



September 2026



Rector's Corner

Dear Holy Cross community,

The season has changed, by which I mean school has started. While not liturgical, most parents are offering praise and near a university town, even those many years removed from its pattern likely feel the turn of the semester.

Coming from Memphis, which will have many more weeks of summer, I also appreciate that our cooling misty mornings and leaf-change forecasts are also reflecting the change. Helpfully, we also happen to have our parish name day, the Feast of the Holy Cross to mark the end of summer chapel at St. John's (the week prior) and the return of our early service at Holy Cross (the next week). The feast day is technically on the fourteenth, but we'll celebrate it with a single service at 11 a.m. on Sunday the 13th, with a potluck lunch and fellowship afterwards. I hope you'll be able to join us! Our liturgical season continues to be the long season after Pentecost, but Holy Cross Day will also mark some small changes as well, just to keep our spirits and ears attentive.

This will be the date for the return of Children's Sunday school during the 11 a.m. service, with our stalwart leaders and teachers providing a wonderful chance for our littles to pray and sing and learn the stories of Scripture in a setting especially appropriate for their stages of development. With the lower Skiles renovation being near finished, I'm excited to expand our possibilities in this area and spread that word that Holy Cross is not only welcoming to all but especially parent-friendly and a great little church to bring one's family. I'm also working on plans for adult formation between the services and look forward to exploring all sorts of topics of faith and spirituality together (ideas and topics welcome!), as well as inviting some of our well-known teachers to offer some classes as well.

The coming season is also one of harvest, where fruits of the land and labor are gleaned and preserved and set aside for use, per many cultural celebrations of Thanksgiving and, naturally, we in the Church so celebrate as well. This includes a time for reflecting upon our stewardship that has begun and while my appeal letter covers the financial side of the topic, a huge way that we show our gratitude for God's blessings in our lives, and for our parish community, is in the way we use our time, attention, energy, and passion, and Holy Cross is rich in those things in spades, by virtue of each of you. Every Sunday as we engage in our sacrifice of thanksgiving, the Holy Eucharist, I give thanks for each of you, in whatever way, or shape, or regularity (or irregularity!) that you take part in this beloved community.

Gratefully,

Jonathan



Birthdays

1 Michael Taylor	14 Ahren Koenig
1 Steven Bentley	15 Hank Wansker
8 Mary Stolberg	15 Jennifer Browning
9 Craig Adams	19 Susan Duke
11 Darby Logan	24 John Heiss
12 Norman Lock	27 Bert Yates
12 Jim Vroom	28 Mary Frisbie

Anniversaries

September 4
Brenda and Jim Lowman

September 8
Julie and Bob Gates

September 9
Alicia and Jim Toomey

September 14
Jo Betts and Harry Baxley

September 14
Tracey and John Heiss

September 22
Caroline and Dan Shepherd

September 23
Katherine Slayton and Nate Buhler

September 30
Tricia and Jim Tennant

Prayer List

Please keep these people in your healing prayers:

For Healing: Our injured and disabled military personnel, our veterans, all civilians harmed in conflict, and for Dayton C., Wendell S., Noyes L., Gerry P., Rebecca M., Sam, Bill B., Randy M., Shane B., Tav G., Andrea M., Charles III, Kate M., Floyd T., Leslie S., Suzie L., Pam C., Ann G., Rosalie G., Stuart T., Michael H., Laura B., Linda B., Mike L., Mike M., Susan M., Jacquie M., Arthur L., Coleman B., David, Michael T., Wayne W., Sally, Ann I., Beth B., Daryl M., Angie N.

For those in Harm's Way: All who serve with the armed forces at home & abroad, all who serve in the Peace Corps, and all health & relief workers throughout the world.



MEN'S NIGHT OUT

“Up On The Roof” on September 22 in Boone

Our next **Men's Night Out** gathering will take place at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, September 22 "up on the roof" at the Howard Hanna/Allen Tate Company, located at [736 West King Street](#) in the heart of uptown Boone. Host Jaco Gerbrands will welcome MNO colleagues with beer, wine, and hors d'oeuvres before moving across the street at 6:30 p.m. to the South End Brewing Company for a Dutch treat dinner. On street parking is available after 5 p.m., as well as in several nearby public parking lots in Boone including the new parking deck at Water and Queen Streets.

MNO is a monthly opportunity for men from various parishes and in our community to enjoy having an evening of fellowship together. We're very flexible and inclusive, so feel free to bring a friend... or three! In order to let our gracious host know how many will be in attendance (and to make our reservation at the restaurant), please RSVP by noon on Monday, September 21 via email to KeithTMartin@gmail.com

If you do not drive at night, need a ride to and/or from MNO, or are without reliable transportation for whatever reason, simply let us know. We have participants from all over the High Country who would welcome your company and be happy to pick you up and deliver you safely home.

Please come join us, "up on the roof."



Sunday, September 13, 2026

The Feast of the Holy Cross – Potluck Luncheon in Skiles Hall

On Sunday, September 13, we will celebrate the Feast of the Holy Cross with one service at 11:00 am and a potluck luncheon in Skiles following the service. Please bring one dish of your choice. Meal set ups will be provided and ready for your tasty offerings. Mary Pietan will be hostess for this event so you may contact her if you have questions. Looking forward to seeing you all there!

Sunday School Resumes Soon

Children's Sunday School at the 11:00 service resumes on September 13! Children ages three (and potty-trained) to ten years old will be invited with our stalwart Sunday School teachers for song, prayer, and learning in Skiles Hall and return to the service approximately at the Peace. We hope to have an update on nursery care options soon as well.

Early Service at Holy Cross Resumes Soon

A spoken Rite II service will resume at 8:00 a.m. on September 20, 2026, with our Rite II service with music continuing as usual at 11 a.m. This will be our regular service schedule moving forward. We remain in conversation with Valle Crucis United Methodist Church as their restoration project nears completion. Keep an eye out for an announcement regarding the reopening and rededication of their restored sanctuary in the heart of Valle Crucis!

September 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Steven Bentley and Michael Taylor's birthday	2	3  8:00pm "Online Compline"	4 Brenda & Jim Lowman's anniversary	5
6 Holy Eucharist 9:00am St. John's 11:00am Holy Cross 	7  8:00pm "Online Compline"	8 Mary Stolberg's birthday and Julie & Bob Gate's anniversary	9 Craig Adams' birthday and Alicia & Jim Toomey's anniversary	10  8:00pm "Online Compline"	11 Darby Logan's birthday	12 Jim Vroom and Norman Locke's birthday
13 11:00am Holy Eucharist  The Feast of the Holy Cross with Potluck Luncheon in Skiles Hall	14  8:00pm "Online Compline" Ahren Koenig's birthday Tracey and John Heiss and Jo Betts and Harry Baxley's anniversary	15 Jennifer Browning and Hank Wansker's birthday	16	17  8:00pm "Online Compline"	18	19 Susan Duke's birthday
20 8am & 11:00am Holy Eucharist  Rite II	21  8:00pm "Online Compline"	22  5:30 Men's Night Out "Up On The Roof" Dan and Caroline Shepherd's anniversary	23 Katherine Slayton and Nate Buhler's anniversary	24  8:00pm "Online Compline" John Heiss' birthday	25	26
27 8am & 11:00am Holy Eucharist  Rite II Bert Yate's birthday	28  8:00pm "Online Compline" Mary Frisbie's birthday	29	30 Tricia and Jim Tennant's anniversary			

Valle Country Fair: T-shirts and Volunteers and Thanks!

Thanks for all the help and prayers so far as we get closer and closer to this year's fair. This fair could not and cannot happen without you. We are grateful.

VCF Merchandise – New VCF merchandise should be on display in Skiles by mid-September! Your merchandise chairs Sis Kinney and Karla Prudhomme are offering short- and long-sleeved T-shirts and fleece vests. T-shirts will have the new fair poster art on the front. Fleece vests will be embroidered with the red barn logo. We know you'll love them!

Volunteers - We continue to recruit volunteers from inside and outside the parish. If you haven't found a job to do this year, please reach out to Mary Pietan, our wonderful volunteer coordinator. You can reach her at vcf.volunteer26@gmail.com or vcf.chairs@gmail.com. As the fair continues to grow, we need more willing hands. We hope you will consider how you can contribute. Many thanks to those who continue to pitch in.



If you have questions or need anything related to this year's fair, please contact Julie Gates ([704-906-2269](tel:704-906-2269)) or Tracey Heiss ([703-919-9767](tel:703-919-9767)). Thank you for your support.

Outreach

(aka MOC)

Things have slowed a little. Our July outlay was under \$4,000 so our monthly target was under by \$1,000. If we continue in this way we will be able to better provide heat in homes in the winter, which is one of our aims (1. Keep people in their homes, 2. On their jobs and 3. Heat in the house). Thanks to Martie Thompson, we have three new resources to refer people: Rutherford Baptist Church, Elk River Helping Hands, and Code the Dream through "My Friend Ben". Thanks for those, Martie. We have helped 122 people since January and the asks just keep on coming.

Keep up the prayer for folks who lost governmental housing vouchers and those who are out of work due to illness and injuries. Prayerful thanks to Jeff and Angela Williams for heading up the summer food ministry. Thanks to all who continue the Simple Gesture green bag donations to Hunger and Health Coalition. Our church village is strong and unwavering.

Every day someone is less hungry, more encouraged and more safe because of you. You matter and He sees. We thank God for challenges and the resources to address them. Be sure to thank Fair leaders Bob and Julie Gates and John and Tracey Heiss for their work on the upcoming Valle Country Fair on October 17. We are blessed to have a big fundraiser to support Outreach. Thanks to our church and community for working that day. It's fun but exhausting.

Be well. "God is watch watching us from a distance" as per Bette Midler.

Your Outreach team— Judy, Niki, Vickie, Mary S, Martie, Kip, Sis, Roberta and Radie



Notes from the Attic – Dedy Traver

“Notes” this month are taken from an article by Frank Grubbs in *“The Communicant”* June/July 1987, the newspaper of The Diocese of NC. Life in the mountains in the early 1900’s was not always easy. This gives a little insight into the hard work and sacrifices made by so many of those saints who worked to keep the Beacon of Light alive in the mountains. They were intent on bringing the Gospel and education to those who did not have the opportunity.

“We go uphill no matter which road we take and by some mysterious process its uphill coming back,” wrote missionary Maude Adams about her mission at Glendale Springs, NC. “Snuff, whiskey, and faith are the predominant elements in the house,” confided Janet Bottum of Linville as she characterized the mountain folk’s homes near her mission. Those quotes come from the collection of papers, the Rev. John Norton Atkins. Rev. Atkins began his service to the Missionary District of Asheville in 1902 as a seminary student at Valle Crucis. In 1907 he became priest-in-charge of several mountain missions and served in that capacity until 1929. The collection provides a fascinating picture of Episcopal missionary life in the western mountains at the turn of the century.

The missionaries were a vigorous lot, having fun when possible and socializing among themselves. Sarah Marsh of Valle Crucis loved the trips to the top of Grandfather Mountain. Louise Harlow was especially fond of the house parties at Foscoe and admitted to being “very unruly” when there. Mary Lucas Cantwell and Louise Harlow, both from Wilmington, were two of the most mischievous missionaries, sending Rev. Atkins bogus reports on their summer missionary work. Mary Lucas wrote “Age uncertain, 5-feet, 10 inches 107 lbs.; arrived too late to claim any hearts; only conquest a cast off suitor.” Louise Harlow wrote, “5-feet, 120 lbs.; broke one heart; killed one mule.”

But missionary lives were predominantly taken up with spreading the Gospel. They had serious obstacles to overcome: the terrible winters, bad roads and a constant scarcity of funds. The Rev. Alfred I. Lawrence complained that he could make only six house calls in the afternoon because of the weather. His job grew even more interesting when he conducted his first funeral and because no rope was available to lower the coffin into the grave, had to use his buggy lines instead.

At Linville Janet Bottum was required to assist a hotel doctor in amputating the leg of a severely injured man. During the operation she used up all the mission’s sheets and towels soaking up the blood. For weeks she begged Atkins to resupply the mission. In the meantime, Bottum went on trying to stop the children in the school from chewing tobacco in the classroom and in teaching them the strange art of kneeling and using the Book of Common Prayer.

At Glendale Springs, Maud Adams labored to end a diphtheria epidemic and to persuade the mountain folk to use medicines other than coal oil and turpentine. Lacking a baptismal font, the good lady offered to buy a bowl in Asheville and have a stand made to support it so the people could see infant baptism. Also at Glendale Springs Mitchell was constantly hampered in her duties by shortages of almost everything including tableware. She told Atkins that seldom could she put out a meal without having to wash the wares at least once to get them to go around. She felt deeply for the children and in 1909 carried two girls, who had walked miles through a blizzard, up to her room to teach them by her hot stove. She tolerated no slackers and complained about another young missionary who refused to attend the lectures on hookworms because it made her sick to listen to them.

Continued...

Notes from the Attic continued:

The lack of funds, overwork, and the long bitter winters severely affected the morale of the missionaries. Missions in Todd, Murphy and Linville, hauntingly beautiful in summer, became nightmares in the winter. At Todd, Margaret Dobbin complained of not having had communion in so long she had gone to the Methodist Church for it. At Glendale Springs, Jennie Field eagerly awaited the little devotionals which Atkins sent from time to time. Cellie McCullough complained of her desperate need to associate with her fellow missionaries during the winter, and Sarah Marsh told Atkins, "If you get guests at Foscoe we will have them at Valle Crucis."

As if isolation were not enough, the missionaries were often in threatening situations. Virginia Mitchell wrote, "The drinking has started. It is so bad we abolished the evening service. I really should not be alone here." Two months later she witnessed a fight over "the cows, that got into someone's corn" and remarked, "I just went upstairs, cut out my light and went to bed. I never heard so much swearing." The year 1910 was a bad one for Glendale Springs. One of the locals who had grown to dislike the mission brought his drunken friends and they all fired their pistols into the air around the house until Maud Adams feared for her life.

Financial frustrations, cabin fever and attempts to educate the mountain folk in Episcopal ways sometimes caused bitter feelings among the missionaries. Virginia Mitchell blamed Atkins for her failure to get a small raise. After two years in Todd, Margaret Dobbin asserted that she was losing interest in church work and partially blamed Atkins.

Even so, most missionaries became attached to the mountains. Sarah Marsh later wrote from New Jersey, "the mountains pull at the heart strings" and Cellie McCullough wrote from New York City "Sometimes I dream of returning to the valley but realize it is only a dream."

It is a pity that the enthusiasm which these young missionaries demonstrated could not have been supported by sufficient funds. Bishop Horner made repeated trips to New York City and to Philadelphia to seek money. Atkins began the *Mission Quarterly* in March 1908 partly to attract funds but the periodical folded in 1915. Friends in the North sent aid in small allotments. Within NC, aid arrived from St. John's, Wilmington and Christ Church, Raleigh. Occasionally wealthy northeasters would give substantial gifts. Some missions leased their fields to farmers. For a time the missions sold some of the children's sewing to northern buyers. Even Mrs. Atkins peddled some of the wares up North. But sufficient funds were never found and by 1917 many of the missions closed.

The Atkins Collection reveals the efforts of Episcopal missionaries to administer to the spiritual needs of a mountain people who liked sermons more than ritual and who appreciated education more than worship. The letters show why the Episcopal faith grew slowly in that area.

Dr. Frank L. Grubbs is historiographer of the diocese and is a communicant of St. Paul's Cary.



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Diocese of Western North Carolina

Clergy & Staff

The Rev. Jonathan C. Chesney, Rector

Emma Pullium, Director of Music

Ahren Koenig, Parish Administrator

Vestry

Nina-Jo Moore (2028), Senior Warden

Randy McDonough (2028), Junior Warden

Doris Boulton (2026), Catherine Morton (2026 – completing term), Angela Williams (2026),

Radie Armstrong (2027), Paul Cribbins (completing term-2027), Sis Kinney (2027),

John Goodrich (2028)

Officers

Jan Skopecek, Treasurer

Dedy Traver, Clerk

Church of the Holy Cross

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