

# The Art and Architecture of Christ the King

## Part Four

From the earliest days of Israel, God's people have endeavored to glorify God in their places of worship with their best gifts and finest craft. The Tabernacle with its ark of the covenant, the temples in Jerusalem, the medieval cathedrals and our contemporary churches all reflect a desire to honor God and create beautiful places of worship that elevate our collective spirits and allow us to sense the mystery and majesty of the LORD God Almighty. This series of articles has been an opportunity to expand the congregation's awareness of the artwork that surrounds and enriches our weekly worship at Christ the King. This final column addresses the artworks and crafts that make our worship space more useful and beautiful, making it possible for our liturgical worship to happen.

An earlier article included photos of the first sanctuary furnishings which carried out the original design of the architects and the sculptor of our Christus Rex cross. In the sixties, oak pews and kneelers replaced the black folding chairs. When the sanctuary was reversed in 1985, the pulpit and font were redesigned to match the altar facing and new communion rail. Since then, additional pieces of worship furniture in the same theme of birch facings on black have been added. Through the woodworking craftsmanship of Chauncey Richardson, Gary Graham, Ken Ruud and Bob McCarty, we have added a credence table, moveable ushers' station, planter box, Advent wreath stand, moveable chancel steps and a redesigned choir loft railing.

In 2000, Ruth and Bill Kratzke commissioned a processional cross for our congregation as a memorial to their niece, Julie Diersen Koch, a Lutheran pastor. Architect and artist Byron Perdue designed the unique cross of faceted glass, copper, and wood to complement the existing artwork. In addition to the cross, two moveable torches and a Paschal candle stand were designed by Mr. Perdue and executed by Doug Dye of Federal Way. All contain the common elements of copper, glass and wood, with black accents. Each piece is engraved or etched with scripture passages referencing worship, the sacraments and the light of God's glory. On the torches, given in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Odin Johnson, are words from Revelations, *"There will be no more night for the Lord God will be their light,"* and *"The glory of God is in the light, and its lamp is the Lamb."* The cross has two faces. The plain wooden face, used during Lent, is centered with a small red-painted cross. On the primary side, a radiant crown and the title *Christ the King* is engraved in the center of the copper facing, and the four arms are inscribed as follows. At the top, below a descending dove, *"He that cometh after me is mightier than I. He shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire."* On the long arm - a vine, with *"I am the vine, you are the branches. He that abideth in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit, for without me you can do nothing."* On the left arm - wheat, with *"He took bread and gave thanks and broke it and gave it to them saying, 'This is my body which is given for you. This do in remembrance of me'."* On the right arm - grapes, with *"He took the cup and gave thanks, and gave it to them saying, 'Drink all of it for this is my blood of the new testament which is shed for many for the remission of sins.'"* The Paschal stand is faced with copper lettering on black, reading *"From Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever."*

The liturgical seasons are marked in our worship space by a changing display of banners that coordinate with the assigned colors of the season and appropriate clergy vestments and altar paraments. We are

blessed that nearly all of our banners, altar and pulpit paraments and clergy stoles have been designed and created by members of our own Altar Guild through the years. Textile artists who have contributed to these with their quilting, embroidery and tailoring skills include Lois Lindsey, Ginny Eilers, Barb Ruud, Marlene Strissel, Barb McDermott, Janet Pearson and Bev Wick. The beautiful Advent blue set is one of the oldest, designed in the late sixties and embroidered by hand in gold, silver and jewel toned silk on silk fabric by Eleanor Gepner, liturgical artisan and former member of Christ the King. The **Bellevue American** newspaper published photos and an article about her work at the time. The beloved red set of banners used for Pentecost and Reformation was created by the Altar Guild from red fabrics donated by members of the congregation in 2002, and is titled "Though Many, One in the Spirit." The narthex banner in this set includes a side banner made from the red brocade fabric of the first altar frontlet ordered by the congregation in 1956. The summer green set is one of the newest, and was created as a memorial to my dear friends. Designed with a theme of growth and creation, the altar and chancel pieces are titled "A Tree Planted by the Water" in recognition of Barb Ruud's deep and nurturing faith. The east wall and choir loft banners are titled "The Trees of the Field" and continue the element of Northwest natural beauty and remind us of Judie Graham's lovingly executed worship music and energetic postludes sending us "out with joy."

In all our worship, we are called to offer our "first fruits." We are blessed to be able to answer this call at Christ the King with high quality liturgical artwork and architecture, fine craftsmanship, and beautiful music, all lovingly offered by God's people using their gifts. Next time you have a chance, sit quietly in God's house, contemplate the surroundings and let them speak to you of the quality and honesty of materials, and of the care and hand stamp of the artists. Appreciate the members of the communion of saints who have created this place and filled it with offerings of beauty and grace. It is here we can reverently draw near to the mystery, awe and wonder which is expressed in Word and Sacrament, and feel the presence of the One who is the infinitely creative Artist behind our finest works and the Composer of our loveliest songs.