

The Quest

*Transforming the world & ourselves,
together in community,
fellowship and faith.*

March
2026

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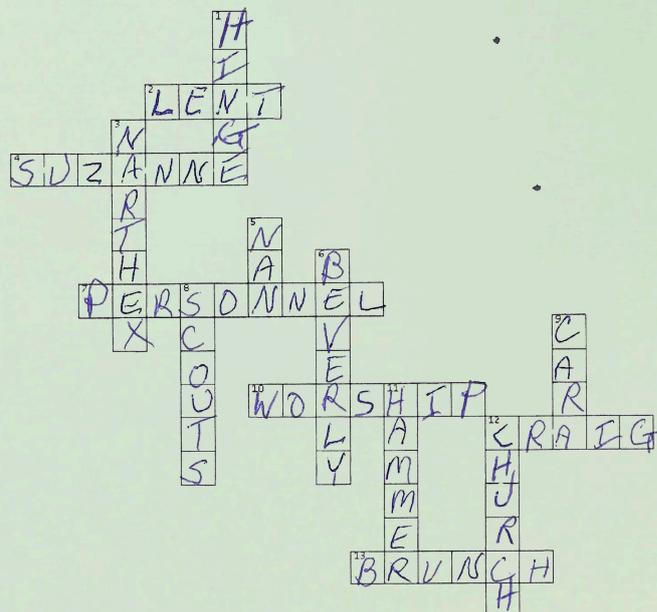


Key to February Crossword

Crossword Puzzle Win \$25 Gift Card

***Staff & Council are exempt from answering February puzzle

February Quest Crossword Puzzle



ACROSS

2. this occurs every Wednesday beginning February 25th
4. first name of the Christian Education Chair
7. Council Chair spot lighted this month
10. this shapes us, teaches us to pray, hope & trust
12. this Council Chair needs help
13. this will be available in the FH on April 5th

DOWN

1. February is this kind of month
3. this is where you find a printed copy of the Quest
5. last month's Quest gift card winner
6. our new Fellowship Chair
8. group honored on Sunday, February 1st
9. person to contact for council opportunities
11. work item pictured in Property's article
12. time that takes us back to basics

What's Happening at Holy Cross

Don't Miss in The March Issue



- Spotlight on Council Members
- March Madness
- Answers to February Crossword Puzzle.

A Few Notes

- The deadline for inclusion in the April 2026 edition of the Holy Cross Newsletter, The Quest, is Monday, March 16, 2026.
- The deadline for inclusion in the Weekly Update is 4 pm on Tuesdays.

Find Us Online!

- www.HolyCrossHerndon.org
- facebook.com/HCLCHerndon
- Instagram.com/HolyCrossELCA

A Message from Director
of Music and Liturgy, Jeremy Shoop
Musicdir@HolyCrossHerndon.org

March always feels like a threshold—
and in the life of the church, it has a very particular sound.

It begins in a minor key.

Ash Wednesday sets the tone with quiet, unaccompanied singing, the weight of silence between phrases, and texts that invite us to honesty: “Return to the Lord your God.” The music of Lent doesn’t rush. It lingers. It makes space. Hymns like **O Lord, throughout These Forty Days** and **Jesus, Still Lead On** don’t try to resolve too quickly. They teach us how to walk, step by step, through a season that is more about formation than arrival.

And if we’re honest, that kind
of music can feel
a little uncomfortable.



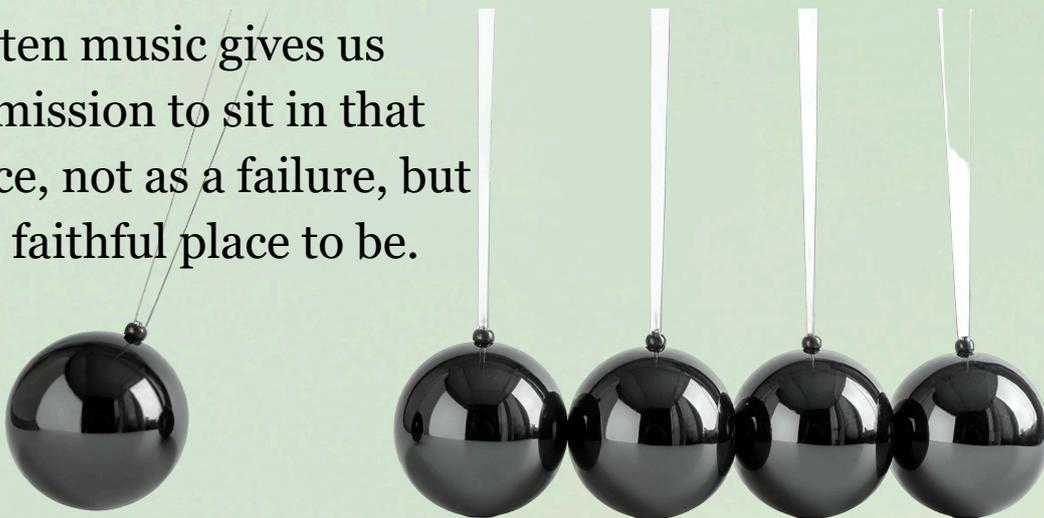
We're used to resolution. To strong endings. To major chords that wrap things up neatly. But Lent resists that instinct. It holds us in suspended moments—like a phrase that doesn't quite land where we expect. And maybe that's because our lives often feel that way too.

We carry things we can't resolve.

We live with questions that don't have easy answers.

We wake up some days (or in the middle of the night) with a restlessness we can't quite name.

Lenten music gives us permission to sit in that space, not as a failure, but as a faithful place to be.



But listen closely, and you'll notice something else.

Even in the most contemplative hymns, there are hints of what's to come. A turn in the melody. A line of text that leans toward hope. A cadence that doesn't fully resolve but promises that resolution is possible. The journey of Lent is never just about introspection, it's always quietly pointing us toward resurrection.

That's part of the beauty of worship this season.

Week by week, we are shaped not just by what we say, but by what we sing. The choir, the congregation, the instruments all work together to create a kind of communal prayer. Even when our own voices feel tired or uncertain, the song carries us. Or maybe more truthfully: Christ carries us through the song.



As you move through March, pay attention to those musical moments.

The hymns that linger with you after worship.

The phrases that catch in your throat a little.

The silence that says just as much as the sound.

This is not background music. This is the soundtrack of a journey. One that doesn't require perfection, only presence.

So, whether you find yourself singing confidently or barely whispering the words, you are part of the song.

And Christ is already holding the final note.

All Shall be Amen and Alleluia!

Jeremy Shoop, Director of Music and Liturgy

THE 2026 HYMN MADNESS TOURNEY HAS BEGUN!

Thank you to everyone who submitted their Hymn Madness Bracket for our Tournament!! If you didn't get a chance to submit your official bracket, that's okay - feel free to pick up a blank bracket and play along with us for fun!!

Each Sunday the congregation will vote on hymn match ups until we have crowned a *Champion* hymn on Easter Sunday, April 5th. The winner with the most points wins the right to pick hymns on a Sunday this summer (not to mention musical bragging rights all year long)!

We are still actively working towards our Transition Fund goal. In order to help raise funds, we're adding a little fun to our tournament. For every \$10 donated, you get an extra ballot vote that week!

To ensure maximum participation, we also will have online voting available each week! Check out our Holy Cross website under "Current Links" to find the online voting form!!

Need a refresher on hymns? [Listen to our "Hymn Madness" playlist](#) on Holy Cross Lutheran Church's YouTube page for a preview of the tournament hymns!





A Message from
Council President Cara Papenheim
President@HolyCrossHerndon.org

Holy Cross Family,

February 15th was the Holy Cross celebration of Reconciled in Christ Sunday. Reconciling Works is an organization that began in 1974, and just like Martin Luther, believes every person is a beloved child of God. In 2020, Holy Cross adopted the Reconciled in Christ doctrine (RIC) unanimously, and we continue to live out this truth in our ministry. Last year, on the actual RIC Sunday I offered the congregation a preamble to the service, and this year, I was honored to begin our RIC celebration with a similar message.

13 months ago I stood at this pulpit to begin our first ever RIC Sunday service and reaffirmed our welcome statement. Today is the transfiguration of our Lord, and while it is not the official Sunday dedicated to Reconciled in Christ, we have chosen this Sunday to honor an important movement, designation and identifier.

Once again, on this day, I refer you to the opening page of our bulletin, and how you are greeted before worship each Sunday, in short:

We welcome you, whoever you are, wherever you are, and whatever your life circumstances, you are safe with us and we welcome you.



These are not just words, they are the modern intention behind Holy Cross Lutheran Church, and they are our identity.

13 months ago I highlighted a world of uncertainty and fear that have affected everyone in this room, and I assured you that we, your church leaders, were committed to our identity of safety and welcome. In the face of those uncertainties, you, siblings in Christ, you doubled down...or as us millennials like to say, responded with a “hold my beer.”

We continued Lunch for the Soul uninterrupted; we fortified our building with gender neutral restrooms, we strengthened our relationship with the town of Herndon, we hosted community events, opening our property to strangers with open arms and saw record breaking attendance, we renewed the charter for Troop 12 and this past Advent season we raised over three thousand dollars for Prison Fellowship.

And we prayed with and supported each other through a months long government shutdown.

This Sunday is not a victory lap. This Sunday is the reaffirmation of our faith through action and our commitment to each other and our Lord, the triune God. In today's gospel, Peter, James and John follow our Lord up a mountain and they are fearful. As we prepare our hearts and minds for worship today and every Sunday. Like them, the face, our Lord is revealed to us, and the Holy Spirit is upon us. But unlike our biblical predecessors, we do not need to stay silent, in words or actions.

Siblings of Holy Cross, when we enter this sanctuary every Sunday, we double down, we thrive in a radically welcoming environment, we see the face of the Lord, we hear the words of our Savior, we know who we are and we are not afraid. Our identity as Holy Cross Lutheran Church is to give each of you an identity, to celebrate it, and to protect it. Welcome to worship, today and always.

Peace and blessings to all of you as we continue our inclusive and immersive love through action. Thank you for making me proud to be your church President.

In Peace,

Cara Papenheim

A Message from
Council Vice President Mark Roe
VicePresident@HolyCrossHerndon.org

Dear Holy Cross,

It is tough to believe we are already well into the Lenten season, but as Easter and Spring are approaching we have much to continue to celebrate at Holy Cross thanks to the efforts of so many people. As we celebrate the joy of Easter, we must also continue to be mindful of our shared responsibility to sustain the ministry of Holy Cross. Our church's financial health directly supports worship, outreach, our amazing staff, building maintenance, our synod and the many ministries that bless our church and the community.

We are grateful for the generosity already shown by so many. Your faithful giving makes ministry possible. At the same time, we must remain diligent and consistent in our stewardship.



Regular, intentional giving provides stability and allows us to plan responsibly for the future and provides us with the foundation for calling our next pastor as we discussed at the annual meeting. If you have fallen behind or have been prayerfully considering increasing your giving this Easter season is a meaningful time to recommit to supporting the mission of Holy Cross.



The Easter season is also a time of action. Holy Cross thrives not only because of financial gifts, but because of the time and talents offered by our members. We are always in need of volunteers across our various ministries. Every act of service, no matter how small, is incredibly important to the work of the church and helpful to the ministry leads.

Mark Roe,
Vice President

A Message from
Council Secretary, JoanaD'arc "Jo" Roe
secretary@holycrossherndon.org

Read All About It



To be cognizant of more sensitive church information, while not compromising on keeping our church members informed, meeting minutes and reports were moved to a more secure location on our HCLC website.

You can access these files now using the "Congregation Members" section. Should you need assistance, please contact the Church Office. Look for information to be provided in an e-blast message and church bulletin about a brief coffee talk session to review the website that will be scheduled during Fellowship Time in the very near future.

A Message from Fellowship
Beverly Siecker
FellowshipChair@HolyCrossHerndon.org

Rejoice!

Snowcrete is over and Spring is trying to get here.

Holy Cross celebrated Scout Sunday on February 1, 2026 with scouts serving at the service. Members of Troop 12 handed out bulletins and Alex Frederick read the lessons. Gary Wolfe was acolyte and Anne Geiger (the Troop 12 Chartered Organization Representative) was assisting minister. Craig Reichow, who has been with the Troop for 23 years, gave a brief history of the Troop and how they came to partner with Holy Cross. Assistant Scoutmaster Dave McDonald talked about some of the things the scouts have done and encouraged our members to present ideas for future activities. He then presented the Charter to Anne Geiger, who presented it to Mark Roe, Council Vice President . Both Girl Scout Gold awardees and BSA Eagle Scouts were recognized at the service.

If you weren't at the Shrove Tuesday/Mardi Gras Pancake Supper, it will be talked about next month. (You probably missed a lot of fun and food.)



For Your Calendar

Celebrate

February - March

- Lenten dinners started February 25, 2026 and will continue each Wednesday through March 25, 2026.
- Soup and sandwiches (no dessert) will be on the menu. Let me know who can bring their favorite soup.
- There is always a vegan option.

April

- Sunday, April 5, 2026 is the Easter Brunch Potluck following the service.
- Feel free to bring your favorite brunch food to share.
- Holy Cross will provide ham, a vegan option, and rolls for sandwiches.

June

- Sunday, June 14, 2026 Music Sunday Potluck

July

- Saturday, July 4, 2026 - Patriotic music and fireworks viewing. Join with the neighborhood for the best place to see the fireworks. Volunteers are needed for this growing event to plan and set up the activities.

Stop by the Fellowship Hall before and/or after Sunday School and/or the service for coffee, tea, juice, or water, along with fruit and snacks. It's always nice to see smiling faces greeting each other. There is always a LWR quilt available to work on - no prior experience needed.

February's Laugh - Corrected

From a Church Bulletin:
Potluck supper Sunday at 5:00 pm.
Prayer and medication to follow.

Something to
Make You Laugh
for March

From a church bulletin (not ours!)
A bean supper will be held on
Tuesday evening in the church
hall. Music will follow.



A Message from Outreach

Tonya Elliott

OutreachChair@HolyCrossHerndon.org

2026 Lenten Appeal
Fellowship House -
A Ministry Close to Home



Fellowship Square

The 2026 Lenten Appeal at Holy Cross Lutheran Church will support Fellowship House because it is more than a ministry partner — it is part of my own story and part of our Lutheran legacy.

For years, I lived just down the street from Fellowship House at Hunters Woods. On Sunday afternoons, I had the privilege of volunteering there, serving meals and spending time with the vibrant community of seniors who gather within its walls. What I discovered was not simply a place of need, but a place of joy, resilience, wisdom, and deep connection. I witnessed neighbors becoming friends, laughter filling the room, and lives strengthened through dignity and care. Fellowship House is a space where seniors are not forgotten — they are celebrated.



This ministry also carries deep Lutheran roots. Fellowship Square Foundation began in 1960 under the visionary leadership of Rev. Dr. John A. Scherzer, a pastor and member of the Lutheran Lay Fellowship of Metropolitan Washington. Compelled by faith and a desire to support vulnerable seniors, Rev. Scherzer advocated for older adults to have access to safe, affordable housing. On November 30, 1960, a corporate charter was issued for Fellowship Square, formally beginning this mission.



Fellowship House on Lake Anne opened in 1976, followed by Fellowship House at Hunters Woods in 1979 — both created to serve a diverse population of seniors with dignity and care. What began as a faithful vision has become a lasting ministry that continues to bless our wider community.

Generosity



During Lent, we prepare our hearts to welcome the risen Christ, who comes to us most clearly in compassion, hospitality, and community.



Supporting Fellowship House allows us to live out that calling — drawing near to those who have built the communities we now call home.

SHARE

This appeal is personal because I have seen firsthand the impact of this ministry. I have served alongside these neighbors. I have shared meals and stories with them. And I know that our generosity can sustain this vibrant, life-giving community for years to come.

A member of the Fellowship team will join us in March to share more about the services provided and where our donations will have the greatest impact. Thank you in advance for supporting our local community and the wonderful work that Fellowship Square provides.



Outreach in Action: LINK Food Distribution

On February 21, LINK partnered with Holy Cross Lutheran Church to host a large-scale food distribution event at our church. A special thanks to Joy Heuer, who serves on the LINK leadership board and advocated for HCLC to serve as a distribution site. More than 225 families benefited from this effort.

The scope of the distribution was remarkable:

Fresh Produce Distributed

- 3,000 apples
- 600 pounds of carrots
- 650 pounds of onions
- 800 pounds of white potatoes
- 800 pounds of sweet potatoes
- 512 pounds of zucchini squash
- 512 pounds of yellow squash

Each family received a bag of dry goods that included:

- Cereal, cake mix, and pasta
- Rice and dried garbanzo beans
- Two cans of soup
- Canned peaches, green beans, corn, black beans, tuna, and pasta sauce
- A pouch of chicken
- A bag of snacks

Holy Cross will sponsor the next Herndon LINK food distribution on Saturday, March 21, with packing on Friday, March 20. Volunteers are encouraged to participate and can sign up through the church's Sign Up Genius.

[Sign up Here](#)

Respectfully Submitted,
Tonya Elliott
Outreach Chair

Tonya

A Message From the Stephen Ministry
Sarah Schulmeyer, Coordinator



March is an Amazing Month!



Celebrating ***Three*** new
Stephen Ministers:

- Jo Roe
- Beverly Siecker
- Diana Virgo

Be on the Lookout!

Now that the Stephen Ministers have finished their training, they will be installed during a future service. Be on the lookout for this special event!

We are deeply grateful for our church family's continued support of Stephen Ministry. Your prayers, encouragement, and trust make it possible for us to walk alongside those who are hurting with Christ's love and compassion. Thank you for being a congregation that truly cares.

If you're interested in becoming a Stephen Minister or would like more information about meeting weekly with a Stephen Minister as a Care Receiver, please contact Sarah Schulmeyer using one of the methods below.

Sarah Schulmeyer
(703) 437-1883
admin@holycrossherndon.org

Council Spotlight

Jo Roe, Council Secretary

Secretary@HolyCrossHerndon.org

All of My Favorite Things...



Favorites at Holy Cross:

- The people I get to call church family.
- Being a member of such a welcoming, inclusive place for worshipping God.

Favorite Titles for My Autobiography:

- “The Girl from Ipanema”
- “How to Keep Your Samba Rhythm”
- “Rely on God in the Midst of Lifes Storms”

Favorite Dishes if I were a Chef:

- Feijoada (pronounced “fay-jwah-dug) It is a black bean stew with ground meat, rice and collard greens, topped with fresh tomatoes on the side.

Favorite Things to do as a Kid:

- Play with our dogs outside.
- Read science books.
- Listen to music.
- Ride my bike.
- Help prepare Sunday family dinners each week.
- Having summertime neighborhood crab feasts.

Get Connected

“God has given each of us special spiritual gifts to use and serve one another. Do this with all the strength and energy God supplies. Then everything we do will bring glory to God through Jesus Christ.” 1 Peter 4:10-11

March Features

Connect with *Fellowship* to help with:

- Easter Sunday Potluck - Sunday, April 5th
- Music Sunday Potluck - Sunday, June 14th
- July 4th Fireworks - Saturday, July 4th

FellowshipChair@HolyCrossHerndon.org

Spring/Summer

Connect with *Fellowship* to help with:

- **Lenten Dinners** on Wednesdays, beginning February 25th

Contact Jeremy Shoop to connect with Music and Liturgy: **Musicdir@HolyCrossHerndon.org**

Contact Cara Papenheim to connect with Council opportunities: **President@HolyCrossHerndon.org**

Contributions & Offerings

We aspire to keep Holy Cross Lutheran Church a thriving, serving community of God's people. We each need to make a determined effort to ensure that our offerings sustain us. Your generosity makes all things possible. You can bring your offering with you to worship service at 10 am, or use one of our many alternative giving options:

- Online/Mobile Set up a one-time or recurring donation through Vanco, our secure giving platform. Scan code to access.



- Send a donation directly to our PayPal account. Scan code to access.



- Through your bank:
Use BillPay with your bank or credit union to set up a single or recurring donations.
- By Mail
Mail a check to the church at:
Holy Cross Lutheran Church
1090 Sterling Rd.
Herndon, VA 20170