“impress them on your children”

THE PRODIGAL SON

Hanging on the wall of Ford Foyer in Pilgrim Chapel is perhaps one of the most famous works by the Late Renaissance artist Rembrandt, Return of the Prodigal Son. Its scene depicts Jesus’ parable, as the lost son returns to his father seeking a place to work, and yet the father embraces the son with merciful kindness, restoring him to the family.

The print was presented to DBU from Dr. Charles and Dorothy Shellenberger, long-time friends and former trustees of DBU, and it serves as a reminder to students entering the sanctuary for worship that regardless of their situation, there is always a loving Father waiting with open arms for them to return to Him.

THE APOSTLES

Throughout the mezzanine level of Pilgrim Chapel hang a series of portraits by Kenneth Wyatt, a Methodist Minister from Tulia, Texas. In the early 1990s, DBU acquired a collection of these prints thanks to the generous support of David Wicker, a former DBU trustee, and his wife, Carolyn, who is a past president of the DBU Women’s Auxiliary Board. Jesus and his twelve disciples, along with Paul, are represented in the collection. With Wyatt’s permission, the likenesses of these portraits were utilized for the Disciples Rose Stained Glass Window inside the Pilgrim Chapel sanctuary.
In 2013, DBU opened the new Sadler Global Missions Center, which houses the International Admissions Department, the Spiritual Life Department, the Baptist Student Ministry, and the offices for the Master of Arts in Global Leadership program, a degree designed to train future missionaries.

As a centerpiece to the inside of this building is a grand stairwell with an opening above that is shaped like a fishing boat. Dr. Blair Blackburn, DBU executive vice president, designed this staircase as a way to reflect the Biblical story of Jesus calling Andrew, Peter, James, and John to leave their livelihoods, become His disciples, and in turn, fishers of men, as seen in Matthew 4. As students walk down these stairs, they are symbolically stepping out of the fishing boat along with the disciples, and walking through the exit, they see another sign, reminding them that they are now “Entering the Mission Field.”
Entering the Pilgrim Chapel sanctuary, one sees a stained glass image of Jesus praying in the Garden of Gethsemane the night that He was betrayed. This piece of art, based on a famous German painting of the same scene, was commissioned by DBU and completed by a stained glass company in Virginia, all made possible thanks to the generous support of DBU trustee Joan Trew.

As seen on the front cover of this special edition, the image portrays Jesus in the early morning moments prior to the arrival of the soldiers. Over His shoulder stands the Holy City of Jerusalem, waiting to receive its coming King. Jesus is kneeling at a stone, wearing a robe with thorns tugging at it, symbolizing the coming trial and crucifixion. In the background, you see the disciples sleeping while Jesus prays in agony, and in the midst of this sorrow, a beam of light shines through, demonstrating not only the care of God the Father, but also the coming Resurrection.
At the back of the sanctuary is a beautiful piece of art reminiscent of the Rose Stained Glass Window in the Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris, which was made possible through the generous support of June Hodges, a long-time friend of DBU. Dr. Blair Blackburn, DBU executive vice president, along with a group of DBU religion and art majors designed DBU’s window, with each petal depicting one of the twelve disciples, along with symbols of their ministry or martyrdom. The images for each of the apostles were inspired by the paintings of the Apostles by Kenneth Wyatt and used with his permission.

At the center of the glass is the cross, draped with a scarlet cloth. The cross is symbolic of the one that stands on campus and is similarly draped during the week of Easter. The window reminds those who look at it of the foundation of our faith, with a center on the Gospel as seen in the Cross of Christ and the spreading of that Gospel through His disciples and the formation of His Church.