

North United Methodist Church is full of beauty and symbolism in the sanctuary. Please take time to read about the sanctuary ceiling and its symbolism in the brochure, "Sanctuary Ceiling Symbolism".

Both the ceiling and even the stained glass windows are "up high" and can be difficult to see easily. What is the purpose of such elaborate symbolism in a church building, especially when it is too high up and too small to be seen clearly?

Actually it is typical of Gothic cathedrals in Europe and elsewhere that they include many intricate, symbolic details of stonework, glass, mosaic, painting, sculpture, wood carving, etc., both interior and exterior, many of which are normally out of sight. These are considered by their creators to be offerings to God as such, their chief function is to glorify God and express the faith of the artist. Of course a cathedral is intended to inspire human worship and devotion also, but it is first and foremost the temple of God. Every detail should embody the best of human craftsmanship and artistry, whether visible to others or not.

Interesting Facts About the Building

From the Dedication Booklet, 1931

The architecture is Gothic. The design is by Mr. Charles H. Hopson of Atlanta, one of America's foremost church architects.

The exterior walls are Briar Hill variegated sandstone with trim of cut Bedford limestone. The roof is slate and copper.

Chancel and chancel rail are amber travertine marble; communion table and pulpit are white Vermont marble. Interior decoration is Italian Gothic by Schanbacher of Springfield, Illinois, one of America's leading church decorators.

The four manual organ was built by the Kimball Organ Company of Chicago and is a gift to the church of Mr. Sterling R. Holt, of this city.

Seating capacity of the sanctuary is 1200. The sanctuary symbolism includes more than 100 crosses.

The building was erected at an actual cost of \$315,000. All but the final one-fourth of the cost of the ground, building and furnishings was given or pledged prior to the dedication.



Sanctuary

Windows

3808 North Meridian Street, Indianapolis IN 46208

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Sanctuary Window Colors

For many centuries colors have suggested qualities of character and Christian teaching. The windows in our sanctuary are beautiful and meaningful in their colors.

Blue A deep rich blue is dominant in the windows and that blue speaks of consistency and truth. It is the color used in portraying the Mother of Jesus.

Red Red speaks of zeal, creative force, and the Love of God.

Yellow Represents beneficence.

Violet Represents humility and sympathy.

Green Represents immortality and victory

Purple Represents devout suffering and martyrdom

Gold Symbolizes power.



The **twelve** art glass windows that bring the light of the sun into the sanctuary represent the **Twelve Apostles**. High in the gothic stone arches of each window is a distinctive Christian symbol. Beginning with the one to the west on the north side, we follow around the sanctuary:

- Law** Two tablets of Stone on which are carved Roman numerals I – X, representing the Ten Commandments.
- Missionary** The Cross and the Orb speaks of the world conquest of Christ. “Go ye into all the world” was the commission He gave to His disciples.
- Creation** The oldest symbol known is the 6-Pointed Star. This is the Creator’s Star. The six points suggest the attributes of God – Power, Wisdom,
- Eternal Life** The Golden Crown is the age-old reward for faithfulness.
- Humility** The Turtle Dove was commonly offered among the sacrifices in the temple. This humble peaceful bird typifies constancy and devotion.
- Light** The Oriental Lamp holds a burning wick. “Ye are the light of the world”, said Jesus.
- Security** Early Christians used the Anchor as a disguised cross so as not to attract the attention of their persecutors.
- Resurrection** The Lily with its pure white petals and golden heart has become the floral symbol of the resurrection.
- Communion** The Chalice has become the symbol of the holiest sacrament in the church.
- Holy Spirit** The Descending Dove has come to represent, in the symbolic language of the church, the coming of the Holy Spirit.
- Bible** The Greek letters on the Bible pages teach us that in God we have not only the beginning and the ending letters of the alphabet, but all the letters in between. Jesus said, “I am the Alpha and the Omega.”
- Victory** The Cross symbolized suffering and death; the Crown symbolizes victory and life. The Cross and Crown remind us that victory sometimes comes through suffering.