

Testimony of Faith & Love

Testimony of Faith & Love was created by members of Christ Church Episcopal in Montana. It is a 16x20 acrylic on canvas. It was a collaborated piece that began in August and was dedicated September 30th, 2018.

Each Vestry member of Christ Church was challenged with creating an event to bring Christ Church members and their families together for summer fun. Holly wanted to use her talent as an artist/painter and her love of Christ and the beauty of the Flathead Valley, so decided to invite members for a painting pot-luck pic-nick on August 26th, 2018.

We decided to meet at Wayfarer's park in Bigfork, but not everything went according to plan. The first challenge was acquiring a useful photograph of the Bigfork cross. The existing photos weren't quite what Holly wanted to make into the painting, so she enlisted her daughters to hike with her to take the photograph. The cross was much bigger up close, so they decided the best vantage point to take the photo was from the fishing access of Flathead Lake.

Holly sketched the photograph into a drawing on the canvas and planned the event. The day of the event, Holly loaded supplies and paint into her car and headed to Bigfork, only to find that she'd left most of her paint at home, limiting the color options to just a few. Her daughter, Johanna drove all the way back to Holly's to retrieve the paint and when she returned, it started to sprinkle rain! We enjoyed the pic-nick and people wrote their testimonies and we laughed at the color choices, but everyone was willing to use green and orange and the few others available. Some indicated other colors they would have chosen, and Holly agreed to integrate their preferences into the final piece. It was a day that had other events taking members away, so Holly offered the experience the following Sunday during coffee hour and more people were able to participate.

To highlight the areas of testimony, Holly decided to use swirls in the paint after Vincent VanGogh's Starry Night to represent points of light and love in the piece. Each person who participated was asked to write a page in the book accompaniment about their testimony or experience and sign their names and circle the area they chose on the painting. Holly combined these to accompany the framed painting. The painting was dedicated to Christ Church by the members present on September 30, 2018. MB Bertram took the photo of the dedication.

