

CrossWalk Banquets and Catering Offers 'Miraculous' Dining Options

By Suzanne Corbett

Divine inspiration may best explain how St. John CrossWalk Banquets and Catering expanded its church kitchen into a multi-purpose banquet center. The operation – considered a culinary ministry – is an outgrowth of St. John Lutheran's school lunch program and has grown within a year to include an impressive selection of services ranging from special events catering to take-out home replacement meals.

"We offer almost any culinary and event service," CrossWalk Catering Sales Manager Susan Heep said. "Our goal was to develop St. John Lutheran Church's full hospitality potential by utilizing our facility better to serve our community."

With service as its mantra, CrossWalk has utilized all available space, including what Heep calls "The Warehouse," an adjacent venue for custom events. Each venue offers full-service bars, table linens and decorations. Audiovisual needs and recommendations for music (live bands or experienced DJs) can be arranged through the event staff.

Unlike most banquet facilities, which are limited by space and hours of operation, CrossWalk can handle anything from a breakfast meeting for 10 to a large evening gala for as many as 400 guests. Any of CrossWalk's meeting rooms also can be rented without foodservice. Rockwood schools have booked the facilities for their trivia night fundraisers.

For those who do want food, CrossWalk's versatile menu features more than 100 items, but if that is not enough, that is not a problem.

"If you're looking for something that's not on the menu, just ask and we'll do it," said Chef Steve Ferguson,

the former catering director the Sheraton Clayton, who oversees all of CrossWalk's foodservice enterprises. "We even did baked Alaska for a reception. It was spectacular – we dimmed the lights and paraded it out of the kitchen flaming."

CrossWalk also offers in-home dinner parties, off-site catering and a weekday Dinner to Go for those wanting an alternative to the fast food burger stop. Dinner to Go includes a featured entrée, vegetable, salad, rolls and dessert, all for just \$8. (On my visit, it was baked tilapia, rice, broccoli, Italian salad and bananas foster cheesecake.) Orders must be called in before 2:30 p.m. for evening pick-up.

Sunday brunch is another CrossWalk offering, open to the public weekly from 8:30 a.m. until 1 p.m.

"Each week, our early brunch menu features classic breakfast items such as French toast, eggs Benedict and fruit. At 11:00, we add three entrée items such as roast beef and fresh fish along with salads and desserts,"

Ferguson explained.

"It's been an amazing transformation for CrossWalk - from school lunches to full service catering and gourmet dining," Heep said. "It's exciting – and we've been blessed to be able to provide the community with food for all life's celebrations."

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