



Greg Poole, Jr. All Faiths

The Chapel

Mural Guide





The Mural, painted by North Carolina artist, Christopher Holt in 2021, was informed by the land's natural and cultural legacy.

There are 1,400 individual leaves of silver in this room and application of the individual leaves is done by hand. The effect serves to elevate the viewers' perception of value and importance of this space.

Mural imagery description is based on the artist's original narrative.

Featured Imagery

1. Owl

2. Frog Playing a Banjo - An ode to North Carolina songwriter and musician Graham Sharp who created the original score for this space to accompany the mural.

3. Bright Leaf Tobacco

4. Fern in Hands

5. Original Hospital Facade - Representing the architectural drawing by A. J. Davis for the design of North Carolina's first mental health hospital, which opened in 1856.

6. Crow with Burning Rosemary

7. Impacts of War - Union troops camped on the hospital grounds in the final days of the Civil War. Union General John Logan famously halted a mob of these soldiers saving the capital city from destruction.

8. Sunflowers

9. Land Blessing - A land acknowledgment and blessing ceremony was held Dix Park in partnership with the Triangle Native American Society in 2020.

10. Black Swallowtail Butterfly

11. Deer

12. Volunteer Planting a Tree

13. Portrait of a Nurse - The hospital opened a nursing school for women in 1913.

Nurses were central to the mental health hospital as caregivers, students and members of the community who lived on Dix Hill.

14. Park People and Dogs

15. Yellow Swallowtail Butterfly

16. Moon Phases

17. Lightning bugs

18. Crossroad Path of 'Pleasant Influences and Small Embellishments' - Great intention was put into well maintained hospital grounds for the benefit patient wellbeing as well as public perception.

19. Emancipation

20. Honeybees

21. Ox Cart - An old cart path cut through the hospital property connecting what is now Lake Wheeler Road to the former Spring Hill plantation. In the distance a dairy barn, which still stands beyond the park property.



22. Medicinal Plants: Black Cohosh, Sumac, Evening Primrose, Goldenseal, Ginseng, Skullcap, Spicebush, Witch Hazel, Solomon's Seal, Wild Cherry and Bloodroot

23. Bird of Humanity - Inspired by historical photographs and sculpture, this captivating image above evokes strength and welcome, a soul looking back at us, carrying us into a hopeful future together.

24. Willow Oak

25. Water

26. Knitting Hands

27. People Enslaved - For more than 150 years, land that is now Dix Park was part of a plantation owned by the Theophilus Hunter family and worked by enslaved African Americans.

28. Carolina Parakeet, *extinct*

29. Ancestor - Through recent genealogical research, family trees are taking shape for descendants of the people

who were enslaved on this land. Hunter descendants are discovering and helping preserve the contributions of their ancestors - in Raleigh and beyond. A photograph of Elbert Hunter from the US WPA Slave Narrative Project inspired this image.

30. Rabbit

31. Medicine Wheel, Clovis Point and Atlatl - Honoring the Indigenous People of this land. A singular Native American artifact - the atlatl, a spear throwing tool - discovered near the Spring Hill House.

32. Apple and Peach Trees

33. Dead Tree with New Life

34. Rehabilitation of the Dix Chapel - In the center is a toolbox with the initials, S.E., in honor of African American carpenter, organizer and statesman, Stewart Ellison, who was once enslaved and worked on the construction of the original hospital building.

35. Nurse Tending a Patient

36. Hunter Family Scottish Crest

37. Greg Poole Jr. - Legend has it, Greg Poole Jr. marched into the NC state legislature while in session to speak his mind about the importance of saving this land as a public park. His tireless efforts, along with many others secured the 308-acres of Dix Park.

38. Hospital Keys

39. Tortoise

40. Pink Camellias

41. Farm - For many years the hospital was self-sustaining including growing all the food needed the patients and staff. Until the 1970's, farming and working outdoors was considered therapy for some patients.



The Chapel Stained Glass

The Rose Window

The Rose Window is the original stained glass in the chapel. “Rose Window” is a generic term applied to a circular window. The term is especially used for circular windows found in churches all over the world. Rose windows are divided into segments by mullions. When the mullions form the shape of a cross and are applied over the stained glass such as this, it creates a Celtic Cross. The Celtic Cross is said to be a representation of knowledge, strength, and compassion to manage life’s ups and downs. John Erwin Ramsay, the Chapel Architect no doubt considered this in the original design of the chapel. The Rose Window faces west and is brightest with the afternoon setting sun.

Symbols in the Windows

The Dix Hospital Chaplain, Rev. William R. Steinger, had the 14 stained glass panels installed around 1969. The windows were given in memory of the Chaplain’s wife, Emily L. Steinger, who observed similar leaded glass symbols at the Duke University chapel. All of the glass panels are symbols of Christian faith. The vertical windows face east to greet the rising morning sun.

Information provided by John E. Ramsay Jr., 2021

