

Countryside: Where Art

Art has long been revered within the sacred confines of churches, serving as a conduit for spiritual reflection and communal connection.

Historically, churches have patronized the arts, commissioning and collecting pieces that depict religious narratives and themes. From elaborate stained-glass windows to modest statues, each artwork contributes to the rich tapestry of worship.

At Countryside, artistry and spirituality intertwine. Donated, created and loaned works of art, both grand and humble, carry profound significance and tangible benefits for the congregation.

Members and friends who donate art to Countryside, like Bonnie and Bob Buckland, continue this tradition, enhancing the spiritual journey of all who enter the sanctuary. The couple last year presented a beautiful bronze statue to Countryside.

The couple purchased *Cattail Rhapsody*, a bronze statue by Colorado artist Randy Rau, in 2001 at the Governor's Western & Wildlife Art Show & Sale in North Platte.

Bonnie and Bob co-chaired the art show event with another couple for six years, 1997–2002. When the couple decided to downsize to an apartment, they decided to find a new home for it. But they wanted it exhibited in a place with plenty of space and people to enjoy it. Countryside checked all the boxes.

Donating or loaning artwork fosters a sense of



Bonnie and Bob Buckland donated this bronze statue, *Cattail Rhapsody*, by Colorado artist Randy Rau, to Countryside.

community and stewardship among members. It is a tangible expression of their commitment to the church, as they collaborate to enhance the worship space for the benefit of all. Even small donations, such as a work of ceramic or a framed painting, play a vital role in beautifying the sanctuary and leaving a lasting legacy for future generations.

The tradition of donating or loaning artwork to a church reflects its members' dedication to faith, fellowship and the celebration of beauty. Whether through grand gestures or small contributions, each donation piece an indelible mark on the church, enriching the

spiritual journey of all who gather within its walls.

Countryside Originals

Permanent or long-term loans of artwork to churches has a long history. But so does creating art specifically for a church.

Countryside is wealthy, indeed, when it comes to art generated within its walls. Members and groups of all ages and artistic background often collaborate to create original, meaningful art and curate art installations that enrich the Countryside worship experience.

and Spirituality Meet



In 2023, an intergenerational effort culminated in a striking Pentecost installation in the Narthex. This collaborative project not only showcased the diverse talents and perspectives within the congregation but also served as a powerful visual representation of unity and faith.

Countryside's youth have also left an indelible mark on the church's artistic landscape, with their vibrant paintings and mixed-media pieces adorning the sanctuary walls. Their contributions infuse the space with youthful energy and creativity, inviting all to embrace the transformative power of art in worship.

Enhancing Our Spiritual Journey Through Art Art has a profound impact on our spiritual life and worship experience, enriching our connection to the divine and deepening our sense of reverence.

Inspiration and Contemplation Art invites us to pause, reflect, and meditate on the mysteries of faith. Whether through intricate paintings, serene landscapes, or captivating sculptures, artwork prompts us to explore the depths of our spirituality and seek meaning in the sacred.

Visual Representation of Faith Art provides a tangible expression of our beliefs and narratives,

offering visual cues that reinforce our understanding of scripture and tradition. From depictions of biblical scenes to symbols of hope

Want to stretch your creative wings? Contact Alex at alexr@countrysideucc.org to find out how you can get involved in an artistic event, project or group!

and redemption, artwork serves as a visual language that speaks to the soul.

Fostering Community and Connection Art brings people together, fostering a sense of unity and belonging within the congregation. As we admire and discuss the artwork adorning our sanctuary, we form bonds with fellow worshippers, sharing in the collective experience of awe and wonder.



Above: *Community*, the custom-made blue bowl that graces the interior of our baptismal font was custom-made and donated to Countryside by Elkhorn artist Tyler Curnes. Below: Countryside youth getting creative with the 2023 Pentecostal Intergenerational Art Project.

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Countryside: Where Art and Spirituality Meet

Elevating Worship Spaces Art transforms our worship spaces into sanctuaries of beauty and reverence, creating a sacred environment conducive to prayer and worship. Whether through vibrant stained-glass windows, intricately crafted altarpieces, or subtle embellishments, artwork elevates our worship experience and draws us closer to the divine.

Inviting Encounter and Engagement Art invites us into a deeper encounter with the sacred, sparking curiosity and inviting us to explore our faith in new and unexpected ways. Whether through interactive installations, immersive exhibits, or participatory experiences, artwork encourages active engagement and personal reflection.

In essence, artwork serves as a catalyst for spiritual growth and transformation, enriching our worship experience and nurturing our connection to God and community.

Through the efforts of Countryside artists and creatives, and generous contributions of art donors, Countryside continues to cultivate a sanctuary where beauty, faith and spirituality intersect, inspiring all who enter to embark on a journey of discovery and enlightenment. 

