



Calling All Artists!

Dear Artists,

This letter has two purposes.

The first is a word of gratitude to say how much I appreciate you and value your gifts as artists! This is something I've wanted to share for some time now. The late John Paul II, on Easter 1999, wrote a **Letter to Artists**. Here is an excerpt:

"God saw all that he had made, and it was very good" (Genesis 1:31)

None can sense more deeply than you artists, ingenious creators of beauty that you are, something of the pathos with which God at the dawn of creation looked upon the work of his hands. A glimmer of that feeling has shone so often in your eyes when—like the artists of every age—captivated by the hidden power of sounds and words, colors and shapes, you have admired the work of your inspiration, sensing in it some echo of the mystery of creation with which God, the sole creator of all things, has wished in some way to associate you.

Those who perceive in themselves this kind of divine spark which is the artistic vocation—as poet, writer, sculptor, architect, musician, actor and so on—feel at the same time the obligation not to waste this talent but to develop it, in order to put it at the service of their neighbor and of humanity as a whole.

In Christ, God has reconciled the world to himself. All believers are called to bear witness to this; but it is up to you, men and women who have given your lives to art, to declare with all the wealth of your ingenuity that in Christ the world is redeemed: the human person is redeemed, the human body is redeemed, and the whole creation which, according to Saint Paul, "awaits impatiently the revelation of the children of God" (Rom 8:19), is redeemed!

(You can read [the whole letter on line](#) - which I urge you to do sometime - or listen to this short [video version](#).) This letter captures much of the true biblical theme of the sacredness of the material world and what has often been called the "saving" nature of beauty. The Arts MATTER to God and to God's world!

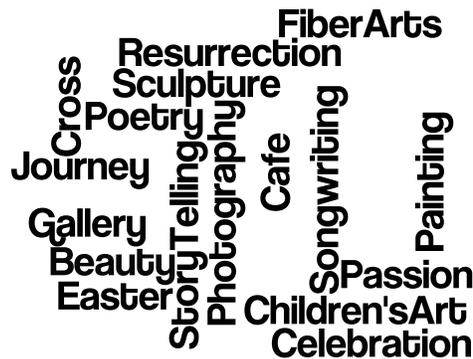
My second reason for writing is to share the vision for a very exciting Holy Week event at Christ Church that we are calling an ***Easter Celebration of the Arts!***

HERE IS THE VISION

We are inviting painters and poets, photographers and sculptors, fiber arts and song-writers, calligraphers and drawers - to submit their work to transform our church building into a Center for sharing the Good News through the Arts during the week leading up to Easter!

One of the results of our recent *Flourish Learning Forums* was the desire to provide a way for our artists to share with the broader community. Our prayer is that this event will deeply enhance the Easter Week experience for all who contribute artistic gifts and for all who participate by attending.

We are considering, in addition to the “Exhibit,” gatherings such as seminars, demonstrations, a cafe music and poetry night, etc.



HERE ARE THE DETAILS

The Coordinating Team:

The Team, at present, includes Linda Anderson, Tracie Taylor Davis, Leslie Felker and myself. Josh Danielson will assist with original songs and Robert Messorre will receive poetry submissions. Linda will be the central contact person. If you have experience and interest or resources in any aspect of art or exhibiting, please offer your gifts and ideas. Reach Linda at lindaa@christchurchec.org.

Guidelines:

You are encouraged to submit up to 3 pieces of art and our team of “experts” will choose based on space available, etc. You may offer existing items or create new works between now and the dates below.

Although this event is at Holy Week and Easter time, your themes can include your “Journey to Christ” more broadly. We want to tell the story of the *Good News* which includes our stories of encountering Christ. You will be able to include an “Artist’s Statement,” in the program if you wish, to describe the inspiration behind your work.

Important Dates:

By March 15 - Email your intention to participate in whatever artistic or supportive endeavor. Email Linda Anderson at: lindaa@christchurchec.org

On March 26 - Delivery of Art or exhibits for hanging and arranging - all day Thursday, 8 am - 6 pm (or by arrangement.) Poetry can be emailed directly to Robert Messoro at: rpoets2@yahoo.com. Songwriters can communicate directly with Josh Danielson at: joshuad@christchurchec.org

March 30-31 - Final Display Set-up and arranging

April 1-3 - The Exhibit and Events - Wednesday and Thursday evenings of Holy Week ending with a Good Friday Service of worship

I am very excited about the many ways these exhibits and events will glorify God and reach out to people with the life-giving Good News that God is FOR US in Christ.

Please prayerfully consider how God may be calling you to use your gifts this Lent and Easter season!

With love in Christ,

Lyle

Lyle Mook, Sr. Pastor, Christ Church
1025 Main St., East Greenwich, RI 02818
lylem@christchurchec.org