

**Bow Valley Baptist Church**

## **The Four Stained Glass Windows**

Iconography of the Designs

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Window 2



## WINDOW TWO

*Buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith. (Col. 2:12).*

The colours and images in this window are symbolic of baptism. In His submission to baptism, Jesus, the sinless Son of God, identified Himself as the Son of Man, the Suffering Servant of the LORD, who, by this action numbered Himself with us, the transgressors, and in this profoundly crucial moment of dedication to His mission as the Messiah we learn that "Jesus, also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven saying, "You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased." (Luke 3:21). Jesus spoke metaphorically of 'another baptism', that of His passion and death, which He alone could undergo. In the design, the five squares symbolize the five wounds of the Crucifixion, and therefore, are representative of the Presence of Christ.

In numerous works of mediaeval art, the 'voice of God' has been depicted as words drawn upon a scroll, often carried by angels. In this design, there is a desire to give a sense of a scroll which 'reads' as from heaven to Jesus Christ, the incarnate Word of God; "*a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."* (Matthew 3:17),

The shape of the square was chosen to signify Christ's descent from heaven to earth for us - this world oft referred to as having four corners, four winds, four elements, four seasons. By employing the same sheet of ruby glass, the symbolic images of scroll and squares touch with awe and humility upon "this Jesus . . . being the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of His nature." (Hebrews 1:3). Jesus said, "**I and my Father are one.**" (John 10:30).

At Christ's baptism in the river Jordan, the Holy Spirit of God, described as "descending like a dove, and alighting upon Him." (Matthew 3:16), is the very emblem of gentleness. But this gentleness brings the poignant reminder that the Dove speaks also of Sacrifice; so the design of the Dove's emblematic flight springs from a perception of that holy purpose.

A believer's baptism is a personal and public testimony of faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord, and the way in which we identify ourselves with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection. The symbolic burial of 'the old life' is represented here by the dark-toned horizontal shapes along the lower edge of the window. Then a change occurs; the dynamic of the design lifts and flows upward, to give a visual sense of rising with the baptized one, who emerges to walk in newness of life in faith-union with the Lord Jesus Christ.

I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless, I live;  
yet not I, but Christ lives in me:  
and the life which I now live in the flesh,  
I live by the faith of the Son of God,  
Who loved me, and gave Himself up for me. (Galatians 2:20)