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## *Traditions Worth Coming Home For*



An article for the *Cathedral Times* by Rev. Canon Lauren Holder, *Canon for Community and Education*

When I think about Homecoming, the first thing that comes to mind is my beloved red, white, and blue homecoming mum. I'm not talking about the colorful mums we tend to put in our front porch pots in the fall—those are lovely. I'm talking about the super gaudy homecoming mums of Texas lore.

These faux chrysanthemums are adorned with glitter, tinsel, trinkets, and braided ribbon that nearly touches the ground. Homecoming mums are heavy, weighing down whatever garment you pin them to. A few years ago, I visited my youngest Texas cousin who was still in high school. I noted that homecoming mums had grown in both size and weight (because bigger is always better in Texas) so that girls now wear them hanging around their necks rather than pinning them to their clothing. This struck me as simultaneously practical and ridiculous.

When I was growing up, these mums were meant to be a sign of school pride. They were a way of marking yourself as part of a community and celebrating that sense of belonging. Long after the homecoming game and homecoming dance were over, the mum would remain pinned to a bulletin board as a sacred reminder of friendship and fun.

This Sunday we will celebrate Homecoming at the Cathedral of St. Philip. And while I don't anticipate any Cathedral themed mums (I'm looking at you, Flower Guild!), I do look forward to the sense of celebration, community, belonging, and maybe even a little church pride.

So many new people have joined our church community this past year, and I hear in their voices an eagerness to connect with Bible studies, volunteer opportunities, and social guilds. So many long-timers are rolling up their sleeves after some summer rest, ready to reconnect in old ways and new. There is a certain energy in the halls, a beautiful full sound in the nave, and a refreshed feeling in our classrooms. (Lisa and Keith can't wait to show off their new spaces!) This Homecoming feels especially significant, and I can't wait to share it with you.

On **August 14**, Homecoming Sunday, we'll host the Ministry Fair between services. Come explore all the small groups that make this big community feel like home.

On **August 21**, we'll host a Godly Play Open House for parents and children, as well as a Youth Information

Session for parents and youth.

On **August 28**, we'll celebrate with a Parish BBQ for all ages and stages!

The Cathedral of St. Philip is ready to welcome you home with arms open wide, whether you have been here one year or a lifetime. Thank you for making this place your spiritual home.

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