

The Story

Skyward honors the ultimate sacrifice given by Chaplain Aloysius Schmitt during the attack on Pearl Harbor. The piece is inspired by his final moments as he pushed his fellow soldiers to safety through a hatchway out of the sinking USS Oklahoma. Skyward was created so people of all backgrounds can contemplate and remember the sacrifices given by our veterans. The sculpture welcomes visitors to walk inside, where they can spend time in contemplation and reflection. Artistic gestures visible as a pattern of cuts in surface of the sculpture are inspired by rain, perchance tears. At night, the interior is illuminated, glowing from within and sending a beam of light upward.

Designed by RDG Planning & Design, and fabricated in Altoona, Iowa by Cox Metal Fabrication, Skyward honors local veteran Chaplain Aloysius Schmitt and is a memorial to all who have sacrificed their lives for their country.



The Structure

Skyward

- Chaplain Schmitt's story is directly tied to the form of the sculpture. His story plays out on interpretive signage and visitors learn about the Dubuque hero's life as they approach the terminus of the walk.
- The chapel like, contemplative space is inspired by, and speaks to, the ultimate sacrifice Chaplain Schmitt gave. The forms give visitors a vicarious experience of his final moments.

Rain

- On the inside surface of Skyward the visitor is met with the poem "Rain" written in 1916 by World War I British soldier Edward Thomas.
- Inspired by nature, he contemplates fellow soldiers who are exposed to death and danger elsewhere in the world, the poem portrays the fragility of life, the price of war, and the many sacrifices given by veterans both past and present. Thomas was killed in action one year later at the battle of Battle of Arras.



Rain

Rain

Rain, midnight rain, nothing but the wild rain
On this bleak hut, and solitude, and me
Remembering again that I shall die
And neither hear the rain nor give it thanks
For washing me cleaner than I have been
Since I was born into solitude.
Blessed are the dead that the rain rains upon:
But here I pray that none whom once I loved
Is dying tonight or lying still awake
Solitary, listening to the rain,
Either in pain or thus in sympathy
Helpless among the living and the dead,
Like a cold water among broken reeds,
Myriads of broken reeds all still and stiff,
Like me who have no love which this wild rain
Has not dissolved except the love of death,
If love it be towards what is perfect and
Cannot, the tempest tells me, disappoint.

- Edward Thomas











