

## The 325th Anniversary Banner

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Mixed fiber

### Artist Statement

My father, Max Dooley, *loved* Old Swedes Church! He delved into its history, immersed himself in its stories and the people that had been part of its past, and was proud to share all he knew with those that walked through its doors hoping for a tour. In 1999 my dad reveled in the 300th anniversary festivities and at his request I rendered the logo in fabric as a banner that hung next to the altar since then.

Twenty five years later, we celebrate the 325th anniversary of the consecration of Old Swedes Church. In honor of my father and the church community, I took on the task of creating a new banner. I chose to keep the original basic design, but used a place-based approach to how the design is interpreted.

The basic structure of the banner is inspired by the church's stained glass windows- paintings in glass framed in rich dark tones. Colors for the banner are in keeping with the blue and gold tones that define all things Delaware and Wilmington's ties to its Swedish colonial history. I chose textural fabrics to represent the rich history of the church and its community- pineapple motif liturgical brocade, comforting velvet, and handcrafted cotton mudcloth.

For the background of the banner, I wanted to honor the historic Delaware watershed by showing the location of the church (marked with the star) along the Christina River near its confluence with the Brandywine Creek just upstream from the Delaware River. Consider a time when these waterways provided the Lenni Lenape and other Indigenous Peoples with food and other resources, provided an efficient means of transportation, and trade routes. Now, bridges and roadways bisect our communities and we forget the waterways' courses. On the banner, the church building itself is shown from the perspective that would have been seen from the river rather than from the road that we now associate with the church's *front entrance*. The crosses in each of the banner's four corners remind us that with all of its historical significance, Old Swedes Church is anchored in Christianity- it was, and still is, a house of worship.

The neighborhood that surrounds Old Swedes is an ever-evolving community, and as with the banner's mudcloth frame, celebrates its vibrant African roots and rich history. Known as *bògòlanfini*, this textile's name translates to something like *earth in cloth*, it is hand woven and dyed with fermented mud and plant dyes by the Bamana people in Mali.