

BANNERS

on Favorite Bible Verses

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SALLY BECK



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3558 S. Jefferson Ave., St. Louis, MO 63118-3968
1-800-325-3040 • www.cph.org

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Variations of some of these designs previously appeared in publications from Creative Communications for the Parish, St. Louis, Missouri.

Manufactured in the United States of America

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Preface

Something we consider oh-so-familiar sometimes offers new insights when it appears in a new context. Politicians attempt to spruce up old ideas with new rhetoric. Preachers face the challenge weekly of finding fresh ways to present familiar texts. And sometimes difficult-to-understand ideas become easier to grasp if we can *see* what that idea is like. Poets and preachers give us metaphors or word paintings to do just that. Banners—with their interplay of words, bold shapes, symbols, and colors—do this also as they provide new ways to look at words that we have heard many times or provide visual metaphors with fresh understanding for hidden meanings. Because these words and ideas are found in Scripture, the task is infused with new energy. For God’s Word is alive, and the Holy Spirit enables the reader to see valuable things in every encounter.

Words and images are a dynamic combination: Posters, book jackets, T-shirts, billboards, and junk mail all vie for our attention. Banners also combine those two powerful elements to enhance our Sunday worship. I hope that these banner designs will “declare to you what we have seen and heard” (1 John 1:3 NRSV), taking inspiration from the rich language of the psalmists, the prophets, the apostles, and the Lord Himself.

The Bible verses for these designs are some of the favorite passages that believers throughout the years have put to heart, remembered fondly from confirmation, recalled in joys and sorrows, written to encourage others, hung by the front door, and posted on the refrigerator. The banner format is just one more place to declare the truths that God has for us. These designs can aid us in our prayer and praise in worship, or, created in smaller sizes, they can become appropriate gifts for fellow believers.

I hope that the designs in this book have other uses as well. Pastors and church secretaries might find them useful for bulletin covers or newsletter clip art. Teachers easily can turn them into bulletin board designs. And anyone can pull out their colored markers or watercolors to create a fast greeting card by adding color to a photocopy on heavy paper. Whatever purposes creative people will find for them, these banner designs are intended to add joy to the journey of faith.

Sally Beck



Introduction

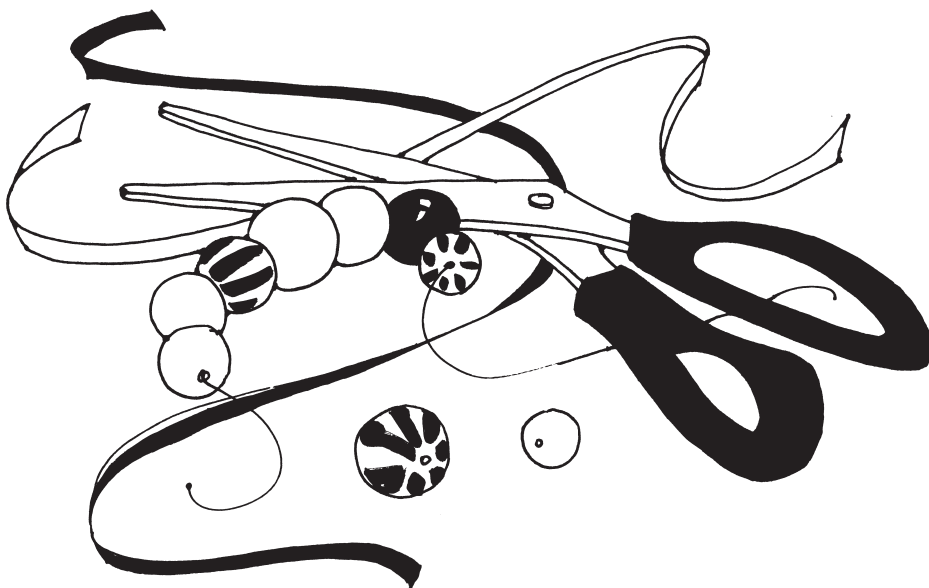
Whether banners have been assembled by accomplished sewers or are the result of preschoolers' cutting and pasting, they stand or hang before us, the body of believers, offering a glimpse of God's truth and enhancing the worship service with their colorful witness.

The variety of colors, forms, shapes, and textures in creation gives evidence to the joy that God knew when He formed the world. And He allows His creatures that same fun when they create. Liturgical art in the banner format can incorporate a variety of materials available to artists, sewers, and craftspeople and still retain the traditions associated with church art. Many of the symbols and suggested colors for the banners in this book are traditional, but the assembly allows you, the bannermaker, much latitude in choosing materials. The box that still has buttons from your grandmother's sewing days, the boxes of fabric scraps that you've saved for all those quilts you were going to make, the ribbons and embroidery floss from completed or abandoned projects, the shiny beads from the broken necklace—these all offer possibilities to the bannermaker.

Beauty in banner design can take many forms. A large part of that beauty is the personal touch that comes from the faith and imagination of the bannermaker. In other words, these designs are only beginnings that invite you, the artist, to dream your own designs. Move the design elements around, use a favorite lettering style instead, put *your* favorite Bible passage with a design that you like. Don't feel bound by the lines on the page.

Many of the construction ideas that accompany each banner are easy to follow and require little time. Some, however, are time consuming and require some advanced needlework or artistic talent. If you are a novice bannermaker, or you are short on time, ignore the more advanced suggestions and assemble the elements with one of the basic cut-and-paste methods. If you are a quilter or painter or artistic in any of a variety of ways, the advanced ideas will stir your creative energies.

May your colorful results be an integrated part of the worship service where the Lord's presence brings banners, singing voices, lighted candles, litanies, stained-glass, homily, confessions, and bread and wine together in a divine and joyful whole.



General Directions

Because the individual banner design and its scriptural theme are the determining factors for the choice of materials, the first task of the bannermaker is to spend time mulling over the project, allowing God's Word to warm your creative juices. Let the ideas percolate on a back burner of your mind. Think about the tone of the design: Is it a soft, comforting message? Are the words and design bold and courageous? Should the fabric be flowing? soft and fuzzy? sturdy and unyielding?

CHOOSING FABRIC

After spending time thinking about your banner project, the next step is a trip to the fabric store. Instead of being overwhelmed with options, enjoy the wonderful panoply of colors, textures, patterns, and designs. Indulge your tactile sense. Make your way around the store, touching and holding the various weights of cloth and imagining the background of *your* banner in different colors, weights, and densities of weave.

Think also how the banner will be hung. Does your church have poles for it to be hung from the rafters? Will it be stretched between two poles, or will it be hung from the top of the banner? Will it be carried for processions? Should it move in the breeze of the ceiling fans or from the open doors in summer? Will it hang on a wall? Or will it be a small banner, made for a new baby or as a confirmation gift?

The following fabric descriptions may be helpful. In general, avoid knits and work instead with cottons and cotton blends.



Heavy background fabrics

Cotton Duck—100 percent cotton; bleached or unbleached; 60" wide; inexpensive.

Heavy felt—72" wide; variety of colors; reasonably priced.

Heavy Duck—36" wide; some colors.

Denim—Cotton and blends; 60" wide; many colors; reasonably priced.

Poplin Plus—60" wide; beautiful colors; reasonably priced.

Medium-weight background fabrics

Poplin and *Twills*—Cotton and blends; 60" wide; many colors.

Corduroy—Cotton; 60" wide; beautiful colors and texture; more expensive.

Linen-Look—Polyester and rayon; 60" wide; many colors.

Gabardine—Polyester and rayon; 60" wide; hangs beautifully; more expensive; more difficult to use.

And don't rule out *upholstery* and *drapery fabrics*, which come in a wide variety of beautiful, artistic textures and intriguing weaves. These fabrics vary in price and in ease of handling.

Lightweight background fabric for small banners

Muslin and *Skimmer muslin*—45" wide; permanent-press type; inexpensive; great for classroom individual banner projects and for a natural look.

Chintz and *Sateen*—Polished cotton; 45" wide; firm; easy to use.

Heavy-weight interfacing (Pellon brand)—24" wide; translucent; inexpensive; great for classroom individual projects. (Banner 14 requires this.)

China silk—Beautiful; inexpensive; more difficult to use.

Fabrics for design elements

Sometimes it is desirable for the background fabric and the fabric used for the design pieces to be the same. Any of the background fabrics listed can serve as fabrics for the individual design elements. However, some design pieces lend themselves to different materials, and many fun fabrics exist. Don't forget to look in your closets for possibilities or consider some of the following novelty fabrics.

Calico—Small prints for visual interest.

Terry cloth—Great for sheep or for banners that children can touch.

Plush felt—Fun texture for kids.

Also consider *metallic fabrics*, *taffeta*, *satin*, *Liquid Gold*, *organdy*, or *nonwoven interfacing* (with the fibers showing).

Any of these, plus numerous other fabric types, can be selected, but make sure the fabric for the design piece will adhere in an attractive way to the background fabric.

The sale table in the fabric store offers a source for inexpensive specialty touches for your banners.

