

## Fall Newsletter 2025

### Holy Cross Episcopal Church

4603 Rocks Road (Route 24), Street, MD 21154

Holy Cross Church, P.O. Box 103, Street, MD 21154



### **A note from Rev. Mary**

1—I'm grateful to all who share sermon responses. On Trinity Sunday, some of you shared your images of God. (And thank you, Rev. Jan, for stepping in and sharing my sermon on that topic while I was home with COVID!) A few weeks later, several of you shared stories about "Good Samaritans" on easel pads in the Parish Hall. Conversations over coffee have also included thoughtful sermon responses.

2--Speaking of sharing: This fall, I'll invite you to share your favorite psalm, because our Advent Bible Study topic will be the Psalter: a collection of poems praising and thanking God as experienced in creation and human history and personal experience--but also lamenting life's sorrows and crying out for help. Did you know that 27 of our hymns are based directly on psalms? Did you know that some striking psalm verses never show up in our Sunday readings? But we'll dig deeper than Fun Facts, allowing these poetic prayers to deepen our life with God. Please join our exploration on Nov. 30 and Dec. 7, 14, and 21 after the service.

3--Speaking of exploration: On August 10, we prayed over Matt Wilson as he begins a 6-month internship at Emmanuel Episcopal Church, Glencoe. We were happy to celebrate Matt's acceptance in our diocese's Discerning Ordained Vocations program, yet sad to see him go! But internships help participants explore whether God is calling them to ordination, and if so, whether to the vocational diaconate or the priesthood. Diverse internships, "book learning," mentorship, spiritual direction, and community with peers are all part of the discernment process and then the formation of anyone accepted for postulancy, candidacy, and finally ordination.

Discerning God's call involves the whole Church; not just the individual, and not just their home congregation. Some of you asked why Matt's internship couldn't happen here with us. Rest assured that the Diocese and Matt himself appreciate all he has learned at Holy Cross! Yet it's important for everyone in discernment to experience various ways of being Church. It's also important for congregations to recognize that their "beloved discerner" is becoming a gift to the wider Church. So during the next six months, we'll keep Matt and his family in prayer, and we'll discover new ways to share ministry at Holy Cross.

## **A note from Rev. Jan**

### **Two more special Sundays at Holy Cross this fall**

In addition to Homecoming (2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of November), at Holy Cross, we celebrate two other special Sundays, on the first Sunday of October and the First Sunday of November.

**St. Francis' Day is October 5.** St Francis loved all of God's Creation, and particularly any living creature who was little, lost, vulnerable, left out.

**Did you know Francis was born Giovanni di Pietro di Bernardone (c. 1181 –October 1226.) He gave up not only his privileged life but also his name to serve God. Francis of Assisi, became an Italian mystic, poet, preacher, "good trouble maker", and gathered together all who would listen to God's message of Love for all of Creation (even when that was inconvenient or troublesome for the "authorities.)**

We try to capture something of the spirit of Francis in our own celebration – blessing the animals, and also helping households who may not be able to feed their animals.

Bring your pets (appropriately leashed/ contained, or whatever) and also bring a contribution of pet food for the Mason Dixon Community center. You may also bring photos of pets who don't travel well or appreciate a crowd. And it's a great day to bring a friend or neighbor too! Weather permitting, we will be outside that morning. Parish hall is our backup space for a soggy weather event.

**All Saints Day and All Souls Day** is November 2. This Sunday we remember the great cloud of witnesses who support and surround us in the Way of Love as followers of Jesus. The Church holds up those who are especially notable, called Holy Women and Holy Men – Saints of the Church. On this Sunday we also remember those who have gone before us in our Holy Cross journey, and in our own journeys. And we pray for those who have died since last All Saints who are more personal to us, family and friends. On this Sunday we light candles as we pray the names of those special to Holy Cross and to each of us, saint or not.

## **Senior Warden's Notes Fall 2025**

Galatians 6:9,10

*“Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. 10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.”*

Summer is quickly coming to a close. Hard to believe since it seems the Strawberry Festival was just a “few days ago”. This year’s fest was a great success.....again! Thanks, **Sue** and all of our volunteers for all the hard work to continue this outreach fundraising effort.

The Grocery Bag and School Supplies donations continue strong again this summer. The Senior Lunch for the community starts again on Monday September 15 th and dessert donations are sincerely appreciated by the participants. Please consider signing up for our Sunday **Fellowship Coffee Hour**. Thank you!!

This winter we will have a new Heat Pump as the primary source of heat for the Church. A new oil furnace was installed at the same time as the secondary supply. It is expected we will significantly reduce our use of oil. We also installed a mini-split heat pump in the kitchen replacing a failing air conditioner.

This year the entire property was mowed every other week by contractors. **Steve Petersen** and **Mark Raab** mowed the front the alternate weeks. Please thank them for all their help while keeping our expenses down.

The “shed/old kitchen” reconstruction is continuing thru the summer. Thank you volunteers for taking on this project. I had a “Friend Request” on Facebook that came from a family member of a Parishioner. Their Cover Photo is of the family in front of our wooden Memorial Cross and the recently improved shed as a backdrop.

On August 27th the Advisory Board will be involved with **Rev. Canon Kristofer Lindh- Payne** for our annual Mutual Ministry Review. This discussion will focus on the following member survey that was passed out in Church. Please think about what we are looking for in our spiritual quest. The following are some thoughts.

*What keeps you coming on Sunday? Your thoughts on what you feel works (or doesn't work)? What do you think could use improving? What makes you happy at Holy Cross?*

This MMR is necessary to finalize Rev Jan and Rev Mary’s Annual Contract. Our wonderful Co-Vicars have agreed to continue with us in our Spiritual Journey!! AMEN!!

Peace be with you and God bless,

**Chip**

## **Sunday School**

Sunday School will start back up on September 7th. I am very excited because my granddaughter, Jacklyn Thomas, will be joining us. The class will be focusing this year

on some of the traditional bible stories (Creation, Christmas, and Noah's Ark). We will also continue to learn how to pray (Praise God, Thank God, The ASK, and Thank God Again) as well as the values of prayer. Cathy

## **Holy Cross Guild**

**Financial Giving:** The budget process this year went very well.

We decided to budget and retain \$1,000 to the SARC 2026 "Walk a Mile in Her Shoes". In 2025 we issued SARC a check for \$120, then collected donations toward the walk of \$700. Totaling \$820. Please watch the announcement for the SARC 2026 walk.

Excluding SARC and outreach expenses a total of \$7,800. was sent to **26 non-Profits**. While still leaving a balance on hand of more than \$11,000.

We kicked off the year with an amazing **School Supply Collection**. Thanks to everyone who made donations. Financial donations will be sent to Mason Dixon for use filling voids in supplies.

Last year Theresa initiated a new outreach with a "**Thank You**" gift of cookies for teachers

as they start their year. She delivered our cookies to North Harford Elementary school.

This will now be an annual event. Theresa asked us to add a box of tissues this year with each batch of cookies donated. The cookies were delivered to North Harford Middle on August 25<sup>th</sup>.

**Senior Lunch** will start up September 15th. This outreach started when Holy Cross celebrated our Bicentennial. This may make it a 40-year old tradition. Mary Raab and Karen Dominick lead this outreach. Please donate deserts and volunteer the third Monday September through June and invite any senior who would like to come and enjoy a free lunch and lots of good company.



**Green Sale:** Of course we will be having the Green Sale. Karen has made beautiful fall arrangements on display in the Parish Hall AND she and Alice are already checking on supplies for Christmas. There is something for everyone. Watch the weekly announcements or talk with Karen or Alice and mark your calendar for December 6th for the sale.

**Empty Stocking** is going strong. ANY time you have donations they can be put downstairs. We will contact Empty Stocking in November to see if there are any specific needs. They always need things for teen girls. Alice and Vertis usually deliver our donations to them right after Thanksgiving.

**Christmas Adoption:** While it's too early to ask Mason Dixon what they need for Christmas, we plan on continuing our support for a senior citizen and for a family with children.



## **Home Coming**

We will be celebrating Homecoming this year on November 9, 2025 at the 9:30 service. Jared, a recent graduate from Char Hope, will be speaking to us.

The Char Hope Foundation is a unique social care farming approach that combines the National Ag Literacy Outcomes with the renowned 12 Steps of addiction recovery. Rooting Recovery participants engage in hands-on learning opportunities including homesteading, commodity marketing, gardening, equine therapy, and exposure to general farm life. Agriculturally based healing with direct lessons on our social care farm and homestead creates a safe space for authentic, impactful, personal discovery. Our residents have the opportunity to learn through vulnerability, self-reliance, trust, and personal development. Following the service there will be a fantastic potluck brunch. Please join us in this important celebration.

## **College and Military Christmas Boxes**

The gathering of Christmas Gifts for our College Students and Military Personnel Christmas Boxes is right around the corner. In October, Mary Raab will be requesting the names and addresses,( along with any allergies) of our College Students and Military Personnel with deadline of October 31. Box assembly will be Thanksgiving week, November 23 and mailing the boxes via Postal Solutions on the 25th. Sign up will be posted to remind church members the items needed and the total number of packages to be mailed. The box will include a Holy Cross Blessing, plus the Day to Day prayer book, and the following donations to the boxes:

- Candy
- Chocolate (it's own food group)
- Ramen Noodles
- Beef Sticks
- Snacky food like Nutella spreads and Energy bars
- Hot Chocolate and Tea
- Christmas decor for their room
- Throat Lozenges and
- Crazy socks

## **Seafarers**

October 5th through October 26th, the of items for seafarers "Christmas at Sea" bags will be collected. A sign-up sheet will be on the bulletin board in the parish hall. See Patty Wilson if you have any questions.

## **Building and Ground**

Welcome Mark Raab to the Building and Grounds committee. This winter we will have a new Heat Pump as the primary source of heat for the Church. A new oil furnace was installed at the same time as

the secondary supply. It is expected we will significantly reduce our use of oil. We also installed a mini-split heat pump in the kitchen replacing a failing air conditioner. Total cost \$27,950!

This year the entire property was mowed every other week by contractors. Steve Petersen and Mark Raab mowed the front the alternate weeks. Please thank them for all their help while keeping our expenses down.



## Bible Study

Did you know that Holy Cross now has a Bible Study Class? We meet on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Mondays of the month from 10 am until noon. We are currently reading the Old Testament and using the book: The Bible In 52 Weeks as a guide. Please feel free to join us at any time.

## Holy Cross Sign

Did you notice how wonderful our outdoor sign is? Well that is thanks to Sue Becraft who has repaired and replaced the old pieces. She also adds inspiring messages that inform and guide us every month. Thanks Sue!



## CALENDAR

### September

- 7- Sunday School
- 15- Senior Lunch

### October

- 5- **Saint Francis celebration!** Bring your pets to church for a special blessing.
- 12- Deacon Neva Brown will be our special guest.
- 20- Senior Lunch

### November

- 2- **All Saints Day**
- 9- **Home Coming!** Service at 9:30 followed by a potluck brunch. All are Welcome!
- 17- Senior Lunch
- 21-23 Convention at Claggert Center
- 30- Advent Bible Study The Psalms

### December

- 6- Green Sales
- 7- Bible Study The Psalms
- 13- Santa comes to Holy Cross!!!
- 14- Bible Study The Psalms
- 21- Bible Study The Psalms

begins!



"Pastor Marv, we can't revive our church by implementing small groups—we are a small group!"



**Happy Fall, Y'all!**