

INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY HISTORIC NOMINATION FORM

HRC Staff Use Only

Date Received:

Parcel No.:

Ward:

Zoning Classification:

Bldg. Inspector:

Council District:

Fee Schedule

Please make check payable to *Treasurer, City of Pittsburgh*

Individual Landmark Nomination:	\$100.00
District Nomination:	\$250.00

1. HISTORIC NAME OF PROPERTY:
 St. George Roman Catholic Church; St. John
 Vianney Roman Catholic Church

2. CURRENT NAME OF PROPERTY:
 823 Climax Street

3. LOCATION

- a. Street: 823 Climax St.
- b. City, State, Zip Code: Pittsburgh, Pa. 15210
- c. Neighborhood: Allentown

4. OWNERSHIP

- d. Owner(s): The Roman Catholic Diocese of Pittsburgh
- e. Street: 111 Blvd of the Allies
- f. City, State, Zip Code: Pittsburgh, PA 15222 Phone: (412) 456-3000

5. CLASSIFICATION AND USE – Check all that apply

<u>Type</u>	<u>Ownership</u>	<u>Current Use:</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Private – home	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> District	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private – other	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Site	<input type="checkbox"/> Public – government	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public - other	_____
	<input type="checkbox"/> Place of religious worship	_____

6. NOMINATED BY:

- a. Name: Mark Wittman
- b. Street: 105 Haberman Avenue
- c. City, State, Zip: Pittsburgh, PA 15211
- d. Phone: () - Email: _____

7. DESCRIPTION

Provide a narrative description of the structure, district, site, or object. If it has been altered over time, indicate the date(s) and nature of the alteration(s). (Attach additional pages as needed)

If Known:

- a. Year Built: 1911-1912
- b. Architectural Style: Munich Pictorial Style/Munch Glass/More broadly categorize under Romanesque Revival Art & Architecture
- c. Architect/Builder: Leo Thomas for George Boos

Narrative: See attached.

8. HISTORY

Provide a history of the structure, district, site, or object. Include a bibliography of sources consulted. (Attach additional pages as needed.) Include copies of relevant source materials with the nomination form (see Number 11).

Narrative: See attached.

9. SIGNIFICANCE

The *Pittsburgh Code of Ordinances, Title 11, Historic Preservation, Chapter 1: Historic Structures, Districts, Sites and Objects* lists ten criteria, at least one of which must be met for Historic Designation. Describe how the structure, district, site, or object meets one or more of these criteria and complete a narrative discussing in detail each area of significance. (Attach additional pages as needed)

The structure, building, site, district, object is significant because of (check all that apply):

1. Its location as a site of a significant historic or prehistoric event or activity;
2. Its identification with a person or persons who significantly contributed to the cultural, historic, architectural, archaeological, or related aspects of the development of the City of Pittsburgh, State of Pennsylvania, Mid-Atlantic region, or the United States;
3. Its exemplification of an architectural type, style or design distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship;
4. Its identification as the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder whose individual work is significant in the history or development of the City of Pittsburgh, the State of Pennsylvania, the Mid-Atlantic region, or the United States;
5. Its exemplification of important planning and urban design techniques distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design or detail;

-
6. Its location as a site of an important archaeological resource;
 7. Its association with important cultural or social aspects or events in the history of the City of Pittsburgh, the State of Pennsylvania, the Mid-Atlantic region, or the United States;
 8. Its exemplification of a pattern of neighborhood development or settlement significant to the cultural history or traditions of the City, whose components may lack individual distinction;
 9. Its representation of a cultural, historic, architectural, archaeological, or related theme expressed through distinctive areas, properties, sites, structures, or objects that may or may not be contiguous; or
 10. Its unique location and distinctive physical appearance or presence representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community, or the City of Pittsburgh.

Narrative: See attached.

10. INTEGRITY

In addition, the ordinance specifies that "Any area, property, site, structure or object that meets any one or more of the criteria listed above shall also have sufficient integrity of location, design, materials, and workmanship to make it worthy of preservation or restoration". (Attach additional pages as needed)

Narrative: _____

11. NOTIFICATION/CONSENT OF PROPERTY OWNER(S)

1.3(a)(2) Community information process.

Preceding submission of a nomination form for a District, the Historic Review Commission shall conduct at least one (1) public information meeting within or near the boundaries of the proposed district, which shall include at least one (1) member of the Department of City Planning and one (1) Commission member, to discuss the possible effects of designation. Notice shall be given to the owners of property in the proposed district in accordance with Section 1.3(b) below. The final public information meeting shall be held no more than six months before the nomination form is submitted.

1.3(a)(1)(a) Subsection F.

In the case of a nomination as a Historic District, by community-based organizations or by any individual, but in either event the nomination shall be accompanied by a petition signed by the owners of record of twenty-five (25) percent of the properties within the boundaries of the proposed District.

- Please attach documentation of your efforts to gain property owner's consent. -

** The nomination of any religious property shall be accompanied by a signed letter of consent from the property's owner.

12. PHOTO LOGS: *Please Attach*

13. BIBLIOGRAPHY: *Please Attach*

14. NOMINATION FORM PREPARED BY:

a. Name: Preservation Pittsburgh

b. Street: 1501 Reedsdale Street., Suite 5003

c. City, State, Zip: Pittsburgh, PA 15233

d. Phone: () _____ Email: info@preservationpgh.org

e. Signature: 

7. Description

The two nave windows created by Leo Thomas working for George Boos' Studio depict *Tu Es Petrus* (Image 1), the moment in Catholic liturgy when Jesus charges St. Peter to be the rock on which his church would be founded and *St. George and the Dragon* (Image 2), the original patron saint of the former church.

The *Tu Es Petrus* window is divided into three distinct pictorial planes. The bottom plane, which contains an operable vent in which a flowering plant painted in grisaille, is punctuated by multi-colored blooms and fruit. This is flanked by two kneeling figures crowned with halos and wings reminiscent of medieval donor iconography.

The central scene is framed by a stylized arch, which surrounds the risen Christ, a kneeling and tonsured St. Peter, and two observers. A haloed Christ stands barefoot at left and extends his right hand to present Peter with a key. Christ's left hand is raised and with an open palm he gestures towards a building on the horizon. The three green-tinged domes and prominent white portico on the building recalls the architectural elements present in Michelangelo's High Renaissance design of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. Immediately below this depiction of St. Peter's a pale, unidentified onlooker stands above St. Peter, his hands clasped, head bowed, and eyes shut to signify the gravity of the moment and reflect the likeliest activity of the view, prayer. To this figure's right, the viewer can make out only the bearded face of another onlooker as it protrudes from the boarder pieces which constitute the framing.

Above this scene the sky is composed of a veritable rainbow of color, with lighter yellow and orange colored pieces framing the haloed Christ and stylized St. Peter's Basilica. These colors darken into hues of red, purple, and blue through elevation and are interrupted by stylized palm trees and clouds. Above this scene the viewer is again presented with multicolored fruit of the vine, two eagles, and a haloed angle with outstretched wings.

The *St. George and the Dragon* window shares similar motifs and configuration to the *Tu Es Petrus* window, which is best seen in the similar scene division. Here the viewer is again presented with a window divided into three registers, the bottom containing an operable vent

Individual Property Historic Nomination, Attachment to Form: *Tue Es Petrus* & *St. George* Windows of the former St. George Church

and filled with foliage painted in grisaille accentuated by curvilinear lined of muted color. The central panel is framed by a stylized arch and depicts St. George mounted atop a white horse that rears over the dragon. In the background of the window the viewer is presented with an angel on left and a kneeling woman in blue framed by an archway on right. The incorporation of these figures at this scene largely reflect St. George and the Dragon iconography popular in the Middle Ages as recounted in *the Golden Legend* (de Voragine, 1275). In the legend, the town of "Silene" was forced to appease the dragon by offering it their children through a lottery. The king's daughter was ultimately selected and by happenstance was saved by St. George who agreed to slay the beast should the town and king convert to Christianity. Interestingly, this representation of St. George breaks from traditional iconography by depicting St. George after triumphing over the dragon. Here St. George rides with his lance clutched in his right hand, angled away from the dragon while the figure's focus is pointed on an unidentified object or person outside of the picture frame. By focusing on the moment of triumph, the designer breaks from the traditional depiction of St. George, which focuses on the active moment when the dragon is impaled by the soldier's lance. This approach can best be seen in Hans Acker's *St. George* (circa 1440) located in Ulm Minster, the construction of which was completed during the late 19th century (Image 3).

The design, use of color, and sense of depth created by the painter and glazer in both windows is exceptionally complex and very much representative of the Munich Pictorial Style. The designer forgoes the use of opalescent glass and the use of multiple layers of glass made popular in America by Louis Comfort Tiffany and John La Farge and instead relies on textured glass, multiple painted layers, and lead lines of various sizes to create the illusion of depth and perspective within each window. The designer uses size and scale of the figures and objects present to create a distinctive foreground (Christ, St. Peter, the onlookers in *Tu Es Petrus* and St. George, his horse, and the dragon in *St. George and the Dragon*) and accentuates the objects and figures that should first demand the viewer's attention by using thicker lead lines. Additionally, each individual piece of glass is painted on both sides to help diffract light, add shading, and to create a sense of depth with each figure and object. This approach to creating

Individual Property Historic Nomination, Attachment to Form: *Tue Es Petrus* & *St. George* Windows of the former St. George Church

stained glass windows is unique to the Leo Thomas's work at the George Boos Studio and remains the best example of this approach to glass making within the City of Pittsburgh.

8. History

King Ludwig I of Bavaria (1786-1868) sought to turn Munich, the capital city of his kingdom, into the preeminent center of German art and culture. In order to do so, he spent lavishly on new construction and the arts particularly focusing on the liturgical revival of mural and glass painting, which gave rise to existing craftsmen and spawning new artistic ventures (Tiemey, 1999). It was into this environment that in 1847 Josef Gabriel Mayer founded Meyer & Co., a company whose primary business model was to make ecclesiastical furnishings (Farnsworth, 2002). Meyer & Co. would become tremendously successful in Bavaria and in 1860 Josef Meyer's son-in-law, Franz Xavier Zettler founded Meyer & Co.'s glass studio in 1860 and subsequently found his own studio in 1870, largely working off commissions of the crown and the Catholic Church. However, in the late 19th century Zettler would expand his glass business outside of Germany by opening sales offices in the United States (Tiemey, 1999).

The creation of sales offices in the United States followed a long lineage of cultural and artistic exchange between the two countries and followed larger international trends in the art glass industry. The aforementioned Ludwig I sent artists to the United States throughout his reign to promote the arts, the most relevant example of which may be seen in the fresco-painter William Lamprecht's prolific work in Western Pennsylvania (Curran, 2003).

George Boos of Munich began his career at Mayer & Co. and established his own art glass firm around 1880, where he was joined by his young English nephew, Leo Thomas. In addition to working in the George Boos Studio, Thomas would study at the Munch Art & Crafts, Munich's Museum of Fine Arts, and tour throughout Europe. Thomas would often base his designs off of different pieces he encountered while traveling although his design approach incorporated elements of modern design, reflecting developments in German & Viennese Secessionism (Farnsworth, 2002). It was in this style that Thomas would design a series of windows for several churches in Western Pennsylvania, St. Paul's in Butler and St. George's in Pittsburgh (Tannler, 2008).

9. Significance

Criterion 3: *Its exemplification of an architectural type, style, or design distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship;*

The *Tu Es Petrus* and *St. George and the Dragon* stained glass windows are among the preeminent examples of Munich Style art glass within the City of Pittsburgh.

What distinguishes the work of Thomas, as well as several other designers from the George Boos Studio, is the labor-intensive and incredibly skilled approach that creates the illusion of depth and realism by fusing paint on both sides of a piece of glass. This approach demands a difficult working environment because the hue of glass pieces becomes opaque and nearly impossible to distinguish unless they are directly held in the light, a practice which was, and remains, uncommon and impractical in glass studios. An example of this can be seen in Image 4, which shows a segment from a Leo Thomas window above a printed color picture of the same window in situ on a glazier's work bench (Image 4). A detailed image of glass from the same window program may be seen in Image 5 (Image 5) and a contrast between glass painted on one side (bottom) and a Leo Thomas piece (top) (Image 6). Because of the level of both design skill and craftsmanship necessary to execute such a technique, examples of this approach to stained glass making remain rare outside of the Munich Style. Leo Thomas' unique approach to stained glass design also distinguished him from his contemporaries like Louis Comfort Tiffany and John LaFarge, whose designs primarily centered around the incorporation of opalescent glass, textile glass, Favril glass, jewels, and the layering thereof (Baal-Teshuva, 2008).

Criterion 4: *Its identification as the work of an architect, designer, engineer, or builder whose individual works is significant in the history or development of the City of Pittsburgh, the State of Pennsylvania, the Mid-Atlantic region, or the United States.*

The *Tu Es Petrus* and *St. George and the Dragon* stained glass windows present in the former St. George's Church can be directly attributed to one of Meyer & Co.'s most prominent glaziers, Leo Thomas. While Thomas' contributions are rare within the City of Pittsburgh, his work and the work of his parent studio, George Boos, is well known throughout Western

Individual Property Historic Nomination, Attachment to Form: *Tue Es Petrus* & *St. George* Windows of the former St. George Church

Pennsylvania, the East Coast, and the MidWest. The nearest, and perhaps most numerous, collection of Thomas's work exists in St. Paul's Church in Butler, Pa. Here we can find roughly fifty eight windows designed by George Boos' Studio with under the design supervision of Leo Thomas. It was here, collaborating with the renowned Pittsburgh architect John T. Comes, that both the firm and the designer would receive their first major recognition in the United States. Regarding the window program in St. Paul's, the architect Comes stated:

The windows were made by the firm of George Boos in Munich, and to Leo Thomas a nephew of Mr. Boos is due all credit for their beauty of color and design. Messrs. Boos and Thomas have been comparatively unknown in this country heretofore, but it is safe to say that work like that which we are considering will soon win for them an international reputation (Comes, 1920).

Additionally, Thomas' works are indicative of the importance that stained glass played to the cultural development of Pittsburgh. Thomas's work stands along with other stained glass designers like Louis Comfort Tiffany, John LaFarge, William Nelson, Henry Hunt, Charles Connick, and the S.S. Marshall Brothers as significant contributors to the field and diversity of stained glass in Pittsburgh.

Criterion 7: *Its association with important cultural or social aspects or events in the history of the City of Pittsburgh, the State of Pennsylvania, the Mid-Atlantic region, or the United States;*

Before the advent of steel, the manufacture of glass played an instrumental role in Pittsburgh's economy. This, in turn, led to the rise of several regionally prominent art glass studios and helped to fuel the popularity, and accessibility, of art glass in Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania. As manufacturing diversified and led to the accumulation of great wealth amongst a smaller segment of the population, they sought to display their wealth and civic and cultural pride by seeking more renowned, and prominent, stained glass designers to create windows for their homes, businesses, and places of worship. The windows of Thomas and George Boos Studio in the former St. George Church fits into this history as they reflect the popularity of stained glass in Pittsburgh's burgeoning middle and upper class. They also demonstrate the importance Pittsburghers placed on the fine arts.

Individual Property Historic Nomination, Attachment to Form: *Tu Es Petrus* & *St. George* Windows of the former St. George Church

Criterion 10: *Its unique location and distinctive physical appearance or presence representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood, community, or the City of Pittsburgh.*

The location of each of these windows, along the nave's south side, ensure that each would be visible to the public, particularly in the evening and serve to as beacons communicates the identity of the former St. George Church in Allentown. The prominent iconography of St. George (visably accessible from Climax St. and the intersecting Allen St.) communicates to the viewer the importance the saint has to the church and congregation. The *Tu Es Petrus* window located above the nave's South Entrance, communicates the relationship the former church had to the Roman Catholic Church. In concert, the message these windows communicated was clear, this building was a Roman Catholic Church dedicated to St. George. The location of these windows provides an indication of the intended audience, the congregants present on the former church's interior and the large public who could visually access these windows from the nearby street.

These windows, and the history they embody, also speak to the cultural heritage of the neighborhood and the aspirations of St. George's former congregants. While records do not reveal the amount of money paid for the creation of these windows, the cost involved in producing them overseas and shipping them to America would have been substantial despite the tax incentive (Tannler, 2008). The congregation paid Boos for these two specific windows and hired another studio to complete the remaining program in the church (which consisted of roughly a dozen equally sized nave windows, a prominent rose window, and several chapel and apse windows). The designer, and firm, contracted to create these two windows were, like the architect commissioned and the majority of the congregation at the time, German. St. Paul's congregation in Butler, on contrast, commissioned nearly sixty windows from the same studio and commissioned an architect of far more prominence. Yet, the *Tu Es Petrus* and *St. George and the Dragon* windows embodied the very identify and aspirations of St. George's congregation. It's important to note that the total program of windows in the former St. George's reflects the artistic contributions of several different designers, artists, and studios but the *St. George and the Dragon* and *Tu Es Petrus* windows have special significance to the building's and communitie's identity.

Individual Property Historic Nomination, Attachment to Form: *Tue Es Petrus & St. George* Windows of the former St. George Church

10. Integrity

Both leaded windows are in good condition. The individual pieces of glass and lead comes in each window are intact and the painted features, which can be most susceptible to corrosion, within the glass remain vibrant. Windows show minor sign of bowing although the support bars remain attached. Each stained glass window is protected from the elements by transparent cover glass.

Individual Property Historic Nomination, Attachment to Form: *Tue Es Petrus & St. George* Windows of the former St. George Church

12. Photo Log

Image 1: Photograph of Stained Glass, "Tu Es Petrus". Source: Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation, 2008

Image 2: Photograph of Stained Glass, "St. George and the Dragon". Source: Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation, 2008

Image 3: Photograph of Stained Glass, "St. George", Ulm Minster. Source: Hans Acker, circa 1440

Image 4: Photograph of Stained Glass, "George Boos Panel". Source: Matthew Falcone, 2014.

Image 5: Photograph of Stained Glass, "George Boos, Munich Bavaria". Source: Matthew Falcone, 2014

Image 6: Photograph of Stained Glass, "Boos Painting Contrast", Source: Matthew Falcone, 2014.

Image 7: Photograph of Stained Glass, "Tu Es Petrus". Source: Matthew Falcone, 2016.

Image 8: Photograph of Stained Glass, "St. George and the Dragon". Source: Matthew Falcone, 2016.

Image 9: Photograph of South Nave Exterior, "St. George and the Dragon and Tu Es Petrus". Source: Matthew Falcone, 2016.

Individual Property Historic Nomination, Attachment to Form: *Tue Es Petrus* & *St. George* Windows of the former St. George Church

13. Bibliography

Baal-Teshuva, J. *Tiffany*. 25th ed. Taschen. New York, Ny. 2008.

Comes, J., *Catholic Art and Architecture*. Pittsburgh, Pa. 1920.

Curran, K. *The Romanesque Revival*. University Park, Pa. 2003.

de Voragine, J. *The Golden Legend*. Compilation, 1275, first edition published 1470. Englished by William Caxton, First Edition 1483, v.III. Temple Classics. Edited by F.S. Ellis. Issue 1, 1900. Reprinted 1922, 1931.

Farnsworth, J, et al. *Stained Glass in Catholic Philadelphia*. Philadelphia, Pa. 2002.

Köhler, J. *St. George. Photograph of Stained Glass*. CC BY-SA 3.0,
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=1467950>

Tannler, A. "Leo Thomas (1876-1950) for George Boos (1859-1937), Munich, Germany". *Architectural Glass in Pittsburgh. Series 1: Eight Glass Artists in Nine Pittsburgh-area Buildings 1883-1962*. PHLF. 2008.

Tiemey, G. *Franz Mayer and Company and Zettler Studios*. Dominican College. 1999.

Individual Property Historic Nomination, Attachment to Form: *Tue Es Petrus* & St. George Windows of the former St. George Church

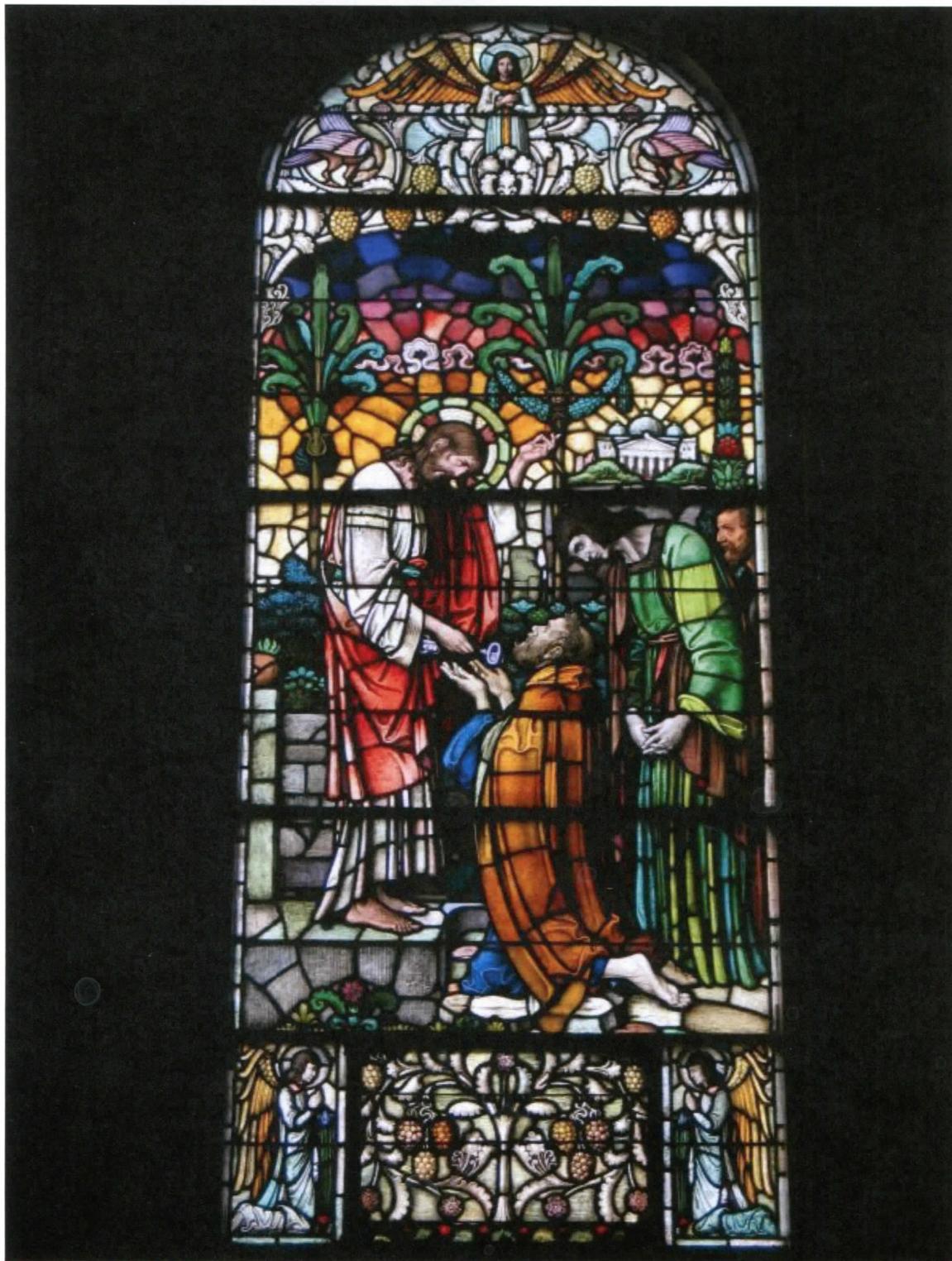


Image 1: Photograph of Stained Glass, "Tu Es Petrus". Source: Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation, 2008

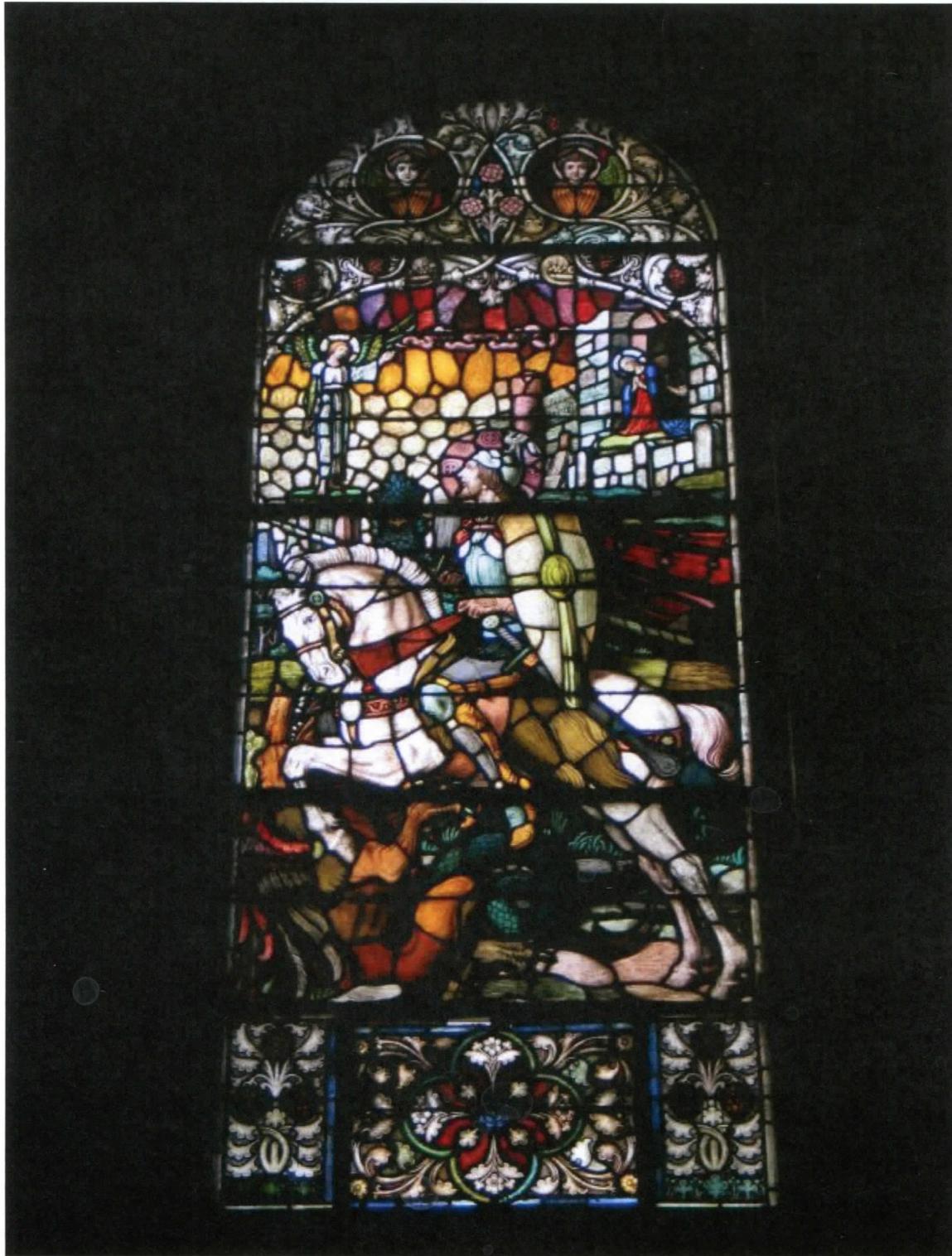


Image 2: Photograph of Stained Glass, "St. George and the Dragon". Source: Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation, 2008

Individual Property Historic Nomination, Attachment to Form: *Tue Es Petrus & St. George* Windows of the former St. George Church



Image 3: Photograph of Stained Glass, "St. George", Ulm Minster. Source: Hans Acker, circa 1440

Individual Property Historic Nomination, Attachment to Form: *Tue Es Petrus & St. George* Windows of the former St. George Church



Image 4: Photograph of Stained Glass, "George Boos Panel". Source: Matthew Falcone, 2014.

Individual Property Historic Nomination, Attachment to Form: *Tue Es Petrus & St. George* Windows of the former St. George Church



Image 5: Photograph of Stained Glass, "George Boos, Munich Bavaria". Source: Matthew Falcone, 2014

Individual Property Historic Nomination, Attachment to Form: *Tue Es Petrus* & *St. George* Windows of the former St. George Church

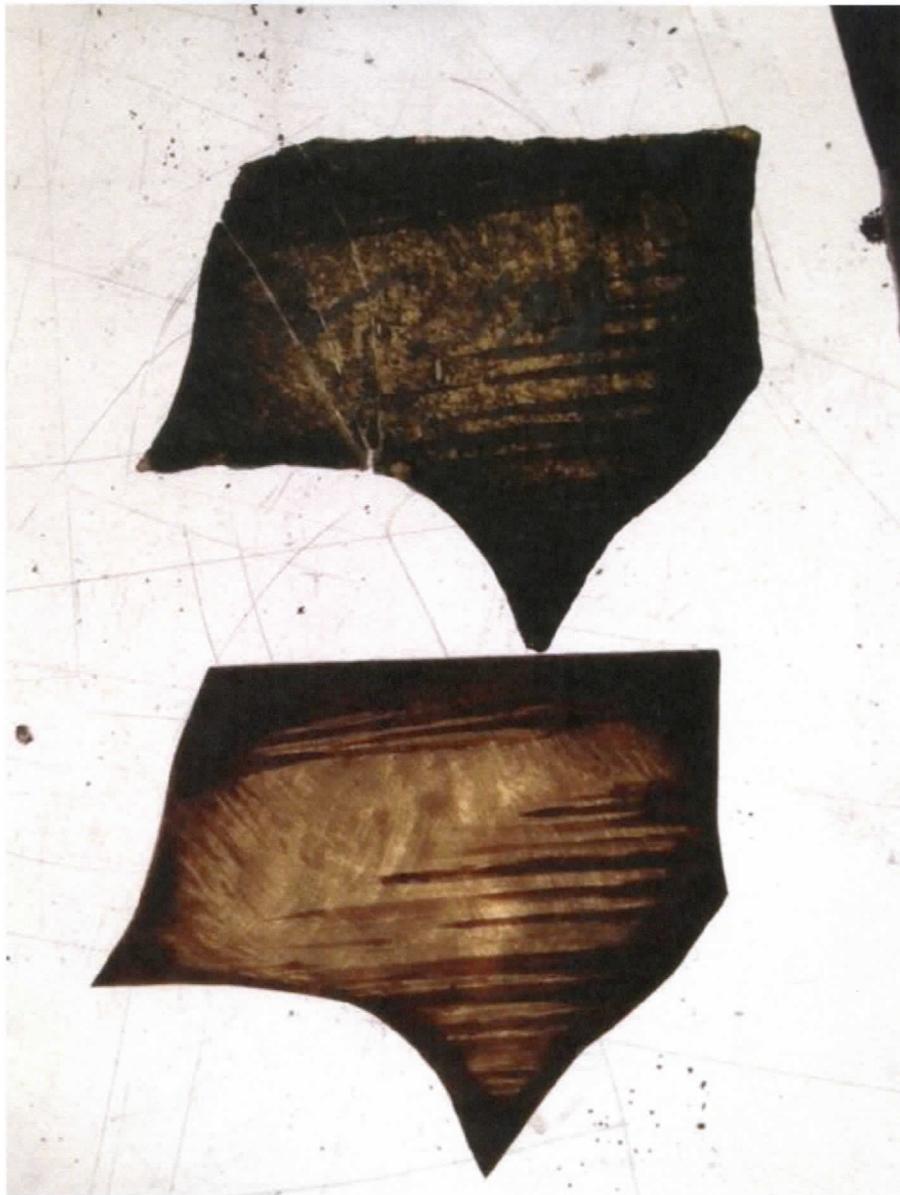


Image 6: Photograph of Stained Glass, “Boos Painting Contrast”, Source: Matthew Falcone, 2014.



Image 7: Photograph of Stained Glass, "Tu Es Petrus". Source: Matthew Falcone, 2016.



Image 8: Photograph of Stained Glass, "Tu Es Petrus". Source: Matthew Falcone, 2016



Image 9: Photograph of South Nave Exterior, "St. George and the Dragon and Tu Es Petrus".
Source: Matthew Falcone, 2016.