

“Home”

Home church. This is a term that is frequently used in the black vernacular. The question gets to so many smaller truths about a person.

Within the first few minutes of a conversation between black folks one or the other may inevitably ask, "What's your home church?"

This can tell them if you were raised a church goer, where you are from, where "your people" may still be, what religion you are, and even what denomination.

It's a simple question with a wealth of information in its answer.

And in my family it is one that we have always been able to answer without hesitation even though it's different for each of us.

For my grandma, it's St. Leonard's Anglican Church in Bridgetown, Barbados.

For my mother, it's Saint Stephen's Episcopal Church in Petersburg, Virginia.

For me, it's St. Cyprian's Episcopal Church in Hampton, Virginia.

And for Keaton, it St Paul's Episcopal Church in Waldorf, Maryland.

One's home church is her bedrock in the community, where she gets her religious foundation and initial education. It's the place where, when she comes back, people always tell her they remember when she was little.

Keaton and I will be forever blessed that this church family has been part of our lives and that we have been welcomed, accepted, and included in so many aspects of what make this church special.

When we stepped in these doors 7 years ago and my very fidgety special needs 5-year-old stood up in the pews and couldn't quite grasp the concept of whispering, I would have never guessed this would be the place that I have most come into myself as an active participant in the church. Altar Guild, Sunday school teacher, lector, stewardship committee, finance committee, seasonal choir member, and more.

This is where I became an "adult" member of the Episcopal church---- Keeping the lesson in my heart that we are all responsible for helping our church be the best it can be.

St. Paul's will forever be Keaton's home church. And for that reason and many others, I relish in the opportunity to contribute to what allows this place to not only survive but to **thrive**. I want St. Paul's to be a wonderful discovery in the lives of many more people in this community.

As our family sets out on the next adventure, with my husband accepting a position at Scott Air Base in Illinois, while I am sad to leave, I am overjoyed in what we have had here at St. Paul's.

Integrating ourselves into this church family, has given us the ability to know that we can go out there and make our way in a new setting with the roots and wings we have been given at St. Paul's.