

Cross exhibition stirs many emotions

By Karen Gail Jostad
Star Tribune Staff Writer

The crosses displayed in the new ArtSpace at Lake Nokomis Presbyterian Church in Minneapolis are wondrous indeed.

Fashioned by hands both near and far away, they represent the vibrant faith of artists from North

America, South America, Latin America and Israel.

Of the 15 or so creations, it is "The Holy Rood" that "really draws people in," said the Rev. Louise Bender.

Carved by a Michigan priest and exorcist, the Rev. Bohdan Kosicki, the crucifix of driftwood, jack pine and barbed wire includes figures of John and Mary flanking the cross. Bender confessed that she often walks through the area when people are sitting or mingling there to overhear their comments.

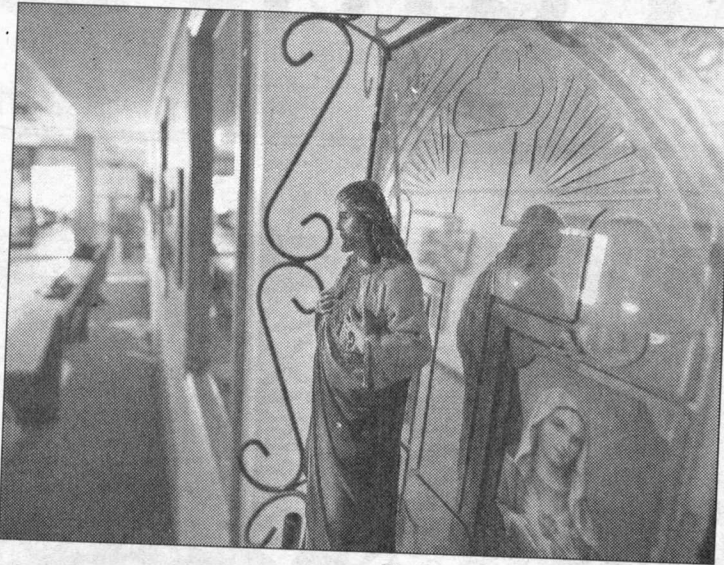
"We as humanity are reflective of a creative God," she said. "Anything that is expressive of a spiritual element we are especially interested in showing."

ArtSpace, a small gallery next to the sanctuary on E. 46th Street, was conceived by member Sue Goodspeed of Richfield with support from the Worship Committee. Members Alan and Aleta Isaacson of Minneapolis, did much of the legwork.

Minneapolis artist Susan Hensel, who recently joined the church, contributed her expertise and hung the Wondrous Cross exhibition, which runs through March. The space is available to artists at no charge, especially those who use art to "express life in the Spirit," Bender said.

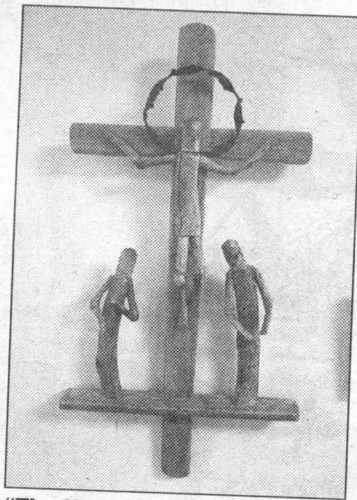
Goodspeed said many things converged to bring about her vision for ArtSpace, including the church's desire to lift up local artists and members who paint, quilt or teach art. Money and materials were contributed, so the congregation of 150 didn't have to tap other resources. Seating was provided by Presbyterian Church of the Way in Shoreview, and track lighting will be installed soon.

"With the narthex space, it



Photos David Brewster/Star Tribune

Lake Nokomis Presbyterian Church recently converted a hallway into an art gallery. The first exhibition, "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross," features crosses from around the world.



"The Holy Rood," carved by a Michigan priest, features driftwood, jack pine and barbed wire.

seemed accessible and something that might interest people," Goodspeed said. "It's a way to connect with the neighborhood and lift up things from members of the congregation."

As Goodspeed admired a Milagro cross with silver-tone charms on a black background, she said it brought back memories of a church she visited in Costa Rica. It had a black velvet-lined room with charms affixed to the walls representing people's prayers and offerings of thanksgiving.

"That's their version of votive

candles," Goodspeed said. Bender likened it to the rosary.

Bender contributed crosses to the exhibition that remind her of a particular place or time; also a colorful linen towel from Ireland intricately woven with crosses and birds, and a blue and black tartan plaid liturgical stole that she sewed for her ordination in 1992. It now serves as a frame for a cross-stitch cross created by her sister, Kay Brown. Crosses by contemporary artists B.J. Christoffer-son and Jane Rosemont from Susan Hensel's collection also are displayed.

A beautifully matted print of Salvador Dali's "Christ of St. John of the Cross" flanks the collection's centerpiece, "Crossfire of Extinction," by Nebraska artist and lifelong Quaker Margery Coffey.

The collage of oil, metal and cheesecloth with copies of old photos depicting the carnage of animals and humans, is made even more vivid by splatters of red across the approximately 4-by-5-foot-high cross.

April through June, the church will host an exhibition of artworks by students from Northrop Urban Environmental Learning Center across the street.

Lake Nokomis Presbyterian has had a longstanding partnership with the magnet school, Bender said, and wants to cel-

AT A GLANCE

ArtSpace

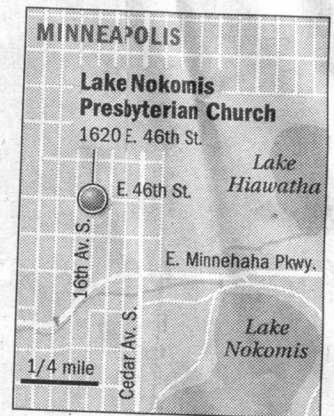
What: A small new gallery at Lake Nokomis Presbyterian Church, 1620 E. 46th St., Minneapolis.

When: Exhibitions rotate every three months. Now showing is "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross," a 15-piece exhibition of crosses from around the world, and hand-made liturgical stoles.

Admission and more information: Free, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Tuesday through Friday and by appointment. Call 612-721-4463. Also may be viewed during meditation, 6 to 7:30 p.m. Thursdays during Lent.

Submissions/proposals will be previewed. Phone the church or e-mail lnpcinfo@aol.com.

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brate it before the school moves in the fall. Principal Kathy Alvig has already set aside artworks, including handmade tiles and watercolors.

"They have been a fabulous partner for us for a long time," said Alvig, ticking off how the church has helped the school: providing reading and math tutors, representation on the site council and space for luncheons and other gatherings.

"It's been a real give-and-take dialogue with the congregation and the community," Alvig said. "This end of town is a fabulous place to be."

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