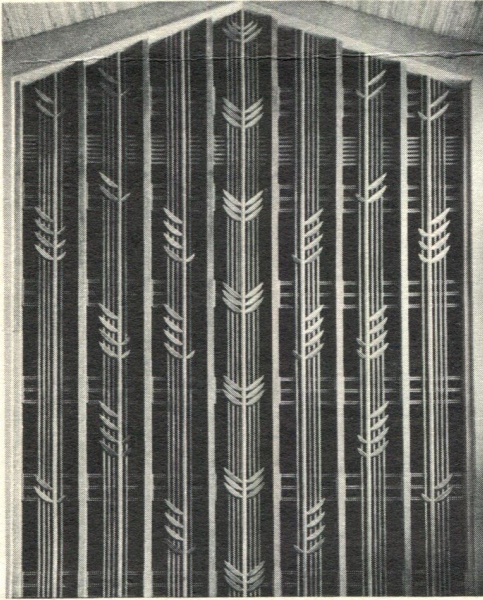






# THE NEW SANCTUARY

of THE CLAREMONT CHURCH



SIXTY-FOUR YEARS ago, our founding fathers, forty-nine in number, bade farewell to mother Pilgrim Congregational Church, Pomona, to organize a new church, recognized by the General Association of Southern California. This was to serve locally the spiritual needs of the faculty and students of growing Pomona College, together with the few townspeople then living in Claremont.

After worshipping for a time in the dining room of Sumner Hall (renamed for their leader after the ornate land-boom hotel of the Santa Fe was converted) the little religious society helped scrape together enough money to equip Holmes Hall, in which they were to meet, provided they could furnish seats and a little reed organ to cost all of \$250. This they accomplished, partly by the donation of assorted gifts, including one two-wheeled dumping cart. All of this transpired at the outset of the nineties, but the turn of the century brought even higher aspirations.

The year 1904 witnessed a great decision of faith. Under the inspiring leadership of Dr. Henry Kingman, the little group decided to leave the outgrown college quarters and build their own sanctuary. Ambitious plans, wholly unwarranted by the census, were made. The cornerstone for the present building was laid, "Ad Gloriam Dei," in 1905; dedication came the following June.

Half a century again placed considerable strain on the seams of this building, forethought notwithstanding, which even the commodious Guildhall, built under the guidance of Dr. Albert Stauffacher in 1927, could not arrest. For the Claremont Church had long since become the center of community life. At an optimistic annual meeting in 1951, looking toward the future half of the century, it was judged that the membership, then over 1600, might by 1962 swell to 2000! (It is now over 2200 with seven years still to go on that estimate.)

## *A New Sanctuary is Planned*

From the limbo of dusty archives discovered in the office of the present minister, Dr. Harold G. Jones, was produced a drawing depicting a beautiful sanctuary adjacent to the Guildhall. This dream of the future had been postponed again and again, due to the depression of 1929, the second World War of 1941, and the ensuing period of economic uncertainty. Finally, a new building plans committee, headed by Rev. Charles L. Boynton, looked into matters once more.

Soundings were taken along many lines, and a committee under L. A. Shelton asked Prof. David Scott of Scripps College to paint his concept of a new house of worship to adjoin the Spanish colonial Guildhall and yet to strike a note modern enough to catch the spirit of the present age. This was admirably done, resulting in a vote by the Church Council and later by the congregation, at the annual meeting of 1952, to proceed with the project.

A subcommittee on architecture headed by Prof. John Vieg (to be followed by Prof. John Gleason, and Mr. Percy Johnson, in turn) selected Mr. Theodore Criley, also an instructor at Scripps, to draw up tentative plans. From funds raised in 1947, during the pastorate of Rev. Homer Yinger, by the Cornerstone Committee, of which Mr. Harold Bruner was chairman, the necessary beginnings were made. Mr. Edward Lockwood was chosen as financial su-



pervisor, and under his able leadership three successful fund campaigns were held, the last being surprisingly oversubscribed. Later committees included one for selecting an organ, headed by Dr. Robert Bernard; one for planning the grounds and landscaping, under Mr. Percy Everett, and finally one for narthex furnishings, led by Mrs. Lawrence Wilson.

In order to plan and build a unique church befitting a community blessed with more than one town's share of artistic talent, it was at once decided to use such specialized abilities as much as possible. Mr. David Scott consented to continue as art consultant, having already used time and creative imagination to the fullest.

For the past four years hundreds of devoted men and women have given their time and strength, best thought and sacrificial financial backing, to bring about this auspicious day of dedication.

### *Architectural Vision*

The style of the new sanctuary had been anticipated in that of the Guildhall, which was to become an integral part of it. We envisaged our church as an expression of basic beliefs and faith. We felt that it should bring about communion between God and man by means of public worship, the preaching of the Word and the celebration of the sacraments; that, designed in gracious dignity, it should satisfy the worshipful aspirations and requirements of the congregation for many generations to come, and that in architectural form it should have enough of the traditional to speak to men out of our rich heritage and timeless faith, yet that it should be conceived in terms of contemporary construction and design.

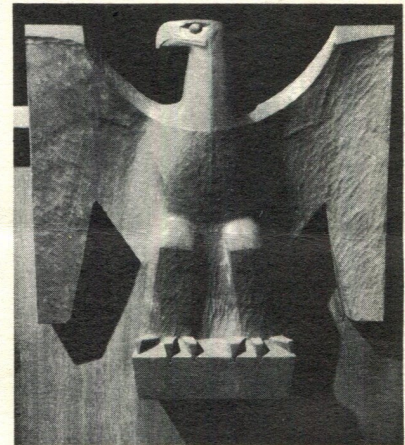
We think that this ambitious goal has been largely fulfilled. The exterior is impressive yet inviting. As one enters the narthex, one immediately senses a warm friendly atmosphere. Then one steps into the sanctuary and is at once uplifted by the simple design, lofty walls, the cathedral-like sense of spaciousness, and the dignified altar and reredos. The long line of windows to the south will be shaded by shrubbery, giving a modern touch.

### *Ornamentation*



"Always ornament your structure; never structuralize your ornament," was an ironclad rule laid down for good architecture. The new sanctuary began with good, clean, and simple lines of structure, based upon the ancient basilica, or Roman law court plan — rectangular in form, from which grew Gothic, Romanesque, and even Colonial types of architecture. Modern variations appear in the skeletal ribs, windows, arches, and ornamentation. Spiritual aspirations are reflected in the simple but lofty proportions of the nave and chancel, further enhanced by carefully designed ornamentation appropriately related to the basic forms.

As one approaches along Harvard Avenue, it would be difficult to say which feature first catches the eye — the soaring columns of indigenous stone from the San Antonio wash, or the magnificent facade cross of ceramic blocks made by Mr. Millard Sheets, one of Claremont's deservedly renowned artists. The colors of this cross — blue, gold and cream enlivened with splashes of gilt — bring out unsuspected variegation in the cleverly placed mosaic-like pieces of native stone, each complementing the other in one harmonious unity, with just the right accents wherever needed. The intriguing pattern of squares, rectangles or circles enclose simply but exquisitely fashioned smaller crosses—of Roman, Greek and Celtic design. In all this two simple shapes are outstanding—the square, symbol of stability, and the circle, mystical concept of eternity.





Beneath the cross appear the words, "My house shall be called a house of prayer for all people," in archaic letters designed by Mr. Malcolm Cameron, who also made the ceramic cornerstone.

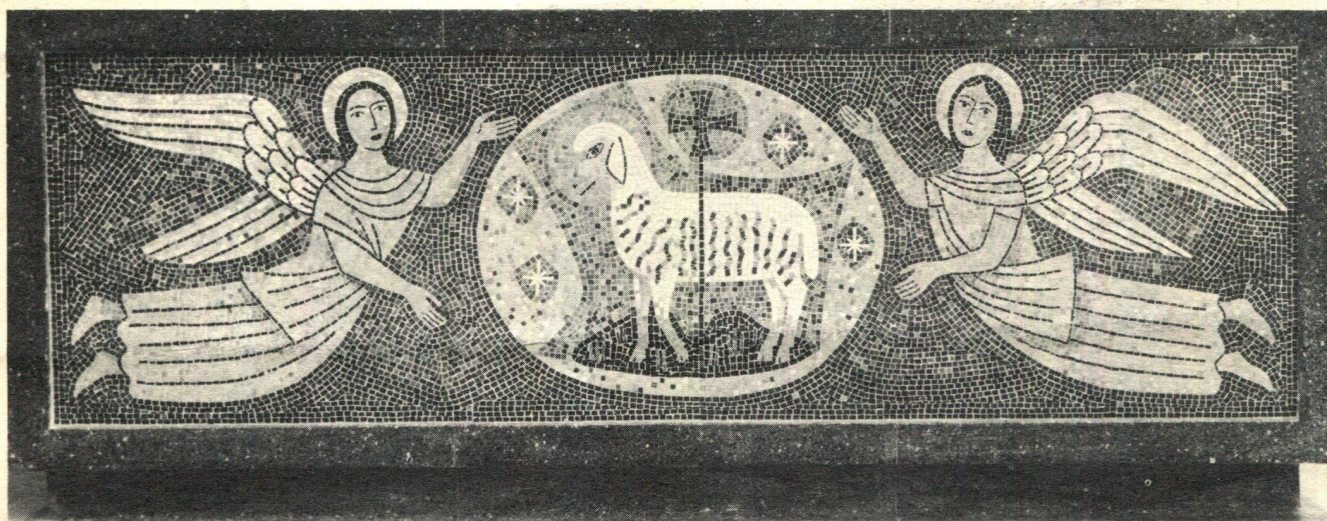
Likewise fundamental simplicity characterizes the reredos screen conceived by Mr. Scott, with its straight lines—horizontal for repose and vertical for aspiration—combined with the diagonals of agitation suggesting movement and growth. Seven lines form the underlying pattern of the lofty cross, while five suggest branches upheld by it, from which spring the outcropping leaves to indicate everlasting life.

To left and right of the chancel appear the bold carvings of Mr. Albert Stewart, highlighting pulpit and lectern. The former, bearing an angel with the face of a man, is the symbol of Matthew proclaiming Good Tidings; the latter, an eagle supporting the Bible, represents John, who loftily opened his evangel by announcing the Logos, or Word of God.

Between these two appears the altar with its sparkling mosaic of crimson, white and gold, designed and executed by Jean and Arthur Ames. Two angels proclaim the Lamb of God, carrying the Red Cross banner for the healing of the nations. In the background appear four stars, one for each of the evangelists spreading the light of the Gospel.

In contrast to the massive central doors, with twelve crosses for disciples and apostles, will appear further beautiful carvings by Mr. Stewart on either side of the main entrance. At the left, as viewed from the plaza, will be seen a representation of Moses and the burning bush, symbolic of man's dawning conception of the intermingling of common with divine through the book of nature. On the right the New Testament theme is introduced by the message and summons to the Kingdom from the Sower, whose Word, like scattered seed, may be so easily lost to fruition because of choking thorns, avaricious birds, or the hardened and rocky soil.

Later, Mr. Sheets will design the jeweled windows which tell the story of man's encounter with God, according to the insight of prophetic writers of Scripture, from the earliest times of the ancient covenant on down through the New Testament, church history, and so to the present ideal of the ecumenical church for all people.



DEDICATION CEREMONIES  
September 25, 1955