



### Spotlight on Crestwood: The Lollis Chapel

I thought I was picking low-hanging fruit when I decided to explore the Lollis Chapel next in my Crestwood adventures. I knew Wayne and Elaine Lollis when I was at Crestwood years ago, and our children were preschoolers together. I remember hearing about Wayne's mother, Lorraine, whom they described as a saint. I knew their family roots were deep in Crestwood. I'll just call Elaine, get the information, and be done, I thought.

Elaine and her brother-in-law, David, were a big help, talking to me from various locations in Florida, but their stories led me down a rabbit hole to other questions and ideas and more things to write and think about.

The Lollis Chapel is a small but beautiful room in the northern walkway leading to the sanctuary. It used to be the library, I'm told. One wall of the room is clear glass, giving a view from the hall of a substantial, carved wooden communion table topped with a brass cross. The scene is accented by a round, brilliantly colored stained-glass figure of a dove of peace. The window appears to be back-lit.

There is a piano, but the most exciting find was a large harpsichord carefully covered and protected. I found Crestwood is storing it for the University of Kentucky Fine Arts Department. I long to hear it played.

My first impression of the chapel was that it was a neglected looking area, with a white board, chairs and tables stacked willy-nilly, obscuring the beauty and innate peacefulness of the room. It reminded me of coming upon a long-sought, overgrown family cemetery where important ancestors lay quietly, their contributions still lingering in our lives. But under the seeming neglect of this

little space, I found a beautiful story that I think should be remembered. And I learned that first impressions can be wrong.

I was told that the Bridge Group uses the chapel weekly. I thought that explained the tables set up for our card-playing members. But I learned something else new! The Bridge Group, instead, is a gathering of 3-5<sup>th</sup> graders which meets in the chapel during the 10:45 service. They go there after Children's Time to read the same scripture that is used in the sermon that day and have an age-appropriate discussion about it. "It's a great way for the Lollis' legacy to live on," Senior Minister Kory Wilcoxson explained.

I also learned that the chapel sometimes is cleaned up nicely to host the occasional small wedding or funeral.

As I poked around, I discovered within the chapel and the numerous plaques on the walls, stories about Jim and Lorraine Lollis and the history of Crestwood. James A. Lollis was the first minister to serve Crestwood. There are lingering memories of other Crestwood members in the plaques and momentos donated long ago. I believe there are some items that are missing or have been moved to other areas of the church and I'm tempted to track them down. Elaine says there is a book listing all the original items and their donors. I am hoping it has been moved to the library or another safe place and the history within it preserved.

In my exploration, I concluded that the Chapel represents the very foundation of our church and reminds us of the hard work and sacrifices the Lollises and many others made to birth our church on a rolling crest on the outskirts of Lexington in 1959.

Although I wish the area could receive more physical respect, I could be wrong. What speaks more clearly of Crestwood than the active use of a room rather than being just a show place? Here is what Kory mused when thinking about the Chapel: "I'm so thankful to have a space like the chapel available. It provides an intimate, holy place for special gatherings, and yet is flexible enough for us to use for mission and educational endeavors. I hope we are honoring the Lollises in how we put that space to use."

The Lollis Chapel led me to ask other questions. I learned fascinating things about Jim and Lorraine Lollis. The exploration took me back years. It led me to talk with the Disciples library in West Virginia. It encouraged me to pore through the written history of Crestwood. It has me searching for a particular book in the library.

And I ask you, do you know who Brother Quartus was? There is a fun mystery there. Next time I'll share more about the Lollises and the important role they played in Crestwood. Maybe you can find out who Brother Quartus was. Jim Lollis knew.

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.

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