



EPISCOPAL
CHURCH *of the* HOLY CROSS

90 Parkway Drive | Trussville, AL 35173

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Rector: The Rev. Wes Sharp

Deacon: The Rev. Dn. Susan Southwick

Organist & Director of Music: Justin R. Finch

Children's Minister: Heather Johnson

Student Minister: Jason Varnadore

Parish Administrator: Janice Ridgeway

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FEBRUARY
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the **PATHWAY**
CHURCH *of the* HOLY CROSS NEWSLETTER

Holy Cross is dedicated to raising up faithful disciples of Jesus Christ, committed to genuine Worship, loving Fellowship, and passionate Mission.

a message from our

senior **WARDEN**

Fellow Parishioners,

It's been an honor to serve on the Holy Cross Vestry these last three years and serve as your Senior Warden this past year. As I leave this position, I can say with confidence that the vestry members have been very good caretakers and stewards of the finances and resources of Holy Cross.

Substantial renovations to our church building were accomplished in 2018, including a complete kitchen renovation, many rooms received new paint, cabinets/closets, sacristy leak problem was addressed by tearing out old, moldy wood, installing a new hot water heater, tile, sink, and cabinets, and our parking lot was graded and re-graveled. A special shout-out to David Meadows, Robert Davis, and Mark Meadows who devoted their time and talent to make much of this happen.

I am greatly pleased and impressed with the success of new programs and the community outreach that has grown over the years. Trunk or Treat had over 500 participants in 2018—more than double the previous year! The Movie on the Lawn has been a great venue for community outreach and I believe this investment will pay big dividends.

Our church has seen increased revenue and we started this year with a slight surplus. Our membership is growing, and we added a Youth Minister to our staff, Jason Varnadore, from Beeson Divinity School. Much of this progress is the result of the support and backing we've received from the Cathedral Church of the Advent. With continued growth, we hope to soon be financially independent and standing on our own. And much of the credit has to be attributed to Rev. Sharp's leadership and commitment to Holy Cross and its future.

Last but not least, I want to extend a warm welcome to our new Vestry members: Reese Booth, Fran Bramblette, Jo Grove, and Louise Wood, and thank them for dedicating their time and talent to guide our church through the next three years. I am confident they will do an excellent job and make us all very proud.

Thank you,

Roy Wood

MESSAGE FROM THE RECTOR:

THE CALL OF A NEW YEAR

What another great year we have had at Holy Cross! In 2018, we had so many accomplishments of which we can be can proud. The Lord is certainly encouraged when we use our gifts and talents for Him. As we begin the new year, this question comes to my mind, "Lord what are you calling us to do in 2019?"

I have asked many of you this question over the past couple of years, "What do you want Holy Cross to look like in five years?" It's a hard question; especially if we attempt to answer in detail. Of all the answers I have received, there is this commonality: Everyone wants Holy Cross to thrive. The good news is that the Lord wants Holy Cross to thrive, as He does his entire church body. I realize "thrive" may mean different things to different people, but let me direct you to something I believe we can all agree on--the inherent Word of God. At the end of the book of Revelation, an image is seen that gives the reader a great sense of external comfort and internal joy. There is great feast that occurs in Revelation 19 where the Bride, adorned in white, is met by Jesus, the ultimate Bridegroom. The Bride in this wedding is the church, who has stood strong and sought the Lord through it all. The best part of that text to me is what John, the writer, and the church ultimately, is instructed to do in that moment. Worship the Lord!

If you were to ask me what I want to see in five years at Holy Cross, it would be a mirror image of that scene. That we, as a church, would focus our hearts' affection and our minds' attention on Jesus. That in everything we do, Jesus is worshipped. While the worship of Jesus may look different for each of us, our motivation and our heart is the same when our eyes are on Him.

There, I believe, is our New Year's call. That our eyes would be on Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. That means we turn from our selfishness, take our eyes away from looking at how others might do it, and fix our gaze on the Bridegroom, who longs to bring us into His presence.

Please join me in this call for 2019, and in the great words of this hymn: "... turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full in his wonderful face, and the things of this earth will grow strangely dim, in the light of his glory and grace."

For His Glory,

Wes +
Wes



what's HAPPENING?

TREASURER'S REPORT/BUDGET James Patterson

For the last year, I have had the pleasure of reporting the financial condition of the Parish to the Vestry each month. With each report, I have been able to give positive news, stating that revenue had significantly exceeded budget projections, and that our expenses had been well managed, with no major deviation from what had been projected in the 2018 budget. I can report that we ended 2018 with a moderate surplus, which can be applied to the 2019 budget.

For calendar year 2018, the members of The Church of the Holy Cross pledged \$133,834.00. Actual contributions toward these pledges totaled \$122,932.00, a shortfall of \$10,902.00. To put that differently, the Church received 91.8% of what had been pledged. For calendar year 2019, current pledges total \$137,830.00. If the Church can expect the 91.8% fulfillment of pledges to hold true, approximately \$126,528.00 will be received in 2019. This will be an increase in revenue of \$3,536.00, or 2.9% over 2018 pledge receipts.

There is, however, a significant concern. With pledges, plus plate and other receipts, 2018 revenue for the Church of the Holy Cross totaled \$271,882.03. Of this total, \$178,677.21 (65.7%) is comprised of pledge and plate contributions from our members and visitors. \$85,000.00 (31.2%) of the revenue came in the form of an investment from the Cathedral Church of the Advent. The remaining 3.1% is revenue from miscellaneous sources, such as flower guild, fellowship meal receipts, etc. To put it bluntly, over the last calendar year, contributions from our members and visitors have only provided just over two-thirds of the financial needs of the parish. For the remainder, we are dependent upon the generosity of the membership of the Cathedral Church of the Advent.

The support from The Church of the Advent will decrease in 2019 by \$12,500.00 to \$72,500.00, and by increasing amounts over the following three years, being eliminated entirely after 2023. The responsibility for filling budgetary needs will fall directly on the membership of our Parish. I am confident that we can meet this obligation, but quite aware that it will take a dedicated commitment on our part. My goal, which I expect that you share, is that Holy Cross will grow, thrive, and stand on its own, to carry out our mission of "Transforming the Hearts of People for the Glory of God".

I have carefully watched as the members of the vestry wisely managed the Church's finances over the last year. Great things have been accomplished, including significant upgrades and repairs to our facility. I can report with confidence that our contributions have been multiplied, going directly toward the purposes we intended. For the Church of the Holy Cross to stand on its own and be self-supporting, all of us must commit to support this Church that means so much to us. In order to see this realized, fulfilled pledges to the parish must increase by approximately 50% over the next four years. This can be accomplished through a combination of increased giving from our existing members, and new giving as additional families choose Holy Cross as their place of worship. I hope you will enthusiastically invite and welcome those looking for a church home into our Holy Cross family. I encourage you to prayerfully consider your role in supporting Holy Cross through both your gifts and your outreach.

MONTHLY TEACHING SERIES – The Rev. Canon Matt Schneider from Cathedral Church of the Advent, will be teaching "Taking Your Friends to Heaven with You," on Wednesday, February 20th. We all want the people we love to be with us in eternity and Matt will take us to the book of Colossians for a deep dive into this subject. Fellowship meal is at 6:00pm and teaching begins promptly at 6:30pm. Please join us.

ANCIENT MEETS MODERN SERVICES this year will be the third Sunday each month during the 10:30am service. Mark your calendars!

HAPPY
Birthday
TO YOU!

FEBRUARY

Phillip Johnson	1st	Mary Gualtieri	19th
Inga Strickland	5th	Anne Mize	21st
Cindy Cole	6th	James Patterson	23rd
Nolan Williamson	8th	Dianne Rotenberry	25th
Bill Wester	10th	Johnny Cole	26th
Kenneth Lind	15th	Danny Dollar	26th
Cissy McLendon-Isaacs	18th	Linda McQueen	26th
Melinda Walczuk	19th	Sean Williams	28th

what's HAPPENING?

2019 MISSIONS POSSIBLE! This year promises to be exciting for mission work. Father Wes plans to lead a team to Rwanda to visit the Anglican agricultural mission program, Hope on a Thousand Hills, but there are plenty of other opportunities to serve at home. We support the following organizations with our prayers, finances, and time, Grace Works (headed by Fran Bramlette); Lovelady Center (headed by Cindy Wester); Serving You Ministries (headed by Father Wes); TEAM (headed by Courtney Dollar); Gumbo Gala - Episcopal Place (headed by Mike Rohr); Hope on a Thousand Hills - Rwanda (headed by Father Wes); Episcopal Relief and Development (headed by Susan Southwick). We also continue to support our Angel Tree ministry at Christmas, the United Thank Offering of the Episcopal Church Women, Meals on Wheels - and more. Several great ideas are being discussed for the revival of our Garden Ministry. Holy Cross is a small parish but we have big heart for service! Look for highlights of these organizations and activities in upcoming Pathway articles and for visits by representatives to tell us directly of their work.
Julie Barnard, Chair, Mission Committee

EPISCOPAL CHURCH WOMEN - ECW ANNUAL RECRUITMENT - If you are not currently an active member of ECW, please consider participating this year. Some of our local mission work includes donations to TEAM, The Lovelady Center, Wellness House, Three Hots and a Cot, and Camp McDowell Special Needs Camp (annually pays for two attendees), and Camp Sawyerville. Community outreach includes providing one of the Lenten lunches served during Trussville Community Lenten Holy Week services. ECW also provide a light meal and serve as hosts after church funerals/memorials. Fund raisers include Spring/Fall Soup & Sweets Sales, Annual Rummage Sale, Summer Bake Sale, and Family Bingo Night. ECW has a business/lunch meeting monthly in the Genesis Room, and our annual Christmas party is hard to beat. Holy Cross ECW also participates in the Annual Alabama Diocesan Conference. Annual dues are \$12.00.

NEW LADIES' GROUP - SENIOR SINGLE LADIES is the brainchild of one of our parishioners, Dianne Adams. Dianne has a desire to provide a venue for single senior ladies (especially those who have lost their spouses) to plan day trips to state and local places of interest as well as share out-of-state adventures together. If you would like to participate in this group, please contact Dianne Adams @ 205-527-7162.

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY/KNITTING GROUP will be meeting on Monday nights at 6:30pm in the Genesis Room (the second Monday of each month, we'll be meeting in the Conference Room.) Next meeting - Monday, January 28th. If you knit or crochet, you are invited to join to first, help restock the supply of prayer shawls, and later, begin church charity projects for the year. If you don't knit/crochet and want to learn, come anyway—someone will teach you. Feel free to bring a friend.

MINISTRY SCHEDULER PRO SOFTWARE has been a timesaver, especially to Susan Southwick, who, at one time, spent many hours each month maintaining our Sunday services schedule. Since we implemented this software last year, individuals can schedule their own times of service and make changes when necessary. Email or text reminders are sent (auto-generated) five days in advance and the software follows up with a 48-hour advance notice prior to scheduled service dates. If anyone has challenges with this software, Fr. Wes will walk you through any issues.

ALTAR GUILD is a faithful, hard-working group dedicated to the maintenance of The Lord's Table. This job is performed with the utmost reverence in the care and upkeep of the Communion elements, vestments, table linens, candles, etc. for our Sunday and special services. Our Altar Guild did a fantastic job last year with only three team members! Please prayerfully consider if this is an area the Lord might be calling you to serve. You will be welcomed with open arms!

FLOWER GUILD is another group of faithful, dedicated hard workers who provide the floral arrangements and other green plants that so beautifully decorate our church. The Flower Guild recently purchased a live Christmas tree and planted it in the front lawn of Holy Cross in memory of Anne Henderson. Shrubs were also planted around the church to begin a "cutting garden" for the greening of the altar arrangements. This group professionally arranges nearly all the flowers that adorn the altar and other rooms throughout our church. Forms for weekly altar flower donations/dedications are located in the Genesis Room. This is another area that welcomes those who would like to serve in this capacity.

YOUTH DIRECTOR'S REPORT - The last three months at Holy Cross have been a blessing for me and my family. Jenna and I believe that any kind of ministry should entail hospitality and have attempted to model this for our youth. We've prepared weekly homemade meals and create a comfortable space for transparent discussions to drive us deeper into Scripture. Our goal is to establish an atmosphere of closeness for our young parishioners as well as newcomers where we teach them how to be good neighbors. In addition to our weekly group meeting, Jenna and I have started meeting with the youth individually over coffee or a meal.

Our goal for 2019 is to continue our hospitality model while incorporating more outings i.e. hiking, church lock-ins, visiting the civil rights museum, doing ministry work, and partnering with other churches such as the Advent. We also plan to establish an online media presence through the Holy Cross website and other social media accounts. -Jason V.