



# *The Cross, Anvil and Pentecost*

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The Cross - the visible symbol of Christianity - is the center of Christians' faith reminding us of Jesus' triumph over persecution, death, rejection, ridicule, and the injustices of His time. The power of God's great Love for humankind was publicly displayed on the Cross as God simultaneously glorified Himself and sacrificed His Son. The logo of the African Methodist Episcopal Church intertwines the Cross and an anvil: two symbols representing the crucifixion of racism and separatism; two symbols with parallel significance to the foundation of our faith. The bedlam at the crucifixion, and the defiance of the founding fathers of African Methodism when they faced virulent injustice and rejection, are testimonies of the power of the Cross.

The point at which the Cross and the anvil intersect, resonates the power of coming together of those separated by language and territorial customs on the first Day of Pentecost. The people came together in Jerusalem as they did in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in 1816, to receive the power of the Holy Spirit to empower them to unite in one voice to go out and tell the mighty works of God. Today, the unifying force of the Holy Spirit gives us this same power to speak the language of togetherness, to crucify racism, and to prize the root of separatism.

It was the strength our founding fathers gained from the Cross that gave them the resolve to purchase a blacksmith's shop and convert it to a worship site. It was the power of the Cross that drove their determination to subvert the status quo. Two hundred years later, the African Methodist Episcopal Church stands strong in its tradition of boldly challenging injustice and withstanding the recurrent infliction on our people. The season of Pentecost should take us back to our denominational origin and the foundation of our faith. It summons us to unite in sonorous gratitude in many languages and tongues, in gratitude to God for 200 years of gathering in various places under our common banners: the Cross, the anvil, and the African Methodist Episcopal Church.



1816 - 2016