

Cross Current



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The Episcopal Church of the Holy Cross

Welcome Father Patterson



Welcome Father Dennis Patterson! Our priest in charge is originally from Norfolk, VA where he graduated from B.T. Washington High School and attended undergraduate school at Norfolk State where he majored in Psychology. While there he was president of the Psychology Club.

Father Patterson continued his education at the Union Theological Seminary in the City of New York, part of the Columbia University consortium where he received his Master of Divinity.

Father Patterson expressed that the congregation of Holy Cross has a long history of loving each other and that the

commitment to our community is real. "You provide a warm, welcoming spiritual experience to everyone. Because the Holy Spirit perseveres among the people of God you can teach and learn and grow together.

God is working in the moment and will continue to be with us. God ain't through with us yet!"

Father Patterson and his wife are parents to two children, ages 7 & 8. He and his wife met in middle school in Virginia and have been together ever since.

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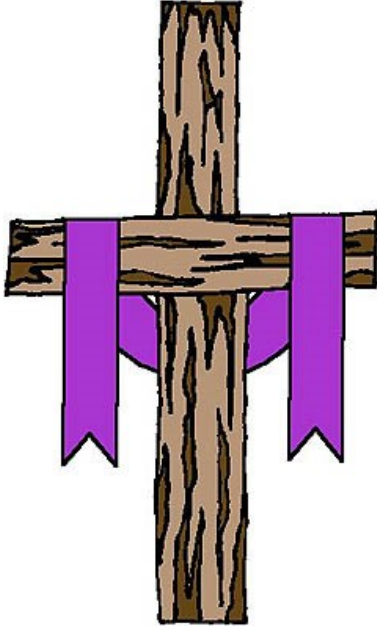
Welcome to the first 2017 issue of the Cross Current. As we begin Lent, much has already happened in 2017. We thank the parish for your active participation to date, and we are excited about how this year is unfolding.

To summarize some of our parish accomplishments since the beginning of the year:

- We welcomed Father Dennis Patterson as our Priest-in-charge, on a part time basis. This means a greater degree of consistency in the pulpit than we experienced in 2016, and that we have a pastor, priest and teacher, who can share in the councils of the Diocese and the community at large.

He officially joined Holy Cross on January 1, 2017, after being a frequent supply priest with us in the second half of 2016. His sermons have been inspiring, exciting and thought-provoking, and have been very well received by our congregation. Refer to the article introducing him above.

Vestry Voice (cont.)



- We had our annual parish meeting in mid-January, and elected a new Vestry. At that time, the Cross was passed by outgoing Senior Warden Dr. Jennifer Friday, and members Brother Willard Fey, Dr. Paula Murray-Krueger and Sister Bevely Willabus. Their service was significant over the course of the last three years, and we thanked them for their dedication on behalf of Holy Cross. Accepting the call to serve on the Vestry for the next three years were Mr. Don Bennett, Mrs. Dorothy Day, Ms. Debbie Harris and Mr. Roland Wallace. As the Vestry organized for the year, Richard Thorpe, Karen Williams, Melanie Wilson and Irving Williams were elected Senior Warden, Junior Warden, Secretary and Treasurer respectively and Cecily Morgan was appointed Scribe.
- The finance team announced that Holy Cross ended 2016 “in the black” financially. In other words, we are meeting ALL current financial obligations.
- Holy Cross had its first church-wide retreat, at the Forrest Hills Mountain Resort in Dahlonega, Ga., where thirty members spent the weekend in spiritual growth and organizational planning. At the retreat, five overarching goals were identified to improve congregational vitality. Four Informational Roundtable meetings were conducted in late February to gain parishioner viewpoints of those goals. Members of the parish joined the initiatives around those goals, and the work is ongoing to develop plans for implementation. You will see more of this content in future issues of the Cross Current.
- On Wednesday, March 1, two Ash Wednesday services were held. We were reminded that we are dust, and to dust we shall return. The important time of Lenten reflection has begun and the parish is invited to participate in “Wonderful Wednesdays” each Wednesday evening during Lent, at 7:00. The group will study Jesus and the Disinherited, by Howard Thurman.

To say that there is a new spirit at Holy Cross seems an understatement. Inspiring sermons, great music, empowered parishioners, and a vision of a growing future all are present. All of this means...” God ain’t through with us yet”. There is more work to do, and as always, you are invited and welcomed to join the efforts. We will continue to update the Holy Cross website and we invite you to provide your comments on what you would like to see on the website. We have a very active Facebook page, which receives updates constantly. Follow Holy Cross on Facebook: [@HolyCrossDecatur](#) and Faithstreet.

A prayerful and productive Holy Lent to all.
From Your Vestry

Reflecting on the Lenten Season

I visit Web sites often to reflect on many events in my life. I want to share this reflection on Lent with you. Enjoy! *Stephanie Seate*

Lent’s purpose is to reorder the lives of the disciples of Jesus where they went astray. The time-honored ways to draw nearer to God in Lent are prayer, fasting, and almsgiving.

The genius of these dependable Christian practices is how they acknowledge our spiritual and physical natures in our yearning for God.

Purposely spending more time in prayer helps us step back from the pressing demands of busy lives. Then, we can better hear and respond to God’s quiet voice in the present.

St. Mother Teresa once remarked, “Prayer is not asking. Prayer is putting oneself in the hands of God, at His disposition, and listening to His voice in the depth of our hearts.” Being intentional about listening to God is a basic Lenten practice.

Other traditional acts of “giving up” sweets, alcohol, tobacco or other pleasures during Lent help us personalize our spirit of sacrifice. We “turn from sin and believe the Good News.”

Fasting isn’t about dieting to shrink our waistline for a new spring wardrobe! Rather, it is about disciplining ourselves by saying “no” to things we like—to build up our spiritual will. This strengthens us to avoid other temptations to wrongdoing.

Fasting also expresses solidarity with our many fellow humans who go to bed hungry or thirsty each night. The Lenten fast, with its small hunger twinges, motivates us to help the truly hungry.

Almsgiving or charity is the practice of intentionally sacrificing a little of our own comfort and lives of abundance. We share with those who are in genuine need. This is an essential Lenten discipline. Sacrificial giving releases us from the idolatry of materialism. Our Lord Jesus Christ tells us that when we clothe the naked, feed the hungry, or assuage the thirst of another person, we do it to him (Matthew 25:31-41).

Almsgiving flows from saving money by these sacrifices. We should care especially for the needy near and far. We can take part in our parish's social outreach. Being other-centered by purposely giving

to charity connects our innate need to help with our recognition that we are all God's children.

Finally, the Sacrament of Reconciliation is a big part of our quest for holiness. The Church urges Catholics to make a good confession each year during the days surrounding Easter. The practice of confession is a major impetus to spiritual growth.

Ultimately, Lent is the Church's gift to Christians, not a seasonal punishment. It helps us prepare more worthily and joyfully to celebrate the most profound moment in our personal life and the history of the cosmos—the

Passion, Death and, Resurrection of Jesus Christ!

-Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops



Welcome to Holy Cross' New Choir Master / Organist



The Lord continues to bless Holy Cross. Please welcome Dr. Christopher Walters as our new, interim Choir Master and Organist.

Chris hails from Jacksonville, Illinois. With an undergraduate degree in Music from Vanderbilt, a Master's degree in Education from Vanderbilt, a Master of Sacred Music degree from Emory, and a Doctor of Musical Arts degree from Boston College, Chris is a most accomplished musician and choral conductor. He has conducted at churches, schools, colleges and communities from Huntsville, Alabama to Boston, Massachusetts, and as far west as Illinois.

He and his wife Carri moved to Atlanta in 2016 from Hunstville, Alabama so

"During these 40 days, let me put away all my pride. Let me change my heart and give up all that is not good within me. Let me love God with all that I am and all that I have."

~Genesis Grain

The Episcopal Church of the Holy Cross

2005 South Columbia Place
Decatur, GA 30032
Phone: 404-284-1211
Email: office@holy-cross.org

holy-cross.org

Time

Take time to work...*It is the price of success*

Take time to think...*It is the source of power*

Take time to play...*it is the secret of perpetual youth*

Take time to read...*It is the fountain of wisdom*

Take time to be friendly...*It is the road to happiness*

Take time to love and be loved...*It is the privilege of God!*

Take time to share...*Life is too short to be selfish*

Take time to laugh...*For laughter is the music of the soul*

~Courtesy of Joseph Ricketts

Ark Encounter



How big was Noah's Ark?

How did Noah fit all the animals on board?

How did Noah feed and care for all the animals?

How did Noah build the Ark?

Ark Encounter features a full-size Noah's Ark, built according to the dimensions given in the Bible. Spanning 510 feet long, 85 feet wide, and 51 feet high, this modern engineering marvel amazes visitors young and old. Ark Encounter is situated in the beautiful Williamstown, Kentucky, halfway between Cincinnati and Lexington on I-75.

It's the most authentic replica of Noah's Ark in the world. Millions will come from all over the globe to see the biblical account of Noah's Ark brought to life.

Ark Encounter offers an experience like no other. When the towering ship comes into view, you'll see pages of the Bible come to life.

The ark contains three decks of exhibits specially designed to answer your questions about the biblical account of Noah's Ark.

Trip: July, 2017