

CROSSWAYS

"Making Christ Visible in His Community."

The Reverend Michael P. Flanagan, Rector of Holy Cross Episcopal Church, Simpsonville, SC 864-967-7470

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"TO WITNESS AND BLESS" A DIALOGUE ON SAME SEX UNIONS

This Lent we will be holding discussions on the blessing of same sex unions. These discussions are required by the bishop for all parishes in the diocese and are necessary to take place in advance of any parish requesting permission to utilize the rite. Recall that our General Convention passed Resolution A059, which included the resolve:

"Resolved, That the 77th General Convention authorize for trial use "The Witnessing and Blessing of a Lifelong Covenant" from "Liturgical Resources I: I Will Bless You and You Will Be a Blessing" beginning the First Sunday of Advent 2012, under the direction of a bishop exercising ecclesiastical authority. ..."

Our bishop, along with a Task Force on Unity and Faithfulness has designed a curriculum for parishes to hold a conversation about these blessings. Since that time, the state of South Carolina has begun issuing marriage licenses to same sex couples, which further confuses the matter since the church has currently provided only a rite for the blessing of a civil union. General Convention 2015 will be exploring canonical (church rules and regulations) responses to these developments as part of the Task Force on Marriage that was instituted by Convention 2012. (Our bishop is a member of this task force.) The preliminary report from that task force may be available to us by the time we begin meeting together.

The Episcopal Church has been working toward full inclusion of LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered) persons in the church since 1976, and a number of resolutions regarding full membership have been passed by conventions over the years. One notable resolution came in 2000. D039 addressed the ethics and morals of all lifelong, monogamous Christian relationships as follows:

Resolved, That the members of the 73rd General Convention intend for this Church to provide a safe and just structure in which all can utilize their gifts and creative energies for mission; and be it further

Resolved, That we acknowledge that while the issues of human sexuality are not yet resolved, there are currently couples in the Body of Christ and in this Church who are living in marriage and couples in the Body of Christ and in this Church who are living in other life-long committed relationships; and be it further

Resolved, That we expect such relationships will be characterized by fidelity, monogamy, mutual affection and respect, careful, honest communication, and the holy love which enables those in such relationships to see in each other the image of God; and be it further

Resolved, That we denounce promiscuity, exploitation, and abusiveness in the relationships of any of our members; and be it further

Resolved, That this Church intends to hold all its members accountable to these values, and will provide for them the prayerful support, encouragement, and pastoral care necessary to live faithfully by them

It has been my hope all along during this conversation that we would eventually get down to the heart of the matter, and I believe that D039 moves very clearly in that direction – ALL lifelong, monogamous relationships require fidelity, monogamy, mutual affection and respect, careful, honest communication and holy love. And under no circumstances are promiscuity, exploitation and abusiveness acceptable behaviors in a Christian monogamous relationship. We are all held to the same relationship standards and expectations as children of God and followers of Christ Jesus.

I understand that this is not a comfortable topic for some of you, and yet I am convinced that the local church is the best place for these conversations to take place. Together we can learn and grow deeper in our understanding and care for one another.

Please join us on Wednesday evenings beginning at 6 p.m. on Feb. 25 and subsequent Wednesdays through March 25. We will gather together, eat dinner, talk together and pray together. We may not resolve all the issues we are faced with, but we will have the opportunity to talk through them together and come to a deeper knowledge of one another and of God's love for us all.

Mike+

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Comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.

2 Corinthians 1:4

REFLECTIONS ON FAITH AND LIFE

**THE REVEREND ALFREDO GONZALEZ,
SANTA CRUZ HISPANIC MINISTRY**

Beloved of Holy Cross!

First of all, I want to take this opportunity to thank you profusely for the warm loving welcome my wife Luisa and I have received from you from the first day we arrived. Words cannot express our gratitude for letting us feel a “part of the family” of Holy Cross.

Both my wife and I share a passion for the ministry among our own brothers and sisters of Spanish descent. Among the people of the Hispanic Community are U.S. citizens, legal residents, immigrants, some documented and some undocumented, refugees; they come from most of the countries in the Americas where Spanish is spoken. In our Santa Cruz congregation we have many nationalities represented, and there are people of different backgrounds, skills and educational levels.

I want to share with you part of an article written by Jeffrey P. Cave, an Episcopal Priest in the Diocese of Atlanta. Father Jeffrey and I share feelings for the Hispanic Ministry, and he expresses eloquently. He says: “In the faces of these people I see God’s image in a dozen colors, from blanco to Moreno — light to dark. They come with hope and tears their eyes; generous hearts, but fear about what lies next for them; a refreshingly uncomplicated love of God and his Son, and the Mother of that Son, and full of the Holy Spirit, with many gifts for ministry, and for life. Most of them have been nurtured in a deeply Catholic culture, but it is a mistake to think of Latin America as monolithically Roman Catholic. They have been exposed to different Christian traditions, and quite a few still maintain the regional devotional practices that enrich their lives. We routinely find our altar laden with plastic bottles of water or crucifixes or rosaries or pictures of the saints waiting to be blessed. The people who come are themselves a blessing to every congregation of the diocese, which has established and continues to support these ministries.

“Our goal is to minister, to evangelize, and to teach, but not to proselytize. I think it would be fair to say that many people, who for various reasons desire to gather in these congregations, know very little about the Episcopal Church, and perhaps that in some ways is a good thing! What they know is that we welcome them, offer them love and the bread of life, support them in their struggles and sorrows, rejoice with them, and cherish the traditions they bring with them. We are in many ways ministering to the people who are alienated in some way from the Roman Catholic Church; we neither rejoice in that nor hide from them the treasured differences we know as Anglican Catholics. Naturally we want them to know of our own history as a reformed catholic family of sister Anglican churches. They are part of us, regardless of the degrees of separation which may occur to us as we reach out to them from a historically predominantly English-speaking, culturally North American, predominantly white, church. As people move on — either back to their country of origin, or to another state or Canada or into a primarily English-speaking

environment — we try to inform them of how our church might serve them back home or in a different state. The Episcopal Church has been in Mexico since the 1870s, and in some countries of South America decades before that. Our Anglican Hispanic ministries can be found in the majority of our U.S. dioceses, in all of Hispano-America, and even in Spain. At the Nuevo Amanecer (New Dawn) conference in June 2008 in Peachtree City, more than 200 clergy and lay leaders from throughout the Episcopal Church gathered to celebrate and strategize for the future of this cutting-edge ministry. Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Shori was there, preaching in Spanish at the conference eucharist.

“Right now, Hispanic people suffer a greater level of discrimination than any other ethnic group in the United States. When the economy is flourishing, they help it to flourish. Some of them get into trouble or bring trouble with them, but most bring only the desire to work, to make a better life for themselves and their children, and to find a place to reflect the light which is daily cast upon the mosaic of peoples and cultures that make up America.

“The Spanish came to South Georgia in 1587 when they brought the Catholic faith to the Guale people living on the barrier islands. They are still here. They bring us all the gifts of diversity, of ‘difference,’ and of the poverty which enfolds us when we speak only one language, culture, ethnicity or theology.

“As the Southeast continues to attract numbers of new residents from many countries the world over, we will be tested as a church to be flexible and vibrant enough to move well beyond the mere label of ‘multi-cultural’ ministry and mission, into areas of substantial conceptualization and practice which remind us of what the Prophet Isaiah discerned even centuries before Jesus was born: ‘See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland.’ (Isaiah 43:19)”

May we at Holy Cross/Santa Cruz also strive to make a way in the desert for our brothers and sisters.

CHRISTIAN FORMATION

CHRISTIAN FORMATION, ADULT, CHILDREN, AND YOUTH

DIRECTOR OF YOUTH CHRISTIAN FORMATION — SUSAN LOUITT HARDAWAY

YOUTH@HOLYCROSSEP.ORG

DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY MINISTRIES — SHELLEY ALLEN

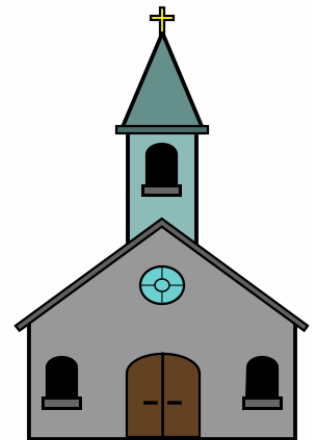
ACADEMYDIRECTOR@HOLYCROSSEP.ORG

COORDINATOR OF CHILDREN’S MINISTRIES — LESLIE DONAHUE

CHILDREN@HOLYCROSSEP.ORG

PROGRAM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE

ADULT — DRAYTON GAILLARD WHDGAILLARD@CHARTER.NET



FEBRUARY YOUTH ANNOUNCEMENTS

WEDNESDAY NIGHT YOUTH GROUP

Youth in grades 6-12 are invited to participate in Wednesday night Youth Group meetings every Wednesday night from 6 – 8 p.m. in the Parish Hall. Dinner begins at 6 p.m., followed by Bible study and games. For more information, text or call Mother Susan at 483-2250 or email her at youth@holycrossep.org. There will be no Youth Group Feb. 18. Teens and Parents encouraged to attend the Ash Wednesday Service.

PANCAKE SUPPER

Youth are needed to set up, cook, serve and clean up on Tuesday, Feb. 17. William Haynes is going to be our lead chef and will buy all of our supplies this year! We need games and activities for the children. Help us have the best pancake supper ever!

SUNDAY YOUTH FORMATION

Youth in grades 6-12 are invited to participate in Bible lessons/discussions during Youth Sunday School on Sunday mornings from 10:15-11am in the Meeting Hall. For more information, contact Bonnie Schmidt at 270-0341 or bonnie1870@gmail.com

DESIGN TEAM MEMBERS NEEDED

Design team members (who plan and staff the event) are needed for 2 upcoming Diocesan Youth Events: New Beginnings and a new 5th Grade Bridge Retreat. Please see documents attached in youth email announcement for

deadline for applications and requirements. Youth also needed to serve on the Diocesan Youth Leadership Team for 2015-2016. We will send registration information about the events closer to the event itself.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

- 1) Happening #73, March 20-22, grades 10-12
- 2) 5th Grade Bridge Retreat, April 11-12, grade 5 (registration due by March 20)
- 3) New Beginnings, May 1-3, grades 6-8 (registration due by April 10)

CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

PUMP IT UP!

Pray & Play goes to Pump it Up! on Feb. 8. All children through 5th grade and siblings are invited to a fun afternoon. Cost is \$5. Bring your socks! Please sign up in the Narthex. Our jump time is 2:50 – 4:50 p.m.

MOVIN' ON UP

Movin' On Up has its first gathering on Wednesday, Feb. 11 at 6 p.m. This is an opportunity for our 5th graders to preview Youth Group and learn about Wednesday night Youth Group, Youth Christian Formation and opportunities for teens at Holy Cross. We hope you come check things out! All 5th graders welcome.

FIRST COMMUNION CLASS

Our First Communion Class will be Sunday, March 22 at 4 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Mother Linda will lead a communion class tailored toward helping children both understand and respond to the Eucharist. The class is designed for children who already receive, as well as those children who will truly be participating in their first communion. Please sign-up in the Narthex.

VBS

Make plans now to attend Vacation Bible School – we are going on a Cross Cultural VBS to Ecuador! We are excited to present the wonderful world of faith beyond our own backyard. VBS is June 21-25, 5:30 – 8:30 p.m. You don't want to miss the Fiesta on the last night! Please register your children early. And adults, please consider volunteering your time to make Christ visible to our youngest parishioners.

Contact Leslie Donahue at children@holycrossep.org if you have any questions about these programs.



LORD'S RESOURCES

ADMINISTRATION, STEWARDSHIP, BUILDING & GROUNDS

SENIOR WARDEN – SHARON PUTMAN

SRWARDEN@HOLYCROSSEP.ORG

JUNIOR WARDEN – MIKE NICHOLS

JRWARDEN@HOLYCROSSEP.ORG

STEWARDSHIP – JIM WEBB

STEWARDSHIP@HOLYCROSSEP.ORG

BUILDING AND GROUNDS – TOM JONES

JONE63194@GMAIL.COM

WELLNESS MINISTRY

Come one, come all age 16 and over. On behalf of the Wellness Ministry and Bon Secours St. Francis Health System, we will be conducting a CPR Blitz on Saturday, Feb. 28 at the Church. Everyone in the community should be trained to do CPR in case the need were to arise. You never know when you might use this skill and save a life. As you may have noticed, we have two AEDs (Automatic External Defibrillator) that were donated to the church and the Academy. The AED for the church is located in the narthex just before the fire doors. AED training will be included with the CPR training. The time and location is TBD, and there will be a sign-up sheet soon. The final details will be planned at the Wellness Ministry meeting on Feb. 1. Save the date and save a life!

~ Deb Flanagan

cdrflan@gmail.com



FOOD FOR THE JOURNEY

Eager to Love

by Richard Rohr

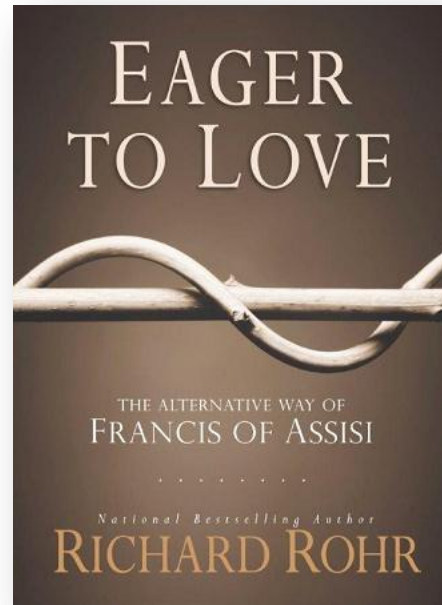
Francis of Assisi is one of the most beloved of all saints. Both traditional and entirely revolutionary, he was a paradox. He was at once down to earth and reaching toward heaven, grounded in the rich history of the Church while moving toward a new understanding of the world beyond.

Globally recognized as an ecumenical teacher, Richard Rohr started out—and remains—a Franciscan friar. The loving, inclusive life and preaching of Francis of Assisi make him a recognizable and beloved saint across many faith traditions. He was, as Rohr notes, “a master of ‘making room for it’ and letting go of that which was tired or empty.”

Francis found an “alternative way” to follow Jesus, one that disregarded power and privilege and held fast to the narrow path of the Gospel. Rohr helps us look beyond the birdbath image of the saint to remind us of the long tradition founded on his revolutionary, radical, and life-changing embrace of the teachings of Jesus.

www.amazon.com

Send an email to kclconnor@gmail.com if you have a book, music, or movie that has been a special part of your spiritual journey.



HOLY CROSS CONTACT INFORMATION

Items for newsletter:	newsletter@holycrossep.org
Bulletin announcements:	secretary@holycrossep.org
Parish office	(864) 967-7470
Fax	(864) 967-0393
Mailing address	PO Box 187, Simpsonville, 29681
Holy Cross Academy	(864) 963-5986
Academy director	academydirector@holycrossep.org
Pastoral counseling	(888) 293-7585
Church website	www.holycrossep.org
Diocesan website	www.edusc.org
Office	secretary@holycrossep.org
Rector	rector@holycrossep.org
Associate rector	associaterector@holycrossep.org
Youth ministry	youth@holycrossep.org
Children's ministry	children@holycrossep.org
Senior warden	srwarden@holycrossep.org

