

## Pipe Organ

While our sanctuary was being designed and built, the church leaders were planning for the sanctuary's pipe organ, an instrument the church had never had before.



The research was led by Mabel Stewart Boyter ←, the congregation's pianist and eventual first organist, as well as consultant Wilbur H. Rowand, dean of music at Shorter College in Rome, Georgia. Their search led them to the Æolian-Skinner Organ Company in Boston, the premier pipe organ company in America at that time. That company designed and built our organ, led by their president, G. Donald Harrison, who was also

the country's foremost organ designer in that era.

The organ was completed in time for the opening of the sanctuary in September, 1940. Five years later, more pipes in the original design were added to the instrument. While the organ has received regular maintenance throughout its lifetime, it remains essentially unaltered to this day. It is one of only 19 G. Donald Harrison signature organs remaining in existence so we consider it a rare jewel.



The organ consists of three keyboard manuals and a pedalboard, with 2,108 pipes arranged in 36 ranks (sets) within two chambers fronted by façade pipes. The Swell and Choir divisions are under expression. A zimbelstern was added in 1995 and tubular chimes in 2016. There were internal console upgrades in the 1980s and again in 2005. The organ is undergoing complete restoration in 2022 to repair the

effects of eight decades of continuous use and to return it to as close to original specification as possible, plus the addition of authentic Æolian-Skinner pipes that were in G. Donald Harrison's original design but the congregation could not afford in the 1940s. The organ is also receiving electrical and other necessary upgrades during the restoration by the A. E. Schlueter Pipe Organ Company.

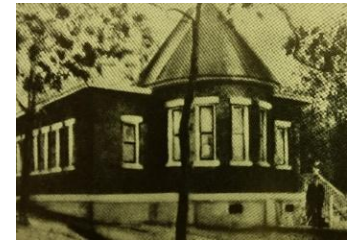
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## Introduction to the Sanctuary of Druid Hills Presbyterian Church Atlanta, Georgia

Welcome to the sanctuary of Druid Hills Presbyterian Church. This pamphlet will introduce you to our church and our sanctuary. You are invited to take this pamphlet with you as a remembrance of your visit.

This congregation began as a mission Sunday School in 1881, possibly in a house, on Howell Street, just blocks east of downtown Atlanta. It grew sufficiently to be chartered by Atlanta Presbytery on June 24, 1883 as Fourth Presbyterian Church with 37 members, 4 ruling elders and 3 deacons. Its first building was at the corner of Chamberlain and Jackson Streets near the present-day King Center.

The growing membership and rapidly growing city crowded that site so that the church searched for a new location. Temporary quarters were found within the Methodist Mission in the Copenhill neighborhood near the present-day Carter Presidential Center. In 1910, now known as Druid Park Presbyterian Church, the congregation found a permanent home → at the corner of Highland and Blue Ridge Avenues. The new name Druid Hills Presbyterian Church was adopted in 1914 to align with the identity of the new neighborhood.



With a growing membership and overcrowded space, the size of the property was again strained and the current Ponce de Leon Avenue location was secured. The first building on this site was what is now our education building, which opened in 1924. With a still-growing membership and a financial campaign, the present sanctuary ← was erected and opened

for worship in September of 1940. Across the parking lot, you'll see McIver Hall which was erected in the 1950s for recreation. The Margaret White Dilbeck Building next to the sanctuary was originally built for our growing Sunday School but is now leased to Druid Hills Child Development Center. The Presbytery of Greater Atlanta's headquarters occupies the southwestern edge of our property.

We would be pleased to welcome you to participate in our weekly worship services on Sunday mornings at 11:00.

## Sanctuary



The church's first sanctuary at this location was in what is now the education building in the first floor space now occupied by our parlor. ← It was always intended as a temporary worship assembly until a more spacious sanctuary could be erected.

Serious planning was underway in the 1930s and we secured the design services of local architect Francis Palmer Smith. In 1909 at

the age of only 23, he became the first full-time director of Georgia Tech's new architecture program. His colleagues declared our sanctuary a "masterpiece" in his career. The church leaders in the late 1930s foresaw the country's rapid movement toward World War II so they acted quickly to arrange for building materials and, we have been told, secured the last structural steel that was available for commercial use in the city before all production was diverted to the war effort. The sanctuary was dedicated in a celebratory worship service on September 22, 1940.



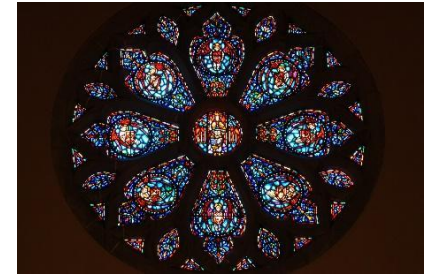
The sanctuary is designed in the French Gothic style as evidenced by the pointed arches above the chancel and aisles and at the top of the windows. The Gothic ceiling features impressive arched timbering reminiscent of London's Westminster Hall. Pews are arranged in two sections with a center aisle as well as in overflow seating in the balcony. A loft behind the chancel accommodated the choir which has since been relocated to the chancel. The original chancel was much smaller than at present, with a pulpit at its right end. Other prominent features of the sanctuary are its stained glass windows and pipe organ, as described on subsequent pages of this pamphlet.

In 2013, the sanctuary was remodeled to accommodate the variety of needs of modern worship. The chancel was expanded. Pews were shortened, spaced further apart and reduced in number for easier movement and flexibility. Acoustics and appearance were improved with a slate floor replacing carpet and vinyl tile. Enhanced sound and flexible lighting systems were also installed.

In addition to weekly worship services, our sanctuary is available for concerts, weddings and other public events. This space has also been featured in several motion pictures and television productions.

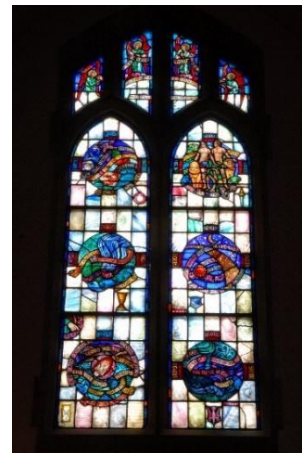
## Stained Glass Windows

For centuries, large churches have incorporated stained glass windows to augment their narration of God's word in their worship. The colors are derived from dissolving mineral salts in molten silica. Certain salts produce various colors. For example, copper salts produce green. Cobalt salts produce blue. The glass pieces are held in place by lead framing and putty-like mastic. The windows before you were produced using traditional medieval methods which means our glass was hand-designed, hand-mixed, hand-blown, hand-cut and hand-assembled.



Our sanctuary's architect, Francis Palmer Smith, recommended Henry Lee Willet of Willet Studios in Philadelphia to design and produce our windows. They had collaborated before so the coordination of the window design and architectural style of the sanctuary was assured. One of Mr. Willet's priorities was always to design windows with the client's identity in mind, so our windows include subjects that are well known to Presbyterians. All of the windows were designed before any of them were created and installed, during the period 1940-1948, so the uniformity of style is quite evident.

The large nave windows span the story of God's love starting on the west side near the piano: Creation, Precursors of Christ, The Major Prophets, Christ's Nativity and Childhood, the Good Samaritan parable, and the Prodigal Son parable. Crossing to the east side, the series continues: Four Miracles of Christ, Christ's Public Ministry, the Four Evangelists, the Twelve Apostles, Paul's Missionary Journeys and Four Modern Missionaries. Smaller windows on the west aisle depict twelve Labors of the Months. Similar windows on the east aisle depict knowledge as God's gifts to us.



The large Choir Window contains nine scenes from Christ's Passion through Ascension. The brilliant Rose Window contains eight scenes from Revelation with Christ seated on the throne of heaven in the rondel. Smaller side windows in the balcony depict two reformers, John Calvin (west) and John Knox (east). Two American Presbyterian ministers are depicted in the narthex windows, Francis Makemie and James Henley Thornwell. "A Soft Radiant Light," a detailed 118 page full color soft cover book on these windows can be ordered from [www.lulu.com](http://www.lulu.com). Neither the church nor author derive income from the sale of the book.