

Dedication

(Continued from Page 1)

A tract of land was purchased and the building committee selected the architect firm of Smith, Kranert, Tomblin and Associates of Huntsville to draw up plans for the new complex.

The new St. John the Baptist Church is more centrally located and is situated on the choicest spot, a gradual sloping site up hill toward the east, on the 14 acre tract of surrounding land on Hughes Road. The building was designed with a chancel facing west so that the tallest part of structure would be seen first to create a dynamic impact at first glance from the highway and when entering the church grounds.

Using a contemporary design, the architect utilized at this west end a tower effect with the

stained glass window tower and celtic cross being the focal point. Exterior material selected was rough sawn cedar siding to blend in with the existing trees and sloping hillside. The interior's design is a unique form utilizing a wooden ceiling and wood beams measuring 12 feet at the wall and rising 40 feet, all sloping upward to a focal point directly over the altar, which stands in front of the stain glass window.

The nave is fan shaped to provide the best viewing area of all, again, focusing to a central point at the altar. The architect placed the participants during a service in close proximity to one another at this focal point—the altar, the pulpit and lecturn are in center front. To the left of this is the baptismal font and to the right is the organ with seating for the choir.

The pews are placed in four sections and are made of oak. The seats and kneelers have a tweed cushion that brings out the multicolors of the stained glass window. Eight large windows have been placed on each side of the seating area, which helps to bring in the beauty of the outdoors. The floor is completely covered with a deep brown plush carpet.

As one walks through the three sets of double doors that lead to the sanctuary, the stained glass window comes into view and dominates the scene. From the theme of Genesis... "In the beginning God created heaven and earth..." Aric Koren of Sabra Glass, Inc. created this awe-inspiring design especially for St. John the Baptist Church. The idea for the stained glass window took about six months to evolve,

explained the artist. He called his work "Resurrection" with the cross symbolizing victory over death and the opening of heaven. The fish are symbolic of the disciples and the church after the Resurrection, while the doves symbolize peace and love.

The various planets are symbolic of heaven and God's universal presence. Some of the triangle and diamond designs are incorporated to provide balance and compositional structure to the work. Because the supporting window frames are rectangular and therefore stately, the diamond and triangular shapes maintain the fluid motion and theme of the work as a whole.

Aric of Sabra Glass, Inc., a pioneer in the field of modern art in glass, is one of Israel's most respected artists and was commissioned by Kranert for this work. They had met in Toronto, Canada, while attending a design exposition. In his unique glass designs, Aric creates an exciting technique that combines elements of sculpture and painting with the vibrant beauty of glass.

Aric, a native of Kfar Azar, Israel, has for more than 20 years created fused glass works that have been displayed throughout the world. His works can be found in private residences and public buildings in Israel, England, Germany, Australia, Canada and the United States. His works are in the permanent collection of Israel's Ha'aretz Glass Museum and the Israeli President's residence.

Father Murphy, with just reason to be pleased and satisfied with the completion of this immense undertaking begun a little less than a year and a half ago, sums it all up in this manner... "I cannot help but continue to be impressed with the personal and financial sacrifices made by so many in our parish. Their efforts have been indispensable in bringing this major project to completion," Father Murphy said.



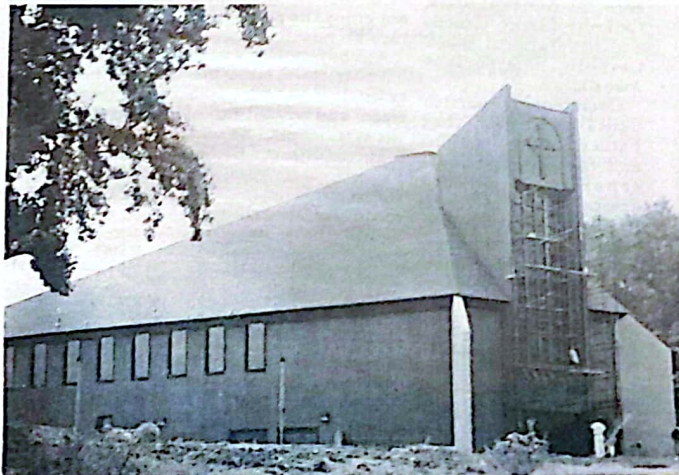
STAINED GLASS WINDOW — The stained glass window above the entrance of St. John's Church, Madison.



LOOKING OVER DESIGN of stained glass window at St. John's Church, Madison, are Moshe Manoah, of Sabra Glass, Inc., Auraham Itzhack, producer, Lloyd Kranert, architect, Aric Koren, artist, and Father Patrick Murphy, pastor.



STATUE OF PATRON SAINT — John the Baptist baptizing Jesus is depicted in marble, and is in the foyer of St. John's Church, Madison. (Photos by John McMahan)



SCAFFOLDING still in place as the finishing touches are made to St. John the Baptist Church, Madison, to be dedicated on Sunday.

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