



# SOUNDS

*Fall 2026*

*September - November*



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# From our Rector

During our family's travels over the summer, an interesting stop was the Mohawk Chapel in Brantford, Ontario. Constructed in 1785, it's the first Anglican church in the region and one of the oldest Protestant churches in Canada. Officially, the church is known as "His Majesty's Royal Chapel of the Mohawks," and it's one of only a handful of chapels royal outside of the United Kingdom.

Most of the chapels royal, like St. George's Chapel at Windsor or the chapel at St. James' Palace in London, are intended for the use of the king and his family. They are under the royal household's direct control instead of being subject to a diocesan bishop, an arrangement that dates back to the 15th century. But a few chapels royal have been given the honorific for symbolic reasons, and this rather unprepossessing clapboard church within the Mohawk reservation (Canadians call it a "reserve") is one of these.

Its presence here is a tribute to the longstanding loyalty of the Mohawk people to the British Crown, and their persistent Anglican faith. The Mohawk are one of the six nations of the Iroquois or Haudenosaunee Confederacy, the dominant tribal group in the Northeastern part of what is now the United States during the colonial period. Several colonies contracted alliances with the Iroquois from the late seventeenth century, creating a bond long known as the "Covenant Chain" that offered protection to settlers on the frontier in exchange for the recognition of the Iroquois' land rights.

In 1710, a group of Mohawk chiefs living in what is now central New York traveled to London to appeal directly to the British monarch, Queen Anne, for protection from the French. In response, she ordered the construction of Fort Hunter, along the Mohawk River (near where we used to live, in Cooperstown).



She also sponsored the construction of a chapel and the salary of an Anglican chaplain, the Rev. Thomas Barclay, who was to minister both to the local English-speaking population and to the Mohawks. The queen even sent a set of communion silver and a Bible for use in the chapel.



The ministries of Barclay and the chaplains that followed him were very successful. A school based at the fort trained the Mohawk elite, and they adopted Anglicanism with vigor. Once, when the community was without a resident minister, a Presbyterian missionary tried his hand at leading worship among them. He grew very frustrated when the Mohawks ignored his long extemporary prayer and sermon, persisting instead in reciting the responses of the prayer book service and standing, kneeling, and sitting as the Anglican chaplains had taught them.

A later chaplain, the Rev. John Stuart, translated the Prayer Book liturgy and parts of the Bible into English with help from Joseph Brant or Thayendanegea, who would become the Mohawk's main military leader in the 1770's. His sister, Molly, also a devoted Anglican, was the wife of Sir William Johnston, the British agent working among the Mohawks, and she has a feast day on the Episcopal Church's calendar of saints recognizing her work as a patron of church work among her people.

When the Revolutionary War broke out, the Mohawks remained loyal to the British, and Joseph Brant led a guerilla company of Mohawk and white loyalist soldiers called Brant's Volunteers that clashed with revolutionary troops along the frontier in New York and Ohio. The chapel at Fort Hunter was plundered in retaliation, but the Mohawks had buried the Queen Anne communion silver in a secret location.

As the tide of war turned towards the American side, Brant led his community in relocating to a large grant of land provided by the British Crown in what is now Ontario. King George III also paid for the construction of a chapel at their new settlement (now known as Brantford), and also sent a beautifully carved and painted plaque of the royal arms which still hang over its west door. The Mohawks dug up the communion silver as they were departing, and it remains in use at the church, along with the original Bible.

The furnishings of the chapel will be familiar to anyone who has spent time in Colonial Anglican churches in Maryland or Virginia. Boards painted with the Lord's Prayer, Ten Commandments, and Creed hang over the small altar—but the text is in Mohawk, not English. A beautiful series of modern stained glass windows tells the story of the Mohawk people's religious life, including the 1710 journey of the chiefs to London, the chapel at Fort Hunter, and the founding of the settlement at Brantford. Brant is buried in a large tomb in the cemetery, alongside a number of Mohawk veterans of the War of 1812.

The chapel no longer has a regular congregation, but special services and community gatherings are still held here throughout the year. It remains a holy place among the Mohawk, the oldest monument of their presence in Canada.

The Mohawk Chapel is important because it witnesses to an important side of the Church's mission among native peoples that is often ignored in contemporary discussions. The Mohawks enthusiastically embraced Anglicanism, and it became central to their communal identity. They brought it with them to their new home, and placed a church at its center, worshipping God in their own language. Today, about 5% of Canadians are indigenous, but 10% of Canadian Anglicans are of this heritage. The Christian faith is not, for them, a foreign creed imposed from outside, but a source of inspiration and renewal fully compatible with their ethnic heritage.



**Our new website will be up and running this month! Take a moment to view some of the videography we will be using.**

**<https://sl1nk.com/e5g4kyi>**



## From The Desk of Pastor Allison

Dear Saint Francis Family and Friends,

I hope that for all of you, the summer has been a restful one, filled with quiet days and joyful memories made with loved ones and friends! We are excited to have everyone back as we renew our fall routines with Bible studies, Sunday school, choir practices, worship, and social events. The body of Christ is always richer when you are with us in prayer and in person.

It is a strange time in the world, and one of the things that we're all grappling with is the rapid changes in human-like technologies. Artificial intelligence, in particular, is transforming our world rapidly, with its wide range of risks and possibilities. In light of that, Fr. Mark and I really want to spend time pondering this fall is the what it means to be human.

We have known it, in fact, since the first chapter of Genesis, where the human being is created-- spoken into being and made in the image of God, who first made the stars and then, extraordinarily, stooped down to shape a creature out of dust and breathe life into it. Unfortunately, the world tells us in a thousand quiet (or loud) ways that intelligence and achievement are the measure of a person, and that machines can "think" faster and more cheaply than we can. If intelligence is what makes us valuable, then we have a problem,

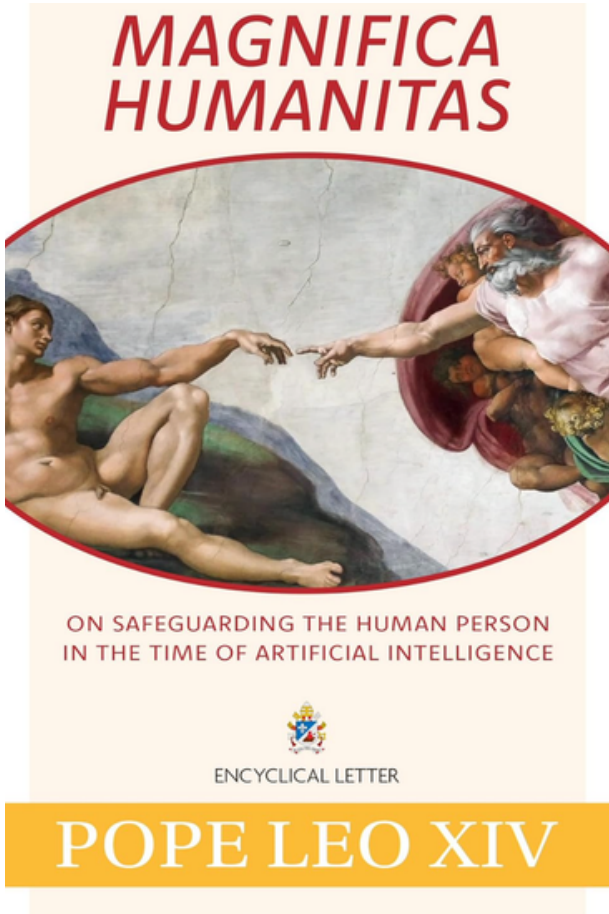
because the machines are winning! Fortunately, our worth was always and only about being claimed by a God who loves us before we have done a single useful thing. Fall adult forum will consider these things through the lens of Magnifica Humanitas (“Magnificent Humanity”), the recent papal encyclical. We will also ponder related themes in Bible study as we start reading through the book of Exodus and consider what it means to be a human being in community as a part of the wider people of God.

This theme is also part of what we aim to live when we bless our children’s backpacks and remind them of their value, or when we visit one another in times of grief or distress. The practice of the faith is largely about living fully as the humans we were made to be, which requires us to reckon with our own fragility and littleness alongside the great dignity we have been given in the invitation to a living relationship with God.

We are not our data, nor are we even what we accomplish for God’s Kingdom — we are what has been done for us. We are beloved creations of God, offered redemption on a Friday outside Jerusalem. Whether you’ve been with us every week this summer or you’re just off the plane from extended time away, we look forward to celebrating and pondering the blessings of our shared humanity with you this Fall!

In Christ,  
Pastor Allison+

## Adult Forum for Fall



Magna Humanitas is the first encyclical of Leo XIV's pontificate. In it, the pope provides a groundbreaking analysis of our times -- the "change of era" fueled by technology -- and applies the principles of the Church's social doctrine to the challenges we now face. Digitalization, artificial intelligence, and robotics are not intrinsic enemies of humankind. Yet they amplify a call to shared discernment and frame a fundamental choice: Will we construct a new Tower of Babel or rebuild the walls of Jerusalem? Boldly engaging human knowledge and innovation, Pope Leo proposes a path forward, one that safeguards human dignity, bolsters the common good, builds communion, and ultimately leads to Christ.

## Youth Group Update

**Our first Youth Group event will September 20<sup>th</sup> at Manna. More to follow once the school year gets underway.**

### MERCY AT MANNA

LOVE, SORT, PACK, SERVE

**TEENS AND YOUTH 11+ (AND CHAPERONES!)**

- Meet us at Manna Food Bank:
- 9311 Gaither Rd, Gaithersburg, MD
- September 20, 5-7 pm

**WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT**

Every day, families in our community go to bed hungry. Your donation helps us provide fresh meals and groceries to those who need it most.

**EVERYONE DONATE!**

- By September 13
- vegetables, beans & soup
- Rice, pasta & cereal
- Shelf-stable milk & baby formula
- Peanut butter
- Cooking oil & spice
- Allergy-friendly items

**SSL ELIGIBLE**

RSVP: Contact Pastor Allison  
amichael@stfrancispotomac.org  
or Fr. Angel frangel@cecrockville.org  
or Maddie Webber  
maddie@stjamespotomac.org



# From the Keys of the Choirmaster

The choir returns to sing our services for the season on September 6<sup>th</sup>, the day before Labor Day. The choir rehearses on Thursday evenings at 7:30 - 9pm. We would welcome some more volunteer members from the congregation!

We lost two of our favorite choir section leaders over the Summer. Our Soprano, Mimi Rinaldi, and our Bass, Chris Fotis, are both moving on and will be missed. We also lost our alto, Maddie, in May. We are already auditioning replacements. Kareem, our tenor, remains with us as do our Choral Scholars, Elvira, Sam and Philip.

I had a busy Summer, which was filled with music, including carillon, organ, and especially choral music. In addition to the two carillon conferences, Connecticut and Portugal, and a recital tour of Michigan carillons, I took a great class in Anglican Choral and Organ music at St. Albans Cathedral. In the class, we explored the history of the English Church Music, sang evensong every night for a week and the Sunday Eucharist.



The class was called “If These Stones Could Sing”. This title alludes to the quote from Luke 19:40, when Jesus tells the Pharisee, “...I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry.” St. Albans Cathedral is built on the spot where St. Alban, England’s first saint, was martyred in around 300a.d. The work on building this Cathedral, set on the site of previous churches, was begun in 1066 by the Normans. That work was complete in 1115, and the tower and other parts of the Cathedral date from then. The stones have been witness to so much!

As a reminder, please mark your calendars:

**All Souls' Requiem Eucharist: November 1 at 5pm.** We will feature the Requiem Mass of English composer John Rutter, along with a small instrumental ensemble of Oboe, Flute, Cello, Harp Timpani and Organ. It will be a beautiful way to remember all of our Saints from St. Francis.

**Choral Morning Prayer: September 27 at 9:15am.**

**Advent Service of lessons and Carols: Sunday, December 6th at 5pm.**

# Property Updates

With warmer summer weather and peak growing conditions, our property team has been busy keeping the campus in good shape and addressing the issues that summer weather inevitably brings to light. Much of our focus has been on routine roofing,



gutter and downspout maintenance, drainage, exterior masonry and window touch-ups, caulking, painting, and other repairs.

We have also been working on landscaping and tree-trimming projects to keep parking spaces and walkways clear and accessible, while staying ahead of the summer weeds and growth.

The past several months also included our annual inspection and Certificate of Occupancy renewal cycles. We are pleased to report that these were successfully completed, benefiting both St. Francis and our long-term tenant, Georgetown Hill Early School.

The remote monitoring and reporting capabilities added as part of our recent HVAC upgrade proved their value this summer. Timely alerts, diagnostic information, and remote control capabilities allowed the property team and HVAC contractor to respond quickly to minor issues and help prevent them from becoming larger problems.

A seasonal comfort note: Our HVAC systems undergo a seasonal transition from cooling to heating. As temperatures begin to drop, there may be some mornings when the church feels chilly because the boilers have not yet been activated. Please bring a layer or two as needed to stay comfortable!

We continue to invest in our relationship with Georgetown Hill by maintaining the campus to standards that reflect both their needs and ours, while also supporting their enrollment and programming efforts when they enhance the campus and align with our community and outreach objectives. The newly striped basketball court includes hopscotch and four-square lines! So please bring your children and grandchildren and take advantage of the grounds.

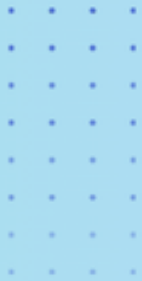


Our newly  
resurfaced  
basketball  
court!



# A Report from our Outreach Committee

## A SUCCESSFUL School Supply Drive



STEPPING STONES PROVIDES SCHOOL SUPPLIES FOR OVER 250 ELEMENTARY, MIDDLE, HIGH SCHOOLERS AND KIDS GOING TO COLLEGE. WE RESPONDED TO THEIR REQUEST FOR HELP. ST. FRANCIS COLLECTED A CAR FULL OF BACKPACKS, NOTEBOOKS, CALCULATORS, WRITING AND DRAWING MATERIALS AND MORE. WHEN THE SUPPLIES WERE DROPPED OFF THEY WERE EXTREMELY THANKFUL AND APPRECIATIVE OF OUR EFFORTS.

THE NEED WAS GREAT AND WE HELPED. WE LOOK FORWARD TO PARTNERING WITH STEPPING STONES IN THE FUTURE.





# The Sunday School & Fellowship Corner



**Picnic in the Park**



## **KIDS SUMMER SUNDAYS**

The kids have had the opportunity to learn about Jesus through games, plays and activities. They have also had a chance to spend time on the playground together. Sunday School will resume September 13<sup>th</sup> at 9am.





## Vacation Bible School

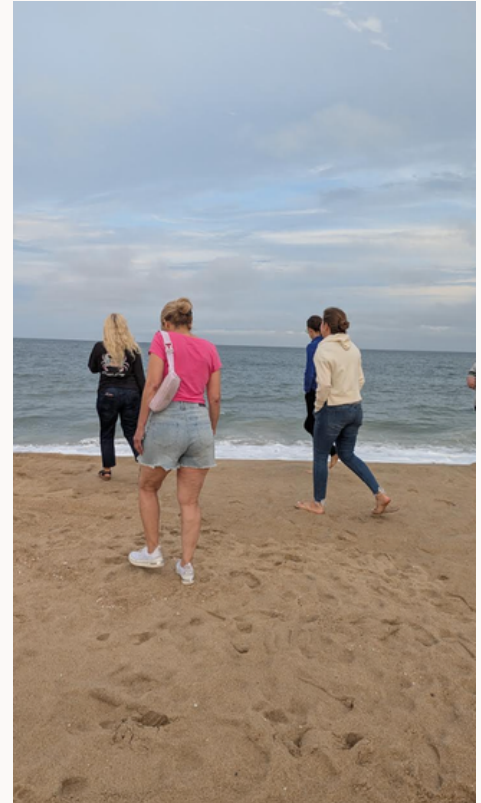
The year the theme for VBS was the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm. We collaborated with Zion Church which led to a packed sanctuary and lots of little voices praising Jesus. We ended the week with a presentation to the parents. Many thanks to all of our volunteers.



# In & Around the Parish



**The Women of St. Francis  
took some time to rest,  
restore and revive at the  
beach.**



# In & Around the Parish



**Playing and Learning in the Nursery room this Summer**



**Jack and George were excited to celebrate their baptism in June**

# Planning Ahead



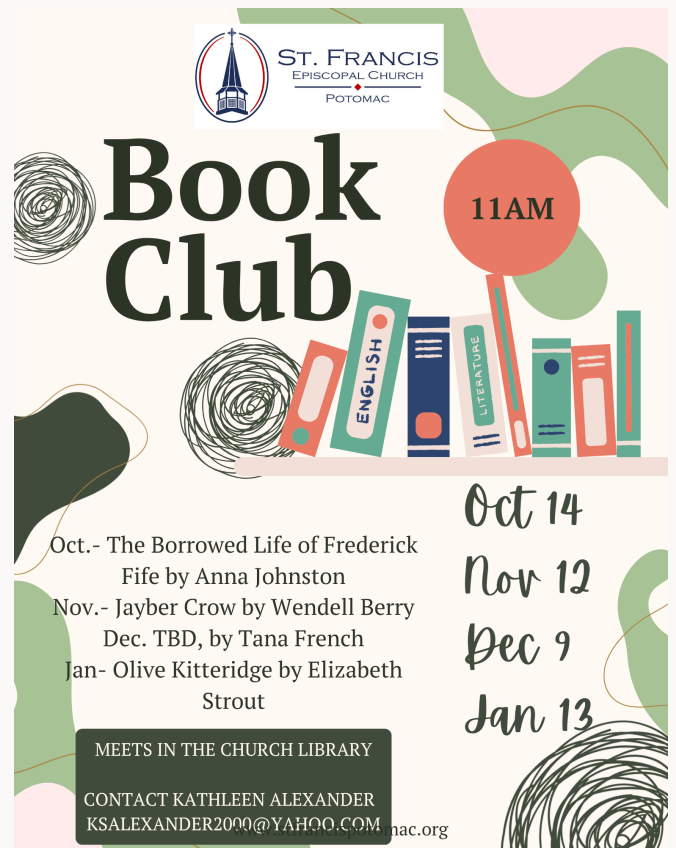
**LOBSTERFEST**

NOVEMBER 14<sup>TH</sup>  
6-8PM

\$45 DOLLARS PER PERSON  
RSVP REQUIRED BY NOV. 8<sup>TH</sup>

YOU CAN RSVP ON REALM OR BY  
CALLING THE CHURCH OFFICE

PLEASE JOIN US IN THE PARISH  
HALL FOR A TIME OF FELLOWSHIP  
AND TASTY LOBSTER!



**ST. FRANCIS  
EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
POTOMAC**

**Book Club**

11AM

Oct. - The Borrowed Life of Frederick Fife by Anna Johnston  
Nov. - Jayber Crow by Wendell Berry  
Dec. TBD, by Tana French  
Jan- Olive Kitteridge by Elizabeth Strout

MEETS IN THE CHURCH LIBRARY

CONTACT KATHLEEN ALEXANDER  
KSALEXANDER2000@YAHOO.COM [nac.org](mailto:KSALEXANDER2000@YAHOO.COM)



**SAVVY SENIORS**

Savvy Seniors meets on the  
**Bring your bag lunch and  
meet us in the Library at  
Noon.**

SEPTEMBER: WHATS HAPPENING AT THE  
POTOMAC COMMUNITY CENTER

OCTOBER: PARK & PLANNING HAS MANY  
CHOICES FOR 55 AND OLDER

NOVEMBER: PERSONAL SAFETY FOR  
SENIORS BY MCPD



**MINI GOLF OUTING**

ST. FRANCIS EPISCOPAL CHURCH

GET READY TO ENJOY A TIME OF  
FELLOWSHIP AND JOIN THE FUN AT  
OUR MINI GOLF OUTING

**OCTOBER  
11TH  
2PM**

WE WILL LEAVE AFTER CHURCH  
AND MEET AT BOHRER PARK  
514 S FREDERICK AVE,  
GAITHERSBURG, MD 20877

CALLING ALL  
3RD-6<sup>TH</sup>  
GRADERS AND  
THEIR  
PARENTS!

FOR MORE INFORMATION EMAIL:  
[STESTER@STFRANCIS@POTOMAC.ORG](mailto:STESTER@STFRANCIS@POTOMAC.ORG)

# Planning Ahead



## Fall Fellowship Calendar

September 7<sup>th</sup> - Interfaith 5K

September 13<sup>th</sup> - Homecoming Brunch

September 27<sup>th</sup> - Prince Caspian Outing

October 5<sup>th</sup> - Blessing of the Animals

October 17<sup>th</sup> - St. Francis Fall Fest

November 14<sup>th</sup> - Lobster 14th

November 27<sup>th</sup> - Leftovers Potluck

November 29<sup>th</sup> - Advent Wreath Making

See you there!

