

Holly Marquardt

Art in Ministry

This capstone project is unusual, but so am I. Raised a missionary's daughter in Brazil, I graduated from Martin Luther College in 2017 with a secondary English degree, spending the next few years teaching in WELS schools. After the Covid pandemic, I gave myself permission to pursue a career in graphic design. It was a big mental shift as a former called worker (You mean I'm allowed to dream about earning more money?). But with that shift, the puzzle pieces finally fit. I can spend my time making pretty graphics and it's not procrastination—it's my job. I can indulge my overthinking nature to zoom in on each pixel and make it *just* so. When I am confronted with a pile of information, I itch to put it into hierarchies, to color code it, to give it visual form. And the things that scratch my brain are precisely what is asked of me. Now, at 29, I am ready to use design to make a positive force for change in the world.

My work as a whole tends to be a clean, measured, illustrative style with a hint of cleverness (I'm a fan of puns). I'm quick to doodle thumbnails and storyboards in my sketchbook, getting excited over bringing a client's vision to life. Parameters don't scare me; they actually invigorate me because I have a direction to throw myself in, a problem to solve.

The strength that I wanted to highlight for this exhibition is my ability to build a brand and sustain it through a variety of media—and since I value authenticity, this isn't just a practice project, but the starting point for a real website: **ArtInMinistry.com**. I created the logo and website, wrote some initial content, and designed promotional materials to sell. I also stretched myself to learn how to create a motion graphic animation—which is really sequential graphic design.

You'll find in this capstone a self-contained trade show booth ready to go—and God-willing, you will be able to shake hands with me at a future conference as I continue to promote this mission. My goal is to make **Art in Ministry** a household name for art education and advocacy within the WELS and ELS, and to grow its collection of articles and resources for creative Lutherans for as long as I am able. This will take a combination of writing and designing content myself, interviewing experts, and asking others to contribute. Once enough content has been generated, I may publish a magazine and/or textbook with the accumulated wisdom.

If you are interested in helping me with this ambitious project, I'd love to interview you about your thoughts on art, whatever your background. Or, feel free to subscribe to keep abreast of new articles and resources!

Sincerely,

