On February 24, 2018, intricate stained glass windows and a complex and beautiful stained glass transom light or over-light were installed in the Clay Street entrance to the Golden Gate Spiritualist Church. (See photograph below)

The idea for these stained glass panels developed as June Johnson sat with Tony Detels by the solid wooden doors of the Clay Street entrance, greeting people, giving them programs of our services, and sometimes ushering them to seats in the sanctuary.

Both June and Tony saw the need to see people approaching the Clay Street entrance from outside and recognized the opportunity to do something beautiful with stained glass.

On August 12, 2018, as part of our Sunday Service, June Johnson, who was assisted by Bethany Decof in designing and making the stained glass panels, gave a joint presentation on this unique project. After the service, we were invited upstairs to see pictures of the project, as it developed from stage to stage.

In the presentation at our service, Bethany told us the stained glass in the Clay Street entrance took three years from start to finish. The design took them one year to complete, making the stained glass panels and preparing them for installation took two more years.

The photograph below was taken shortly after the stained glass panels were installed. The view is from the inside of the church with daylight outside. Clay Street runs east & west. The Clay Street entrance faces south. On the opposite side of Clay Street is a large, light colored apartment building several stories high.

Sunlight reflected from this apartment building from early mid-day into mid-afternoon can fill the Clay Street porch with bright light, brilliantly illuminating the stained glass in the entrance as viewed from inside the church. Sunday morning on a clear day is a great time to see this incredible work.
June said she “meditated and sketched for several months to come up with the drawings” that expressed the overall design and could be used to cut each of the thousands of pieces of glass that would have to be joined to create the windows.

Our building has a large stained glass skylight in the roof that is visible from the first floor through a balustrade enclosed opening in the second floor. June felt it “important to echo details of the existing skylight” in the design of the stained glass panels for the Clay Street entrance.

June realized that she and Bethany were being given a “unique opportunity to feature symbols which represent the spiritual energies we unfold in collaboration with our Spirit mentors, a process which is at the heart of our Spiritualist science, philosophy, and religion.”

June understood that “to become a whole person, we learn to balance our reason with our intuition. While science offers statistics and probabilities about what is measurable, scientific logic cannot tell us what we most value. As Spiritualists, we realize it is our intuitive, interior knowing which steers us toward developing character and alerts us to our sense of purpose.” It is this intuitive, interior knowing that our founder, the Rev. Florence Becker identified as our Inherent Knowing.

June said that she and Bethany researched a number of traditional images, including American Indian designs. They “chose symbols which represent spiritual energies that help us develop strength of character and the ‘soft power’ of our receptive sensitivity.”

Each stained glass panel is described in more detail in the information given below.
The west side door, or right hand door when facing the entrance from inside the church depicted in the photographs, contains “symbols based on traditional representations of the seven main human energy centers, described as ‘wheels’ or chakras. The Rev. Florence Becker, the founder of this church, referred to them as the nerve centers in our mental body.” Ascending from the lowest nerve center, she referred to them as the Earth, Fire, Water, Air, Ethereal centers, the All-Seeing Eye, and the Thousand Headed Lotus.

The connecting spiral in this design, June tells us, is based on an ancient Chinese teaching she interpreted in this affirmation:

“From my heart I aspire;  
To communicate truth;  
Out of my life experience and my inner seeing;  
Using the energies of the Earth in union with  
The higher energies of the universe  
In support of the highest and best for all concerned”
The stained glass panel on the east or left hand door as you view the door from inside the church, contains a series of 14 ascending lilies. “Each lily symbolizes one of the fourteen Faculties of Being described by the Rev. Florence Becker as a set of three inseparable qualities” we unfold “to form our spiritual body.”

The First Faculty is Duty, Gratitude, and Tolerance. From Rev. Becker, “It is our Duty to be Grateful and Tolerant.” To be tolerant, she said, “I only see their Soul which is Perfect.”

The Second Faculty is Faith, Poise, and Humility. From Rev. Becker, “Humility is the first step to bringing the ego into line. Faith is spiritual reliance, a workable, demonstrable, fact; Principle manifest.”

June continues, “In each set, the yellow symbolizes our aspiration rising toward spirit; the blue symbolizes the gift we receive, and the green at the base of each triangle represents our expression of that gift to the world.

“The unfoldment of each Faculty is related to the energetic qualities of a specific human nerve center. In the order she described, from the first, most basic, to the higher, the related energy center is indicated by the color of the central triangle. So the two door panels, representing the mental body and the spiritual body, go together.”
June tells us they “wanted the over-light to express the joyful feeling of a heavenly experience. The central sunflower is based on the logo of our National Spiritualist Association of Churches.

Echoing the blue, yellow, and green we see in the Faculties, the intersecting blue and yellow triangles in the upper corners are an ancient symbol representing the ideal union of the material and spiritual worlds. “As with the Faculties of Being, we are urged to express ourselves in the green, a joint collaboration.

There are four other circles containing antique symbols which represent a set of four spiritual tools, or kinds of paranormal experiences we may experience, particularly as we concentrate our intention to bring assistance or healing to others.

“The ‘wand’ can sometimes be ‘seen’ with the interior eye as a more or less glowing rod emerging from the solar plexus which can join with others to effect change in the physical world.

The ‘cup’ symbolizes the crucible of the heart where fears are burned away in the fire of spiritual knowledge to connect our left brain human ego with our right brain loving compassion through the intelligence of the heart.

The ‘ball’ represents a gathering of higher energy which can be transmitted to empower another, or for self-defense.

The ‘cone’ represents spiritual energy flowing through the crown.”