



### **The Front Altar area, or Chancel**

Blue, which is the color of the advent season, is prominent. The gold **Cross** behind the altar is central. If there were a stasis, which is the partition in Orthodox churches separating the seating area (and worshippers) from the "inner" altar (only for priests), this would be it. But, as Lutherans focusing on grace and not the law, the altar area is inviting and open.

### **Front Right Panel**

The focus is the **Crucifixion**, the **Chalice**, and the **Host** which is before Christ, who is hung on a cross. Again, one can see the gold beam passing through Christ who is bleeding into the chalice, a very typical Medieval expression, this one taken from the altar piece of the church in Eisenheim, Germany, at Gr unewald. This front section tells us of the redemption story. This in turn has transfigured all of humankind and creation.



The large **Blue Circle** (upper right) with bright gold spots is the traditional art expression of the Transfiguration. Now we will see how this has transfigured not just humankind (right side of church), but creation as well (left side).

### **Front Left Panel and Center**



Begins with the conception of **Mary**, the **Gold Ray** (a common motif) extends from Heaven through Christ. **Joseph** is paled in the background. Light emanates from Mary, embracing the womb, she has become transparent.

This then leads to **Jesus' Baptism**, standing in the water. Blue is a recurring theme in ancient murals.

The **Ark** is a fore sign, so too, the **Rainbow**. Jesus enters the water, under which is the **Spiral**, the universal sign of rebirth and regeneration - common in Medieval manuscripts. For us, it is resurrection and new life. As Christ comes out of the water, the spiral rises recalling ongoing new birth. All this under the auspices, the wings, the presence of the Holy Spirit, a flowing image of a dove.

### **Left Side**

Everything now, from the front backwards to the rear, is the story of humankind as it has been touched by the Divine. We begin with the transfiguration of Creation. This may be seen as a "melody," just behind the piano, the **five lines** (seen along both sides) are the treble and bass clefs of music. These are seen all the way to the end, even in lower center, with "notes." The right side will also reflect this continuing theme. Creation transfigured in a



very specific way beneath the musical clefs, in the gradual changing of the blue Advent **Drops** of water to the purple wine of Lent. This element of wine reminds us of the communion cup found on the front right side, tying the two together and encompassing, bracketing, the redemption story.

Then begins the life giving **River**, full of **Fish** and life giving sustenance. It flows from front to back, eventually displaying a boat with mast. Above this flowing blue, are the **Mountains** embraced in spring and summer colors. Creation also longs for and moves toward the final redemption, which is encountered on the back wall.

### **Right Side**

The crucifixion moves the eye to the right, highlighting a central event which leads up to Christ's death: the feeding of the multitude, represented by the **Loaves and Fishes**. This is on a path which continues backward, again moving towards the final judgment. As the left side of the sanctuary images Creation's redemption, this right side portrays redemption of Humankind. Along this path, surrounded by fall and winter **Mountains** emblazoned with bright Autumn colors, are signs that speak of the presence of the Reign of God (golden rays, musical strands) in our midst, all moving toward the promise of the final redemption, the second coming of Jesus located on the back wall. Signs include the **Lame** being healed and the **Prison Bars** being broken, each touched with that golden ray, the Divine entering human lives and history.

