



## Spotlight on Crestwood #32

### The Metal Chalice

It is the serendipitous nature of suddenly making a personal discovery that makes writing the Spotlight so much fun.

It may not be a new discovery for anyone else, but I have to admit I'm embarrassed by my ignorance. I have entered the South entrance of our church any number of times since I've been back. I have passed by the Crestwood sign and huge silver chalice and never have given them a thought. You would think that just once, the vision would have settled into my brain's conscious gray matter, but I had to see a picture before I realized, "Oh yes, of course I've seen that."

First, let me say that I consider my lack of attention a compliment to the maker rather than an insult. If it was tacky, poorly made, or appeared as anything less than a skillfully manufactured item, I would have noticed. But since it is none of those, I have continued to chat or smile at those around me as we enter the church rather than looking to my left.



I will never again enter those doors without gazing at Crestwood member Mitchell Smith's hand-crafted chalice. It's amazing.

First off, Mitchell insists that if I use the word "artist" in the same sentence with his name, I will probably be violating some law! He says he does metal work, but is a craftsman, not an artist. I think it's a matter of semantics as it looks pretty artistic to me.

Back about the time the church was expanding and extending the South wing. Mitchell made a small metal chalice as a treat for Rev. Wilcoxson. It soon found a cherished place in the minister's office and suddenly became a source of inspiration. As he often does, Rev. Wilcoxson became excited with a new idea, and suggested Mitchell make a large version of the chalice for the new entrance. They worked with the architect who came up with a plan for size and placement.

Mitchell begged a piece of our letterhead stationery which has a small chalice at the top. He took it to the printer and asked if they could take the tiny image and blow it up to five-feet tall while keeping the proportions the same. They did, and he went to work.

The chalice is made of thick work sheet metal (stainless steel). It is hollow, and one of the highlights for me is that the cross that is on all Disciple's Chalice is cut out, allowing the missing piece to become part of the design. When completed, Mitchell buffed it, resulting in the unique exterior design. He and Ward Ransdell attached it in its permanent location on December 20, 2016. It was the coldness of the day that he remembers most.

The Crestwood sign beside the silver chalice is commercially made, but that, along with the chalice and the lighting, make the entrance impressive and welcoming.

I found Mitchell Smith as interesting as his metal work.

When he was in college, Mitchell was majoring in industrial art and technology. That is where he became familiar with metal work, welding, and other such skills. However, as life has it, a baby made an early appearance, and he had to drop out of school to support his family. The police force was advertising, and he became a police officer which became a life-long career. He eventually returned to school. He changed his former major to a minor area of study, and pursued criminal justice instead. He earned his master's degree when he was forty-seven years old. Hat's off to him as he competed with all the youngsters in his class!

He is now heading up our Safety and Security Team at Crestwood which will be spotlighted in our next edition.

Mitchell Smith is a skilled craftsman, a servant to our community, a valued member of our congregation. And he makes very artistic items. There, I didn't put his name and talents in the same sentence, so I'm still on the right side of the law. But his work and skills look pretty impressive to me!

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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@bellsouth.net



Crestwood Christian Church | 1882 Bellefonte Dr., Lexington, KY 40503

[Unsubscribe office@crestwoodchristian.org.](mailto:office@crestwoodchristian.org)

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