daughter Joyce are alumni of Trinity. It was dedicated in 2001 during the inaugural year of the Martin and Janet Ozinga Chapel. Dedicated that same year was the *Creation Redeemed* work, made possible by Martin Ozinga Jr.’s sister, Anna Grace Lich, in memory of her husband, Henry. The *Creation Perfected* composition, dedicated May 2, 2010, was given in celebration of the life and faith example of Edwin Gabrielse by his wife Patricia and family. Ed served on Trinity’s Board of Trustees from 1980 to 1986, and his daughter Kathi Gabrielse Brueggemann is an alumna of Trinity. The last work of the series, *Creation Subdued*, was the result of gifts from Beverly Ozinga (an alumna), Kenneth Ozinga, and Martin Ozinga III, as well as many other gifts given in memory of their late father, Martin Ozinga Jr. and Martin III’s late wife Ruth, an alumna of the College.