

Peace Bike Rack from Bryan Miller

By Bryan Miller of Beth-El Mennonite Church

The new PEACE bike rack that I created for the front of our church was an interesting project that took a lot longer to think about than to actual do. Over the last two years I have been collecting ideas and examples for converting our little single-post bike rack into something that has a lot more room. I wanted to make it welcoming for a whole herd of bikers, but also make an artistic statement that was relevant for our church. Our congregation deserves something a bit unique - beyond the ubiquitous grids of boring vertical bars.

Looking for inspiration can take time. When you percolate on something you want to create - doesn't it make for a pleasurable dynamic tension? You want to get it done, but you also want to put your own personal care and stamp on the result. This can be the case in creating an evening meal, a project report at work, or painting a bedroom wall. It wasn't until I went to Tucson this spring that I saw a bike rack that triggered my welding muse. There is a feeling you get when the loose pieces of a project stop acting like hyperactive squirrels in your brain, and finally coalesce. I hope that happens to you as well. Once inspiration is found the work flows like a serene river as opposed to a Sisyphean slog up a hill.



Which word to put on top of the rack didn't take long to figure out. What better fruit of the spirit to highlight for our unique presence on Union Blvd? Besides, five letters is the perfect size for what I wanted. I have an enormous pile of bicycle parts at home (sorry Jodi) from years of collecting and sculpture projects. Making letters from those parts denotes the utile purpose of the rack, and hopefully makes it fun to scrutinize as well. There is something about chains and sprockets that just makes me happy...

When I bike to a Sunday morning service it starts the spiritual process of preparing for worship at my front door. The slower, quieter, fresh air journey to church tends to get my head in a better space. I was so gratified to see a big pile of bikes out there on a Sunday morning soon after Seth and I installed the rack. I hope you enjoy the dual messages built into the structure. One is that we witness for peace in our world, in whatever way we can. The other is if you want to feel like a kid again then get on a bike and have fun!

