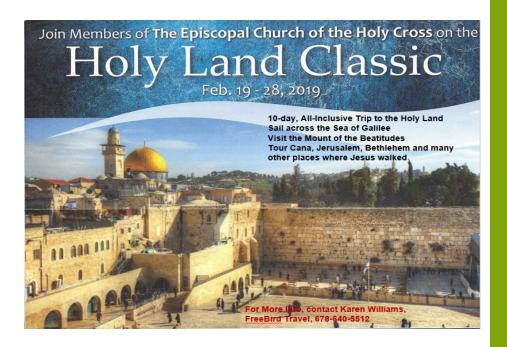
## **Explore the Bible**



The Episcopal Church of the Holy Cross 2005 South Columbia Place Decatur, GA 30032

### **Contact Us**

Holy Cross 2005 S. Columbia Pl. Decatur, GA 30032

Phone: 404.284.1211 Fax: 404.284.7706 Email: office@holy-cross.org Website: holy-cross.org Facebook: facebook.com/ HolyCrossDecatur

#### **Office Hours**

Monday: Closed Tuesday to Friday: 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

#### **Regular Worship Schedule**

8 a.m. Spoken Eucharist with music

11 a.m. Sung Eucharist with full choir

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## **Message from the Rector**

### Be Still and Know

Before my grandma died, she would, without fail, go to the flea market every Saturday morning. She affectionately called it her "mall."

Because she was not a licensed driver, she would wake up early, get dressed and wait on the porch until "her ride" came. It should be noted here that "her ride" was not arranged in advance, but was the first person, family or friend, that drove by. She gladly jumped in the car with the first passerby in order to revel in her favorite past time, collecting and buying items no one wanted. She would spend her entire Saturday there going from vendor to vendor until finally it was time to go home.

At the end of the day, as the vendors were packing up, my grandmother would take her place in a chair near the entrance of her mall, and wait for "her ride" to come, once again. This time, "her ride" was whoever dropped by her house around that time and realized that she wasn't home. On occasion "her ride" would be me. During my visit to her house, it would quickly register that grandma must still be at the flea market and needed to be picked up. Out the door I would go, to make sure that she returned home safely. When I picked her up, I would say, "What if I didn't come over to visit? How would you get back home?" Smiling she would respond, "Somebody would've picked me up." Looking back, I can honestly say that I do not remember a time that she was left there.

How wonderful it is to know that you are covered. To know without any doubt, that if you wait, in time, someone will show up. As you can imagine grandma taught me a lot about my faith. She taught me that if you have done the work, which in her case was loving so many people for so long, serving her community, and being there for others, then you can rest, knowing that they will show up.

In the same way, when we prepare ourselves, in this season of Advent, we can rest assured that "God will do what God said God will do!" Thanks be to God!

God's Peace, ddpj+ "How wonderful it is to know that you are covered. To know without any doubt, that if you wait, in time, someone will show up."

### In This Issue

- Rector's Message
- Stewardship
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### Stewardship

Let's imagine two people pondering over filling out their commitment cards to support God's work in the church. One is thinking "How much of my money does the church need? Times are tight, can I spare anymore?" The other thinks, "God has blessed me in so many ways. How is God calling me to respond to these blessings?"

Our commitment cards request a response that shows our financial commitment to God's work in the church. How much one gives depends on our belief and faith that everything we possess belongs to God. Therefore our focus at this time is on our need to give not on the church's need to receive. It all belongs to *God* and we live by his graciousness and not by our own accomplishments. Let's give Him the glory and thanks; and ask serious questions about how we are called to use what God has entrusted to us.



### Hagar's House

In November Holy Cross continued its close association with Hagar's House. Hagar's House is a family shelter located in Decatur. The shelter is part of the Decatur Cooperative Ministries whose purpose is to help homeless families get back on their feet. As a member of this ministry, Holy Cross has been committed to serving dinners to the families twice yearly. We take a week in April and one in November. We recently finished up a week of meals at Hagar's house, serving five families.

Our role is to provide a nutritious dinner. Usually 4-5 members of our church make up a team, dividing duties to deliver a finished meal at 6 p.m. We serve that meal at 6:30 and we eat and fellowship with the families. We are usually done by 7:30.

There are people who serve twice a year and some who only go once yearly. We also have families within Holy Cross who may take an occasional night on their own. It is such a rewarding ministry. The outreach ministry is very grateful to the parishioners who gave of their time and treasure to make this endeavor happen. We are always looking to widen the circle, so next time you see a sign-up list for Hagar's house please sign up. You will meet new people and will serve a worthy cause.

Also in November we had our 5<sup>th</sup> annual Thanksgiving meal. We delivered and/or gave out approximately 185 meals. Fifteen of those meals were sent to Hagar's House for lunch. We served fewer people than in previous years, possibly because the food pantry was able to give each family a turkey of their own just the weekend before. Holy Cross was very generous as usual. The AARP Holy Cross chapter gave a large donation and we received donations of money and goods from other parishioners.

On Wednesday, November 22, a small but dedicated team cooked 15 turkeys and prepped for the sides that would be prepared the next day. That same small group was back in the kitchen at 7 a.m. on Thanksgiving Day to prepare the sides. We were joined later by others who boxed, delivered, and served the meals.

The outreach committee is very grateful for the people who gave up of their time on Thanksgiving Day to give to others. Our hope is that this ministry will continue to grow. Amen.

Paula Murray Krueger

## Book Club (cont'd)

(Continued from page 8)

Much of U.S. foreign policy that prevailed after World War II had some connection to the policy of containing the Soviet Union. George F. Kennan was the author of that policy. He argued that the Soviet Union would eventually fail because of its internal contradictions. His life is the subject of *George F. Kennan: An American Life* by John Lewis Gaddis (New York: The Penguin Press, 2011) 698 pp. And an interesting life it was, because Kennan lived long and fully. Gaddis had Kennan's authorization to write this biography after his subject's death, but neither expected Kennan to live so long.

Two others are on this short list. One is William Manchester's *A World Lit Only by Fire: The Medieval Mind and the Renaissance, Portrait of an Age (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1991)* First Paperback Edition, 296 pp. Manchester is a wonderful writer in this exploration of the emergence of Europe from the "Dark Ages" after the sack of Rome. He pays a lot of attention to the debauchery of the early popes, their intrigues and the wielding of religiosity and spirituality as political weapons.

My last entry, for now, is Paul Johnson's *A History of the Jews* (New York: Harper & Row) Harper Perennial paperback, 587 pp. Johnson starts with the Hebrews as a nomadic tribe and goes through the sweep of Jewish history to Zionism and the eventual founding of Israel as a Jewish refuge. Two points have stuck in my mind. First, the Jews have a different perspective of Herod, who stood against the Romans' wish to exterminate the Jewish people. And the second is Johnson's point that unless the Jews rule Israel, the country has no reason to exist because its founding was purely as their refuge. It's a point that doesn't solve the Gordian knot of Israeli-Palestinian relations, but it was a point I hadn't previously considered.

Guns, Germs, and Steel and Freedom from Fear are both Pulitzer Prize winners.

Stan Fisher

## Youth Sermon (Cont'd)

(Continued from page 10)

ing at school functions, at church and at charities. This may cause you to sacrifice your time, talent and resources but this is a choice you will make out of love. I know a few good men who embody this sacrificial love. They sacrificed their time, talent, energy and resources to help me get my education and to make me feel welcome into a new environment unsure of my future. And to this day I could call on them at any time and they would be there for me.

I love you!

Jason Greaves

### Make a Difference (cont'd)

(Continued from page 6)



at no charge. The tax law training covers preparing basic federal tax returns electronically and learning about tax deductions, credits and allowable expenses that benefit eligible taxpayers.

**Continuing education credits for tax pros.** Enrolled agents and noncredentialed tax return preparers can earn continuing education credits when volunteering as a VITA/TCE instructor, quality reviewer, or tax return preparer.

Taxpayers who volunteer are joining a program that has helped millions of people file tax returns at no cost for more than 40 years. Taxpayers who volunteer make a difference. This is people helping people and it's that simple.

To become a VITA or TCE tax volunteer, or for more information on the continuing education credits, visit IRS.gov and type "tax volunteer" in the search field.

Debbie Harris

### **Current Events**

2018 RETREAT—Plans are underway for a church-wide retreat for 2018. While no date has been determined as yet, you can sign up on the sheet in the narthex if you are interested in attending.

#### UPDATE YOUR CON-TACT INFORMATION—

There is a new link on the Holy Cross website for all of us to update our contact information. This is another way to ensure that you are on the Phone Tree list and in the church's list of members. To update your information, go to **holy**cross.org/update-info, or see the link under the worship schedule on the left.

#### CHURCH DIRECTORY

—An updated directory scheduled for next year will include pictures of members and contact information, along with a directory of businesses owned by our members. To help on this project, please contact Patricia King.

## Youth Sermon (cont'd)

(Continued from page 5)

#### neighbor as yourself?

To love your neighbor as yourself is just as you accept yourself for who you are and have been you also accept them for who they are and have been. Also, your love for your neighbor can be shown by addressing their needs before your own. An example of this is the story of the Good Samaritan in which the Samaritan risked his life to save the man from Jerusalem as there was a chance that the bandits were still in the area. He also sacrificed his oil and wine to bind the man's wounds, his donkey to carry the man and his money to insure that the man was taken care of. Additionally, since the Commandments given to us by Jesus encompasses the original Commandments this love is also showcased by following the last six Commandments which are:

- 5. Honor your mother and father.
- You shall not kill. 6.
- You shall not commit adultery. 7.
- 8. You shall not steal
- 9. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
- 10. You shall not covet.

Do you love your neighbor as you love yourself?

There are many ways in which we can display this sacrificial love. We can show it by helping the sick. I recently heard of a man named Bob Pierce who founded World Vision and had advanced leukemia. He decided to visit a colleague in Indonesia before he died. As he walked through a village accompanied by friends he came across a girl lying next to the river. She was dying of cancer and only had a short time to live. Bob demanded to know why she was not in a clinic, but his friend explained that she was from the jungle and wished to spend her last days by the river. Upon hearing this Bob felt great compassion for her and he got down on his knees took her hand and began to pray for her. Soon after she looked up and said something. Bob asked his friend what she had said. His friend told him she said, "If I only could sleep again, if I could only sleep again." Apparently, the pain was so great that it prevented her from sleeping. Weeping Bob reached into his pocket and took out his own sleeping pills, given to him to help him sleep with the pain of his leukemia. He handed the bottle to his friend saying, "You make sure this young lady gets a good night's sleep as long as these pills last." Now Bob was ten days away from where he could get his prescription refilled; this meant ten sleepless and painful nights. His love cost him greatly that day, but he was filled with a great sense of satisfaction that he had done the right thing.

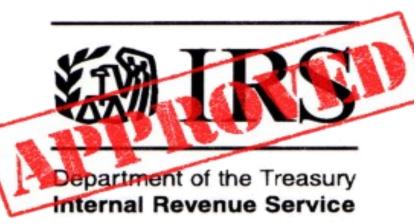
Now considering the recent rise in police brutality by a few police towards young members of the African American community which resulted in the deaths of 416 African American people in the last two years many of them being males. If these few police loved their African American neighbors as themselves do you think that they would be able to kill their black neighbors in such a brutal fashion and at such a large rate.

Will you love your neighbor as yourself?

You can show your love by volunteering in the soup kitchen, helping the elderly, volunteer-

(Continued on page 11)

### **IRS Tax Tip 2017**



### How to Know if the Knock on Your Door is Actually Someone from the IRS

Every Halloween, children knock on doors pretending they are everything from superheroes to movie stars. Scammers, on the other hand, don't leave their impersonations to one day. They can happen any time of the year. You can avoid taking the bait and falling victim to a scam by knowing how and when the IRS does contact a taxpayer in person. This can help you determine whether an individual is truly an IRS employee.

Here are eight things to know about in-person contacts from the IRS.

□ The IRS initiates most contacts through regular mail delivered by the United States Postal Service.

□ There are special circumstances when the IRS will come to a home or business. This includes:

o When a taxpayer has an overdue tax bill

o When the IRS needs to secure a delinquent tax return or a delinquent

employment tax payment

o To tour a business as part of an audit

o As part of a criminal investigation

□ Revenue officers are IRS employees who work cases that involve an amount owed by a taxpayer or a delinquent tax return. Generally, home or business visits are unannounced.

□ IRS revenue officers carry two forms of official identification. Both forms of ID have serial numbers. Taxpayers can ask to see both IDs.

□ The IRS can assign certain cases to private debt collectors. The IRS does this only after giving written notice to the taxpayer and any appointed representative.

(Continued on page 6)

## **Stewardship**

### Ask the Right Question

A steward is not an owner. A steward cares for the possession of the owner (God), both for the benefit of the owner and for the benefit of others. A steward has the responsibility to care for the owner's possessions in such a way that the assets prosper.

Each of us is a steward of the assets entrusted to us by God. We don't own anything. God owns it all and we have the responsibility to manage all that he has provided for us. Since God has provided all that we need and we do not own it. at this commitment time, we should not ask "How much of my money do I give to God?" The right question is *How* much of God's money do I dare keep for myself?





Photo courtesy Stan Fisher

## **Exciting Times at Holy Cross**

### Lights, Camera, Action!

Holy Cross' campus was recently the site of an upcoming motion picture. Between mid-August and late October, there was lots of activity on the church grounds. The production company tried to prepare us for what was to come, but it is an experience one must live to appreciate.

During early negotiations with the production company, several recommendations came our way including the following.

- 1. Document everything on the entire church campus to ensure that the property is restored to its pre-movie condition. Stan Fisher took still photos and Tony Williams took video of the campus.
- 2. Ensure the presence of a member of the church during all activities. It became my honor to fill this role, working long days at the church, Monday through Friday.

Construction and set decoration ran from mid-August into early September with filming from September through the first week of October. The work began to return the church campus to its pre-movie condition during the second week of October. The team returned during the fourth week of October for one more week of construction, filming, and restoration. During this time, trucks, generators, lights, construction crews, and actors' trailers filled our parking lots. People were everywhere.

Our campus was transformed into several sets for the movie with filming in a variety of locations on the church campus. While our sanctuary remained untouched, the narthex, nursery, priest's office, second story of the education and administration (E/A) building and Royall Hall all underwent major modifications. Will you recognize our church when you see it in the movie? Maybe. Maybe not.

(Continued on page 9)

### **Daily Re**minders & Affirmations

Prayer is not a duty or a habit, but pouring forth of the heart in gratitude for every breath, every moment of life, every experience. I am grateful for all life!

Things may happen around you, and things may happen to you, but the only things that really count are things that happen in you. I claim my greatness!

After all, it is our attitude toward life that brings us joy in living. I choose an attitude of joy!

Excerpted from *Daily* Word: A letter to Adam (Sue Sikking); Spiritual Economics (Eric Butterworth); and The Magic of the Word (May Rowland).

Cecily Morgan



### Calendar

### **Monthly Meetings**

| Event                       | DATE  | Тіме       |
|-----------------------------|-------|------------|
| Daughters of the King       | 12/9  | 10 a.m.    |
| Young @<br>Heart            | 12/9  | 1 p.m.     |
| Finance<br>Committee        | 12/10 | 12:30 p.m. |
| Food Distri-<br>bution Prep | 12/15 | 4 p.m.     |
| Food Distri-<br>bution      | 12/16 | 8 a.m.     |
| Youth Group                 | 12/16 | 4 p.m.     |
| Vestry Exec<br>Meeting      | 12/17 | 1:30 p.m.  |
| Vestry Meet-                | 12/19 | 7 p.m.     |
|                             |       |            |

#### Happening Weekly

Wonderful Wednesdays:7:00 p.m.

Choir Rehearsal: Saturdays 10:00 a.m.

#### Special Events

| Event                        | Date  | Тіме           |
|------------------------------|-------|----------------|
| Parish Plan-<br>ning Council | 12/9  | 1:30<br>p.m.   |
| Advent Ser-                  | 12/24 | 10 a.m.        |
| Christmas Eve<br>Service     | 12/24 | 9 p.m.         |
| New Year's<br>Eve Service    | 12/31 | 8 & 11<br>a.m. |
|                              |       |                |



We had our Sunday worship services throughout this period as normally scheduled, and used the breezeway of Royall Hall for our social times. Many of our members commented on seeing the changes to the church campus, and later seeing those changes disappear. We retained several elements from the construction, from vertical blinds in several E/A rooms, to a check-in counter in our nursery, to even dimmer switches for the lights in Royall Hall.

It was amazing to see the number of people involved in the creation of a movie and to interact with the various specialties necessary: producers, directors, actors, extras, lighting people, construction teams, set decorators, painters, location scouts, electricians, and on. A few pictures provide a glimpse of the complexity of such a production. It was fascinating to watch. While most of the restoration work has now been completed, there are a few loose ends still being worked. We hope to have everything complete soon.

Looking back on the whole experience, it is clear to me that the selection of Holy Cross as the site for this movie was the Lord's providence. Holy Cross did not seek this opportunity, but it came our way. We hope you agree that our parish benefitted from the experience. The Lord is good; His mercy endures forever.

On behalf of the vestry, we thank the congregation at Holy Cross for your patience, tolerance and cooperation during these exciting times.

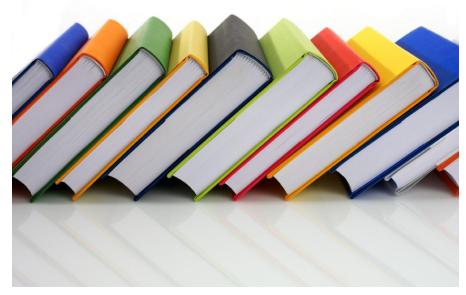
Karen Williams

## **Exciting Times (Cont'd)**

(Continued from page 4)

The production company worked closely with Holy Cross throughout this period. As specific needs arose, the production company worked with us to accommodate special, time-sensitive requirements. For instance, when it was time for the Young At Heart guests to park cars and board their bus for the August trip to Savannah, the production company arranged for them to park at the movie's "base camp" (Columbia Drive UMC) with security coverage. Together, we managed to continue Food Pantry food delivery and distribution.





## **Book Club**

### Books I'm Glad I Read

I've dedicated a corner of my bookshelf to books that have been especially meaningful to me. One reason to group them together is to keep them close at hand. The other is to give them a place of prominence in hopes that some day my children will find them and read them. It's a short list at the moment, but I keep slowly adding to it. Most of these, although generally well-written, are not to be read in one or even several sittings.

The number one position has to go to Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies by Jared Diamond (1999: W.W. Norton & Company, New York & London) (Paperback edition, 440 pp. of author's text). In the author's "Afterword," he sums up his work as "about why the rise of complex human societies unfolded differently on different continents over the last 13,000 years." It's about more than that. It's the UCLA geography professor's answer to other somewhat similar books that have made arguments for innate intellectual differences among the races that inhabited different continents. I particularly liked this book because I've always been fascinated by the transitional period in which societies became literate and began to keep written documents that form what we call history.

Second spot goes to David M. Kennedy's Freedom from Fear: The American People in Depression and War, 1929-1945. Volume 9 in the Oxford History of the United States series (1999: Oxford University Press) 858 pp. The title speaks for itself, but the major impact of this book for me lies in (1) its statistical portrait of a country that people of a certain age will recall in outline, (2) the documentation of the rise of many elements of what is called the Welfare State, and (3) affirmation that the more things change, the more they stay the same. Much of the story of the politics of the era sounds like today with a different cast and different technology at hand. It had special meaning for me because the 1930s, especially its foreign policy, was the core of my graduate studies.

(Continued on page 11)

### **Current Events**

#### SPECIAL COFFEE HOUR—

Starting in December, stations will be set up each month for those celebrating a birthday. Bring a dish to share, put your birthdate on your name tag during services, then stay after church to chat with someone born in the same month. This month we're celebrating on December 10 and 17. Join us, won't you?

### ANGEL TREE PROGRAM-You

are encouraged to prepare for our annual Angel Tree program. Once the tree is available, select the children for whom you will purchase a gift, and list your selection on the sheet in the narthex. Place your unwrapped gifts in the container in the narthex by December 17. Contact Michelle Ware for details

#### CHRISTIAN EDUCATION—

Children will visit a few of Holy Cross' sick and shut-in parishioners during the 11 a.m. Sunday services in the month of **December**. The children will bake cookies, make Christmas cards, bundle the cards into gift baskets, and deliver some Christmas jov to those who are unable to join us for services. Parents, Michelle Ware, or Patricia King will forward details to you soon.

### Celebration and Recognition of Breast **Cancer Aware**ness

Our annual breast cancer awareness event occurred on Sunday, October 22, 2017. The symbolic pink was used for liturgical adornment and personal attire. Coffee hour followed in the parish hall.

Sincere remembrances for those who succumbed and ongoing support to others still valiant in the fight.

Cecily Morgan



## **Youth Sunday Sermon**

### The Greatest of These is Love

Father Patterson, friends, parishioners, lend me vour ears! I love vou! I have come today to speak about the correlation between the Commandments and love. Jesus said the two greatest Commandments are to 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your soul and all your mind' and to 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'

But what are the Commandments?

The Commandments are given to us to guide our relationship with God and man. Originally there were ten Commandments, but the two Commandments given to us by Jesus encompasses all the others and are based on love.

But what is love?

According to the Webster's fourth edition dictionary, love in its purest form is defined as a deep and tender feeling of affection for, attachment to, or devotion to a person, thing or idea. For example, a mother's love for her child. I know of a mother who loved her child so much that she sacrificed her ability to get a renewable source of income into her old age and sacrificed the last 15 years of her life to take care of her daughter's child. That mother is my grandmother. Another example is a patriot's love for his country. I recently met a US Marine veteran who not only sacrificed his time for his country he also risked his life and now in his old age he still volunteers his time to the Paris Island Museum to teach the young folk the history of the Marine Corps. Additionally, love can also be defined as addressing the needs of your neighbors. This love is a choice that is marked by sacrifice. An example of addressing the needs of others is the story of the Good Samaritan. In the first Commandment given to us by Jesus we are told to love God with all our heart and all our soul and all our minds.

But what does it mean to love God?

The love of God is the devotion to and desire for God as the supreme good that people have. This love is shown by following the first four Commandments, which are:

- 2 You shall not make any graven images.
- 3. You shall not use the Lord's name in vain.
- 4. Remember to keep the Sabbath day holy.

The second Commandment given to us by Jesus is to love your neighbor as you love yourself. But what does it mean to love yourself?

The love of one's self is having self-respect, a positive self-image and unconditional self-acceptance. This does not mean that you are arrogant but that you accept yourself for who you have been, who you are and who you will become.

Now that we know what it means to love yourself, what does it mean to love your

1. You shall have no other Gods before me.

(Continued on page 10)



### Make a Difference

### Become a Community Tax Volunteer

The IRS is looking for community volunteers to provide free tax preparation and help to their neighbors and other area residents in 2018.

The IRS sponsors the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) and the Tax Counseling for the Elderly (TCE) programs. These two programs offer free tax help across the country for people with low-to-moderate incomes, senior citizens, persons with disabilities, those with limited English proficiency and Native Americans. This year, VITA and TCE volunteers prepared more than 3.5 million federal tax returns for all types of taxpayers at no cost.

Tax volunteers can and do make a difference in their community. Here are five reasons to become a VITA or TCE tax volunteer:

**Flexible hours.** Volunteers generally serve an average of three to five hours per week. The programs are usually open from mid-to-late-January through the tax filing deadline in April with a few sites open all year.

**VITA and TCE sites are often nearby.** Over 11,000 sites were set up in neighborhoods all over the country for this past filing season. These free tax help sites are located in nearby community centers, libraries, schools, shopping malls and other similar areas with flexible hours.

**No prior experience needed.** Volunteers receive specialized training and often serve in a variety of roles. VITA and TCE programs want volunteers of all backgrounds and ages as well as individuals who are fluent in another language.

Free tax law training and materials. Tax volunteers receive training materials

(Continued on page 11)

## Tax Tips (cont'd)

#### (Continued from page 3)

Private collection agencies will never visit a taxpayer at their home or business.

□ The IRS will not ask that a taxpayer make a payment to anyone other than the U.S. Department of the Treasury.

□ IRS employees conducting audits may call taxpayers to set up appointments, but not without having first notified them by mail. Therefore, by the time the IRS visits a taxpayer at home, the taxpayer would be well aware of the audit.

□ IRS criminal investigators may visit a taxpayer's home or business unannounced while conducting an investigation. However, these are federal law enforcement agents and they will not demand any sort of payment.

If you believe you were visited by someone impersonating an IRS agent, visit IRS.gov for information about how to report it.

Debbie Harris



## **Vestry Retreat Initiative**

### Engagement

As a parishioner at Holy Cross for over 30 years, I have seen our church go through its ups and downs. 2017 has been a good year for us, by all accounts. Most importantly, at the vestry retreat in January, we started a conversation about how we can put the church on a more consistent path of positive progress. Participants empowered by the vestry launched five initiatives: Communication, Engagement, Spirituality, Greeting, and Reconciliation. I chose to spearhead the Engagement initiative, as my first significant leadership role at Holy Cross in over 20 years. I formed a committee, and we got started.

My committee's efforts to generate increased engagement in our congregation has prompted me to ask two questions: What gets people engaged? What gets people disengage?

I would like to start a conversation about these questions that will have Engagement become a living, breathing part of the culture at Holy Cross. I'll answer these questions for myself and encourage a dialogue with all of you.

What gets me engaged at church?

- Opportunities to participate meaningfully
- Having fun
- Thoughtful discussions about scripture
- Seeing people live out Christian principles
- Great food (Yay!)

What gets me disengaged at church?

- Boredom
- Hypocrisy
- Unresolved conflicts; gossip
- People not doing what they say; broken commitments
- Lack of accountability

In my committee's work, we've started the process of creating activities that embody what I believe has people engage. We have a year's worth of monthly programs, plus the ongoing special interest/foyer groups that we look forward to launching. At the end of the year, we'll evaluate to see what the congregation likes and wants to continue.

What we have not yet done is address the issues that cause the congregation to disengage. If we don't address these issues, we will be putting clean water in a dirty bucket. Everyone has their sore points. For example, it drives me nuts when people say they are going to do something and they don't follow through or honor their commitments. This seems to be an endemic problem at Holy Cross. Enough said. I'll leave the preaching to Father Patterson. I've started a conversation with the vestry about how we can move forward on surfacing these issues and resolving them.

The way forward on the disengagement issues is not as clear (and probably not as fun) as the programming we have developed for engagement activities. But, it's necessary. So, let's do it, Holy Cross. Let's face the things that have had people leave our church. We've come this far by faith, and we have a great future ahead.

Soyini Coke

## **Get Engaged**

# Answer These Questions

What gets you engaged at church?

## What gets you disengaged at church?