



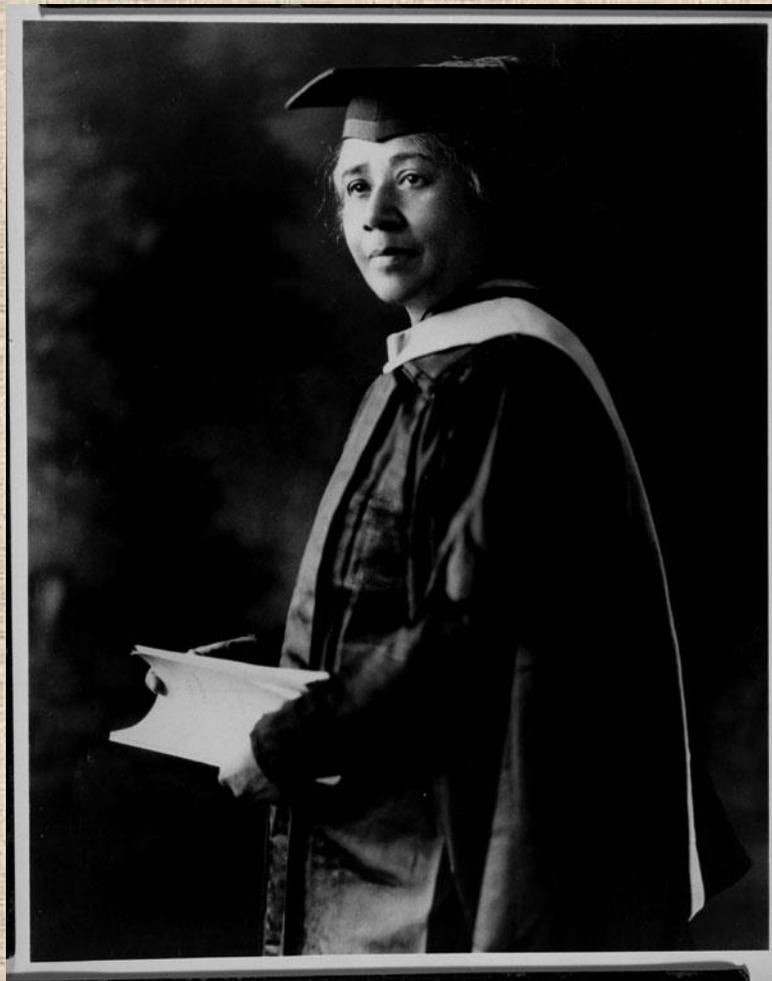
# The New Epistle

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ANNA JULIA HAYWARD COOPER

10 AUG 1858 – 27 FEB 1964

*EDUCATOR*

**A**nna "Annie" Julia Cooper was born into enslavement in Raleigh, North Carolina, in 1858 to Hannah Stanley Haywood, an enslaved woman in the home of prominent Wake County landowner George Washington Haywood. Either George or his brother Fabius J. Haywood are thought to be Cooper's father. Cooper worked as a domestic servant in the Haywood home and had two older brothers, Andrew J. Haywood and Rufus Haywood. Andrew was a slave of Dr. Fabius J. Haywood, and he later served in the Spanish–American War. Rufus was also born a slave and was the leader of the music group Stanley's Band.

In 1868, when Cooper was nine years old, she received a scholarship and began her education at the newly opened Saint Augustine's Normal School and Collegiate Institute in Raleigh, founded by the local Episcopal diocese for the purpose of training teachers to educate former slaves and their families. The Reverend J. Brinton offered Cooper a scholarship to help pay for her expenses. According to Mark S. Giles, a Cooper biographer, "the educational levels offered at St. Augustine ranged from primary to high school, including trade-skill training." During her 14 years at St. Augustine's, she distinguished herself as a bright and ambitious student who showed equal promise in both liberal arts and analytical disciplines such as math and science; her subjects included languages (Latin, French, Greek), English literature, math, and science. Although the school had a special track reserved for women – dubbed the "Ladies' Course" – and the administration actively discouraged women from pursuing higher-level courses, Cooper fought for her right to take a course reserved for men, by demonstrating her scholastic ability. During this period, St. Augustine's pedagogical emphasis was on training young men for the ministry and preparing them for additional training at four-year universities. One of these men, George A. C. Cooper, would later become her husband. He died after only two years of marriage.

Cooper's academic excellence enabled her to work as a tutor for younger children, which also helped her pay for her educational expenses. After completing her studies, she remained at the institution as an instructor. In the 1883–84 school year she taught classics, modern history, higher English, and vocal and instrumental music; she is not listed as faculty in the 1884–85 year, but in the 1885–86 year she is listed as "Instructor in Classic, Rhetoric, Etc." Her husband's early death may have contributed to her ability to continue teaching; had she stayed married, she might have been encouraged or required to withdraw from the university to become a housewife.

After her husband's death, Cooper entered Oberlin College in Ohio, where she continued to follow the course of study designated for men. After teaching briefly at Wilberforce College, Cooper returned to St. Augustine's in 1885. She then went back to Oberlin and earned an M.A. in Mathematics in 1887.

She later moved to Washington, DC – where she would develop a close friendship with Charlotte Forten Grimké – Cooper began teaching at M Street High School, becoming principal in 1901.

Cooper made contributions to social science fields, particularly in sociology. She is sometimes called "the mother of Black Feminism."

During her years as a teacher and principal at M Street High School in Washington, D.C., Cooper completed her first book, *A Voice from the South: By a Black Woman of the South*, published in 1892, and also delivered many speeches calling for civil rights and women's rights. Perhaps her most well-known volume of writing, *A Voice from the South* is widely viewed as one of the first articulations of Black feminism. The book advanced a vision of self-determination through education and social uplift for African-American women. Its central thesis was that the educational, moral, and spiritual progress of black women would improve the general standing of the entire African-American community. She says that the violent natures of men often run counter to the goals

of higher education, so it is important to foster more female intellectuals because they will bring more elegance to education. This view was criticized by some as submissive to the 19th-century cult of true womanhood, but others label it as one of the most important arguments for black feminism in the 19th century. Cooper advanced the view that it was the duty of educated and successful black women to support their underprivileged peers in achieving their goals. The essays in *A Voice from the South* also touched on a variety of topics, such as race and racism, gender, the socioeconomic realities of black families, and the administration of the Episcopal Church.

Cooper was an author, educator, and public speaker. In 1893, she delivered a paper entitled "The Intellectual Progress of the Colored Women of the United States since the Emancipation Proclamation" at the World's Congress of Representative Women in Chicago. Cooper was one of five African American women invited to speak at this event, along with: Fannie Barrier Williams, Sarah Jane Woodson Early, Hallie Quinn Brown, and Fanny Jackson Coppin.

She was also present at the first Pan-African Conference in London in 1900 and delivered a paper entitled "The Negro Problem in America."

A nation's greatness is not dependent upon the things it make and uses. Things without thots [ sic] are mere vulgarities. America can boast her expanse of territory, her gilded domes, her paving stones of silver dollars; but the question of deepest moment in this nation today is its men and its women , the elevation at which it receives its "vision into the firmament of eternal truth.

— Anna J. Cooper, *The Ethics of the Negro Question*, September 5, 1902

In 1914, at the age of 56, Cooper began courses for her doctoral degree at Columbia University, but was forced to interrupt her studies in 1915 when she adopted her late half-brother's five children upon their mother's death. Later on she transferred her credits to the University of Paris-Sorbonne, which did not accept her Columbia thesis, an edition of *Le Pèlerinage de Charlemagne*. Over a decade she researched and composed her dissertation, completing her coursework in 1924. Cooper defended her thesis *The Attitude of France on the Question of Slavery Between 1789 and 1848* in 1925. At 65, she became the fourth black woman in American history to earn a Doctorate of Philosophy degree.

Although the alumni magazine of her undergraduate alma mater, Oberlin College, praised her in 1924, saying, "The class of '84 is honored in the achievement of this scholarly and colored alumna," when she tried to present her edition of *Le Pèlerinage de Charlemagne* to the college the next year, it was rejected.

Cooper's other writings include her autobiographical booklet *The Third Step*, about earning her doctorate from the Sorbonne, and a memoir about the Grimké family, entitled "The Early Years in Washington: Reminiscences of Life with the Grimkés," which appeared in *Personal Recollections of the Grimké Family and the Life and Writings of Charlotte Forten Grimké* (privately published in 1951).

On February 27, 1964, Cooper died in Washington, D.C., at the age of 105. Her memorial was held in a chapel on the campus of Saint Augustine's College, in Raleigh, NC where her academic career began. She was buried alongside her husband at the City Cemetery in Raleigh.

*"The cause of freedom is not the cause of a race or a sect, a party or a class – it is the cause of humankind, the very birthright of humanity."* – Anna Julia Cooper

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT – A LENTEN REFLECTION by REV. GRETTA VOSPER

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**QUESTION:** *What do you make of the Season of Lent? How should the Christian Church observe it?*

**ANSWER:** The season of Lent is traditionally understood to be a time for reflection, contrition, and consideration of the sacrifice Jesus undertook for our sins. It has been, as you know, traditionally recognized for the forty days leading up to Easter. Preceded by Shrove Tuesday, upon which Christians are to prepare to confess their sins, Lent is entered into as a holy season of penitence.

Of course, all that is contingent upon a belief in the atonement theory of the crucifixion by which we accept that Jesus died to save us from our sins and bring us into eternal relationship with the divine being, God. If our belief in that story has cracks in it, the idea of Lent can become nonsensical. Why would we need to be penitential if we are considering the death of a man who didn't die for our sins? Or if we didn't believe in the idea of sin as it was constructed in the early centuries of Christianity? Why would we consider an act of contrition the appropriate response to an act of barbarity and violence?

The seasons of the Christian year and the festivals and traditions that are celebrated within them are usually based upon doctrinal or theological premises that may be difficult to discern at first blush. Communion often feels like a beautiful, communal meal. The doctrinal assertions that undergird it, however, are considerably different than many assume. Similarly, Lent can be thought of as a meaningful time for reflection and the consideration of love, justice, and kindness when the doctrinal beliefs upon which it is built no longer synch with contemporary understandings elicited through the study of the historical Jesus or the evolution of the idea of God.

If our understandings have shifted and we no longer believe that Jesus died for our sins, something I do not believe, does that mean, however, that we should give up on the idea of Lent? I do not think so. Sometimes setting aside a period of time for intentional reflection on life, on love, and on the things that flow from the often challenging intersection of those two things, can be a very important discipline to undertake, particularly in the busy craziness of twenty-first century Western society.

And so I invite you to undertake a course of reflection and study if that is your wont and to set aside a prescribed period in which to do it. Forty days feels good to me. And giving something up for Lent, an idea that is built on the practice of fasting, again, an act of penitence, can be worked in, if you like, by way of breaking a bad habit, or building up a good one.

As with other ecclesial practices and understandings, however, I invite you to leave behind the exclusively Christian word associated with it: Lent. To hold onto it continues to overshadow your period of reflection with a bleak and dangerous interpretation of a tragic story. I am not suggesting that you deny others their right to use the word or to critique them for it. My thought is simply that you practice without it and see if it feels okay for you. You don't need the doctrinal interpretation to reap the benefits of reflection and a sabbatical time away from the daily grind. And I would be willing to bet that if you share the news of your intentional forty-day practice with someone who is not involved in

church – someone at work or a family member – they will be far more likely to want to know what it is you're doing and why.

If you're at a loss as to what you would do if you weren't self-flagellating, here are some ideas. Think about what one or another of them would elicit in and from you. Would it make your life or the life of another more beautiful? If so, it is certainly worth trying. But the list is simply to stir your own imagination and see what you might undertake against the backdrop of your own life. Consider, make a pledge to yourself, and, if you can, keep track of how to feel as you move through your time.

- Use one of Barbara Frederickson's 15 minute Love 2.0 Meditations each day.
- Sign up for a poetry blog and read a new poem every morning when you get up and the same one every evening before retiring. Better yet, write a new poem every day!
- Tape West Hill United's words of commitment, As I Live, up next to your bathroom mirror. In the morning, consider how they can affect your day positively; in the evening, acknowledge what you might have done better and celebrate the good you made happen.
- Write a thank you note to someone every day. Like that person down the street who you don't know but who gifts the community each year with a beautiful garden or Christmas light display.
- Think of a charity you'd like to support. Every day, place an amount of money you'd like to contribute to it and a note to explaining why you want to support it (yes, a different one each day!). Read the notes when you're done and, if you feel like it, send them in an envelope with your cheque.
- Subscribe to the daily TED talk and learn something new every day. Follow up on stuff that really intrigues you.

Break the mold that Lent has been and release the new you that you've not yet met! And don't forget to celebrate you while you do it!

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 About the Author:

The Rev. Gretta Vosper is a United Church of Canada minister who is an atheist. Her best-selling books include With or Without God: Why The Way We Live is More Important Than What We Believe, and Amen: What Prayer Can Mean in a World Beyond Belief. She has also published three books of poetry and prayers.

## *Social Justice: A Calling to the Nation*

*A Lenten message from Bishop Rick Ward-Harder*

Greetings in the Name of our God. As Progressive Episcopalians we naturally have a bent towards the liberal in most things social. We have some members who are conservative in matters of fiscal affairs, but in a social model we are liberals. Why, many ask? It is because we are called to model for those around us the message of Christ. **Christ was first and foremost a Radical Reformer.** He stood against the Theocracy of His day. He stood up for the marginalized in society. He went where other “holy men” feared to tread. He welcomed the misfits and “liberals” of His day to His table. He turned no one away. Recall for a moment the twelve men he assembled as his disciples, they were the poor, the uneducated, the overlooked by society, few of notoriety, one was a zealot (a purveyor of rebellion against the government), one a despised tax collector, many simple fishermen, and one possibly from nobility. .

Think for a moment of the social justice and spiritually freeing acts Christ engaged in - the dinner with the most despised of society, a tax-collector; the prevention thru social action of the stoning of a woman accused of sexual impropriety; the public demonstration against the money-changers who were buying and selling in religious goods; the rebukes (there were many) of the religious leaders of the day who tried thru “laws” to subjugate women, the poor, the disabled, and the like. **Christ as our example MUST be the driving force to illuminate the path to Social Justice in this day and time.**

**As The Progressive Episcopal Church we must find new and innovate ways to engage ourselves,** from the Bishops of the Church to the youngest of the laity. We must become engaged in Social Justice until it is a natural part of our DNA. We must be aware of the world around us and stand, speak, and act. This all begins in our local community. Your parish may be small, even only one or two members, but look around you. We all have friends and even more acquaintances. Believe it or not you influence them and **many of them WANT to become involved** in the community. You must step out in faith and ask. If you do so, your parish will begin to grow.

The fact is that many do not attend church today. This is due in part to the hurt the traditional church has inflicted on so many. **We must be understanding of this and understand that “religion” turns many off. This is not a bad thing, it is an opportunity!!** This is the segment of the population that is a growth potential for TPEC. You see, I have found, that many of these good people still have a genuine care for society in their hearts and minds and still have a deep faith in Humanity. These folks are an opportunity for you, be you a priest or a member, to witness. I am not stating witness to the message of salvation or church membership, but a witness to transformational message of Christ. **Share TPEC’s message of Social Justice, share the actions of Christ in social justice, share that our focus is social justice and that we live out our lives in this message within our communities.** You will be surprised at how many people want to be involved and thru the social justice message come to embrace the TPEC. Remember our standard in many of our logos is.....Ancient Heritage.....Progressive Faith.

We know how hard so many of you work nationwide and we are grateful, honored and blessed in Arkansas to have so many supporters and friends among each of you. If we can accomplish what we are doing with all of us working 40+ per week secular jobs and being so few in number here.....**remember that you can accomplish the dreams, the ideas, and most of the callings you have as well.**

**WE ARE a dynamic and growing denomination.** Don’t let anyone ever tell you or make you feel that we are NOT a national denomination. The fact that we are in full provincial membership with the *Free Anglican Communion*, and the fact that we have an *Ordinate for the Chaplaincy* with recognition by the United States Military clearly states our place and position among the denominations. **WE ARE NOT just another Independent Sacramental Movement (ISM) organization.** We have women and men who have worked hard beginning in 2010 before TPEC was born in 2012 to

establish what we enjoy the fruits of today. Some of those persons are no longer with us, Bishop +Ronald come to mind, we owe them the dedication to our denomination and to the message of Christ, so that their labor shall not be in vain. I personally had the opportunity to work with former Presiding Bishop +Jack Stafford in the formation of the Diocese of the Holy Spirit which migrated into the Diocese of the South and ultimately into The Progressive Episcopal Church. I sat many hours with Bishop +Ron in my office when I first became a Chaplain in my state job and I heard the vision and grasped the enormity of the work to be done. **Today, we have not arrived, but we are well on our way....and it is because of each of you, laity and clergy alike. YOU ARE THE CHURCH.....Be the Church.....Know the Church.....Show the Church.....Live the Church.....**

**It is our calling, it is our mission, it is our responsibility to step up**, in both great times and in difficult times and move forward the banner of the TPEC and share the good news of Christ's message of love, grace, mercy and peace. **You have the gifts, the talents, and the ability. It is up to you to determine to use them.** The journey may be tough, the road may be rocky, but the reward in seeing just one person find that sense of satisfaction and knowing that somehow your words, your care, your concern made the difference, makes all the work so worth it.

Join with us in making TPEC and more importantly our message a central part of your everyday. **Your voice is the only tool you need.** Christ has called us.....Christ has equipped us.....We must put these tools to work. We look forward to hearing of our sister churches and brother and sisters in TEPC share of the great victories and missional work that they are doing. We remember you all in our masses each week.

Blessings, Love, and Much Encouragement to our cherished TPEC Family,

Rt. Rev. Canon Rick Ward-Harder

*Pastor/Rector*

**St. Michael the Archangel** (*Hot Springs*),

**St. Mychal Judge** (*Texarkana, TX/AR*),

**Our Lady of Perpetual Help** (*Little Rock*)

*Bishop – Diocese of the Delta*



1. Jesus watched us from a mountain,  
moving toward him up a slope,  
bringing basic human hunger --  
a community of hope.

2. We are climbing with a purpose,  
bearing poverty like a seed  
to be scattered on the mountain --  
a community of need.

3. Jesus gathered us in welcome,  
sat us on the grassy earth,  
paid attention to our longing --  
a community of worth.

4. Then with gifts a child presented  
Jesus saw that we were fed  
and brimful of like compassion --  
a community of bread.

John 6:4-15

1. Desert Wind, find us again,  
move us on to where we learn  
we are children of the dust  
and to dust we shall return.

2. Life begins with blithe intent  
and burns quick with bright desires  
but will also be revealed  
in the ashes of our fires.

3. This is Lent's epiphany --  
Wisdom deconstructing fear,  
as we see that life is short  
and yet trust that God is near.

4. Desert Wind, find us again,  
move us on to where we learn  
we are children of the dust  
and to dust we shall return.

Mark 1:9-13

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1. If we desire a deeper life  
then we must choose between  
the passage God proposes and  
the passage we have dreamed.  
For early dreams, though big and broad,  
meander unfulfilled  
and have no depth until God's hand  
can dredge a dreamer's silt.

2. If we desire a better world,  
then life must run its course  
in us, a river running to  
the thirsty from its Source.  
And we, as deepened channels, bless  
the water on its way,  
rejoicing that we touch and know  
the Life that we convey.

Mark 8:31-38

