

Delores

Each of the residents at Baptist Homes – Adrian has a story to tell, a list of homes that he or she has lived in before moving here. And, strangely enough, so do the windows.

When Delores Kube found out that Baptist Homes needed stained glass windows, she felt like she'd stumbled upon a win-win opportunity. She owned a pair of stained glass windows that she'd been longing to find a meaningful home for, since they represented one of the sweetest chapters of her life and ministry.

The story of these particular windows began sometime around 1910, when Ervay Street Baptist Church was first built in downtown Dallas. In 1958, the congregation moved to a new building, and the old building was converted into the Ervay Baptist Center as a part of the Home Mission Board's Department of Christian Social Ministries.

Soon, three women missionaries were assigned to the Ervay Baptist Center: Delores Kube, Joan Frisbee, and Dolly Roby. The mission board turned some of the upstairs Sunday school classrooms into apartments for them. From 1961 to 1973, Delores came home every day to an old church, climbed the steps up to the choir loft, and slipped past the organ pipes into her apartment. In her bedroom, in her bathroom, and in her kitchen, she slept and cooked, rested and worked under the light of the stained glass windows.

Living in a church could only last so long. Eventually, the three women moved out into a house of their own—but they took two windows with them. For some reason no one can quite remember, the board decided to replace the stained glass with something more modern, and most of the windows were given away.

That left two for the missionaries to hang in their new home, a little sliver of the sanctuary tucked in with all their ordinary lamps and dishes. Joan often joked that she wished they had the window that said "Men's Bible Class" instead. And as the years ticked by, little else changed. The women still served through Ervay Baptist Center almost every day. Love was hard, and God's promises steady, and the Word as sharp and clear as glass.

All three missionaries retired in 2004 and moved to Dolly's hometown of Adrian, where they had a house built on her family's property. The windows more or less retired then, too; no one could find a way to install them in the new house. Dolly's sister, Lala, tucked them under her bed for protection. It felt like a waste of precious beauty. The light was quiet for a while, but it stayed safe, waiting for the day when it could come out for an encore.

Enter Ron Pence. When the women read his vision for a small worship chapel at the Adrian campus, they felt like he had given them a gift. They themselves had done ministry at Baptist Homes – Adrian before; these were people they'd come to know and treasure. "God, this is it," Delores said. She had finally found a way to get those windows back in ministry, serving the Lord and blessing His people.

“I think even if we had one hanging in our home,” Delores said, “we would’ve probably looked at each other and said, you know, we love these windows. But what an opportunity to share the enjoyment, the meaning, and the inspiration with so many others through the years to come.”

Someday, Delores, Joan, and Dolly could see themselves potentially living at Baptist Homes Adrian. For now, a different set of stained glass windows helps them feel right at home in the church they attend in Altona. They know firsthand how life-giving all this splendor of color and light can be, how it eases the soul into worship. And so they’re eager to share their stained glass windows—their legacy—where they can cast light onto others, multiplying every sunbeam into praise.

“What better place for 100-year-old windows to be than in a nursing home?” Delores chuckled. She knows these windows are more than mere art. They are rainbow reminders of God’s faithfulness, His promises and peace. And so she gives away one of her most valued possessions quickly and with gladness. All of them are still missionaries, after all—Delores, Joan, Dolly, the windows—because love itself never really retires.