

Holy Cross Fellows

A Church Planting Internship

Program Overview

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The Holy Cross Fellows (HCF) is an 18 month post-graduate, church planting internship for young Christians with promising leadership potential and an interest in the 'Anglican 1000' movement.

The program will launch in August, 2010 under the oversight of St Stephen's, Sewickley. There will be an opening cohort of at least five Fellows, who have already applied and been accepted to the HCF. They will work in creative proximity to St Stephen's, Trinity Seminary, and the Aliquippa Uncommon Grounds Café for a year and a half of formation, discernment, preparation and ministry experience, all designed to prepare and launch them as church planters.

The heart of the program includes the following components:

- Living in intentional Christian community in a 'Covenant House' under a 'Rule of Life' for the sake of formation in evangelical and missional Anglican spirituality
- Education at Trinity Seminary for the knowledge and skills needed for church planting (2 days/wk in the MA/Church Planting degree program)
- Working in a nearby community and using the workplace as a mission base (3 days/wk)
- Launching a mission initiative within 30 days of arrival
- Mentoring in a 'high accountability/low control' oversight process linked to our parish and a team of key leaders

Here are some expanded thoughts on these components.

Community and Formation

Community and spiritual formation is one of the central components of the HCF program. We expect Holy Cross Fellows to become church leaders who are not simply skilled and educated, but deeply formed in authentic Christian life and holiness. Our hope is that these future leaders will understand the core dynamics of Christian discipleship while experiencing the wealth of evangelical Anglican tradition. Our DNA is biblical Anglicanism with a heart for Christ's mission to the world. HCFs do not need a past history of this, but must, as a Fellow, warmly and openly participate in this formative framework throughout the program.

Our 'Covenant Houses' will be located in several communities, and available through annual application to a significant group of our '20-somethings' who have expressed an interest in community life for the sake of Christian formation and mission (being a compassionate presence in their neighborhoods). Each of the houses will be sex-segregated, mentored, and will house a mixture of HC Fellows, Pittsburgh Fellows alumni and others, living together under our Rule of Life.

Our 'Rule of Life' will include:

- daily prayer and bible reading in an Anglican framework - the core of Christian formation.
- shared, simple life in community (not heavily regulated)
- spiritual and ministry mentoring on a weekly basis
- radical hospitality ('open hearts, open homes')
- local neighborhood ministry of Kingdom care, compassion and conversations

Education at Trinity Seminary

HC Fellows will be enrolled in a two-year Masters degree program at Trinity Seminary in Ambridge, Pa. Full scholarships are available on an 'as needed' basis for our full time Fellows. The academic work will include the heart and soul of the MDiv degree (preparing students for the pastorate) with a special focus on church planting.

Trinity is on the creative edge of shaping curriculum for the new wave of church planting initiatives, and has worked with us carefully to shape this exciting Masters program. Community life on the Trinity campus will be a further source of formation and preparation, working in close sympathy with our own 'culture' in HC Fellows.

Workplace

HC Fellows will work 3 days a week to earn enough to live simply (\$12-15,000/yr). Fellows will need to pay their own food, travel and insurance expenses from what they earn (rent, utilities, course-work, mission trips, conferences & books will be covered through Fellow's entrance fees, see 'Finances' below). Work placements include local coffee shops, thrift shops, restaurants, Student Ministry at St Stephen's, as well as other locations found by the individual Fellows. We will work with our Fellows to help secure these placements.

The workplace will serve as one of three critical 'laboratories' (the mission placement and the Covenant House being the others) for Christian formation and mission.

Mission Initiatives

Each Fellow will spend the first month visiting and discerning his or her first mission commitment, choosing from among several promising possibilities that are already known to us. By the end of September, we hope to have the Fellows active in these placements, which will take up to 10 hours each week. Early placements are an intentional part of our strategy ('deploy before training'), which will help to create teachable hearts and better formation for mission. We hope that each Fellow will have a 6 month mission commitment in both an urban and suburban setting over their 18 months with us, preparing them for a wider range of mission possibilities in the years ahead.

Mentoring Relationships

Mentoring for spiritual growth and ministry effectiveness is an essential part of our program, and will happen weekly (approximately 2-3 hours) over a single fellowship meal. Mentors will embrace the Rule of Life with the HC Fellows, and will bring that shared experience into these evenings, as well as the experiences from seminary, the workplace, and the mission initiatives. Fellows & Mentors will regularly cycle through discussions of spiritual and character formation, community life, pastoral and missional issues.

Finances

Each Fellow is required to raise and contribute \$7000 to cover expenses for the 18 months, which will be due in 3 payments (\$2500, \$2500, and \$2000) at the start of each semester. This will cover the expenses for rent, utilities, books, and other planned conferences and mission trips. This presupposes that Trinity will give full scholarships to all Fellows including their 4th semester. Food, clothing, medical insurance and transportation expenses are the responsibility of each Fellow, and will be covered from their part time employment income. Because of the difficulty of living this simply on a 3 day/wk employment, we strongly advise our Fellows to raise an additional \$3000 to supplement their living expenses during the 18 months. Contributions to their expenses will be tax deductible. All finances will be stewarded by St Stephens/Sewickley and will be fully available to the Holy Cross Fellows.

Proposed Week at a Glance (days may alter according to individual schedules):

Monday/Wednesday/Friday:	Workplace employment
Tuesday/Thursday:	Academics/Study at Trinity
Monday night:	Weekly Meal w/ Spiritual Director & Guests
Thursday night (2x month each):	Covenant House Meal with Mentors &/or Mission Initiative
Friday nights:	Mission Initiative
Saturdays:	Rest Day
Sundays:	Worship & Mission Initiative
Everyday	Rule of Life Lifestyle

A Glance Ahead

This ministry initiative is born out of a passion for hurting people, a love of the Gospel of Christ, a longing to recover authentic discipleship to Christ as a way of life, a confidence that biblical Anglicanism is entering a new season of fruitfulness in God's mission to the world, and the repeated leading of the Holy Spirit. Indeed, we believe that the 'Anglican 1000' movement is being raised up by the Spirit of Jesus for these very purposes.

As we have looked for God's leading, we have asked ourselves what this experiment might look like if God gave his favor to it over the next decade. Depending upon Christ's leading and provision, we hope to see...

- Multiple regional partnerships between parishes and urban ministries, which would annually recruit, sponsor, mentor and deploy 'cohorts' of Holy Cross Fellows...
- Scores of well-disciplined young men and women entering the mission fields in the region of Pittsburgh and beyond as proven church planters and leaders...
- Dozens of new ministries launched in the greater Pittsburgh region, from mission centers that are engaged in creative outreach to unreached communities, to micro-churches that are yoked with mother congregations, to fully self-supporting congregations...
- Hundreds of new believers in Jesus Christ who are growing as his disciples and taking their place in his mission to the world...
- A discernable shift in the life and culture of our communities and our city as a fresh wave of ministries and congregations make an impact with Christ's compassion, wisdom and gospel.
- A network of Anglican churches that are planting churches across North America where discipleship and mission are the norm, and where the leading of the Spirit of Jesus is sought and welcomed - among whom we are grateful to take a place...

Over the past months we have come to believe that this initiative, along with others like it, is something being birthed of God out of the hardship of the decline of our culture and the parallel decline of the mainline denominations, which seem to have lost their way. There is a fresh wind of the Spirit moving through our own churches and well beyond them, giving rise to a new passion for the lost, for a recovery of the ancient ways in modern world.

Perhaps you also hear this call and long to be a part of this movement. We would welcome the opportunity to sit down with you.