

## FAITH AND THE ARTS

# Art reflects creator's desire for inclusiveness, peace and love

By Jerry Hames

The peace marches and protestors during the Vietnam War prompted Karen Loew to create a monotype in the fall of 2016 as a political statement. “Symbols of the times were the hand peace sign and the daisies placed into the gun barrels held by soldiers and police,” she recalled.

The art, “Come Together,” also served as her Christmas card that year. “It is my update for our time in history, combining both visuals in a new way, to show my hope for inclusiveness of peace and love for all, united as in one hand, created by God and met in God. I want to encourage us all to come together, as

human beings, on the same side, in favor of life and love and happiness for all humankind,” she said.

A member of the Episcopal Church & Visual Arts for seven years, she often contributes to the organization’s online exhibitions. She remembers painting when she was as young as 3 after her parents purchased art supplies for their children.

“I came from a blue-collar family — people said I’d starve to death if I became an artist — and so I decided to go into advertising art,” she said. “I graduated from The Art Institute of Pittsburgh, got a job with a top design agency in Pittsburgh, but I also continued with my artwork on the side, as often as I could.” Loew enjoys monotyping, or making prints by drawing or painting

on a smooth, nonabsorbent surface. The surface, or matrix, was historically a copper etching plate, but in contemporary work it can vary from zinc or glass to acrylic glass.

Loew, chair of the Coast Guard Art Program (COGAP) Committee of New York’s Salmagundi Club in New York and a member of the club’s board of directors, was with the Coast Guard at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba in 2002 when she documented activities of Coast Guard Port Security Unit 305. She addressed the opening reception of the COGAP exhibition in Vlissingen, Holland, in 2009. Six years ago she received the Coast Guard Distinguished Public Service Award,

the highest recognition given to men and women who have made outstanding contributions in advancing the Coast Guard’s missions.

“Art can be healing for those who create it and for those who view it,” she said. “This is certainly true for me as an artist — great art therapy. I hope it works for my audience.” ■



Karen Loew

*“Come Together” is a monotype by Karen Loew, chair of the Coast Guard Art Program Committee of New York’s Salmagundi Club and a member of Grace Church, Brooklyn Heights, in the Episcopal Diocese of Long Island.*

photo of the artist by Philippe Debeusscher

