



# Lifeline

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*The Church of the Holy Trinity*

*An Episcopal Church*

*office@holytrinityoxfordmd.org*



A Message from Our Rector, *Fr. Kevin M. Cross*

## Love is The Way

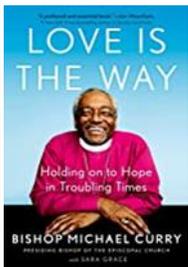
*“<sup>34</sup> I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. <sup>35</sup> By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” John 13:34-35*

Epiphany is the season of light. It is a time of new understandings, new revelations, new beginnings. We are continuing to journey through a difficult time. And, in the words of the popular Bacharach/David song, **What the world needs now, is love sweet love.**

“Love Heals.” This statement of truth first came to my attention emblazoned on a baseball hat. The hat was from Thistle Farms, a mission formed by Episcopal priest, Becca Stevens. Thistle Farms has offered shelter, education, and healing to trafficked and abused women for over 20 years. It has become a model for ministry that builds on the work of Christian missionaries from Charles Dickens to Edwina Gately. It is critical work. It is healing work. It is the work of Christ’s followers. This short saying sums up our life as followers of Christ.

Over the holidays I read the novel, This Tender Land by William Kent Kruger. The main character in this novel, an orphan, Odie O’Banion comments about the need for love in his life. He writes “*We Breathe Love in, we breathe love out. It’s the very essence of our existence, the very air of our souls.*” This echoes the saying of the ancient Desert Fathers to breathe Christ, breathe love. Love is the oxygen for our souls.

Love is such an ordinary word yet is it the foundation of our life as Christians. As orphan Odie says, “we breathe love.” Our faith is based on a God of love. God is love. Presiding Bishop Michael Curry has just published a new book, **Love Is The Way: Holding On to Hope in Troubled Times.** In his book, Bishop Curry examines how experiences of love shaped his life. It was inspired by the folks who raised Bishop Michael Curry, folks who represented “a universal hope for a better life and a better world.” Michael writes: “**Love is the Way, and the way to cultivate that Love is through understanding that there is only One Love from which all life springs forth and that nothing can separate us from this Love, - for we are it, united as one as we truly are, one. So Love, please Love. Always come back to the Way. For the Way is Love.**”



Jon Meacham, #1 New York Times bestselling author of Destiny and Power, American Lion, and Thomas Jefferson: The Art of Power, comments “This is a profound and essential book. At once personal and universal, intimate and sweeping, it frames the great question of our time—which is, really, the great question of all time on this side of Paradise—with passion and eloquence. Michael Curry, priest and bishop, plays the prophet in these pages, drawing on his own remarkable life to show us the way we might make our own lives, and the lives of nations, warmer, better, and nobler.”

This is a hope filled, empowering book about how we can walk the way of love and transform the world around us. I invite you to join in an Epiphany journey as we discuss this book and look for where love shows up in our lives. This discussion group will be conducted via Zoom for four weeks during this period of Epiphany, a time ripe for awakening of the spirit and new revelations of God’s truth. Our adventure will start on January 19 at 6 pm and meet on consecutive Tuesdays through February 9. Please call or email the parish office to RSVP. A zoom link will be sent to all participants. This group will be facilitated by Fr. Kevin and Rev. Dr. Lisa Webb.

Copies of this book are available at your local bookstore or at Amazon. [https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0525543031?pf\\_rd\\_r=ZHM5JV03M21MD7P5MAX0&pf\\_rd\\_p=5ae2c7f8-e0c6-4f35-9071-dc3240e894a8&pd\\_rd\\_r=485fed9e-55bd-4945-a707-1b779fe7a5f2&pd\\_rd\\_w=reR5W&pd\\_rd\\_wg=ArY1Z&ref=pf\\_rd\\_gw\\_unk](https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0525543031?pf_rd_r=ZHM5JV03M21MD7P5MAX0&pf_rd_p=5ae2c7f8-e0c6-4f35-9071-dc3240e894a8&pd_rd_r=485fed9e-55bd-4945-a707-1b779fe7a5f2&pd_rd_w=reR5W&pd_rd_wg=ArY1Z&ref=pf_rd_gw_unk)

\*If you need assistance purchasing the book, please contact Fr. Kevin.



## CHEERS and APPRECIATION

- Thank you to our **Sunday School children, families and Barbara Cross** for presenting a creative Christmas Pageant to us at our Christmas Eve service. Neither pandemic, wind, rain or cool temperatures could deter them from brightening our Christmas. Thanks also to **Dennis Roberts** for his technical assistance with sound and video production.
- Great appreciation to **Cora, Linda Sattler, our choir and Denise Nathanson** for their wonderful music contributions to our Christmas services.
- Heartfelt gratitude to our **2020 Vestry, our committees, Connie Greenhawk and Cora Bruner** for their leadership and creative approaches to ministry during this challenging time.
- Barbara and I thank you our Holy Trinity family for your understanding and support throughout this past year. You are a faithful, dedicated people of God and friends. .
- Thank God for gracing us with the lives of **Mary Clubb and Betty Hansen**, two angels of love and joy.

Blessings. Fr. Kevin



Two of our angels, Mary Clubb and Betty Hansen. We will miss you.



## Virtual Coffee hour



Join us Sunday January 17, immediately after our 9:30 am worship service for a virtual coffee hour. With the cooler weather and suspension of outdoor services we are seeing less of one another. This will create an opportunity for us to connect, share stories, and actually see one another! To conduct this social-activity we will use the regular Zoom meeting format. To access it, sign out of the service and click on the **Green** "Click Here for Morning Prayer and Other Activities via Zoom" button at [www.holytrinityoxfordmd.org](http://www.holytrinityoxfordmd.org).

Dear Santa's Elf,  
Thank you for the fun surprise! We loved Santa's sleigh full of goodies. Elf, we don't know who you are, but we think you must be southern because you know how to make Santa from an okra pod! And then you gave instructions on how to use the pod to grow more okra! Santa is so cute and special - he will stay as Santa as long as he lasts. Thank you for your sleigh full of gifts. With gratitude and love, Barb and Fr. Kevin



## WOMAN ON A JOURNEY



Women on a Journey will start the New Year with a novel about family, friendships and faith. **Tending Roses** by Lisa Wingate

Zoom meetings are held the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays of the month

January 6<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> February 3<sup>rd</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup>

9:00 am - 10:30 am

For more information contact Beverly Rohman at 410-829-9561 or [beverlyrohman@gmail.com](mailto:beverlyrohman@gmail.com)

### ECW Distributions for 2020

\$3,000 Rector's Discretionary Fund  
 \$3,000 Neighborhood Service Center  
 \$1,000 Society of St. Vincent de Paul  
 \$ 500 Oxford Volunteer Fire Department  
 \$ 500 Waters Church  
 \$ 500 Talbot Interfaith Shelter  
 \$8,500 Total

### Food Donations

*"For whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple- truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward."* **Matthew 10:42**

The Food Pantry at the Neighborhood Service Center has always been a major focus of our activity. Unfortunately, the pandemic made the collecting and delivering of food items to the NSC a risky endeavor and for a time, the NSC stopped accepting food donations. However, we have just been informed that the NSC has resumed accepting food items. While it is still too risky to resume our activity to collect and deliver food items, you are invited to drop off food items in the container at the entrance to the Center. The NSC is located at 126 Port St., Easton, MD 21601.

The Talbot Interfaith Shelter (TIS) could use donations of clothing (infant & adult), household supplies and food (See list posted on this page). TIS is one of the few shelters that provide services to families. Our Mission team has decided to adopt the Shelter as one of our primary relationships this year. You may drop off donations at: 107 Goldsborough St., Easton, MD 21601.

You are a generous people who know that our faith is about discipleship and true discipleship is about service to others. Let us strive to continue to be good disciples and caring companions of God's family. Thank you. Bless you.

|                           |                           |                         |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| 2 baby monitors           | Laundry detergent         | Body wash               |
| Juice boxes               | Coffee & tea (hot & cold) | Tooth pastes & brushes  |
| Dish detergent            | Diapers size 4 & 5        | Hair shampoo            |
| Toilet paper              | Foil                      | Sugar                   |
| Kitchen roll paper towels | Zip lock bags all sizes   | Food storage containers |

### Church Cookbook

We have all been cooking at home more this past year. We have all tried out old recipes or invented new ones. Let's share our new wealth of knowledge and good eats through creating a new church cookbook. I don't think Holy Trinity has published one since the early 2000's. It is time. Please collect one or two favorite recipes and send them to the church office. Also send pictures-drawings of your dish or humorous quarantine pictures or humor. Some recipes have been received but we need many more.

Time to get cooking folks!

Fr. Kevin



### Difference Course Lent Study Group

The worldwide Anglican communion has a vision for the church to be a reconciling presence in the midst of conflict. Leading thinkers and peace-making practitioners have created and continue to hone this course to help us do just that. Difference explores how we can cross divides, disagree well, practice forgiveness and be the community God calls us to be. It is not mediation or conflict-resolution training; nor should it give people or churches a longer 'to-do' list. Instead, the focus is on formation – on the habits and practices that enable us to realize our identity as reconcilers in our own unique contexts.

I would like to invite you to join me by participating in this new series. If a sufficient number of Holy Trinity parishioners are interested, I will schedule a Zoom based conference to help us to digest and discuss our learnings in the context of our community. We will be among the first congregations in the Anglican Communion to participate in this course.

**Explore what it means to follow Jesus in the face of conflict and see transformation through everyday encounters.**

Registration information for this Lenten program will be forthcoming

Fr. Kevin

## Walking the Talk

Josh and Will Schmidt brought love and holiday cheer to our Lunch Bunch Group. While the regular Lunch Bunch activity continues to be suspended due to the pandemic, Josh and Will once again stepped up to fill in the void. On December 18<sup>th</sup> they cooked, packaged, and delivered 30 meals to home bound residents of Oxford and Trappe. The meals were received with great joy and numerous compliments. Josh and Will we are proud of you!



Christmas at Holy Trinity

Decorating Holly Tree, Our Altar and Christmas Day Service



## Thoughts from Gordon Fronk, Senior Warden

I want to share with you the following thoughts, slightly edited, sent by my very good nonagenarian friend, Sally Ransom Knecht, in her Christmas card this year.

The past year has been a year like no other. These are changing times as we struggle with the loss of what was and the absence of what feels normal. Yes, there is no denial that the 2020 pandemic presents new challenges for most everyone, halting life as we knew it and killing millions of persons throughout the world. We have learned new phrases: alone together, sheltering in place, social distancing, wash your hands, virtual learning, Zoom meetings and events, masks required, self-quarantine, staycation, "wear the damn mask". etc. Yet, some things never change: the love and mercy of our Lord, the support of one another, and the blessings of life.

Yes, we miss being close to each other; the handshakes and hugs are no longer acceptable. We have adapted to new ways of doing things. Activities are limited to virtual exercise, education and entertainment programs, drive-by events, deliveries of food and packages, and occasional visits with family and friends. Some have been able to share events and holidays in a safe way, grateful for phones, texts and Zoom. The joys of Christmas season were different this year, with no parties and limited sharing with family and friends. But God never changes and our need for God remains constant. We have drawn strength from our past, lessons from the present, and a promise of our tomorrow.

We are reminded of the precious meaning of life and relationships, while corruption and violence are all around us. We pray for sound and intelligent leadership in our country and across the globe and we pray for peace, not just in our world, but in our hearts. We have just celebrated the birth of Jesus and the epiphany, the revelation of God incarnate as Jesus Christ. Let us be reminded that He came to us so we can have life abundantly.

Let Christmas come into our world and bring us warmth and cheer,  
Bring us faith in place of doubt and strength in place of fear,  
Bring us Hope and bring us Love to guide our hearts forever,  
Let Christmas come into our world and bring us all together .

### Sunday School

The Sunday School children and their parents and grandparents are incredible! We had planned to have the Christmas pageant at the outdoor Christmas Eve service at 3:00 pm. However, Mother Nature had other ideas. With a prediction of rain and 60 mph gusts of wind, plans had to change for the service to be broadcast only. We quickly decided to video the pageant at 9:30 that morning. With Barbara and Pucky directing just one rehearsal, we were ready to go! Father Kevin read the Christmas story while Dennis Roberts recorded it.



Many thanks to Whitney Flower as Mary, Watson Flower as Jesus, Bob Flower as Joseph, Maddox Flower and Mason Davis as the shepherds, Lauren and Lily Davis and Pepper Rohman as the angels, and Evan Becker as the lizard who welcomed this special child.

Additionally, all the Sunday School children made cards and decorations to send to some parishioners and lunch bunch recipients. In addition to the above named Sunday School students, we also thank Will Straub and Justin and Joseph Callahan for their creativity. We received many appreciative notes and calls from the recipients.

Although the Sunday School has met infrequently this year due to the pandemic, we continue to stay connected. With the cold weather upon us, we won't be

having outdoor classes, but we will continue to show God's love for one another. The children will periodically make cards and decorations for others, reminding them that God's love is ALWAYS with them.

### Colin Lang and Crew

Colin gathered a work detail of his colleagues and built a wonderful receptacle to hold all of our trash and recycle cans while working for his Eagle Scout status. Thank you Colin and crew.



## The way God chose to bring a new HVAC unit to the Retreat House at Hillsboro

In this hard time of pandemic, of political upset, of racial injustice, of economic hardship and fear, it's *not* hard to lose sight of God's presence on occasion. And God, in the beautiful, grace-filled way God moves in our midst, brought a precious reminder of that Presence over the last 2 weeks.

In June, we at the Retreat House discovered that the HVAC system that had been poised unused in the basement for 20 years and that had served us so consistently for the next 6 years was on its last legs. Repair people, conversations, bids and proposals were all part of June and July. We managed nicely through the summer: open windows, well-timed to the sun's location—worked sufficiently, especially in a time of pandemic when foot traffic in the building was so low. There were plenty of folks on the grounds, but the building was not the destination. And then it started to get cold.

The need became more urgent, the cost was \$13,000. The Diocese declined taking the lead to solve this diocesan property issue. What to do? Well, pray, of course, and we did, but not in the "Please God, deliver us a check" kind of way. We prayed in the 'let-go-of-anxiety/fear-and-wait-to-see-how-God-will-be' kind of way. And we asked: What is ours to do? Fund-raise? Take out a loan? And we listened and waited... and then this happened.

God moved in the hearts of the people of Holy Trinity Oxford who heard of the situation. They sent us a very generous check for a new HVAC system. Having heard how Holy Trinity had responded, a couple who are friends of the Retreat House matched Holy Trinity's gift. The situation was brought up at Council, and within 2 days, Emmanuel Church in Chestertown's rector and Vestry generously responded. Shortly after that, a friend of the Retreat House spoke with his friends at St. Paul's Kent. Their hearts were open to the need also, and another generous donation arrived. Then another friend of the Retreat House spoke to a foundation he is connected to, and there it was... a total of \$13,000 for a new HVAC system.

For us at the Retreat House, this unfolding situation lives in our hearts as God in our midst: God, living and breathing life through God's beloved children whose hearts are connected to the Retreat House. We have been blown away by the generosity, the compassion and support of so many. And we are surprised... always we are surprised at the same time we hold deep confidence that things will work out. This is not the first time God has held and upheld us here in Hillsboro. We know we do not need to spend energy worrying about these kinds of things. And yet still, we worry a little, and we trust, and we pray and we wait...

How faithful God is, how loving and generous are God's people. We are grateful, so deeply grateful. And we feel renewed inspiration to be good stewards of God's gift to us—the gift of the invitation to be present in Hillsboro at this time. Nothing lasts forever, and we are just so grateful for what is, what has happened, and for God's constant Presence in our lives as so lovingly manifested thorough God's people.

Francie Thayer, Retreat House Director

## A Hearty Thanks, A Warm Welcome, and an Update

Our parish is truly blessed to have so many of you generously pledge your support for the 2021 Holy Trinity operating budget. We are very much aware that many worthy organizations are seeking financial support in these trying times, and that, closer to home, there are challenges facing many families and loved ones. Despite those realities, we are nearing our targeted \$390,000 pledge goal to cover our projected 2021 operating expense budget, which has been held to the same amount as last year.

Many thanks to our several new congregants pledging for the first time and to our long-standing faithful, many of whom have increased their pledges over last year. To our new pledgers, we give a warm welcome to the Holy Trinity family; and to all pledging parishioners, we give a hearty thanks. Together, we find spiritual strength and calm as we "weather the storm."

We are hoping to receive pledges from another 15<sup>+/-</sup> parishioners, who pledged last year, but from whom we have not received a pledge this year. Some mail has taken over a month to reach its destination, so perhaps some of you have already mailed your pledge, but it has not yet been received. For those who intend to pledge, but have not yet done so, and those who would like to pledge for the first time, it's not too late; your support is welcomed, needed, and very much appreciated. We remain approximately \$33,000 short of our budgeted revenue goal. If you would like to pledge, please complete and mail your pledge card at your earliest convenience, or contact Connie, at the Holy Trinity office, at 410-226-5134, who will be happy to record your pledge over the phone.

With gratitude and all best wishes for 2021, Gordon Fronk, Senior Warden, on behalf of your Vestry

## 2020 A YEAR TO BE PROUD OF?

### YOU BET!

While 2020 was a year that will be remembered for its challenges and dangers, it will also be remembered as a banner year for mission activities here at Holy Trinity. While hands on activities such as the lunch bunch and Habitat building had to be suspended, the needs of our neighbors grew. Our response was increased funding to meet these needs. The funds came from ECW, individual contributions, Sunday School fund raising, and the Mission fund.

Here in Oxford we supported individuals in need, neighboring churches and the fire department. Throughout the diocese we supported Camp Wright and the Hillsboro Retreat House. Through the Rector’s Discretionary Fund individual crises involving shelter and other basic needs were averted. Great effort was made to make sure that those living in Talbot County had adequate food. The Neighborhood Service Center stocked its food pantry with funds from the Sunday School, ECW and the mission fund. Abroad children were served by our Sunday School with its contribution to Save the Children. National and international disasters were given support as well. Children in need in Talbot, Dorchester and Caroline counties were able to celebrate Christmas thanks to our support of the Salvation Army Christmas Angel project.

While the year often called for solving critical problems, there was one mission action that will have a positive impact over a lifetime. With a mission fund donation a Mid Shore Scholar was able to pay her tuition at Chesapeake College where she studies in addition to courses at Easton High School. That did not go unnoticed. When she graduates this spring, she will take the summer to prepare for college at Dartmouth where she was awarded a complete four-year scholarship.

In times like this it is easy to get overwhelmed and lose confidence that our small actions can actually help make things better. If you feel like this, I invite you to stop and take a good look next time you see a soybean field being harvested. If you pick one of the pods off the plant and open it up, you will find a measly four or five tiny beans. You can’t help but think how can there be enough to make harvest worthwhile. Wait until the combine empties its load, and you see a tractor trailer fill up. Our mission activities may not appear to be of a size that will make significant impact. But just like those soybeans, each action we take is part of a larger effort working to solve problems and make life a little easier for those less fortunate than we are.

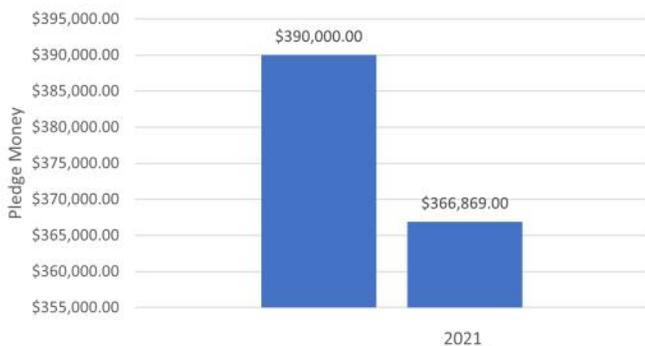
Tot O’Mara, Vestry Mission Shepherd

## ANNUAL APPEAL – Your 2021 pledge as we safely remain “Socially distant, spiritually connected!”

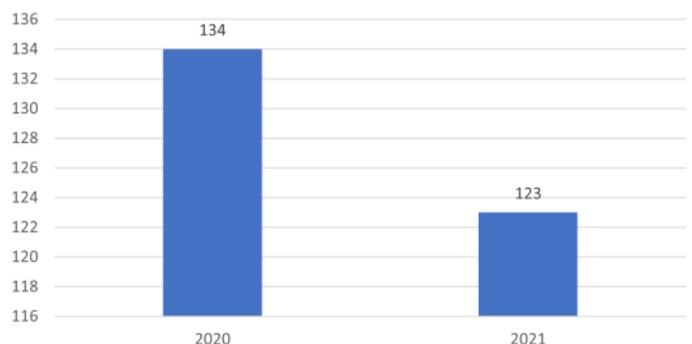
**Please remember to return your Pledge Card.**

On behalf of the Church of the Holy Trinity, thank you for your support. Stewardship Committee Co-Chairs Sandy & Ron Kaufman, and Earl Segal

2020 vs. 2021 Pledge Monies



2020 vs. 2021 Number of Pledges





410.226.5134  
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## *The Church of the Holy Trinity*



## *Lifeline*



### **MISSION**

The Church of The Holy Trinity, an Episcopal Parish in Oxford, Maryland: a caring Christian community dedicated to growing in God's love through worship, study, service and fellowship.

### **Who We Are**

We are a small parish with a big heart comprised of committed people willingly sharing their talents to help those in need.

We are all seekers on a spiritual journey; encouraging of others also on the journey, and non-judgmental of where one might be on that journey.

## *January's Birth Flower*



*January*

Carnation flower signifies vivid love, friendly nature, splendor, and allure. You are a receptive person at heart. You cannot see your family and friends sad, that's your weakness in life. You are always focused on things you love. You pave your own path in life.

www.wishafriend.com