

2006 Statewide Historic Preservation  
Honor Award Presented to:

First Parish  
Congregational Church  
Yarmouth, Maine  
for Sanctuary Window Restoration



This restoration project followed shortly after the completion of Tony Castro's masterful restoration of the elaborate, multi-colored Victorian stenciling that decorated the walls and ceiling of the sanctuary at the time it was built. Simply stated, the interior of this 1868 Italianate church is truly something to see.

This window restoration project began ten years ago, with Robin Neely of the Neely Studio, Westbrook, Maine conducted an extensive survey of every window. Most of the windows were missing pieces, some of the stenciling had been recreated with household paint that had peeled, and large center sections had been replaced with purple glass. All the sashes had been painted lime green. Thanks to Mary Estelle Blake, an angel patron with a passion for preservation, the project hired Robin Neely, who, by being a master glass conservator, repaired and restored only those panes that were missing from the original larger window. The challenge was in the age of these rare windows – immediately post Civil War – 1868, which is very early in the decorated movement compared to Tiffany 15-20 years later.

Researching restoration techniques for stenciled glass of this period proved difficult since there is very little scholarship available. Working with a glass chemist from Colorado, who custom made the right paint, Ms. Neely went about the stenciling and firing process. Then came Marc Bagala, who had to very delicately handle each pane of glass to install it in the newly restored wooden sash. Tony Castro, who is a master color detective, found little clues in surprising places to help determine all the colors.

The First Parish Congregational Church is located at:  
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