



THE Feast OF THE Holy Innocents

Annual Meeting ★ Choir Concert ★ Parish Retreat
Newcomers' Dinner ★ Ventulett Gallery Opening



The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. Genesis 2:15

Here Comes the Sun THE REV. DR. BILL MURRAY

In the first creation story in Genesis, God gives the command to subdue the earth and then the power to humanity to rule over the animals and the earth. (Genesis 1:24-28) In the second creation story, God places Adam in the garden with the simple request "to till it and keep it." (Genesis 2:15) Both have been used to justify humanity doing pretty much anything we want with our world and the creatures in it. Scholars look at these two moments and notice two very different intentions. In the first, God gives humanity absolute control over all living beings and creation. In the second, the injunction can be translated several ways including till it, cultivate it, keep it, care for it. In the second story, Adam and all of humanity is given the task of caring for and improving creation.

This past summer Chris Devine started a process to look into solar power for our church. We spend over \$90,000 a year on our utilities alone. Any level of power from different sources could have an immediate impact. After six months of evaluating companies and reviewing their work, the Vestry voted unanimously to move forward with Cherry Street Power, a company that started in Macon. They have done similar installations for Emory Hospitals, Temple Sinai, and Delta and many, many more.

The system they offered is simple and cost-effective.

Cherry Street will place a solar panel array on our flat roofs at no cost to us. They anchor the system using weights and an interlocking mechanism without drilling into the roof. The sun will provide power to our system through their panels. They will then sell us that power at \$0.1425/kWh with a set annual increase of only 2.25%.

Considering that Georgia Power has increased their rates by 5-7% a year over the last several year, we will see a considerable savings over the next 20 years of our contract.

What is the bottom line? By working with Cherry Street Power, ***we will save almost \$18,000*** the first year and more each additional year as the Georgia Power rates increase more than our solar costs. ***The estimates range from saving \$250,000 to \$500,000 in power costs over the next 20 years.***

Cherry Street will begin putting solar panels on our roofs in January. The goal is to have the whole system up and running by February. We have roughly 23% of our power consumption covered by solar panels in our first year alone. We could increase that percentage as battery technology improves in the years ahead.

I am so thankful to Chris Devine for the work he has done in bringing us Cherry Street Power, to Marc Howard and David Calhoun in reviewing all of the legal paperwork, to the Vestry for jumping into this project with a willingness to plan for our future and to our staff for working on the logistics of installation.

I am excited about what this means for our community. We are taking advantage of the technology and wisdom of scientists who have given us options for clean energy and programs that help our bottom line. We are doing the work prescribed by God in Genesis to not simply dominate and control the earth but to tend it, improve it, and care for it. We are being good stewards of what we have been given. And for that I say,

"Thanks be to God!" *Bill+*



Vestry Candidates



John Cox

became a member of HIEC last year with a letter of transfer from St. Benedict's Episcopal (Smyrna, GA), where he served on their Vestry during its founding years. He is active in the men's group and offers his support to other activities such as the Ventulett Gallery displays and outreach to Holy Comforter, Habitat for Humanity, and CAC drives. John's career background lends experience in several ways, including renovation and refurbishing medium-sized construction projects. Recently at HIEC, he began the Education for Ministry series, enrolling in the inaugural 'wide angle' curriculum. John has two grown sons with their own families (4 grandkids!) and enjoys golf, hiking, yoga, and an array of other interests.

Graham Hurtt

is married to Clara Hurtt and father to Madison and Sadie. He is a managing director in the Technology and Services investment banking group at Raymond James, focusing on financial services end markets. Graham is an embarrassingly big fan of science fiction in all its forms and media, often to the chagrin of his family. In his free time, Graham can most often be found transporting the girls to sports and lessons or losing card and board games to the other members of his family.



Sunni Newton

has been a member of HIEC since 2011, along with her husband, Tommy Newton. They have two children, Boyd and Rosie, and live in Buckhead. Sunni works as an education researcher at Georgia Tech, where she has been a student or an employee since 2001. At HIEC, she serves as a Reader, a Greeter, and co-chief mahjong enthusiast. Her favorite free-time activities include reading, cooking, doing crossword puzzles, and playing with the best dog

in the world, Lita, whom her family is fortunate to have adopted in 2023. She looks forward to being in the room where it happens on the Vestry.

Jan Stewart



has been an active member of HIEC for 25+ years. She has volunteered her time in all areas of the church community during those 25 years, which included serving as past chair of the Altar and Flower Guilds and as a past Junior and Senior Warden. Currently, she is a team leader for both the Altar and Flower Guilds, a lay Eucharistic Minister, and a member of Community of Hope. She has exceptional finance experience, a passion for outreach, and a commitment to pastoral care. She is the mother of three grown children, and although she continues to work full time she always finds the time for the community of HIEC.



Anna Blair Gates

is a ninth grader at Marist School. She has been a member of HIEC since birth. She has grown up in the church nursery, attending Sunday school, singing in the children's choir, and enjoying youth activities. She has also been a VBS volunteer for the past several years. Anna Blair plays competitive soccer with Concorde Fire; she also runs cross country at Marist.

Mary Brooks McCrystal



is a sophomore in high school at HIES and has been a member of HIEC since she was born. She has attended Sunday school regularly as a child and is an active participant in the youth group; she also has attended HIES since Kindergarten and is now participating in their football cheerleading, basketball, and lacrosse programs. Mary Brooks is also on the yearbook committee as well as many clubs such as HI Trees, HIES for CHOA, and Blood Cancer United.

Adult Formation

Annual Meeting

JANUARY 25 | 9:00 AM

Join us in Inglett Hall for breakfast and fellowship as we review our ministry's finances, reflect on 2025's accomplishments, and embrace the vision for the year ahead. We'll elect vestry members and step forward together in faith and community.

Three Weeks with Jesus

FEBRUARY 1, 8, 15 | 9:00 AM

Lawson Kelly will lead us in an exploration of who Jesus is through selected clips from *The Chosen*. Together we'll reflect on Jesus as Healer, Teacher, Prophet, and King, using story, conversation, and scripture to deepen our understanding of his life and ministry—and what it means for us today. All are welcome; no prior viewing required.

The Gospel versus Tony Soprano: What Are Ethics in the 21st Century?

FEBRUARY 18-MARCH 29 | 9:00 AM

On Sunday mornings during Lent, Bill Murray and John Porter will lead a lively, thoughtful exploration of *The Sopranos* as a modern morality play. Using selected scenes and guided conversation, we'll wrestle with questions of sin and self-deception, happiness and misery, integrity, and compartmentalization, asking what it really means to live a morally good life. Set alongside Jesus' teaching that we are known by our fruits, Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, and Post-modern Nihilism, this class invites honest reflection, spirited discussion, and a deeper look at the stories that shape us.

Sacred Law or Sacred Lore: Why Do We Do What We Do?

FEBRUARY 26, MARCH 5, 12, 19 | 7:00 PM

This Lent, we are delighted to partner once again with our friends at Temple Sinai for our annual shared series, led by Bill Murray and Rabbi Ron Segal. Together we will explore what practices and rituals our respective faith traditions specify as actual requirements, which are informed by regional and cultural norms, and which long-held beliefs and practices originate in superstitious lore. Refreshments at 6:30 PM, program from 7:00-8:15 PM.

Feb. 26: Holidays: Observance & Celebration – Temple Sinai

Mar. 5: Marking our Milestones: Birth to Brit to Burial – HIEC

Mar. 12: Prayer: How, Why, When and with Whom? – Temple Sinai

Mar. 19: "Because 'I' said so": Clergy & Authority – HIEC



Parish Retreat Registration

FEBRUARY 13-15

Join us this February at Kanuga (Hendersonville, NC) for our parish retreat exploring the connection between body and soul, spirit, and daily life. Together we'll reflect on longing, authentic relationship, and the ways food, nature, and shared table fellowship reconnect us to God and one another.

Our retreat leader is the Rev. Mark Wastler, Episcopal priest, farmer, and founder of Chesapeake Watershed Ministries, who brings rich experience in spirituality, ecology, and the practice of food as sacred gift.

Cost:

\$375 single room.

\$575 double room

Includes:

lodging, meals (Friday dinner–Sunday lunch), and all programming.

Learn more and register here:



Mystery

THE REV. RUTH PATTISON



We are living in a mystery now.

"The mystery of the Word made flesh"

We have seen the glory of God in the face of his son, Jesus Christ, and there is no going back. A new light shines in our hearts. So here we are. Setting out from Nativity and Epiphany, to find our way home by a different road, just beaming with light. Immersed in the mystery.

The mystery of the Word made flesh, for me, lives at the heart of the story, in the characters of the story, as Matthew tells it.

King Herod was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him. The wise men, when they saw that the star had stopped, were overwhelmed with Joy. Part of the mystery, for me, is that I am both of these. There it is. A profound paradox that this same light, this one and the same glory, can strike terror and dread, or, and at the same time, comfort, and overwhelming joy.

And then, of all things, we, ourselves, are lit up! That same glory resides in us now, along with the fear and the joy, that comes with that light. There is no going back, because we cannot unsee the glory of God in the face of his son.

Think of it. The fear and the joy.

What it will mean for us on this journey?

What will people expect of the light that now shines forth from me? From you? From us as a faith community?

What will it mean to go out into the world, in this season after the Epiphany, in this January calendar of 2026, and journey with that kind of incarnate light radiating, emanating, shining forth, from us?

Will we have new seeing power, an assurance that all the darkness cannot and will not overcome, no matter if it threatens?

Will we be called to go into dark places with just this light and joy? Will we be afraid to go? Will it make a difference to the poor and needy, the lowly and oppressed, that a new light shines in our hearts?

Will the joy infuse our own personal lives, at the heart of the longings, the disappointments, the struggles, or will fear hide out there?

We have the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of his son. It's frightening, and at the same time, thrillingly joyful. The light will go with us, in us, on this journey, and probably, so too, the fear and the joy of that very light. The word made flesh is a mystery and it is ours to live.

Prayers for each and all of us that, even if frightened, we might be bold and open up to the overwhelming joy.

Journeying with you this season,

Ruth

Newcomers' Dinner

FEBRUARY 5, 6:00 PM

Join the Holy Innocents' Church Clergy, Vestry, and Welcome Team for a Dinner Party in your honor! Enjoy delicious food, friendly faces, and good conversation as we gather in community and make new friends.

We can't wait to welcome you!



We Need to Talk.

THE REV. T. STEWART LUCAS

One-on-one conversations are still the best way we get to know one another. Many of us invest time and money in personal trainers, fitness programs, hair appointments, and regular visits to the doctor to care for our bodies. In much the same way, the clergy and church staff are here as your spiritual professionals—not because we have all the answers or a direct line to God, but because we are trained to listen well, ask good questions, and help you notice where God may already be at work in your life.

We truly want to know you better. Whether you are brand new to Holy Innocents or have been here since Jesus was in short pants, your story matters. We'd love to meet you for coffee, buy you lunch, sit on a bench outside, or talk by the fire in the parlor. These conversations don't have to be heavy or dramatic—often they're simply about checking in, hearing your story, sharing what's going well, and naming what feels hard or hopeful right now.

I'm not a big fan of New Year's resolutions, but here's a meaningful one to consider: reach out and schedule a chat. We'd be grateful for the chance to listen. As Scripture reminds us, "Encourage one another and build up each other" (1 Thessalonians 5:11). That work begins, one conversation at a time.

Stewart

SUGAR HIGH!!!! RANDY ROMIG

October gives us all of those candy-bar treats to observe Halloween. Then, November offers up all sorts of sweet pies and cakes to celebrate Thanksgiving. Of course, Christmas brings forth a plethora of candies, cookies, and all sort of saccharine comestibles. February offers up chocolates oh-so-sweet for your sweetheart. And Easter, be it in March or April, brings the bunny with jelly beans and marshmallow chicks.

But, wait, didn't we just skip the month of January? What no sweet treats for the first month of the new year?!

Ah, not if you're tuned in to Holy Innocents' Episcopal! On Saturday afternoon, January 31, starting at 4:30 PM, you are in for a sweet treat beyond measure. The staff singers and the whole choir have prepared a concert for you, a program that will satisfy every yearning sweet tooth. There will be songs from Broadway, from opera, from oratorio. There will be an original composition. There will be a couple of sacred offerings from the whole choir.

AND, the concert will be followed by a delightful reception that will satisfy any toothsome yearnings you may have it.

AND, there is no charge! Come one. Come all!



Winter Warm-Up: Song & Celebration

JANUARY 31, 4:30 PM

Something wonderful is cooking at Holy Innocents! Join us for a cozy winter evening featuring some of our very own staff singers as they share favorite songs, along with the choir singing a few of our all-time favorite anthems.

After the music, we'll move into a festive reception with food, fellowship, and celebration. Come celebrate the talent among us, enjoy good company, and shake away the winter blues!

Thank You for Making Christmas Bright

OUTREACH TEAM

With grateful hearts, we thank all who contributed to the 2025 Secret Santa programs benefiting children and families served by CAC and Solidarity Sandy Springs. ***Through your generosity and care for others, 150 children woke up on Christmas morning to find multiple gifts waiting for them under their Christmas trees***—a joyful reminder of the spirit of the season shared by our parish community. In total, through the generosity of their numerous donors, Solidarity provided gifts for 1,100 children while CAC provided gifts for 1,450 kids. What miraculous support from our community for our neighbors in need!

Throughout the holiday season, parishioners selected children's wish lists that touched their hearts and happily shopped for the requested gifts. Prior to delivery to CAC and Solidarity Sandy Springs, a dedicated team of parishioners—our very own Santa's elves—carefully checked each bag and marveled at the abundance. In fact, two classrooms were filled with toys! Thanks go to our elf volunteers and those who delivered the gifts for generously giving their time and energy to ensure each child received the gifts under their Christmas trees. The kindness and service of our parishioners truly reflected the heart of the season and brought hope, joy, and Christmas cheer to so many children and families.

Memorial Gifts

RECEIVED NOVEMBER 4 – DECEMBER 31

IN MEMORY OF

Judith Dickerson Bullock

Pam and Marion Rivers

Laura and John Foster

Mary Ellen McReynolds

Amanda Kirk



Children & Youth



Growing Together MEGAN ATKINSON

This has been an amazing year for our youth group and our young adult ministry. While I was busy with a new addition to my family in the beginning months of the year, our youth program stayed strong thanks to an incredible team of volunteers who kept our students engaged, growing, and connected. ***It was a great reminder that ministry isn't just one person, it's a community, and God works through all of us.***

While I was home, our youth remained active in parish life, participating in gatherings and the Parish Retreat that helped them grow in faith and community. When spring arrived, they jumped right back into service and celebration, cooking for Community of Hope, honoring our seniors, and rejoicing together on Youth Sunday. Forty one students shared their gifts by helping lead Vacation Bible School, while also taking time for simple, meaningful connections, like catching up over coffee. In the fall, they continued to live out their faith through visits to a nursing home, helping lead the Blessing of the Animals, and gathering around the fire for a s'mores worship night. I'm also thrilled to welcome new members to our young adult program this year! Our gatherings have become a space for conversation, prayer, and encouragement.

This has been a year of growth and faith for our youth and young adult ministries. It has been a joy to see our students living out their faith, serving their community, supporting one another, and to watch our young adults deepen their connection to God and each other. And, of course, it's been a special year for me personally, with my family growing alongside all of this exciting ministry. We invite you to join us on January 25 for our Annual Meeting to hear more about all the ways God has been at work in our ministries.

The Light of Christ RENEE STEPHENS

My kids and I took down our Christmas tree this past weekend. This is something that my oldest always protests. If he had it his way, the tree and the decorations would stay up year-round and to be honest I can see where he is coming from. When you are surrounded by twinkling lights and glittering ornaments, it's easy to hold space for the wonder and joy of God, but when we pack it all away it is almost as if we're packing that away too. No longer are we held by 1200 twinkling lights every morning and night. There is no warm glow in the living room, no physical representation of the expectancy of the Incarnation. But what if we all said to ourselves that the joy and wonder of Christmas were never meant to stay confined to a season but that they are actually gifts meant to be carried forward into the new year, shaping how we live, love, and serve.

At Christmas, we celebrate the miracle of the Incarnation: God choosing to dwell among us in humility and love. As the decorations come down, we can remind ourselves that Christ does not leave with them. The same wonder we felt gazing at the manger can guide us now as we step into a fresh year filled with new opportunities and challenges. The question then becomes not how we preserve the season, but how we live it out. What are our hopes and dreams for this next year? Perhaps part of our goal might be to choose hope even when the world feels heavy, to practice generosity even when it is inconvenient, and to seek God's presence in the quiet moments as much as festive ones. ***The light of Christ is now reflected through us and through our words, our actions, and our willingness to grow in faith.***

To help carry the magic and wonder of the season into the new year, I invite you to join in one of the many opportunities to deepen our connection. The first opportunity for kids is the upcoming Children's Choir performance on Sunday, January 25th. Following that, all children and families are invited to gather for our next Wednesday Night GLOW on February 4th, a chance to gather, learn, and grow together in faith and fellowship. And for those seeking renewal and rest, the Parish Retreat at Kanuga from February 13th-15th offers sacred time away to listen for God's voice and be refreshed in spirit.

Upcoming Events

HOLYINNOCENTS.ORG/EVENTS

Curious About Holy Innocents?

Whether you're new to the Episcopal Church, returning after time away, or simply ready to go deeper—we invite you to take the next step through our Confirmation Classes for youth and adults. These gatherings are a welcoming, no-pressure way to explore our faith, our community, and what it means to belong. Classes for adults will begin on Sundays after the 10:15 am service on March 1 in the Parlor. Youth classes for 9th-12th graders begin on February 1, 9:00 AM, in the Frost Youth Center. The Rt. Rev. Rob Wright, Bishop of Atlanta, will visit on May 31, to welcome and confirm new members. Adults please **email** the Rev. Ruth Pattison (rpattison@holynnocents.org) or the Rev. Stewart Lucas (slucas@holynnocents.org). Parents should email Megan Atkinson (matkinson@holynnocents.org).

Church of the Common Ground

January 25, 11:15 AM | Parish Hall

We will pack 125+ lunches for our unhoused brothers and sisters who attend Church of the Common Ground in Woodruff Park. Join us in the Parish Hall after the 10:15 AM service to make sandwiches and assemble lunch bags. Those who wish are also invited to worship with the men and women of Church of the Common Ground at their 1:00 PM service in Woodruff Park. **Contact** Robin Hickey (hickeys5040@gmail.com)

Men of HI: Annual Cookout

February 1, 6:30 PM | Frost Youth Center

Fire up your cowboy ribeyes, 40-oz. T-bones, monster fillets, chicken, dogs, or burgers! Bring the meat you want to grill and whatever you'd like to drink; we'll take care of the rest. Come kick off the New Year with old and new friends. The event is free — please RSVP to help us plan.

Contact Kevin Nuffer (kevin.g.nuffer@gmail.com)

Bucket List Book Club

February 3, 1:00 PM | Parlor

This co-ed group is reading *Sense and Sensibility* by Jane Austen. **Contact** Audrey Sumner (audreysum4833@gmail.com)

Prayer Shawl

February 3, 7:00-8:30 PM | Parlor

We knit and crochet shawls for those in need, but bring any project—needlepoint, cross-stitch, even mending—and enjoy fellowship while you work.

Contact Cammie Ives (cammieives@gmail.com)

Habitat For Humanity build

February 7-March 28

Holy Innocents, along with several local churches, is sponsoring Habitat for Humanity's Faith Build. Adult parishioners and teens ages 16 and up are invited to participate. Each Saturday, at least four members of Holy Innocents will serve. No construction skills are required—just a willingness to help an Atlanta family purchase a safe, affordable home.

Register here: <https://vhub.at/HIEC>

Contact John Harris (harris4338@gmail.com)

Reading Connections

February 9, 6:00 PM | Inglett Hall C

This month's book is *Salvage the Bones* by Jesmyn Ward. The novel follows an impoverished African-American family in Mississippi in the days leading up to Hurricane Katrina.

Contact Michelle Driscoll (dris1296@yahoo.com)

Men's Third Friday Breakfast

February 20, 7:30-8:30 AM | Frost Youth Center

Enjoy warm hospitality, engaging discussions, and a fresh breakfast. Come for the conversation and stay for the fellowship.

Contact Charles Crosby (charles@corepm.net)

Men's Dinner and a Book

March 10, 6:30 PM | Private Residence

The book is *Becoming Little Shell: A Landless Indian's Journey Home* by Chris La Tray. Rolf Meinhold is hosting. All men at H.I. are invited!

Contact Jeremy Webber (jhwwebber@gmail.com)

Men's Retreat

April 24-26, 2026

Bill Harkins returns as retreat leader for the 2026 Men of Holy Innocents' Retreat at Lake Logan Episcopal Center in the mountains of North Carolina. This year's theme is "*Arete, Faith, and a Rule of Life for Connection Among Men.*" Bill will serve as both facilitator and homilist, offering the grounded presence and depth many have come to value over the years.

Contact John Harris (harris4338@gmail.com)



**HOLY INNOCENTS'
EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

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