

The vast rose windows 'mission' and 'martyrdom'

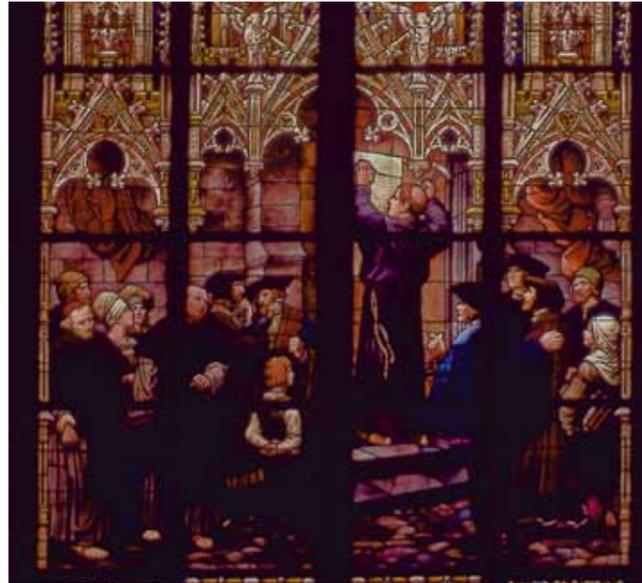
The two rose windows: their diameter is huge (9 meters) and they are full of details. The mission window faces South and it looks bright and pleasant. The Infant Jesus in the middle is the centre of annunciation, close to the edge the 13 disciples (including Paul) are shown on a shining yellow background. The groups of people are quite telling. In a great arch diverse persons are linked up. You will find the peasant as well as the King and grandma with her grandchildren. The global religions are represented by Native Americans, Arabs, and Africans. The message of „love“ is overarching and valid all over the world.

The centre of the martyr window facing North depicts the Luther rose as a symbol of our newly defined faith. On the far left the figures of reformers are shown on a red background - a sign of the martyrdom they experienced and incurred.

Below the gallery we can find four female allegorical figures who represent the four major cities of the Protestant Reformation: defiant Worms, protesting Speyer, confessing Augsburg, and mourning Magdeburg.



Above the galleries: The word of God and vocations



Towards the organ above the gallery on the Southern side you will see the three 'word-of-God windows'. The windows with the outstanding witnesses of faith can be detected on the Northern Side. The mirror imagery which is a peculiar characteristic of the neo-Gothic style once again becomes very obvious here. Towards the organ there is the Old Testament (Moses and the Ten Commandments, the vocation of Jesaja to become a prophet). And towards the church the era of Reformation is depicted:

(Luther and his posting of his theses as well as Calvin's vocation by Farel, with the mission to implement his idea of a theocratic state in Geneva).

For the executive construction committee of Speyer, this configuration was a significant theological trace which they wanted to visualise, when keeping the memory of the Protestation: The foundation of the reformers are the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.

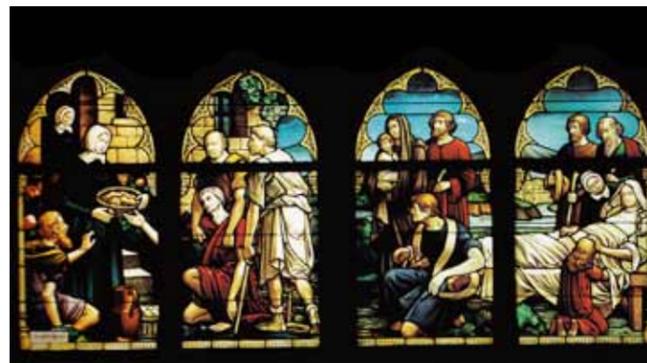
Faith, hope, love – Paul once again below the galleries

The six windows below the gallery illustrate just one word of Paul:

**'Faith, hope, love, these three:
and the greatest of these is love.'**
(1 Corinthians 13:13)

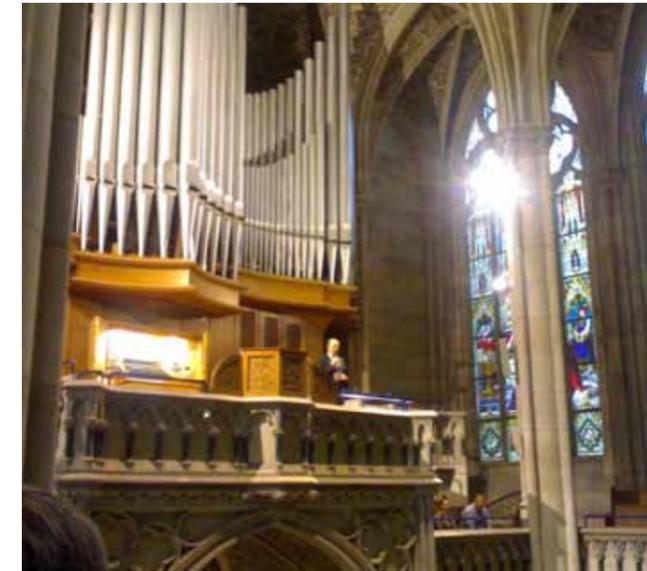
Again, the six windows mirror each other. Three pairs deal with their individual themes: Love is distinctive in the north. It shows what deaconesses do: They nurse the sick, support the disabled, take care of children, feed the hungry. Faith is humble in the south. Jesus says to the Roman captain, 'I have not found such great faith, no, not in all of Israel.'

The windows of hope point to death. On the south side, St Stephen, the first martyr, is stoned to death. In the north, we see an impressive symbol of hope. A young woman is dying. Her earthly life is about to end soon. To the left, there is the consoling pastor, with her sad husband and their son. Yet the certainty of eternal life is stronger than death. The angels to the right are waiting to carry the corpse to heavenly Jerusalem.



The organ – for the praise of God

The organ that you can see now is the third one that praises the glory of God and makes it widely audible. C.F. Weigle, an organ building company from Stuttgart, began to build the first organ in 1900. A company called Steinmeyer completed it in 1902. The instrument contained 65 sounding registers on four manuals and a pedal.



In 1938/39 another Steinmeyer organ was installed. At that time, the original organ case was removed. In 1979 the second instrument was replaced by today's organ, built by the Kleuker factory in Bielefeld. With its 98 registers and five manuals it is presumed to be the largest organ with mechanical action in Southwest Germany. It possesses more than 6,000 pipes. Frequent organ recitals with various artists continue to emphasise the value of this musical instrument.

A concise history of the Memorial Church

- 1857 the foundation of the first church building association ('Retscher association'), which had, as its objective, the building of a church behind the Trinity Church on the site of the former Retscher building (it still exists as a ruin). The new church was dedicated to keep the memory of the formal protest during the Speyer Reichstag in 1529. At that time the Reichstag was thought to have taken place in the house of the noble Retschen family.
- 1882 Renaming of the 'Retscher association' to 'Association for the construction of the Memorial Church dedicated to the Protestation of 1529'.
- 1884 Decision on the 48 submitted construction plans in favour of the architects Nordmann and Flügge from Essen.
- 1890 On September 19th - ground-breaking ceremony with Heinrich Hilgard, (cf. Henry Villard), the (main) sponsor being present
- 1893 On August 24th - foundation stone ceremony below the pulpit
- 1904 On August 31st - ceremonious consecration in four divine services. The Memorial church escaped significant damage in both of the world wars.. That is why it is regarded as the best-preserved major building of the neo-Gothic style - the jewel of neo-Gothic architecture. From 1973 to 1977 and from 1998 to 2009 the exterior was comprehensively renovated. There are challenges that remain and it will not be an easy task to preserve the jewel. The next projects will be the rearrangement of the illumination and the restoration of the organ.

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The Protestant
Memorial Church
in Speyer

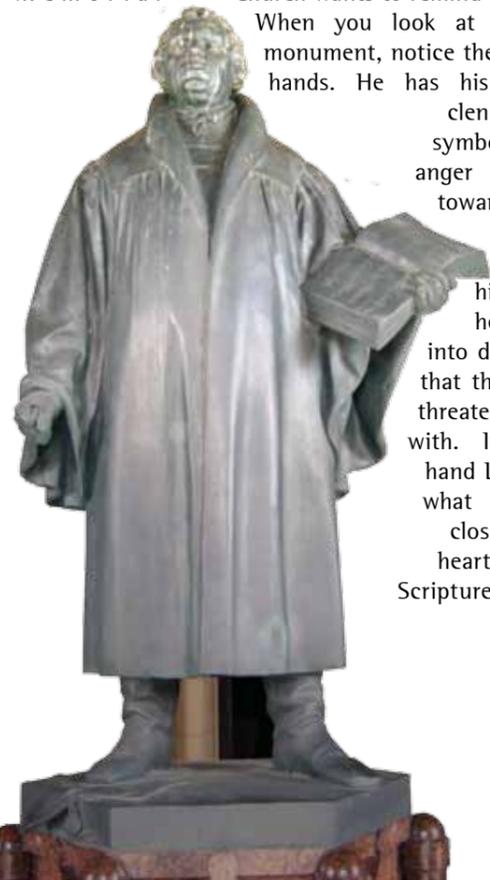
'The Jewel of the neo-Gothic Style'
A concise explanation

The Memorial Church – its name reminds us of the original Protestant act

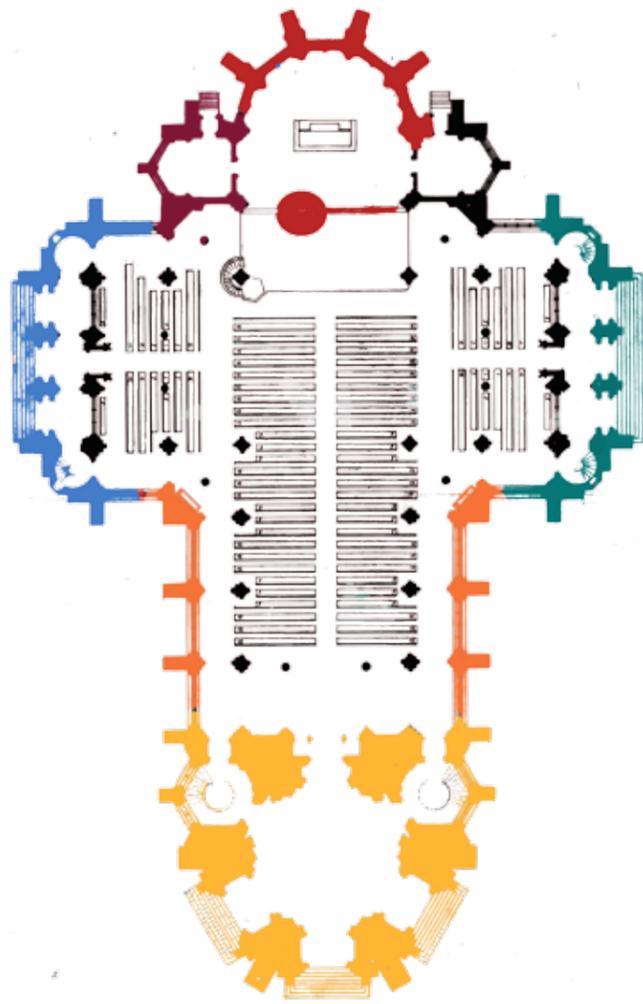
In the spring of 1529 the sovereigns and bishops of the Holy Roman Empire of Germany assembled for the second Reichstag (diet) in Speyer. One of the topics they discussed anew was the issue of the right faith.

On April the 19th the majority decided: The reforming changes must end. Six sovereigns and 14 free cities – you can see their statues and coats of arms in the porch – solemnly raised a protest against this resolution of the Reichstag. This meant that the final separation of a Roman Catholic and a Reformatory Church had its political origins in Speyer. This event gave us the name 'Protestants'. The Memorial Church wants to remind us of that.

When you look at the Luther monument, notice the Reformer's hands. He has his right fist clenched – a symbol of the anger he feels towards his own church. With his right foot he treads into dust the Bull that the Pope had threatened him with. In his left hand Luther holds what is literally close to his heart: the Holy Scriptures.



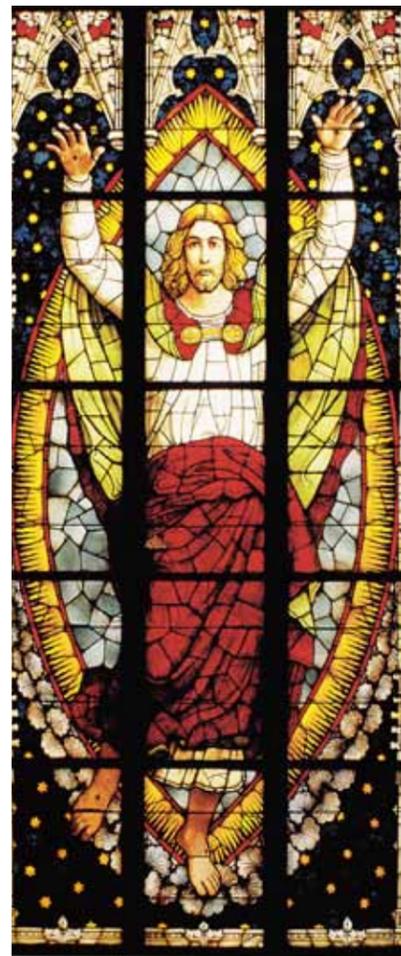
Your personal journey of discovery of the Memorial Church



All the persons in charge of the Memorial Church wholeheartedly invite you to a personal journey of discovery. The coloured plan shown above may be of some help to you. We hope you will enjoy the little journey through the Church of the Protestation.

The Emperor's Choir catches your view

In the centre of the Memorial Church the window of Christ is beaming – inviting and blessing at the same time. 'Come to Me, all you who labour and are heavy laden.' This call of our Redeemer invites us to take a seat, to pause, to look around, and to contemplate. According to the Barmen Theological Declaration the heavenward ascending Christ is 'the one word of God that we have to listen to that we have to trust and obey when we live and when we are dying'.



This word has been presented to us by the evangelists (on Jesus' left there is Paul with his sword) and the evangelists (St John to his right). Definitely smaller and less colourful are the reformers who translated this word into our language: Luther and Melancthon on the far left, Zwingli and Calvin on the far right. These windows are a private donation of Wilhelm II and Auguste Victoria, the last imperial couple of Germany. The cycle of the choir windows is completed with the sacraments of baptism and the last supper.

New metal objects

The baptismal font – the bookrest (ambo) – the candleholder

These are the three newest objects of the Memorial Church. Around 1985 the baptismal font and the ambo were designed and built by the famous artist Professor Gernot Rumpf. The candleholder originates from a workshop of the PFW Aerospace Works and was created under the guidance of some young apprentices.

The dominating figures of the baptismal font and the bookrest are the fish and the ship. It was the fish that became the symbol of religious denomination in early Christendom. The letters of the Greek word 'ichthys' stand for 'Jesus Christ, the son of God, the Saviour'. The figure of the ship which deliberately points from the baptismal font towards the parish figuratively lets the baptised persons become part of the parish. This shows what is meant with the spiritual song 'A ship which calls herself a parish'. On closer inspection you will find many details worth contemplating. We hope you will enjoy discovering them yourself.



The tree of candles invites you to rest and remember. The light of Christ wants to inspire us to think of our loved ones.

A church of world-wide Protestantism



From 1857 to 1904 Protestants from many parts of the world donated something for the Memorial Church in Speyer. The offering of any peasant from a tiny Palatine village was as valuable as the donation of the imperial family from Berlin. A unique sponsoring network was created – from America, the Netherlands to Romania. In the archive of the regional church and in the church itself you can find many traces that remind you of the donors. You can discover various names on the floor, on the pews and pillars.

In the windows there are also various references – you will find some names there, but more frequently there are some coats of arms and pictures of the donors. Above the gallery, to the left of the altar you can see a local family about to be baptised in a window that depicts a Christening. The persons that surround Jesus depict members of the Weltz family, who made contributions to the church.



In the aisles: The story of Jesus' life

The windows in the aisles illustrate the story of Jesus' life. It begins with the Christmas window above the gallery, it proceeds below the gallery with the 12-year-old Jesus in the temple which is a present of the Dutch Queen. On the opposite side Jesus heals the paralysed man near Bethesda pond. On the gallery the Passion already starts. The disciples have fallen asleep in Gethsemane Garden. In the background Roman soldiers are approaching. They want to imprison Jesus. In the Northern nave the crucifixion and (below that) the Entombment of Christ are next.

Now we would expect the resurrection on the opposite side. Actually we find the Whitsun window in 'the concealment behind the pulpit'. The wonder of his resurrection is set apart on the gallery. The women are amazed to hear the angel say, 'Why do you look among the dead for the one who is alive?' In warm and shining colours you can sense the wonder of faith ... and upon leaving the church and looking back you are saluted by the angel at the tomb.

