



NEWSLETTER

The Crucifer

April 2025

GOD DIDN'T MAKE ME TO HATE ME

I asked Father Rob if I could share this with you, since it was such an important blessing for me this Lent. He agreed. I pray that it will now be a blessing to someone besides just me.

"Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so."

This is not a new idea. Jesus loves us. Yes. This we know. I know. You know. We all know. Some of you, like me, grew up singing about how Jesus loves us before we could even string a full sentence together on our own. Personally, I have never questioned that God loves me; but recently, I uncovered something which surprised me. I realized that I wasn't always so sure that God actually liked me.

I have heard people talk about this before too, but I have never consciously articulated this thought for myself, until now. And, I found so much benefit from where this realization led me, that I feel it is worth my sharing the journey with you.

As I looked back on my life this Lent, I began to see how deeply this uncertainty of God "liking me" had shaped my relationship with God. One of the ways this manifested itself is clearly in how I have understood the concept of repentance. I have always struggled with confessing my sins in prayer. As a child, I was taught that to pray "the right way," I first had to confess every single sin I had committed since my last prayer—listing them out one by one. And if I couldn't remember them all? Well, then I was supposed to ask God to reveal my forgotten sins to me.

My struggle wasn't that I thought I was perfect or didn't need forgiveness—quite the opposite. But dredging up every mistake, failure, and misstep regularly left me feeling defeated before I could even move into a real conversation with God. Looking back, I can see that my prayer life became either a guilt-ridden confession or prayers where I skipped that part altogether, only to then worry that God wouldn't listen because I hadn't properly repented first. Exhausting.

Even though I knew, as fact, that God loved me, I also imagined Him as a weary, exasperated parent—one who, despite loving me, probably found me a bit frustrating and exhausting.

Now, as a mother myself, I understand that feeling all too well. My stubborn son will do something he knows he's not supposed to do and immediately shout, "I'm sorry! I'm sorry! I'm sorry!"—not out of genuine remorse, but to dodge consequences. And while my love for him never wavers, I do get tired of hearing those words when I see no effort to change.

I didn't realize until recently how much I had projected that same dynamic onto God. I had unknowingly believed that His patience was finite, that my failures tested Him, that He tolerated me but didn't delight in me.

Then, as part of my journey through Lent this year, I began reading Rev. Lizzie McManus-Dail's devotional entitled, "God Didn't Make Us to Hate Us: 40 Devotions to Liberate Your Faith from Fear and Reconnect with Joy."

Rev. Lizzie writes in the introduction: "I believe it begins here: by looking at the heavens, and looking at the dandelion in the cracks, and looking at scripture, and looking at God, and trying an older and wilder way of trust. It begins by saying: God did not make me to hate me; God made me to love me. God made me out of desire. God made me out of joy."



For me, trying a wilder way of trust began with truly, deeply allowing myself to believe that God is not in pursuit of our perfection or performance—He is in pursuit of love and connection with us. The God who created the universe, who designed the stars and gravity and the intricate workings of our brains, did so out of love. And when He calls us to repentance, it is not about earning His favor or proving our worth—it is about turning towards a deeper relationship with Him. As Rev. Lizzie also writes, "We cut our own imagination and relationship with God off at the knees when we see the image of divine authority as merely a projection of human power."

I am so deeply appreciative for our church and how Father Rob has taught and explained Jesus' call to repentance. Our repentance is, in fact, not about groveling. It is not about proving to God that we feel bad enough. It is about embracing the invitation to grow, to move forward, to change, to embrace the New Life that Jesus came (and comes daily) to offer all people.

This, again, is not a new concept. But hearing this explanation of repentance, in a time when I am feeling especially steeped in the love and acceptance of God, made it hit differently.

Repentance is freedom. It is love. It is grace.

And for the first time, I am beginning to believe that God doesn't just love me—He actually likes me, too. Even when he calls me to change, it is because he made me to love me.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 6:15p AA Meeting	2 Lenten Series Week 4 9a Food Pantry 10a Hagar's Basket 10a Worship Service 5:30p Dinner & Classes	3 5:30p Handbell Practice 6:15p AA Meeting 6:30p Choir Practice	4 5:30p Parents Night Out 6p Meetup @ Coastal 6p ACA Group	5 10a Prayer Shawl Ministry 10a Heavenly Handmade Crafts
6 Feed My Sheep Sunday Morning Worship (See details below)	7 5:30p Depression Support Group	8 6:15p AA Meeting 6:15p Compassionate Friends	9 Lenten Series Week 5 9a Food Pantry 10a Hagar's Basket 10a Worship Service 5:30p Dinner & Classes	10 6p Passion Concert 6:15p AA Meeting	11 6p ACA Group	12 7a Workday 8a Brotherhood of St Andrew 9a DOK 11a WeCare
13 Palm Sunday Sunday Morning Worship (See details below)	14	15 5:30p Bunco 6:15p AA Meeting	16 Lenten Series Week 6 9a Food Pantry 10a Hagar's Basket 10a Worship Service 5:30p Dinner & Classes	17 Maundy Thursday 6:00pm Maundy Thursday Service	18 Good Friday 12p Stations of the Cross 6p Stations of the Cross 6p ACA Group	19 Holy Saturday
20 	21 Office Closed	22 6:15p AA Meeting	23 9a Food Pantry 10a Hagar's Basket 10a Worship Service NO DINNER OR CLASSES	24 6:15p AA Meeting	25 6p ACA Group 6p Early Steps	26 11a We Care
27 Sunday Morning Worship (See details below) 12:00p VBS Meeting	28	29 6:15p AA Meeting	30 9a Food Pantry 10a Hagar's Basket 10a Worship Service 5:30p Dinner & Classes 6:00p Play the Stigma			
<div><div><div>Join us for EASTER! 6:00am 8:00am 10:30am</div></div><div><div>Sunday Mornings 8:00a Worship 9:15a Library Hours 9:35a Sunday Classes 10:30a Worship 11:45a Community Hour</div><div>Sunday Classes Nursery - Nursery Children's Ministry - Classroom 1 Youth Sunday School - Youth Room Contemporary Discussion Class - Lanier Hall Father Matt's Class - Holy Cross Rm Book Study - Chapel Choir Rehearsal - Nave</div><div>Wednesday Evening 5:30p - Dinner 6:15p - Classes for all ages Wednesday Classes Nursery - Nursery Children's Ministry - Classroom 2 Youth Sunday School - Youth Room Adults - Nave</div></div></div>						

Join us for a HC MEET UP @ COASTAL

Friday April 4th @ 6pm
Coastal Brewery 3041 East Olive rd

PARENTS NIGHT OUT LET OUR TEENS BABYSIT!

\$10/CHILD
ALL PROCEEDS GO
TOWARD HC YOUTH



APRIL 4TH
5:30-8:30pm

Holy Cross Youth FLOWER BULB FUNDRAISER!



Get your seeds for spring
AND support our Youth Group!

- Bulbs
- Flower Mats
- Strawberries
- Sunflowers
- Peppers
- and more!

Proceeds go to our
Summer Camp
Scholarship Fund!



SHOP HERE!

Easter Sunday

6:00am Sunrise Service (Outdoor)

8:00am Worship (Indoor)

10:30am Worship & Easter Activities (Outdoor)

HOLY WEEK

Abide with Me

Join us Thursday, April 10th, at 6pm for an immersive musical offering with traditional and contemporary music as we reflect on our Lenten journey from Ash Wednesday to Holy Week through poetry, devotions, scripture, and song.

Palm Sunday

Join Isabelle in the Nave for an all skills level "Come As You Are Choir"! No robe, no pressure, no experience needed! Our worship then begins outside, where we relive Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem and then reflect on the Passion Narrative before receiving Communion.

Wednesday

Come enjoy the last Wednesday night meal and classes to conclude our Lenten series.

Maundy Thursday

A powerful service remembering Jesus' last moments before his capture and death. Begins at 6:00 pm and includes the symbolism of foot-washing (optional participation) and the deeply symbolic Stripping of the Altar.

Good Friday

Join us outside the church at 12:00pm or 6:00pm as we journey through the Stations of the Cross, remembering the great and terrible deeds of our Lord's Passion.

NOW ACCEPTING DONATIONS

PLEASE GIVE THEM TO THE EASTER BUNNY IN THE NARTHEX



BIRTHDAYS!

Rachel Iverson 4/1

Erick Perez 4/4

Emily Montgomery 4/4

Clara Potter 4/5

Ellen Weeks 4/9

Louise Massie 4/9

Michael Bollette 4/10

Piper Bollette 4/10

Linda Bish 4/11

Tyler Kimmons 4/11

Evelyn Spain 4/11

Anna Brennan 4/14

Tim Weekly 4/14

Tony Apap 4/15

Ernie Tarkus 4/17

Lucas Andrew 4/19

Carmen Kimmons 4/21

D'Anna Entrekin 4/22

Ryan Etheridge 4/23

McKenzie Simpler 4/25

Audrey Westbrook 4/26

Lorin Miller 4/26

Landree Williams 4/26

April Schantz 4/27

Lynn Backes 4/28

Brendan Boyer 4/30

ANNIVERSARIES

Fr. Chris & Barbara Coats 4/3 - 55 years

Herman & Helen Stuebing 4/11 - 67 years

Mike & Tracy Haskins 4/15 - 30 years

Mary & Edward Shontz 4/23 - 38 years

Mike & Caiti Bollette 4/29 - 9 years

Holy Cross Episcopal Church
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*Mark
your
Calendar*

Save The Date for VBS

June 10-13th and 15th
8:30-1:00pm

Breakfast and Lunch will be provided



Holy Cross Music Ministry Presents: ABIDE WITH ME Thursday, April 10th, 6pm

Join us for an immersive
musical offering with traditional and
contemporary music as we reflect on our
Lenten journey from Ash Wednesday to Holy
Week through poetry, devotions, scripture, and
song.