



Spotlight on Crestwood: The Blessing Box and the Giving Lane

The Blessing Box is one of the first new things I noticed when I returned to Crestwood. A plain brown cabinet sits outside on the portico of the church's South entrance (Glendover side). Marked simply with the name "Blessing Box," this innocuous wooden container represents the very best of Crestwood.

Several times every day people open the cabinet doors, pick out cans of soup, pork and beans, vegetables. Perhaps they take a tube of toothpaste, or diapers for a baby, or dish soap. They do not have to ask permission or give embarrassing explanations. They do not have to talk to anyone. "Give what you can, take what you need," is the only guidance given. Conceived at the beginning of the pandemic, the simple method works. "It is very seldom that anyone empties the entire box, they are very careful to leave things for others," Associate Minister Trish Standifur says.

The Blessing Box surprised me as Crestwood is situated in an affluent part of Lexington. But with little fanfare, word of the service has spread. A call to Glendover Elementary Resource Center and a posting on Next Door got the ball rolling. The efforts are spearheaded by Martha Seithers, aided by four or five church members who rotate keeping the box stocked on a daily basis.

Donations can be left in the box or placed on the Giving Lane. Because of need, the Blessing Box will continue even after the pandemic is in the rear-view mirror.

The Giving Lane

In the hallway leading to the administration offices, there is a long table called the Giving Lane. There are areas and containers labeled for the numerous out-reach projects that are on-going.

There is a section for donations for our new refugee family. There is a section for donations for the latest monthly DWM (Disciples Women's Ministries) project. Watch the Crest and other church publications to see what the latest needs are and where our gifts are going this month.

On the table there is a box for old eyeglasses that go to Lens Crafters for recycling. This is a project for the Lion's Club.

There is another box for recycled beverage tabs that support a project for the Ronald McDonald House. Wish I'd known about that – they could have furnished a room with all the soft drinks I've consumed during the covid lockdown! Virginia Long (seen below) used to collect tabs for her grandson but when he left for college years ago she started the collection at Crestwood. She is told that the Ronald McDonald House raises thousands of dollars each year with their tabs collecting.

And if you've lost anything, this is the place to go – There is a lost and found box at the end of the table. Right now there is a necklace and glasses, among other things, waiting to be claimed.

Treats for Us

Walking around the church recently, looking for things I didn't understand, I found huge stacks of jigsaw puzzles. They have now been moved to the administrative area near Trish's office, nicely organized by size. The collection was started during the early covid days, offering entertainment to bored church members. However, the stack has grown considerably. Some of the puzzles are eventually destined to be donated, but in the meantime, feel free to look them over and take some to relax and pass the time. Not that working a 1000-piece puzzle with an abstract picture is that relaxing for me! But there are some 200-piece challenges as well.

Lastly, I found a nook not far from the glassed entrance that leads towards the Mission Center. There are any number of very nice notecards and greeting cards– ours for the taking, I understand. At Christmas I was thrilled to find quality Christmas cards which I was encouraged to take. Trish explained this section was started by a generous church member and is growing as members donate boxes of cards they receive through different charitable donations.

My explorations of Crestwood continue to surprise and please me. Our giving nature is visibly evident, and it is obvious we are making life easier for people one day, one donation, at a time.

My attention will next turn to the Lollis Chapel. I knew some of the family when I was at Crestwood years ago, but the chapel is new to me. What is the story behind this pretty little room?

If there is some area of the church you would like to know more about, please share your ideas with me. Let's explore together.

Gaye Holman: gdsolman@bellsouth.net.

