

I worry about the stained glass windows at the Broad Bay Church.

Will I walk in one day to find glass on the floor and snow covering the pew?

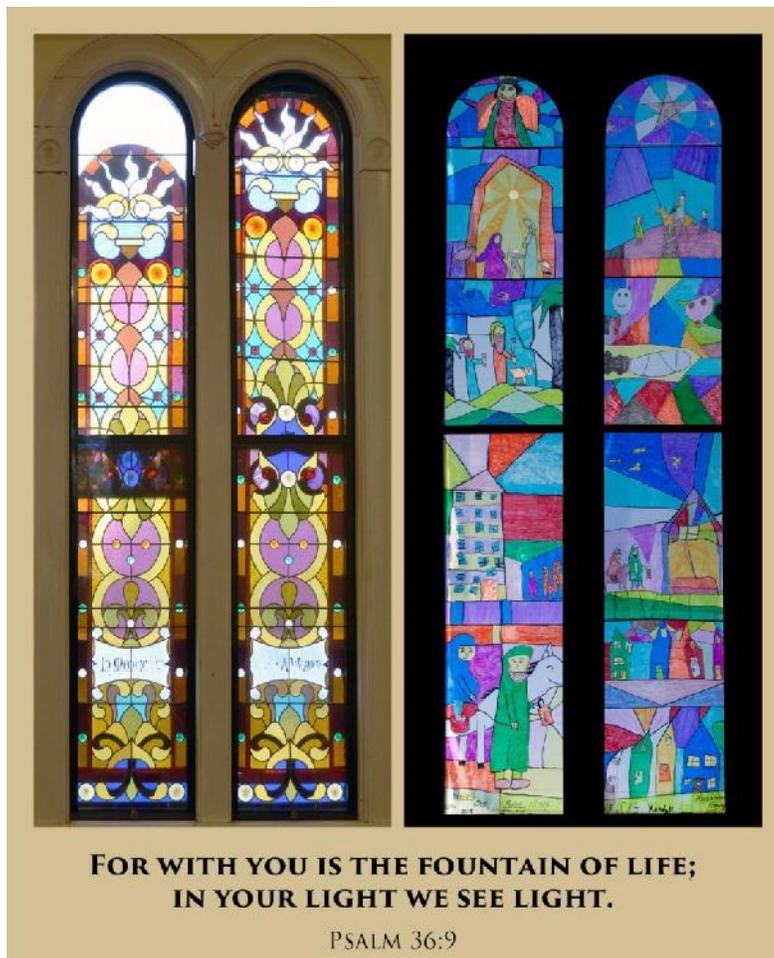
Will the congregation fight about whether to restore the windows them or replace them with clear glass or something else?

One day this fall, on a very grey overcast day, the light in the sanctuary nearly blinds me.

Two of the many windows are safely stored. Clear vinyl, a durable, though temporary fix, protects the sanctuary from the elements. For the first time in 125 years, the sanctuary is brighter. Insiders can see out and outsiders can see in. Viewed from the outside, the chandelier and the windows on the other side of the church are stunning. From inside a tree stands tall against the skyline.

Still the clear windowless hole is odd.

A church school teacher asks “could the children create a Christmas-themed “stained glass” to hang over the window space using clear plastic and sharpie markers?”



“Sure,” say the Trustees.

Looking at the final installation, a leader comments, “God made those windows— not us.”

Whenever people come into the sanctuary, their eyes are drawn to the children’s windows. I tell the story of the windows and a sense of awe and wonder is shared.

An adult asks a child, “What part did you create?”

Child responds, “we did it together.”

On Christmas Eve, with a spotlight lighting the windows from outside, the colors lit the ceiling over the chandelier. Stunning! I no longer worry about what will happen with the windows. We’ll make a decision about whether to preserve what we have, replace it with clear glass or do something else.

The deterioration of windows and vision of children help us to envision a new future—

with windows that tell a story—our story.

The fragility of the windows helps me to see the light. I wonder what will fall apart next.

Rev. Nancy Duncan, January 21, 2016
Broad Bay Congregational United Church of Christ, Waldoboro, ME