

# Diocese of the Central States News

Volume VI, Issue 1: Advent 2016



## St. Jude's Installs Stained Glass

By Dcn. Barton Gingerich

St. Jude's Anglican Church in Richmond, VA, recently installed four stained glass windows for their chancel. The windows, gifted by a philanthropic Richmond family who are friends of St. Jude's, were originally donated to Ritchie Memorial Episcopal Church in Claremont, VA. Upon the closing of that church, the windows were removed by the family and stored until they were offered to St. Jude's earlier this year. Fine examples of old world-style craftsmanship by the late Rudolph H. Buenz of Newton, NJ, the windows depict two important events in Virginia's rich Anglican church history: the first Morning Prayer service and the first Christmas at Jamestown. The plans for using the windows also allowed for an improvement and expansion of St. Jude's chancel space and more seating in the nave.

By happy providence, the Old Testament reading for the first Sunday in which the windows were installed was Deuteronomy 8:1-14, 17-20. Apparently, this was the same lection read after the first landing at Cape Henry in 1607.

### REC Diocese of the Central States

The Rt. Rev. Daniel R. Morse,  
Bishop Ordinary  
Email: [bishop@rec-mdcs.org](mailto:bishop@rec-mdcs.org)  
Phone: 615-947-6703  
Fax: 615-833-3675  
Website: [rec-mdcs.org](http://rec-mdcs.org)

*Send submissions for the Advent issue by 10 March 2017 to Dss. Teresa Johnson at [newsletter@recdss.org](mailto:newsletter@recdss.org).*



### Diocesan Cycle of Prayer

Parish/Mission	Date
St. James, Memphis, TN	12/25/2016
Holy Trinity, Fairfax, VA	01/01/2017
Church of the Redeemer, Wilson, NC	01/08/2017
St. Jude's, Richmond, VA	01/15/2017
Christ Our Hope, Dayton, OH	01/22/2017
Church of Our Saviour, Leesburg, VA	01/29/2017
St. Lazarus, Dayton, OH	02/05/2017
St. Nicholas, Owensboro, KY	02/12/2017
St. John's of Mt. Laurel, B'ham, AL	02/19/2017
All Saints, Lynchburg, VA	02/26/2017
Covenant, Roanoke, VA	03/05/2017
St. Andrew's, Appomattox, VA	03/12/2017
St. Andrew's, Asheboro, NC	03/19/2017

# Trinity Church in Evansville, IN: Faith, Hope, and Love

By The Rev. Fr. David Straw

Trinity Church in Evansville, IN, recently received a new transom window over our entrance doors. This window was graciously donated to Trinity Church in memory of Betty and Ed Ward, the parents of Mary Lou Ward Spieth. Mary Lou is the wife of Trinity's Curate, The Rev. Fr. Michael Spieth. The window was created by stained glass artist The Rev. Fr. Mark Bleakley. Fr. Bleakley used salvaged stained glass, which originated from the now closed St. Alban's Episcopal Church in Olney, IL, to create the window.

Fr. Bleakley explains the symbolism of the window as follows: Crossing the threshold of the Church we are reminded of the Virtues of the "more excellent way" we are called to live in the power of the Spirit: Faith, Hope, and Love abide: these three, but the greatest of these is Love (I Cor. 13:13). The Virtues or Graces are personified like the Lady Wisdom of the Proverbs whom we are called to seek. Faith looks out in confidence faithfully clinging to the cross despite all

obstacles. Her dress is gold—the traditional color for Faith as we are being refined through trials for glory. Hope looks up in expectation holding the anchor—we have this hope as an anchor of the soul (Hebrews 6:19). Her dress is green—the traditional color for Hope, as those who sow in tears will reap in joy. In the center, the greatest of these is Love looks down in compassion with a Chalice—not only reminding us of those who give a cup in Christ's name, but the Chalice as representing the self-giving of Christ in the Passion. Her dress is red—the traditional color for Love.

The Virtues are set in three arches, which evokes the traditional triple gate of the great cathedrals (which symbolized the Trinity) and frame the center of the window with the church's name. The window uses much of the original glass from the aisle windows at Trinity, while the Celtic knotwork both represents the endless love of the Trinity and reflects the ornament of Trinity's Altar window.

For more information, visit <http://www.trinityevv.org/>



## A Special Weekend at Trinity Anglican Church, Evansville, IN

On November 5 and 6, 2016, our Suffragan Bishop, The Rt. Rev. Peter Manto, visited Trinity Anglican Church in Evansville, IN. On November 5, The Rev. Michael Spieth was ordained to the Presbyterate, and on November 6, six members of Trinity's congregation were Confirmed. It was a blessed weekend in the history of our congregation.



## Reminder: ARDF Transformational Vision Trip to Nepal

By Christine Jones

From February 23 - March 5, 2017, the Anglican Relief and Development Fund is organizing a Transformational Vision Trip to Nepal. This Pilgrimage Trip is jointly sponsored by ARDF, Coracle, and the Diocese of Singapore.

With 2017 right around the corner, we wanted to tell you that the time is now to register. Attached is a detailed itinerary of the trip along with a registration form. A \$500 deposit is due to ARDF by Friday,

January 13, 2017. The remaining \$2,700 is not due until February 17, 2017.

We are really excited about this Pilgrimage. Want more info? You can read about the trip at <http://ardf.org/mtns-in-the-gospel-of-matthew/>.

If you have any questions, or just want to talk about whether or not God might be calling you, please do not hesitate to call Christine Jones, ARDF's Director of Mobilization, at 571-499-2256.

# Holy Cross, A New REC Work in the Richmond, VA Area

By The Very Rev. W. Scott Thompson

St. Jude's Anglican in Richmond has sponsored a new work in the Richmond metropolitan area, Holy Cross in Midlothian, VA. The Rev. Dcn. Ken Mills of St. Jude's is serving as the minister in charge. The management of the Chesterfield Heights Retirement Community in Midlothian has provided their chapel for the new work, and ministry to the retired residents is a major mission of Holy Cross. Chesterfield Heights is an ideal church-planting alliance partner. They provide the worship facility, giving residents an in-house church that is easy to access, and yet it is an attractive venue for the surrounding community to join in worship. So far the demographics have been roughly 50/50 residents and surrounding community. Several St. Jude's parishioners who live closer to Holy Cross are committed to attending there as well.

Services were inaugurated October 16. Twenty-eight people filled the beautiful Chapel at the Chesterfield Heights Retirement Community and opened the service by boldly singing "O for a thousand tongues to sing my Great Redeemer's praise!" In

addition to conducting Sunday services, Dcn. Mills visits with residents in the facility and frequents coffee shops in the neighborhood, creating ongoing opportunity to invite new people to Holy Cross.

Here's an example of how God is blessing Holy Cross. A middle school student attended the Thanksgiving Day service with his grandparents and returned again on the following Sunday. After the service, the grandfather asked the young man to compare his first Anglican worship experiences with the familiar church event he's grown accustomed to back in his hometown. Cody was quick to say with an approving smile, "The people in this church really take God seriously." He wants to return.

We thank the parishes throughout the DCS for their prayers and encouragement. Please continue to thank God for the grace He has showered upon Holy Cross, and ask Him to use Holy Cross to make disciples of Jesus Christ in Midlothian, not only among the Chesterfield Heights Retirement Community but in the surrounding residential area as well.



## In Memoriam: Susan Sanders

On the morning of October 11, Susan Sanders, beloved wife of The Rev. Franklin Sanders of Christ Our Hope REC in West Point, TN, passed away suddenly at home. She is also survived by seven children, fifteen grandchildren, three brothers, and two sisters. She leaves a legacy of Christian love and service.

Memorials may be sent to Christ Our Hope Reformed Episcopal Church, P.O. Box 195, Westpoint, Tennessee 38486, marked either for "Jail Ministry" or "Garden."

To read Fr. Sanders' eulogy for his wife, visit <http://christourhoperec.com/susan-eulogy/>. Printed below is the sermon delivered by Bishop Morse at Susan's funeral.



## Precious Death: Psalm 116:13

Sermon by The Rt. Rev. Daniel R. Morse

There are many things in the Bible that are completely contrary to human thinking. Death is one of these—it brings sorrow and tears to us and everyone. We avoid it whenever possible, and even the Bible teaches us to use all lawful means to preserve our lives.

We love the people of God, they are precious to us, and we are apt to look at death as a grievous loss. We wouldn't let them die if we could help it; we would confer immortality on them. We would find it hard to relinquish our grasp because we are poorer because of their eternal enriching.

But while we sorrow Christ rejoices. He prays, "Father, I will that they also whom you have given me be with me where I am," and in the coming of every one of his own to heaven he sees the answer to that prayer and is glad. He sees in every perfected soul a portion of the reward for the travail of his own soul in death on the cross and he is satisfied.

May this help our grief. Tears and sorrow are proper and good, but may they also be tears of faith and hope. Jesus wept over the death of his friend, Lazarus, and we too may weep, but not as those who have no hope, nor yet as though forgetful that there is a greater cause for joy than for sorrow in the death of a Christian, one of Christ's saints.

### **I. These words imply a special kind of attitude toward death.**

Death in itself is terrible. It can't be precious in the sight of God for the crown of his creation to be afflicted with the pain of death. Death in itself cannot be the theme of God's rejoicing.

But death in the case of a Christian is a different matter. For a Christian it isn't death to die, but rather the departure out of this world unto the Father, being unclothed of this mortal flesh that we may be clothed with immortality, and given entrance into the kingdom of glory. To the saint death is by no means such a thing as happens to an unbeliever.

This is because death for the believer is not the infliction of a penalty for sin. The good news of God's Word is that the sins of the believer were laid on Jesus and punished in him. Sin is removed from the believer, and therefore can't be punished in him. It was punished in his substitute, Jesus Christ. The righteous wrath of God has ceased toward believers. Death doesn't come to the Christian because he deserves it and must be punished by it. It does mean that for the unbeliever, the beginning of unending death and separation from God. To the Christian the sting of death is gone, the victory of the grave is removed. It is no more a penalty, but a privilege to die.

It is a covenant blessing. The Apostle Paul says, "All things are yours, things present or things to come, or life, or death, all are yours, and you are Christ's and Christ is God's," as if the believers death came to him among all the other good and precious gifts by way of his belonging to Christ. To die in Jesus is a blessing of the covenant to ask for. "Lord now let your servant depart in peace according to your word."

Jesus Christ our Head has gone through the valley of death. Let his members rejoice to follow. As our Savior slept, so let us sleep. We would not be divided from him in life or in death. We are so wedded to him that we say, "Where you go, I will go, where you die, I

## Precious Death (continued)

will die and with you I will be buried that with you in the resurrection morning I may be partaker of the resurrection.”

This Psalm shows us that death is not ceasing to be. Death is not annihilation as many fear it to be. When God says, “Precious is the death of his saints,” it is clear there is no annihilation, because how could ceasing to be be precious? Death is passing to a better existence—the soul is freed from sin while the body rests in the grave waiting for the perfection of the day of resurrection.

So death can't be a detriment to the believer; it can't be a serious loss for the saint. It is no loss, but a great gain—a lasting, perpetual, unlimited gain. A woman is at one moment weak, unable to lift a finger, and the next clothed with power. The body is aching, but in a moment wears a crown. She is sick beyond the doctor's power, but she shall be in the twinkling of the eye where there is no sickness.

### II. This is a very broad statement.

There is no limit as to whose death is precious to God, provided it be a Christian. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of every single one of his people. He may be the greatest in the church, or may be the least. He may be the boldest confessor, or may be a timid trembler. But if he is a Christian, his death is precious. Precious is the death of martyrs who die refusing to deny Jesus Christ. But just as precious is the death of a patient sufferer scarcely able to say a word—only able to serve God by submissively enduring the pains that make the night weary and the day intolerable.

There is no limit as to when. That is, it does not matter the age of the Christian who dies. It may be a child; of such is the kingdom of heaven. It may be a person in middle age, and we may wonder why one was taken in the fullness of life. But if we could lift the veil and see God's secrets we would be persuaded that no one dies an untimely death. It may be one who lives to old age, who has known the fullness of years in Christ, and who was still bearing fruit to the last. All of these are precious in the sight of God.

### III. This is a very sober and truthful statement.

Their persons were and always will be precious to God—they are his saints! God set his love on them before the creation of the world, he bought them with the precious blood of Christ, their names are borne on Jesus' breast and engraved on the palms of his hands. They are his children, members of his body, his bride.

He looks with care on his child. The very hairs of her head are numbered, his angels bear her up lest she dash her foot against a stone. And because she is his precious child, like fine gold, therefore her death is precious to the Lord.

The death of a believer also shows the truth of grace in her heart. The precious faith of God's children is proved to be such when it can bear the last ordeal, when she can look death in the face and not be staggered by unbelief. Blessed is the woman who can hope in God when her heart and her flesh are failing and can love the Lord even though she smiles through many pains. God counts the trial of our faith more precious than that of gold.

The death of the believer shows the faithfulness of God. God promises, “I will never leave you nor forsake you. When you pass through the river of death I will be with you. As your days so shall your strength be. Yea though I pass through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil for you are with me, your rod and your staff comfort me.”

The death of the believer is precious because it glorifies the blood of Christ. How wonderful it is at the time of death to have in your heart, “The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanses us from all sin.” The blood of Christ has given comfort to countless hosts in their bitter pains when death was near. The saints overcome their last great enemy through the blood of the Lamb.

Jesus looks upon the death of his saints as the last struggle of their life conflict. When that is over it shall be said on earth and sung in heaven, “Your warfare is accomplished, your sin is pardoned, you have received of the Lord's hand double for all your sins.”

*Remember thy servant, Susan, O Lord, according to the favour which thou bearest unto thy people, and grant that, increasing in knowledge and love of thee, she may go from strength to strength, in the life of perfect service, in thy heavenly kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost ever, one God, world without end. Amen.*