



*Gloria Dei*

# *GLORIA DEI*

*at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls, South Dakota*

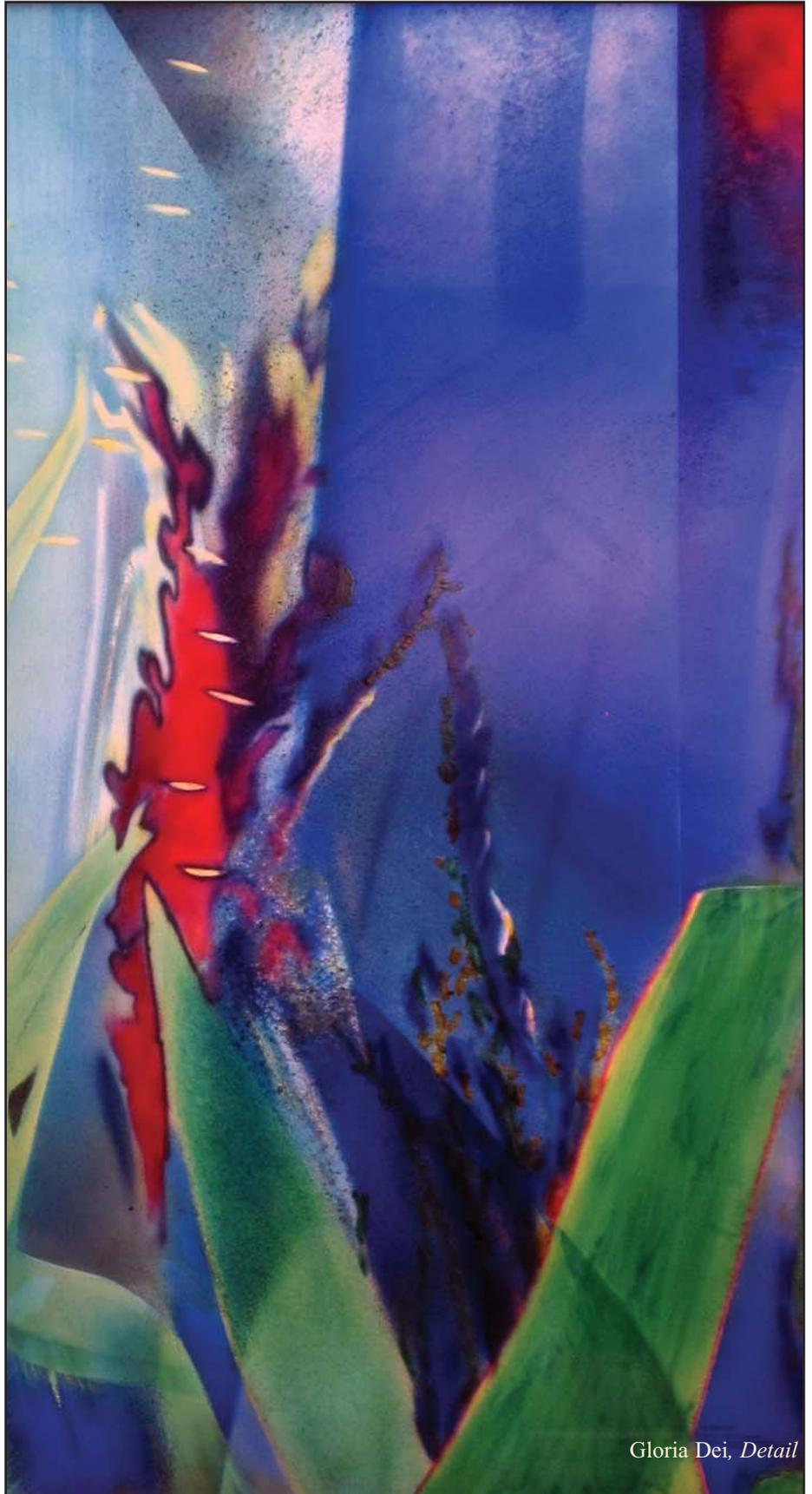
*by Scott Parsons*

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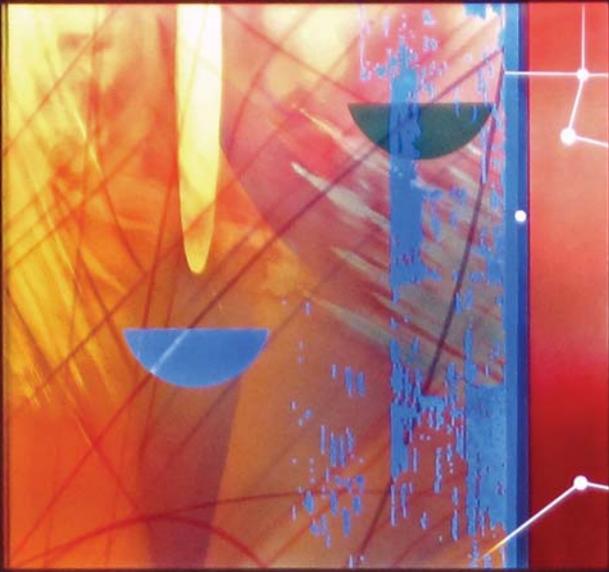
*Gloria Dei* is an ecclesial stained glass project for the new 85,000 sq. ft. Gloria Dei Lutheran Church in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. This project consists of 24 separate architectural glass panels for the chancel facade, which is 750 square feet in approximate area and rises 35 feet in height. Each panel was created using a number of traditional and contemporary glass treatments, including silver stain, acid-etching, sandblasting, and enameling.

These windows are created for the glory of God — *Gloria Dei* — and celebrate the magnificence of the Creation, the life of Christ, and the life of the church. The design and colors are suggestive of spiritual themes (veneration, contemplation, and praise) that allow worshipers to experience the windows in distinct ways each time the congregation gathers for worship. This experience is shaped by the liturgical season, the order of worship, scripture lessons, hymn selections, and each congregant's faith journey. The color yellow, for example, which is often used in stained glass as the color of God, extends near the center in a vertical golden yellow band from the heavens above and reaches downward to touch the earth below. This abstract gesture shows how God can touch us in the midst of our lives.

The glass panels near the floor are more opaque and become more transparent as they gain in elevation, allowing the fleeting changes in the sky and clouds to increasingly influence the shapes and colors you see in the windows. Symbols of the sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist, the Paschal candle, and the Lamb of God are significant elements for the church and in the story we want these panels to tell. It is my hope that this design will resonate



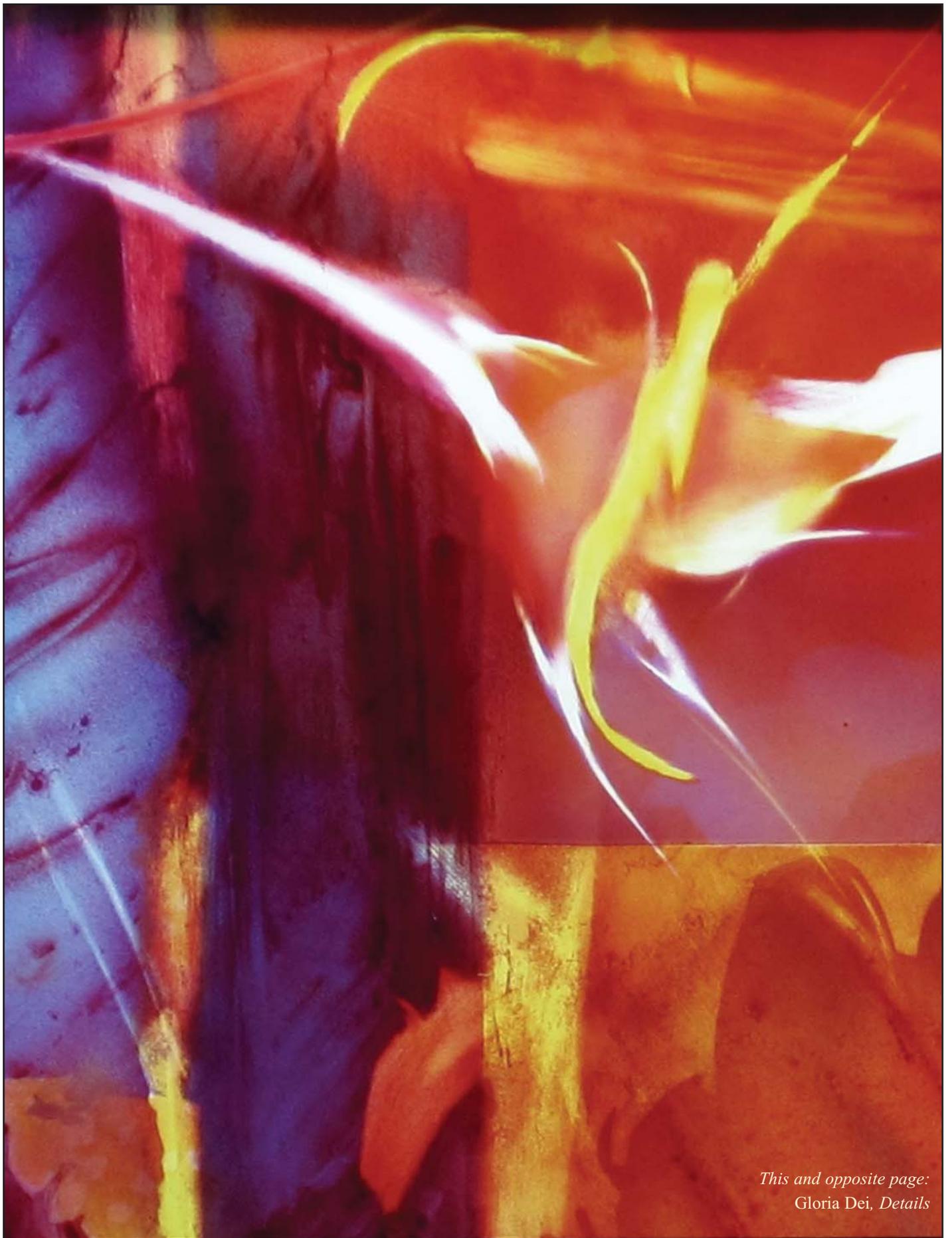
*Gloria Dei, Detail*



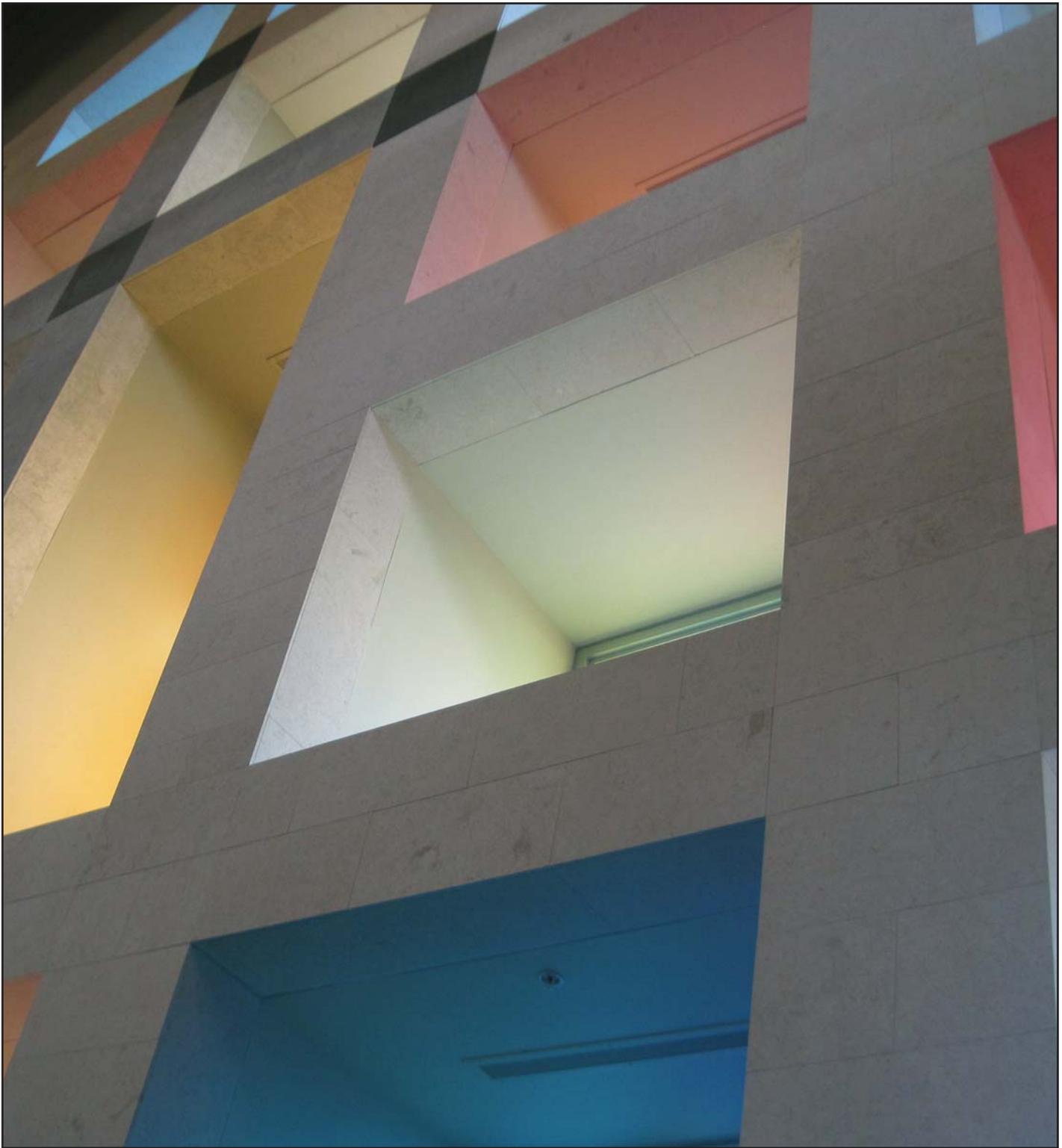
with each viewer as a celebratory offering of thanksgiving for all that God has given to us and to recognize our individual role in the body of Christ to bring peace and healing to the world.

Artist and pastor Linda Henke said, “There are places, for example, where I see the suggestion of stars, which for me conjure up the stars in the Genesis creation story — connections with God’s promise to Abraham that his offspring

would be as numerous as the stars in the heavens — the psalmist’s exclamation of wonder in gazing at the heavens (*who are human beings that you should be mindful of us?*) — the star that marked God’s coming to take on human flesh



*This and opposite page:  
Gloria Dei, Details*



and become one with us — the star that led the sages to the Christ and then to carry news of his coming to all the world — the morning star that gives way to the rising sun — the night sky that we can see so much more clearly here, where we live somewhat away from the city lights — the incredible

Hubble telescope images that explode the boundaries of our perceptions of the universe.”

Artist: Scott Parsons

Architects: Koch Hazard Architects, Sioux Falls, SD

Fabrication: Derix Glasstudios, Taunusstein, Germany; Olaf Hanweg, painter

General Contractor: Fiegen Construction, Sioux Falls, SD

Installation: City Glass, Sioux Falls, SD and Tim O’Neil, Magdalena, NM

