

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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BEGINNING AGAIN

As summer comes to a close, I am reminded of the way in which we start over every Fall. Schools start back up, programs here at the church resume (Life Groups, adult forum and children's Christian Formation to name a few), and we prepare for the celebrations of a new year (Holy Cross Day, Bishop's visitation, All Souls, etc.). Beginning again is a part of the regular rhythm of our community life together as Christians and a part of our lives as followers of Jesus Christ.

The life of Jesus is full of new beginnings. His birth in Bethlehem, his flight to Egypt, his family settling in Nazareth and his visit to the temple as a twelve-year-old boy are all transitional moments in the life of Jesus. Following that story in Luke's gospel about Jesus in the temple, we hear nothing about his life until he appears on the scene as a 30-year-old man being baptized by John. However, this very act is once again an action of new beginning.

In the Jewish tradition, those born in a Jewish household were not expected to receive baptism. Baptism was used only for converts to the faith. Baptism was a cleansing ceremony intended to indicate that the individual had left their former life as a pagan and having been washed clean, was ready to become a member of the Jewish community, a member of the "chosen race." Jesus, born a Jew, had no reason to be baptized and neither did any of the other Jews who came out to be baptized by John. The baptism was one of "repentance." John's invitation to those who came to be baptized was an invitation to begin again. By accepting the sign of baptism they renounced their former ways and committed to a new life in God. They were fresh, new Jews ready to live their lives by the law and the prophets. For Jesus, this was his moment of beginning his public ministry. It is no coincidence, in my opinion, that the gospels tell us that after his baptism Jesus was "driven" into the wilderness by the Spirit of God. New beginnings require deep reflection.

Here at Holy Cross, our Rule of Life is an invitation to begin again on a daily basis. "Pray Daily, Worship Weekly, Read the Bible, Serve Others, Share your Story and Give Freely" are calls to grow and love and serve in Jesus' name. Like Jesus, we are called out in moments of transition to repent and return to the Lord, to prepare for service through deep reflection and to trust God to lead us in the ministry to which we have been called.



*So if anyone is in Christ,
there is a new creation:
everything old has passed
away; see, everything has
become new!*

2 Cor 5:17

The changes in weather and schedules may well be an opportunity to explore potential changes in our spiritual lives as well. We are “baptized” into a new, deeper relationship with Christ Jesus. As Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians, “So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!” (2 Cor 5:17)

The rhythm of life and the Spirit of God combine to urge us into a new beginning, a new life – to become a new creation in Christ Jesus. May we be willing to embrace God’s beckoning love and begin again in a deeper relationship with Christ and our neighbor.

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 LINDA GOSNELL,
ASSOCIATE RECTOR FOR PASTORAL CARE

PRACTICING OUR FAITH – GROWING IN FAITH – CURSILLO

I recently served on staff for a Cursillo weekend and what an amazing weekend it was. Each Cursillo weekend is a little different from the others, but we can always count on experiencing the love of God through the presence of the Holy Spirit.

We have a fairly large number of Cursillistas (people who have been to Cursillo) at Holy Cross, and we welcome our most recent Cursillistas: Sarah Beattie, Tammy Gillespie, and Christina Randall! You Cursillistas can skip to the bottom for content relative to you.

Others of you may have heard the term and are still wondering, “What is Cursillo?” I hope this brief summary will invite you to explore this path for growing in your faith.

Cursillo provides an opportunity for a deeper understanding of the teachings of Jesus and how we can serve in his name. Cursillo offers a brief but focused experience of living and sharing with others in a loving and caring Christian community and a renewed realization that this can be extended into our own environment (home, church, community). Cursillo is also a continuing community that gives support and encouragement to Cursillistas as we help each other on our individual journeys with Christ throughout the rest of our lives. Cursillo provides one pathway to being Christ “with skin on” to others.

There are two main components to Cursillo: The three-day weekend and the Fourth Day, which is the rest of your life.

Weekends are typically offered in our diocese in February, June or July, and October (see below for the next four scheduled weekends). Each three-day weekend begins on a Thursday evening and concludes on Sunday afternoon. The word Cursillo means “short course,” and the Cursillo weekend includes a number of talks and reflections, some meditations, and a Eucharist each day.

The Cursillo weekend is not a retreat. However it is an opportunity to gather with other clergy and laity who are also seeking to strengthen or enrich their faith. It provides an environment to experience the reality of the gift of God’s love through shared prayer, individual meditation, worship, study, fellowship, laughter, tears, and unconditional love.

After the weekend, each participant is encouraged to join in the activities of “the Fourth Day” Community. These activities include gatherings called Ultreyas and small reunion groups that meet together regularly to provide encouragement and accountability to one another in their spiritual journeys. The purpose of the Cursillo community is to give strength and support to one another as we continue to grow in faith and develop and use our own unique gifts of ministry.

You may be wondering, "What's expected of participants at a weekend?" Basically, we hope that you will be open to and willing to respond to what you experience, to share some of your feelings with others, and allow them to share theirs with you. We desire that you make a genuine effort to discover where you are on your spiritual path and reflect on how you can continue to grow in your Christian life. The staff on a Cursillo weekend seeks to help you feel secure in the knowledge that you are accepted where you are and as you are, and to know that a specific response is not expected of you. "All may, some should, none must." is often heard during a weekend.

If you have an interest in participating in a Cursillo weekend, please talk with Father Mike, Lee Brewer, or me. We will be happy to answer your questions.

Upcoming weekends:

Cursillo #132 will be Thursday, October 29, through Sunday, November 1, 2015

Cursillo #133 will be Thursday, February 11, through Sunday, February 14, 2016.

Cursillo #134 will be Thursday, June 9, through Sunday, June 12, 2016.

Cursillo #135 will be Thursday, October 27, through Sunday, October 30, 2016.

Cursillistas - If you've been to Cursillo and haven't participated in Ultreya or in a Group Reunion in a while, get involved again. We are currently planning a social event for all Holy Cross Cursillistas and anyone interested in attending Cursillo. Please watch the monthly newsletters and e-blasts for further details. If you are seeking a reunion group let us know.

The August Ultreya will be at Holy Cross on Thursday, August 27, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. in the Parish Hall. We will have pot luck dinner, group reunion, and music. Plan to come!

Linda+

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



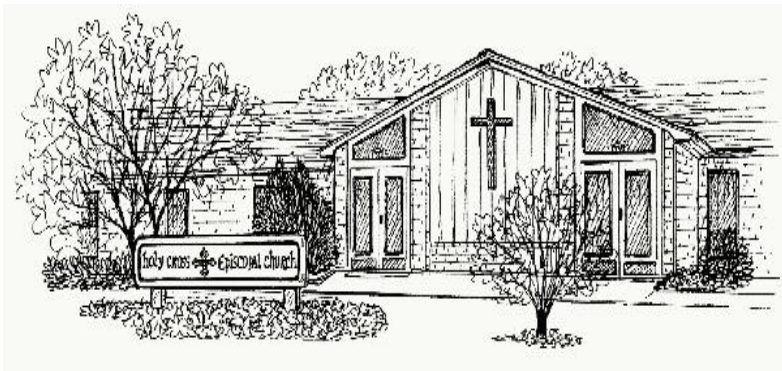
AUGUST YOUTH ANNOUNCEMENTS

YOUTH ROPES COURSE WEEKEND

The Ropes Course Weekend will be held at Camp Gravatt in Aiken, S.C., Thursday, August 13 through Saturday, August 15 for grades 6-12. Contact Mother Susan at 864-483-2250 or susanhardaway@gmail.com.

YOUTH GROUP KICKOFF

The Youth Group Kickoff will be Wednesday, August 19 from 6-7:30 p.m. at the pavilion. We will have dinner and ice cream sundaes. An Updated Youth Registration Form is posted on the Holy Cross Website. A parent and youth information meeting will be held at 6:30 p.m. Questions? susanhardaway@gmail.com or call or text 864-483-2250.



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

MIDYEAR VESTRY UPDATE

It's hard to believe we are halfway through 2015. Back in January at our annual meeting, I gave you all a detailed report about the work your vestry had done in 2014. Now I'd like to give you a midyear update and answer some questions that have come my way over the past few months.

What the heck is a vestry?

A vestry is like a board of directors that is elected by the congregation to oversee the “temporal affairs of the parish”—in other words, finances and short-term and long-term planning. Our diocese tasks each vestry with overseeing salaries, expenses, repairs, and the raising of required funds. Our vestry includes Father Mike and nine church members. At our annual meeting in January, the congregation elects three people for a three-year term, and each year, three people rotate off. The vestry is a democratic body where each member gets an equal vote on matters that fall within the vestry's responsibilities. Your 2015 vestry is me, Father Mike, Lynda Clark, Mike Nichols, Jim Webb, Anne Smith, Brown Garrett, Michelle Williams, Toby Fields, and Johnna Reed.

What do you people do?

A few of us have assigned roles. We have a senior warden (that's me), a junior warden to oversee building and grounds (Mike N.), and a stewardship chair to manage the annual pledge campaign (Jim). We also have a Program Council liaison (Anne). She is the link between the vestry and the hard-working bunch who oversee the day-to-day affairs of the church for membership, outreach, pastoral care, worship, building and grounds, communications, hospitality, group ministries, and Christian formation. In addition to these assigned roles, every vestry member chooses his or her own areas of responsibility based on the goals we set for the year (see below).

What does a senior warden do?

Elected by the vestry in 2014 and re-elected in 2015, I work closely with Father Mike in an administrative, collaborative, and advisory role. In addition to planning meetings and retreats, I weigh in on issues Father Mike might be wrestling with and share issues or concerns from members of the congregation. I help develop our meeting agendas, assist vestry members with their tasks, and authorize expenditures. If Father Mike is absent, I chair the vestry meetings.

When do you meet?

We meet twice a month from 6:30 to 8:30 pm. On the first Tuesday of the month, we have a spiritual meeting, where we use the Holy Cross Life Group format to discuss the previous week's Bible readings and sermons. On the third Tuesday, we have a business meeting. We have a vestry retreat weekend in February to set our long-range and short-range goals, and we have a one-day retreat in August to review and affirm these goals and to begin to plan the budget for the following year.

Who can attend vestry meetings?

Former vestry members are welcome to join us for spiritual meetings. All members of the parish are always welcome to attend our business meetings. If you wish to address the vestry during a business meeting, please contact me 10 days before the meeting so your topic can be placed on our agenda. Our secretary records the business meeting minutes, which are available in her office.

So what is the vestry working on?

In February, the vestry determines the goals for the year ahead. Here are our goals for 2015:

- Launch a new website for Holy Cross Academy. (Almost done, and it looks great!)

- Launch one or more new Life Groups. (Done)
- Recruit a volunteer Life Group coordinator. (In progress)
- Develop an Adopt-a-Highway program. (We've adopted about three-quarters of a mile on College Street. Stay tuned for our first cleanup date coming soon.)
- Create parish hall storage areas. (Coming soon)
- Purchase and install external two bilingual signs. (This could shift to 2016 because of financing.)
- Purchase Church Community Builder software, migrate the Holy Cross database, and promote its use by the parish. (Almost done. You will be hearing more later this month August.)
- Launch a Holy Cross online store for parishioners to purchase promotional materials. (In the works)
- Implement an oyster roast as a sustainable fundraiser for international outreach. (This revamped event is being planned for next spring.)
- Develop a partnership between Holy Cross youth and another church youth group to encourage racial diversity. (Early stages)
- Participate in the bishop's Bible challenge. (Coming this fall)
- Conduct a capital campaign to pay off a sizable amount of our debt. (In progress)
- Introduce a program for planned giving. (Coming soon)
- Conduct a pledge campaign for the 2016 operating budget. (This will happen in late fall.)
- Get an estimate on temporary enclosures for the pavilion to be used for youth and winter events. (We have the estimate but not the funding to make it happen. Perhaps a new long-term goal.)
- Develop a written plan for an annual scholarship at Holy Cross Academy. (Done)
- Develop a Holy Cross International Ministry Partners program. (Done. Check out our website under Ministries and then Outreach.)

It's exciting times for Holy Cross. I am happy and grateful to be a part of this family and to be working with such an amazing group of vestry members. They are passionate about this place, and they really do work hard to help Holy Cross thrive. If you have any questions or if you have an interest in serving on vestry, please contact me at any time. It is truly a joy to be your senior warden.

With love,
 Sharon Putman
sharonwputman@cs.com



PUMPKIN PATCH NEWS

This year, we'll hold our 10th Pumpkin Patch fund raiser. This is a significant milestone, and we should all be very proud.

We will be having our second Pumpkin Patch planning meeting for this year on Wednesday, August 26 at 6:30 p.m. We will be having food and drink. Time flies, especially in summer, and before you know it we will be unloading pumpkins.

We want to extend a special invitation to our newer church members who haven't experienced our biggest fund raiser yet. Please come to the meeting to learn more about it. There is no pressure for any specific volunteering responsibilities. Just come and hear how much fun you can have raising thousands of dollars for local charities. All of our ministries are important whether they involve fund raising or not, and all of us must decide how much "time, treasure and talent" we are able to give toward our Holy Cross mission of "making Christ visible in God's community."

Our Pumpkin Patch is now a popular community event, with our Holy Cross name at the forefront; our volunteers spread our message by their very visible hard work and interaction with the community. We have gained a very good reputation for our generosity and service.

Because of our huge success last year, we had to make some decisions about the distribution of the proceeds. We will limit our annual partnerships to 10 charities, including Habitat for Humanity, and since we are getting more and more requests from other organizations we will start a rotation next year so we can include new partners. The goal is to give maximum benefits to our partners, include new partners, and gain volunteers for the Patch and our partners. And in the process maybe attract new church members. Each weekend we will have a "Focus Day" for a different partner to give out info about their charity.

The Patch requires a lot of volunteers during the month of October but it should not be burdensome for anyone. There are many different jobs, from unloading the trucks to washing little pumpkins to greeting customers and taking money. The more volunteers, the less work for everyone. So please come to our meeting and consider how you can help make our 2015 Pumpkin Patch even better. We will have a sign-up sheet posted so we can have a head count for our food. ~ Daniel Donboch

ON BEHALF OF THE WELLNESS COMMITTEE, LISTEN UP!

What can I do if I have trouble hearing?

If you have trouble hearing you're not alone. In fact, according to the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders, 15 percent of American adults (37.5 million) report some trouble hearing. The most common cause of hearing loss in adults is related to noise exposure, aging and a combination of both. As we age, our ears are exposed to a lifetime of noises such as lawnmowers, telephones, industrial machinery, leaf blowers, chain saws, industrial noise, hair dryers, weapons, and recorded and live music. Many of these sounds occur at loud and potentially hazardous levels. Although some people are born with hearing loss, most acquire hearing loss later in life. Some of the causes for acquired hearing loss include a genetic predisposition, ear disease, noise exposure (including music, industrial, military and more), ototoxic medicines, and head trauma.

Common Signs of Hearing Loss

- Asking people to repeat what they say.
- Feeling like others are always mumbling or not speaking clearly.
- Difficulty hearing and understanding speech in noisy environments.
- Missing words or phrases on the telephone.
- Turning the volume up on the television or radio louder than norm.

Rate of hearing loss by age

- Age 45-54, 2%
- Age 55-64, 8.5%
- Age 65-74, 25%
- Age 75 and over, 50%

So, what do I do?

If you have questions about your hearing or suspect you have a hearing loss call and schedule a hearing screening or test with an audiologist. Your primary care physician may be able to recommend one or you can locate and an audiologist in your area from the website of the American Academy of Audiology, www.audiology.org and click on "Find an Audiologist."

But what is an audiologist?

An audiologist is a professional who diagnoses and treats hearing problems. If you or a family member suspect that you have a hearing problem, contact an audiologist. After carefully reviewing your health history and evaluating your hearing, an audiologist will determine whether your condition might be medically treatable and will refer you to an appropriate professional. If your condition is not medically treatable, he or she will review any recommendations for audiological care or treatment which may include hearing aids and aural rehabilitation.

Hearing aids are the primary means of managing hearing loss that cannot be treated medically or surgically. Your audiologist will conduct a comprehensive hearing evaluation to determine whether or not you are a candidate for hearing aids. Based on your evaluation, the audiologist may recommend hearing aids or make a referral to investigate medical or surgical options.

Hearing aids are similar to a miniature public address system. The microphone picks up the sound, the amplifier makes the sound louder, and the receiver (speaker) delivers the sound. Today, 99 percent of all hearing aids are digital. Digital technology allows manipulation of sound in many useful ways. Some hearing aids are completely automatic, while others have user-adjustable controls. Your audiologist will work with you to review hearing aid options.

After your hearing aids have been selected, they must be fitted appropriately. Hearing aids must be secure and physically comfortable in the ear. The hearing aids are adjusted using a computer in the audiologist's office, and the results can be measured. However, the audiologist's office does not usually represent the variety of sounds in everyday life, so your new hearing aids will need to be evaluated in the sound environments important to you; a daily journal is useful for this purpose. By working with your audiologist, the hearing aids can be adjusted to perform most functions optimally and automatically.

Finally, untreated hearing loss impairs memory and may cause difficulty related to learning new tasks. Untreated hearing loss may result in decreased job performance and has been shown to negatively impact wages and earnings. Hearing loss treated with hearing aids has been shown to decrease fatigue, irritability, risk to personal safety, and withdrawal from social situations. Further, in many research studies, hearing aid use has been shown to increase the wearer's quality of life.

If you need help hearing in the sanctuary, please speak to a member of the media team. We have four FM receivers in the media booth. The FM receiver looks like a transistor radio but is tuned to pick up only the amplified sounds of the worship service, thereby overcoming the problems of distance, reverberation and surrounding noise. The FM receiver, used during the service, will be more effective even than your hearing aids.

For additional information go to: www.howsyourhearing.org and www.betterhearing.org. ~ Lynda Clark, Parish Nurse



FOOD FOR THE JOURNEY

For the Love

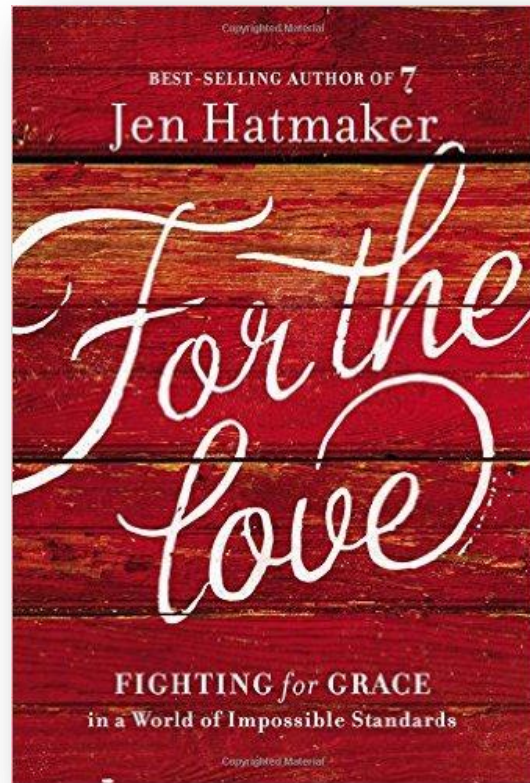
by Jen Hatmaker

Best-selling author Jen Hatmaker is convinced life can be lovely and fun and courageous and kind. She knows how the squeeze of this life can make us competitive and judgmental, how we can lose love for others and then for ourselves. She reveals how to:

- Break free of guilt and shame by dismantling the unattainable Pinterest life.
- Learn to engage our culture's controversial issues with a grace-first approach.
- Be liberated to love and release the burden of always being right.
- Escape our impossible standards for parenting and marriage by accepting the standard of "mostly good."

~ 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
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Children's ministry children@holycrossep.org
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