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Spotlight on Crestwood The Nooks and Crannies

Have you ever rummaged through a crowded attic or basement filled with strange treasures and junk? One that you weren't responsible for cleaning? I had a wonderful morning doing just that at Crestwood.

As I've asked questions for the spotlight articles, I've been told a number of times "that may be buried in the basement." I've been itching to see the basement ever since. I recruited knowledgeable Rick Tittmann as my guide as he obviously knows every nook and cranny at Crestwood.

We first descended to the basement storeroom which is below the children's wing, off the main room that is now used for the summer program. From a left-over sign outside the door and other hints we found inside, we realized it had been the gathering place for the High School Christian Youth Fellowship in the '90s. Remnants of the teens' past occupation are on the walls like paintings in an ancient cave.

You have to move things to see the paintings well, but one wall is covered with larger-than-life painted figures of "Super Friends." On another wall, concrete blocks are painted with individual artistry – each student having their own block to design. There are colorful blocks from Heather who drew a rainbow, and from "Dan the Car Man" who stated in his artwork that he was 17. Valerie 98' decorated with butterflies. Susan, 1999, painted her block bright yellow. And one boldly says "El Barto was here 1996." We assumed the dates were their class graduation dates. My heart was touched to see Matt Hughes's orange and blue block decorated with soccer balls. He chose a block with the light switch on it, wisely knowing his block would be noticed whenever the lights were turned on. Personally, he was a bright light, but his life was too soon ended a few years ago. A bit of all these children lives on in their colorful paintings in the basement.

As you can see in the attachment of pictures, there is no end to the variety of things found in the basement storeroom. They cover the entire floor and wall space. There was a huge cutout of a medieval horse, decorations for every occasion—some stored, others tossed around. We found a cardboard tree trunk, a play tunnel, a baby Jesus, six large Styrofoam boards 4'x15', some with paintings on them. There was a large canvas painting bursting with color. There were lots of empty file cabinets, a big shiny dolphin cutout, and metal doors from a restroom stall with a sign reading "Remember to Flush." There was even a table covered with items despite the sign, "Do not place anything on this table."

It was everything I had hoped it would be in terms of jumble and mess and interesting things. Here is a link for you to see the treasures and junk we found. I do not include them to embarrass anyone about the mess, but maybe in them, you'll remember something from your past.

Next, Rick led the way to the attic, entered by a long, pulldown ladder. Unfortunately for me, he had tackled the mess up there some time ago, which required gloves and lots of trash bags, he said. Now it is clean with a clear vision of some of the internal machines that keep us cool and warm. There are some boxes still there and lots of storage room left, so no telling what will find its way up there in the coming years. We continued our nooks and crannies tour.

Rick found doors all through the church that I had never noticed. Each was a storage

room with a variety of uses as well as a bunch of miscellaneous “stuff.” We have lots of chairs and tables stored hither and yond. There are ladders, buckets, and even a moveable metal series of steps for some use.

Turns out the locked doors in the restrooms near the gym house two nice showers each. Further on there is a closet for Boy Scout paraphernalia.

There was a graduation in the sanctuary when Rick took me on the tour so we had to return on Sunday morning between services to see another interesting area filled with surprises. His wife Cathy explored with us.

Did you know that on the right side of our stage there is a metal elevator which transports people upward who are unable to make the steps on their own? The most interesting fact to me is that there is a storage place under the stage. Peering in, we saw a very large red zipped bag – contents unknown. That was the day Bill McDonald preached, and at that exact moment of our search, he walked by and asked, “Do they still keep the bodies under there?” We could have unzipped the bag to find out its contents—but maybe there are things we don’t want to know!

Behind the stage there are nooks and crannies filled with a strange array of items stored willy-nilly. There is a space where the communion trays were prepared pre-Covid, Two very small dressing rooms for those being baptized is crammed with left-over floor tiles, tall candelabras, and metal items I can’t identify. There is even a commode. There is also a nook for the machine that runs the carillons which I think will make another spotlight article.

I thought I had found another hidden place when I noticed the handles that are on the backdrop of the stage. I’d seen them many times, but never gave them much thought. With a new curiosity, I wondered if they move the wall and lead to someplace interesting. But no, Rick said, they are handles to help people who need help getting up the steps.

After we toured all the hiding places, I still didn’t find the one item I had hoped to spot. Forty or so years ago, the children’s Sunday School class I taught put together a “cornerstone” box with an item from each child so that children of the future could see what things had been important to them. We had hoped it would be opened during a church anniversary celebration. My son Matt put in a tennis shoe; Jon Stuckey donated a baseball card that had an imperfection that already gave it value. Our treasures were stored in a dark-colored office box. Hopefully we just overlooked it and it will reemerge someday. But if not, there are many other things in the nooks and crannies of Crestwood to remind explorers of our past and to make us smile at the memories. It was a fun tour.

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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