

The Symbol Cross In the Sanctuary

The Symbol Cross was designed and carved by Rev Bob Shepperson.



The center of the cross, where the four sections of the cross intersect, contains two intertwined symbols of the Trinity. . . an isosceles triangle and three interlocked circles.

The Symbol Cross was made from a single piece of cherry wood, 2 inches by ten inches by nine feet long. The two pieces were notched, fitted, and joined by wooden pegs, without nails or screws. The cross is 100 inches high and 60 inches across.

The cross was created in 1972 for University Presbyterian Church in Ruston, Louisiana, while its new building was under construction. It hung in the sanctuary there for over two decades.

In the mid – 1990s, University and First Presbyterian Church of Ruston merged, to create “The Ruston Presbyterian Church”

In the spring of 2005, the Ruston Presbyterian Church agreed to donate the cross to St. Andrew Presbyterian Church in Albuquerque.

The Top Section of the Cross contains two symbols representing God's people's relationship to Him.

The Burning Bush represents the place where God is personally encountered. It was here that Moses encountered God and asked to know God's name, and received the answer: "I AM". (The Hebrew word is YHWH, which we know as 'Yahweh' or 'Jehovah'.) The burning bush reminds us that God's people can know something of the mystery of knowing God.

Exodus 3

The down-stretched giving hand represents God's perpetual offer of free grace to all people who experience God's presence in their lives.

Psalms 95



The Bottom Quadrant of the Cross represents the Church, the people of God.

Jesus used the Symbols of Compassion to describe 'His Kind of People'.

These symbols represent qualities that turn faith into action: Feed the Hungry (knife, fork, and spoon); Give drink to the thirsty (cup); Welcome strangers (handshake); Clothe the naked (jacket); and Visit those who are sick and in prison (basket of fruit and flowers).

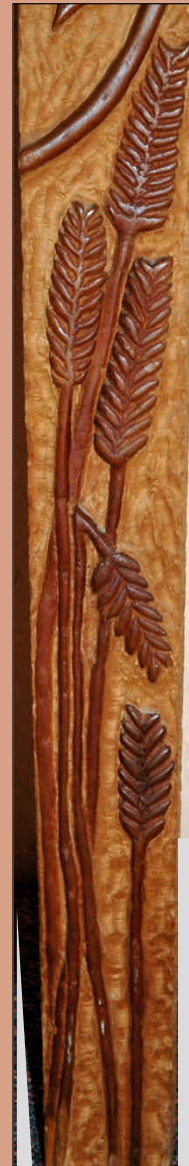
Matthew 25



The Visual focal point in Presbyterian worship is the Table of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. It is not an altar on which a sacrifice is made. It is, rather, a gathering place to remind God's people of Christ's presence among them, symbolized in the bread and wine of communion.

The vine and grapes represent the cup of sacrifice and redemption, and recall Jesus saying, "I am the vine: you are the branches". John 15:5.

The wheat represents God nourishing the people of God, and recalls Jesus saying, "I am the Bread of Life". John 6:35



The Left Transept of the Cross illustrates three symbols representing the Holy Spirit.



*The Wind of the Spirit. In Greek, the same word means "Spirit", "Wind", and "Breath". That word, *pneuma*, is a natural symbol for the power of God's invisible presence with God's people. It is mysterious in origin and destination. We see trees bend from the power of the wind, but can no more see the wind than we can see the Spirit of God.*
John 3:7-8



The Descending Dove, which appeared at Jesus' baptism, was accompanied by a voice, saying: "This is my beloved son, with whom I am pleased". The dove has long been a symbol of peace, and Spirit of God.
Matthew 3:16



The Flames of Pentecost. On the 'birthday of the church', the day of Pentecost, symbolic flames hovered over each of the participants at the coming of the Holy Spirit to the early church. The flames of the Spirit bring with them both heat and light.
Acts 2:3

The Right Transept of the Cross exhibits three representations of the significance of Jesus Christ:



At the beginning of Jesus' ministry, John the Baptist introduced him to the people by declaring: "Behold the Lamb of God!" He was recalling the Hebrew 'Day of Atonement' (Yom Kippur), which re-enacted God's saving grace by showing that sacrificial innocence can triumph over violence and cruelty.

John 1:21



The Crown of Thorns is the symbol which reminds us of the cruelty, brutality, mockery, and humiliation which Jesus suffered on behalf of his people. No matter how cruel and senseless our own suffering becomes, God has been there, and suffers with us.

John 15: 16-20



The Towel and Basin reminds us of Jesus assuming the role of servant on the night of the first Lord's Supper, by washing the disciples' feet. He showed us that the people in the church, leaders and all, are servants to one another. John 13:3-17