



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**April 30, 2019**

## **CROSS REMAINS A TREASURED FAYETTE LANDMARK**

**Uniontown, PA** – As various religions observed their Holy seasons this month, the Great Cross of Christ at Jumonville has been selected as the April “place” in our Faces and Places series.

Erected on August 26, 1950, the 60-foot tall white cross atop Dunbar’s Knob has long been one of Fayette County’s most treasured landmarks.

With Dunbar’s Knob situated 2,480 feet above sea level in the Laurel Highlands, the view from the Cross spans three states and seven counties, up to 50 miles away.

According to Jumonville’s website, the cross is “bathed in glowing spotlights” every night, “shining as a beacon of hope and inspiration to all who see it far and above the dark silhouette of the Appalachian Mountains.”

The cross’ construction was funded through collections in hundreds of Methodist Churches before World War II, but a wartime steel shortage delayed the project. Following the war, solutions to its many fabrication and installation issues were found by L.C. Steiner of the Latrobe Foundry and Machine Company in Latrobe, Pa.

Fayette County Commissioner Chairman Vince Vicites thanked the Methodist Churches who made its existence a reality.

“Visitors get a wonderful feeling walking up the mountain to the cross,” Vicites said. “The cross represents one of the many positive attributes Fayette County has to offer.”

With 183 tons of concrete forming its foundation, the cross’ shaft weighs approximately 47,000 pounds. Its arms, measuring 12 feet long on each side, were hauled up the mountain and welded to the main shaft as separate pieces.

“Because of its exposed location, the bracing of the structure had to be thorough, but all bracing is inside the clean cut steel surface of the cross,” Jumonville’s website states. “The completed structure will withstand winds of 100 miles an hour and the torsion that might be developed by a whirlwind.”

Dedication services were held Sept. 9, 1950, for what still stands as a religious symbol of peace in Fayette County.

“To some, the cross is looked upon as a tourist site, but it is so much more,” Commissioner Angela Zimmerlink said.

Commissioner Dave Lohr said the United States is a “Christian nation,” and “regardless of what form of worship you prefer, the cross is a symbol of our Christian Faith.”

“The cross at Jumonville speaks to so many people,” Lohr said. “The setting is ideal for so many reasons - in the middle of a forest, on top of a mountain with a majestic view of the valley below and a panoramic view of the surrounding communities; where better to go for some time to reflect, pray and worship?”

Lohr said that setting and everything the cross symbolizes are what keep people coming back to Jumonville.

“We have such a beautiful county and an ever-changing landscape through the four seasons,” he said. “You can be at the cross and the mood changes from day-to-day, but the message is the same - come and worship in the nature that He created.”

Another unique detail at the Great Cross of Christ, Lohr said, is the collection of flags surrounding it.

“From the time of the settlers until now, the site has been controlled by four ‘nations,’” he said. “It was first occupied by the French, then the British and, of course, it’s now American soil. As a Methodist camp, it’s also a Christian site, so visitors find all four flags flying there in silent testimony to the history of Fayette County.”

Lohr said visitors to the area look forward to seeing the cross, and some residents who can see the site from their homes make a point to look for it every day.

“That’s the power of the cross at Jumonville,” he said. “It’s a constant draw, a visible reminder of our faith, of who we are at the very center of our being - both in our day-to-day lives and for travelers passing through.”

For more information about the Great Cross of Christ or the many religious services and other events happening at Jumonville, visit [www.Jumonville.org](http://www.Jumonville.org).

To learn more about Fayette County, visit [www.FayetteCountyPA.org](http://www.FayetteCountyPA.org).

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