

Dear Children

Welcome to this very special room in our church which we call the Elijah Chapel. The window in front of you is very special for two reasons.

Firstly, it describes six events in the life of the Prophet Elijah. You can read more about Elijah in the First and Second Book of Kings in the Bible.

Secondly, the artist who designed the window Vicki Couzens is an Aboriginal woman belonging to the Keerray Wurrung Clan from Warrnambool in Western Victoria. Vicki has used lines and shapes taken from Aboriginal art to tell the story in each panel. The window was made in a factory and baked in a hot kiln by an Aboriginal Glass making company in Geelong.

Sometimes we use words to tell a story and sometimes we can use lines, shapes and pictures to tell a story. We have used both in this paper.

To help you to understand the six stories told in the window begin by looking at the first panel in the top left corner. This is called panel 1 in this paper. Each panel has a number. Panels 1, 2 and 3 are read across the top of the window from left to right. Panels 4, 5 and 6 are read underneath from left to right. After reading the story of Elijah in each panel you can then read how the artist tells this story using lines and shapes in glass.

Enjoy looking at our window and the lines and shapes in the glass. You might like to touch the glass and run your fingers over the surface as you read about each panel.



Panel 1 - 1 Kings 17:1-6

The Lord told Elijah to go to the east of the river and set up his camp and stay there next to a small stream to wait until the Lord told him what he wanted Elijah to do.

Elijah was told to drink the water from the river as there was a drought and no rain was falling. The Lord asked the ravens (large black birds like our crows) to bring Elijah bread to eat in the morning and meat to eat in the evening.

This is how the window tells the story -

On the left is the river Jordan. The large circle to the right of the river represents Elijah's camp where he waited. The small green squares represent the meat and bread. The two long shapes appear in all six panels and represent Elijah.



Panel 2 - 1 Kings 17:7-16

The Lord asked Elijah to leave and travel to the city of Sidon where he met a widow (a married woman whose husband has died) gathering sticks to make a fire to cook food for herself and her son. Elijah asked her to bring him some water in a jug and some bread to eat but the widow told him that she had no bread ready to eat. All she had was some oil in a jar and some meal (crushed up grain). Elijah asked her to make a scone for himself and one for her and her son to eat and, although she had very little oil and meal, God gave her enough oil and meal to make plenty of food for all three.

This is how the window tells the story -

The sticks are represented by six green lines next to two green shapes. The green circle with a small white round shape inside is the stone which the woman used to crush the grain to make meal. The two smaller green circles are the woman and her son.



Panel 3 - 1 Kings 17:17-24

The son of a woman who owned a house became sick and died. The mother was very upset and thought that her son had died because she had done something wrong and that God was punishing her. Elijah visited the mother and carried her son upstairs to his bedroom and laid him on his bed. Elijah then prayed and said to God: "My God, may the soul of this child, I ask you, come into him again". And the soul came back to him and he became alive again. Elijah brought him downstairs and gave him back to his mother. His mother was very happy and said to Elijah "Now I know that you are a man of God".

This is how the window tells the story -

The dead son is shown in the top left hand corner. The cross with two white lines in the middle, shows that Elijah is a man of God. The mother and her son are standing each side of the cross.



Panel 4 - 1 Kings 18:20-39

Elijah asked the people to choose between following the Lord as their God or following a group of men (the prophets of Baal) who told them that their god was more powerful than the Lord. Elijah set them a challenge. The people had to bring two bulls to him and the two bulls were killed. Elijah asked the prophets to call on their god to set fire to one of the bulls to show how strong and powerful their god was. The prophets called all day but nothing happened.

Then Elijah called all the people to him and he built an altar out of twelve stones (which are the stones with the two horns on top and with water around the outside). Around the altar he dug a hole which he filled up with water. Elijah then prayed and asked the Lord to send fire down on the other bull. The Lord sent down fire and, when the people saw this they said, "The Lord is our God and we want to follow him".

This is how the window tells the story -

The bulls are represented by the two sets of horns. The flames of fire can be seen in the bottom right hand corner and the people dancing are shown as dots around the circles.



Panel 5 - 1 Kings 18:41-46. 19:9-18

Elijah said to Ahad, his servant, to "go and eat and drink because I can hear rain coming". When he had finished eating Elijah called Ahad to the top of Mount Carmel and to "look out to sea. He went out and looked but could see nothing. Seven times Elijah called him to look and the seventh time he saw a small cloud rising above the water. Elijah and Ahab went down the mountain to Jezreel. The Lord then sent heavy rain to break the drought.

Elijah went into a cave and spent a night there. The Lord then asked Elijah "what are you doing in the cave"? Elijah replied "I am hiding because I am afraid that the people want to kill me. The Lord told Elijah to leave the cave and stand outside on the mountain. A strong wind arose which smashed all the rocks but the wind was not the Lord. Then an earthquake shook the ground but that was not the Lord. The earthquake was followed by a fire but the Lord was not in the fire. Elijah then heard a soft, gentle sound like a breeze and so he covered his face with his cloak and walked outside the cave. The Lord then spoke to Elijah and asked him to go into the desert of Damascus and anoint three people including Elisha who was a prophet, to succeed Elijah.



Panel 6 - 2 Kings 2:1-13

The Lord sent a chariot of fire to carry Elijah to heaven. Elisha saw this happen and called out to Elijah. Elisha then tore half his clothes and picked up Elijah's cloak and put it on. He then went and stood on the bank of the river Jordan.

This is how the window tells the story -

The spiral and the flames represent the chariot of fire which takes Elijah up to heaven.

This is how the window tells the story -

In the panel you can see the pointed mountain and above the point is the cloud, rain and the sea. Elijah and Ahab are standing together. Across the bottom is a spiral which is the strong wind, a jagged line for the earthquake and flames for the fire. The black lines are the gentle sound of God. The semi circle below the mountain is the cave that Elijah stayed in.



The Aboriginal flag which you can see on the flagpole outside our church

Our parish has worked closely with Aboriginal people to help us to better understand each other. To do this we have asked Vicki Couzens, an Aboriginal woman who

Like the Aboriginal babies and children we sit closely with other people who love and care for us and we listen to stories about Jesus and how he loved others through his words and what he did for other people. We show our love and care for each other by trying to do the same things as Jesus did.

Outside the Elijah Chapel is a special garden. It is planted with different kinds of plants which Aboriginal people used for food and medicine. We keep growing these plants so that we can think about Aboriginal people today and how they are a special group of people in Australia because they were here first.

belongs to the Keerray Wurrong clan in the Western District of Victoria to design a special window for the Elijah Chapel and a special sculpture for our Garden of Reconciliation.

Both of these take the shape of a possum skin cloak. A cloak is like a large coat which Aboriginal mothers who lived many years ago on this land long before Europeans arrived in Australia wore to keep themselves warm. They also wrapped their babies in the cloak to keep them close and when they were wrapped up and warm the mothers told stories to them.



You can see the Aboiginal flag, the Elijah window and the Indigenous garden when you stand outside the our church at the corner of Richardson Street and Wright Street



The Elijah Window Story

The Elijah Window Story for Children



Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish Church