

SOUNDS OF ST. FRANCIS

Fall 2025



ST. FRANCIS
POTOMAC



Current Schedule	3
Pastor's Corner	4
Bible Study.....	6
Summer Property Updates.....	7
New Member Classes	9
Sunday School.....	10
New Members.....	11
Music Notes.....	12
Parish Life.....	14
Financial Summary.....	18
Mercy Youth	19
Upcoming Events.....	20
Important Dates	26

Rector
Fr. Mark Michael
mmichael@stfrancispotomac.org
Pastor for Adult and Youth Formation

Rev. Dr. Allison Michael
amichael@stfrancispotomac.org

Organist and Choirmaster
John Widmann
music@stfrancispotomac.org

Parish Life, Sunday School & Outreach
Coordinator Kathy Herrmann
kherrmann@stfrancispotomac.org

AV and Livestream Technician
Sean Smith
communications@stfrancispotomac.org

Communications Team
communications@stfrancispotomac.org

Sounds of St. Francis Submissions
sounds@stfrancispotomac.org

General Information
info@stfrancispotomac.org



Service Schedule

Welcome to Saint Francis Episcopal Church in Potomac, Maryland! Whether you have been a member of Saint Francis for decades or are new to our community, you will find here rich opportunities to worship the risen Lord, a warm welcome, and many opportunities to grow in faith and love.

Wherever you are in your own walk of faith, we would love to have you with us, not because we want something from you, but because we have tasted and seen that the Lord is good at Saint Francis, and we want to share that with you.

The Weekly Lowdown

**NEW Service times Begin Labor Day **

Sunday

8am Morning Prayer & Eucharist
9:15am (with children's chapel on 2nd
Sundays at 10:30)

Monday

3:30-5pm Fr. Mark Office Hours

Tuesday

10:15am Midweek Holy Eucharist

Friday

8am Morning Prayer & Holy Eucharist
3:30-5pm Fr. Mark Office Hours
5pm Evening Prayer



Open Office Hours

Father Mark will have open door office hours this week on Monday & Friday from 3:30-5pm. This is a great time to drop in for a chat. He is available at other times by appointment.



St. Francis
PRESENTS

BIBLE STUDY

EVERY Tuesday

11 a.m. in
the
Library

WITH Father Mark
and Pastor Allison

Pastor's Corner

Beloved Saint Francis Family,



I always associate the start of the school year with the feasts of Saint Monica (August 27th) and Saint Augustine (August 28th). Augustine, despite his brilliance, was an uncooperative student. He admitted in his Confessions that he did not like his lessons and he hated being forced to study. He especially detested arithmetic and Greek! His later education in rhetoric was much more successful—his parents and tutors knew that he was gifted with a fine mind-- but he continued to be unruly as a young man. He was proud, ambitious, and pursued sexual adventure without concern for how his actions affected others.

He scorned the Bible and the faith of his mother Monica because the simplicity of the text lacked the eloquence of Cicero. But a series of blessings helped turn Augustine from a selfish youth to one of the great Saints of the early Church.

1) **His mother Monica** (the original helicopter mom, who annoyed him to no end) never stopped praying for him and entreating him to turn back to the faith of the Church. Her perseverance in faith and love until the end made her a Saint.

2) **God gave him a desire to know Truth**, which led him on a winding intellectual journey. He spent time among the Neoplatonists, the Manicheans (a dualist religion, which he soon rejected as incoherent), and the Skeptics, each of which taught him things and refined his thinking, but none of which satisfied his deepest desires.

3) When in Milan, teaching rhetoric, **Augustine met the bishop Ambrose of Milan**, who was a powerfully articulate preacher. Saint Ambrose was concerned to use eloquent rhetoric, but not to show off. He only wanted the dignity of the language to reflect the weighty importance of the message and substance of the Gospel. "To Milan I came, to Ambrose... I was led by You, Lord, that by him I might knowingly be led to you. That man of God received me as a father... I hung onto his words attentively."

4) **The Scriptures**, which eventually caught him off guard.

As he softened to the message of the Gospels, Augustine agonized over whether he could become a Christian, and often looked down on those who embraced the faith in its entirety. But one day in the year 368, while in a garden with his friend Alypius, he heard what seemed to be a child's voice coming from next door, saying over and over, "Tolle, lege; tolle, lege," or, "Pick up and read; pick up and read."

Since he could not think of any reason why a child would be saying that, he took it as an omen, and picked up a copy of Saint Paul's Letters. As he opened it, his eye fell on the end of the thirteenth chapter:

The night is far gone, the day is at hand.
Let us then cast off the works of darkness
and put on the armor of light;
let us conduct ourselves becomingly as in the day,
not in reveling and drunkenness,
not in debauchery and licentiousness,
not in quarreling and jealousy.
But put on the Lord Jesus Christ,
and make no provision for the flesh,
to gratify its desires.

As he read, he experienced this as God speaking directly to him, convicting him of his past sins, and offering him forgiveness; calling him to amend his life, and promising him the grace and power to do it. He burst into tears, and surrendered. Later, he wrote:

Late have I loved You, O Lord; and behold,
You were within and I without, and there I sought You.
You were with me when I was not with You.
You did call, and cry, and burst my deafness.
You did gleam, and glow, and dispel my blindness.
You did reach out to me, and I burned for Your peace.
**For Thyself Thou hast made us,
and our hearts are restless until they rest in you.**
Late have I loved you, Beauty ever old and ever new.
You have burst my bonds asunder;
unto You will I offer up an offering of praise.

So if you're going back to school and you're dreading math, or if you're a parent or grandparent worrying about your kids or grandkids, or if you're looking back over your past and regretting your worst choices, take heart. There's still time for you and for your loved ones to encounter the risen Lord, who brought peace to Augustine's restless and wandering heart. We were all made for His Love! Whatever the challenges of this year, hear the voice calling your own restless heart to turn away from the sins, selfishness, and worries of the past, and let your restless heart find peace in His embrace.

Pastor Allison

Summer Property Updates:

The summer is a quieter time in our program calendar at St. Francis, which gives our staff more time to focus on property issues, doing all we can to make our buildings and grounds safe and attractive, to welcome all who come to our campus.

We have faced some challenges related to the intense rainstorms this summer. There were minor floods in the church undercroft twice, from water seeping under the door by the ramp. Thankfully, we had just replaced the sump pump and cleared the drainage line on the other side of the building just a few days before the first flood. The floods were mitigated quickly, with no damage.

Flowing water also made our brick sidewalks uneven along Counselman Road and between the church and the school complex. The brick has been re-laid in the affected areas, with some re-grading to prevent future erosion. After a PEPCO truck damaged the grassy area in front of the church while repairing a light pole, the area was filled and reseeded (by PEPCO). We also filled in some areas in our drain field that were eroded by the heavy rains and cleared out a major gutter that had become clogged.

Thanks to help from future Eagle Scout Carter Jillings and members of Scout Troop 773, the parking space lines in our parking lots were repainted and a flower bed near the parking lot was planted with deer-resistant perennials. Several other members of the troop have approached us with interest in undertaking Eagle Scout projects around our campus. If you have ideas, speak with Kathy Herrmann. Enrique our handyman also repaired the church chimney and repainted some areas in the foyer of St. Francis Hall and the offices that needed attention. He also installed some protective guards around the staircase in the church to prevent young children from slipping through the wide gaps between the banisters. He took down some overgrown shrubs and repaired some loose flagstones in the Columbarium Plaza.

We have several projects planned for the next several months. These include a refurbishment of the restrooms in the church (painting, new countertops) and a resurfacing of the basketball court. The final portion of the HVAC work that began last fall will be completed (the commissioning of the system) and we will finalize a maintenance contract for the new digital control system that regulates temperatures in St. Francis Hall (a complex system that cannot be manually adjusted). The staff will be trained on troubleshooting problems with the HVAC system and communicating with the digitalcontrols technicians. We also expect to finalize plans for some necessary upgrades to our fire alarm system and to complete a series of related inspections.

Carter Jillings Eagle Project Takes to the Streets

Carter, a rising senior at Georgetown Prep and member of Troop 773, worked to complete his Boy Scout Eagle project this summer. We are the lucky recipients of new parking lot striping and landscaping thanks to Carter and his troop mates efforts. Many thanks and congratulations on a successful project.



New Member Classes:

We encourage all who become involved in the life of our community to renew their baptismal promises and commit to membership in our congregation. Those who have not been members of an Episcopal or Anglican church before should become members of St. Francis by being confirmed or received by the bishop.

About every 18 months, we schedule new member classes to prepare those who wish to be confirmed or received. These are open to long-term members who might like a refresher as well as to those who are new to our community. They discuss core elements of Christian faith and practice like the creeds, the Scriptures, and the Sacraments, as well as our Anglican heritage, the Book of Common Prayer, and ways to get more involved here at St. Francis.

A six-session new member class will be held this fall on Sundays at 10:30 from September 28-November 9. This will be the adult forum offering on these Sundays, except for on October 12, when Bishop James Almasi will be with us from Tanzania. In addition to the six classes, those preparing for confirmation or reception should plan to attend a half-day retreat focused on discernment and the life of prayer. We will offer these on October 18 from 2:30-5:30 and on November 8 from 9-12.

There are two opportunities to be confirmed or received: either on Saturday, November 15 at 11:00 a.m. at Washington National Cathedral, or on Sunday, April 19, at the morning service here at St. Francis, when Bishop Mariann Budde makes her regular visitation.

Father Mark and Pastor Allison are happy to speak with you more about these opportunities.

SUNDAY School

Starts every Sunday at 9am!

We'd love to see you there.

Please contact

Kherrmann@stfrancispotomac.org with any questions!

Register Now for Sunday School



**St.
Francis
CHILDREN'S**

**Sunday School
Sign up
301-365-2055 ex 320**



The Children's are always welcome during the Church service. If they get too antsy the Cribbery in the undercroft is open during Summer 10am service.





WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!



The Sounds will be featuring members of all ages! We would love to learn more about you! Reach out if you would like an interview or submit pictures and news!

Congratulations to **Will Schneider**, who graduated from Saint Andrew's in the spring. He's now at Auburn University, and we pray for a wonderful start to this new chapter in his life! His sister, **Caroline Schneider**, just graduated from Clemson University and is starting dental school at the University of Maryland.

Welcome

Babies at St. Francis



AND we rejoice to announce the arrival of **Miriam Ann Tester**, born on June 16th! Congrats to Sarah and Kenneth Tester, and big brother Laurence and big sister Sylvia!



We rejoice to announce the arrival of **Sage Emory Maroulis**, born on June 10th! Congratulations to Tyler and Morgan Maroulis, and to big sister Sasha!

For Sounds Submissions Contact:
Kathy Herrmann or Pastor Allison
kherrmann@stfrancispotomac.org
sounds@stfrancispotomac.org
(240)- 409- 9434 or (607) 544- 4400

Music Notes



A Letter from Our Organist and Choir Director **John Widmann**

Internationally known Carillonneur

A rest, some music, and some inspiration.

I write this on my last day of concerts and vacation.

On this trip to Europe, I visited six countries, many churches and organs, played seven carillon concerts, and heard some wonderful concerts.

In **England**, I played the carillon at York Minster as prelude to Choral Evensong and then attended the Evensong, sung by the Choir of Christ Church Christiana Hundred of Wilmington DE.

In **Scotland**, we spent time with Diane's extended family at the Clan Moffat gathering.

Back in **England**, I attended a recital by one of England's finest Organists', Jonathan Scott (not to be confused with another English Organist, Jonathan Scott+, who was at St Thomas Church, Fifth Avenue). Look for Jonathan on YouTube!

In **Belgium**, I played carillon recitals in Wavre, Leuven, Steenokkerzeel, Soignies and Dendermonde.

We spent a few days in **Normandy**, where we visited the Azincourt 1415 Museum, and the Utah Beach landing Museum.

I also played a carillon concert in **Roosendaal, in the Netherlands**, and I saw another YouTube sensation, Gert van Hoef, play at the historic Lutherse Kerk in den Haag.

I am finishing up the trip as I write this in **Thüringia and Saxony in Germany**, where I played a carillon recital earlier today in Erfurt. We also visited other towns in the area, Eisenach, Arnstadt, Weimar and Leipzig. Those of you versed in music history have probably noted what all of these towns have in common: Johann Sebastian Bach. We visited his birth house in Eisenach (sort of), places he worked, in Weimar and Arnstadt (where parts of the organ he played still exist), and Leipzig, where he worked at the end of his life. In Leipzig, we went to a Motet evening service, where the Thomanerchor, which Bach conducted, sang Motets and a Cantata by Bach, accompanied by the Leipzig Gewandhausorchester, which at one point was conducted by Leipzig's other renowned resident composer, Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy. We visited the Bach Museum and Archiv, and the Mendelssohn haus.

Photos from John's Travels



Organ, York Minster

Jonathan Scott and John Widmann



*The Thomanerchor and
Leipzig Gewandhausorchester
at the Thomaskirche in
Leipzig, Germany*



*John and his host, Lorenz
Muelebroek, in Dendermonde,
Belgium*

I missed all of you, and by the time that you read this, I will be back, ready for another choir and organ season. We have great things planned, including a Requiem evening service for All Souls, a dedication of our organ work so far, our Advent Lessons and Carols, an Evensong and much more!

Kind regards,

John Widmann



*John in Roosendaal,
Netherlands*

*Old DDR walk
signal in Leipzig*



John in Wavre, Belgium



Diane and John in Honfleur, Normandy

PARISH LIFE

At St. Francis, we work hard to have activities that appeal to a wide range of ages and interests, and we hope you have enjoyed some of the recent things we have done together. Mark your calendars now for upcoming events, so you don't miss out on any of the fun.

Our annual Easter Egg hunt brought many smiles to children and their parents.



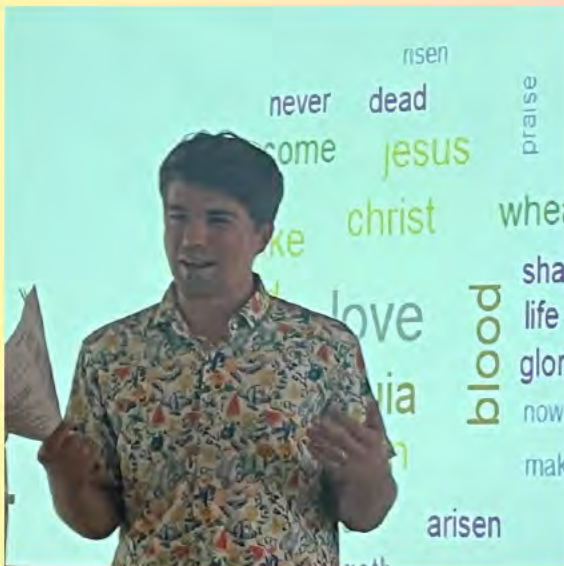
April 6th- Baby Shower and Brunch

Ladies of St. Francis did a wonderful job of collecting baby presents, playing baby shower games and providing a scrumptious meal. 2 carloads of donations were given to Montgomery County Gabriel Project.



Contemporary Worship Service- May 10th

We are grateful for the musical talents of Tina Lundelius, Spencer Ritchie and Peter Davis to once again lead us in an evening of musical worship



Confirmation Retreat

Confirmands enjoyed a fun retreat experience on the eastern shore. From June 16-19th kids enjoyed time together fishing, taught by our own, Matt Jillings, swimming, kayaking, crabbing, paddle boarding and lots of outdoor activities. They read and acted out bible lessons, took part in morning prayer and compline.





VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL



St. Francis partnered with Zion Church for a fun filled Vacation Bible School (VBS) from June 23rd until the 27th. Using Son West Roundup, kids acted out, sang, played games, made crafts and learned about Exodus and God's ultimate plan, power, rescue, trust and love. The Western Theme was well received and a rowdy good time was had by all!





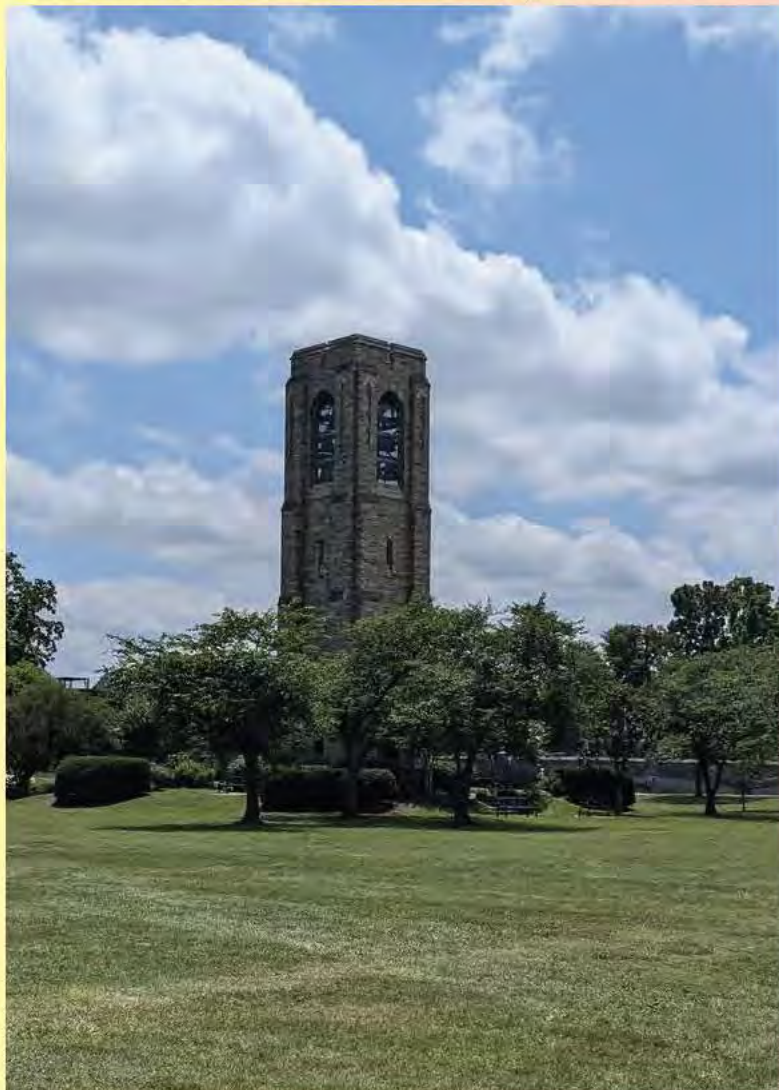
Holy Baptism

Rowe Tendall, granddaughter of Sue and Skip Tendall, daughter of Claudia and Connor Tendall



BELLS ARE RINGING

St. Francis Parishioners enjoyed hearing John Widmann play the Carillon in Baker Park in Frederick. Following the concert, many of us went to Brewers Alley for lunch.



FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Executive Summary

Change in Net Assets: \$150k

Statement of Financial Position (Balance Sheet):

- Cash and Investments: \$653k
 - Schwab Investment Portfolio: \$494k
- Significant Capital Expenditure for HVAC System and Organ in late 2024: \$674k
 - Additional Capital Expenditure in June ~\$40k

Statements of Activities (Income Statement):

- **Revenues**
 - **Pledges: \$331k, down \$26k compared to prior year**
 - Decrease in pledged gifts by \$11k
 - Payment of prior year pledge of \$8k (increase)
 - One-off \$25k gift in March 2024
 - **Other Gifts and Offerings: \$60k, down \$8k compared to prior year**
 - Lenten appeal up \$5k (total \$40k)
 - Other Restricted Revenue (Youth, Flowers, etc.) down \$15k
 - Loose Plate up \$2k
 - **Other Operating Income: up by \$97k compared to prior year**
 - Major Drivers:
 - 2 ERTC payments in March, 1 ERTC payment in June \$53k
 - Timing on GHDS Lease Payments \$37k
 - New Zion Church Lease \$9k
- **Expenses**
 - **General and Administrative: \$43k decrease from prior year**
 - Driven by Accounting Professional Fees (down \$36k), termination of YPTC
 - Timing on Audit Payments \$7k
 - **Outreach: increase \$13k from prior year**
 - Timing on Lenten Appeal Distributions \$24 increase – distributed later last year (July and August)
 - Timing on Diocesan Support Payments \$7k
 - **Property: \$9k increase from prior year**
 - Driven by HVAC repairs in April 2024 (Building R&M \$16k)
 - Partially offset by new HVAC maintenance contract (-\$10k)
 - Utilities \$6k
 - **Internal Programs: decrease \$9k from prior year**
 - No Mission Trip 2025 \$9k
 - **Worship: down \$7k from prior year**
 - No one major driver, guests and AV Tech costing less than prior year
 - **Personnel: flat year-over-year**

MERCYyouth FALL 2025

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Philippians 4:8



SEPT 21
**Animal-Themed
Service Project**

Stay tuned for details, but we have some exciting possibilities in the works! (And if you love animals, check out your congregation's Blessing of the Animals Service the weekend of October 4th!)



OCT 11
FALL FEST

Reach out to the community with children's crafts, games, and fundraisers for community organizations. Saint Francis 9am-3pm (drop in as you are able). SSL eligible



OCT 27
TRUNK OR TREAT

Grab a costume, or just help with the food collection. Always a blast! @ Saint James. SSL Eligible

**OCT
TBD**

CLOTHING CLOSET SORT

Join the people of Christ Episcopal Church to help sort items for those in need in our own community! SSL Eligible

NOV 8

CONFIRMATIONS

We have a big group of confirmands preparing for confirmations at Washington National Cathedral (11am). Come support them, or say a prayer for them on this big day!

NOV 9

BOWLING!

Join us at Bowlero, Gaithersburg (1101 Clopper Rd.) and enjoy some friendly competition! 7pm

DEC 6

COOKIE BAKING

An annual favorite and a fundraiser for youth group service projects, 9am-noon. It is always good to have a few adult helpers or experienced teen bakers! Location TBD.

DEC 20

CHRISTMAS BASKETS DISTRIBUTION

Assemble baskets of Christmas Food and donate to area families in need. Donations needed! Details forthcoming.

MERCY is a joint ministry of Christ Episcopal Church (Rockville), Saint James Episcopal Church (Potomac), and Saint Francis Episcopal Church (Potomac). Contact Pastor Allison Michael or Maddie Weber for info about these or other upcoming events. amichael@stfrancispotomac.org or maddie@stjamespotomac.org

Finding Fellowship in Many Ways



Join us for

Desserts From The Garden Cooking Class

Wednesday, August 27th
From 6:30 - 8:30PM
12312 Rivers Edge Drive
Potomac Md
RSVP to Kathy Herrmann

THE ST. FRANCIS VESTRY
INVITES YOU TO
join us for
COCKTAILS
IN THE COURTYARD
SATURDAY | 13th | SEPTEMBER
BYOB & AN APPETIZER TO SHARE
5:30-8:00
ITHE COLUMBARIUM COURTYARD
IF RAIN, KINCAID LIBRARY
hope to see you!

Join us for

**St. Francis Book
Club**

**September 10th
11 a.m.**

**The Kingmaker
by
Sonia Purnell**



*St. Francis
Savvy Seniors*

September 18th
2025

Bring a lunch. Desserts and drinks
will be provided

See you at Noon!
10033 River Rd

**Roy
DAY**
Dinner at 6
and
presentation
at 7 p.m.

**September
19th
St. Francis
Hall**





St. Francis will be offering Essentrics classes taught by our friend **Elena Detwiler**

Unlock your Body with Essentrics®
elena.detwiler@gmail.com | 814-330-1354
<https://www.drlenadetwiler.com/://essentrics.com/what-is-essentrics>

Essentrics is a functional fitness class designed to address the needs of your full body: to build global strength and mobility while being respectful to its natural limitations.

No matter whether you're age 30 or 80, the science behind what your body requires to stay youthful doesn't change. To feel strong, healthy, vibrant and pain free, your workout should help you to build strength and mobility while being respectful to the natural limitations of your musculoskeletal system. Your own personal muscle flexibility and the capacity of your joints, tendons and ligaments to withstand impact, positions or twists are important factors to consider when taking on a fitness class or activity. Join us in the Parish Hall beginning Monday, September 8th at 6:30 p.m. and check out what amazing things Essentrics has to offer. (\$15 per session) Contact Kathy Herrmann for more information 240-409-9434

SEPTEMBER



September 7- Back to School Brunch after service

September 13- Cocktails in the Courtyard 5:30-8pm

September 14- Youth Confirmation on the Liturgy and Book of Common Prayer 6-8pm

September 19- A night with Roy Day and Dinner 6-8pm



OCTOBER

October 3-5th Women's Retreat is Canaan Valley West Virginia at the edge of Monongahela National Forest.

October 5- Blessing of the Animals

October 11- Potomac Day-Fall Fest

October 18th at 6 p.m. International Food Pot Luck Night with a visit from Bishop Amassi

NOVEMBER

November 2- All Souls Requiem 5-6pm

November 8- Confirmation Half Day Retreat 9am-12pm

November 15- Confirmations at Washington Cathedral 11am-12pm

November 22- Line Dancing 6-8pm

