



Art on the Faith Journey: Holly & The Children's Art Gallery

Holly Coates-Bash *has been part of FCCB her whole life. She is a singer, harpist, visual artist, and lactation consultant, and has been sharing her artistic leadership with children of all ages in the church school program. Several months ago, she birthed the idea of hanging children's art in several locations in the church. Soon, with the help of Betsy York, and some generous contributions for frames, this beautiful work began to appear around the church. This is her story.*

The idea for the children's art gallery dawned when my husband Roger was envisioning the remodel for the Church offices and library. What better way

could there be to welcome our staff to their offices, and children to their classrooms, than children's art!

In the first year, we held a Children's Art Second Hour program in the North Room. Around the walls of the room I placed many words to evoke love and the spirit, such as "mother nature," "lovingkindness," "babies," "friendship." We set up tables with large sheets of beautiful paper and various art supplies. When the children arrived, art happened—careful line drawings, messily splattering paintings, bold oil pastels. Over the next three years, I

visited each classroom on a Sunday morning and led a special art activity intended for the gallery. The second year our theme was the beauty of creation as seen through the literal

fruits of creation. We took large sheets of paper and paint and printed the lovely patterns of cut apples, potatoes and peppers. The third year we celebrated the beauty of the earth by creating landscapes, some dreamy ones painted with colored tissue paper,

some crisply drawn on a variety of beautiful bright backgrounds.

This year our theme is "loaves and fishes," based on the story of Jesus feeding the five thousand—a story of abundance. With pastels and pita bread and paint for the younger grades, and a fresh whole fish, rice paper and paint for the upper grades, we were ready to embark on a project that has resulted in the abundance of life currently hanging in the gallery. As I have assembled the fish into schools, I have become tremendously fond of the bright, whimsical, bounteous spirit of our children that is reflected in the forms of these sprightly fish.

FCCB member Jim Craig made a generous donation in honor of his wife Peggy, who had a great interest in children, to buy a set of beautiful frames. Later on, the Cellar Thrift Store provided another grant to buy additional frames. The children's art is now hang-



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One in a series of longer articles illuminating the life of FCCB. These stories will be attached to the email version of the Carillon, added to www.fccb.org, and will be available in print at the church.

Call the church office if you would like to receive the email version of the Carillon.

ing in the hallway on the second floor above the church office and the stairwell leading up to it, in the Small Assembly, and in the “Bride’s Room” adjacent to the sanctuary chancel.

Our family has found abundant life in this place for many years, beginning with my grandparents. I remember my steadfast paternal grandfather sitting in the pew and remaining silent during the prayer of confession because he had nothing to confess. My maternal grandmother, a professional singer, would cause heads to turn when she sang even in her quietest voice. My

parents, Margie and Barrett Coates, met and married here, as have other family members including my brother John, who married Linda Crebbins, thereby merging the Crebbin and Coates lineages. The spirit smiled on me the day I met my husband to be, Roger, in McLean Lounge. He had been bemoaning his unmarried state to his mother, and she told him to go to church and meet a nice girl. Good advice.

My own artwork is colorful figurative stories. I also love playing the harp, an instrument that recently called my name.



Church members admire the artwork in the stairwell leading to the children’s Sunday school classrooms.