



Growing Together

THE REV. DR. BILL MURRAY

I was young when it happened- maybe 9 or 10 years old. My cousins were all significantly older than me. My dad was the baby in his family by seven years, and my mom was thirteen years younger than he closest brother. One of my cousins was getting married, and we were all due to meet her fiancée at my grandparents' farm near Medina, Tennessee. He arrived and did his best to meet and impress the 15 plus souls all gathered to meet him. My mom's family all had a sharp sense of humor and loved to tease and joke about all sorts of things, large and small. This new fiancée asked innocently and earnestly, "What do y'all do fun around here?" And with a twinkle in his eye, my uncle declared, "We set up chairs and watch the cotton grow! Join us!"

Now even I knew that we do no such thing, but I quickly decided to get in on this moment of ridiculous fun. I grabbed a lawn chair, walked the 100 or so feet from the house, and set up in the line with the rest of the family to watch the crops grow. We still laugh that we all managed to do this without chuckling, smiling, or letting in any way. A group of fifteen folks set up chairs in a single line, all facing a cotton field, sat down, and started chatting away like it was a normal event. After about fifteen minutes or so, the poor fiancée finally broke down enough to say, "This doesn't see too exciting, what did I miss?!"

In many ways, nurturing our faith and cultivating our community is a similar process. There is a ton of work to do, much to invest and pray over, and nothing at all to sit around and watch. In fact, much of the growth happens through God's hand while we are busy trying to take care of all sorts of other things. But if we are doing it right, then there should be great moments of laughter and fun and joy as we grow together.

Over the last three years, we have steadily invested more and more in our children and youth ministries, in our music programs, in growing our staff, and in outreach. The growth has not always been noticeable, unless you look at these trends. In 2021 we had an average Sunday attendance (ASA) of 155. In 2022 we increased to 296 a Sunday, and in 2023 we jumped again to 319. The number in 2023 is close to our pre-COVID numbers in 2019. So far in 2024, we have 336 each Sunday. We have roughly doubled the youth group and children's ministry numbers. Our choir has gone from barely five singers to a dozen and growing. Our outreach program is growing in gifts to the community and in programs to involve volunteers.

To nurture our faith and cultivate our community, we need to see what is working and continue to invest to grow and thrive in our relationships with God and each other. So this year we are seeking to put our money in five areas: Children and Youth, Music and Worship, Outreach, Our Lady of Guadalupe and Spanish ministries, and our staff. Each of those areas has been a key to growth in our church, each of those areas impacts many in our faith, and each of those areas are the key to the future success of our community.

As we begin this season of stewardship, take a moment and think about the ways our church has impacted your life and the lives of those you love. Take a moment to think on the many ways God has blessed you. Take a moment to dream of the good things ahead for us all as we share those gifts to nurture our faith and cultivate community. I believe you will see the Holy Spirit alive and well and moving powerfully in our church. I know you will quickly see how Christ draws near to us in faith and live. And, yes, I believe you will find it to be a lot more fun than watching the crops grow. You will see how God has raised up our church to be a witness to the world.

Bill+



Vicar's View

THE REV. T STEWART LUCAS

At least once every two weeks someone asks me what a 'vicar' is. Here's what I normally tell them. I stand in for the rector sometimes. When he asks me...

A vicar (/ˈvɪkər/; Latin: *vicarius*) is a representative, deputy or substitute; anyone acting "in the person of" or agent for a superior (compare "vicarious" in the sense of "at second hand"). Linguistically, vicar is cognate with the English prefix "vice," similarly meaning "deputy."

The Pope bears the title vicar of Christ (Latin: *Vicarius Christi*). I could make the point that we are all vicars of Christ, his hands and feet in the world now to show his love to all. But I digress.

So, there you have it. There's a lot going on at Holy Innocents especially with the exciting action of the school on campus all the time. Bill simply can't do it all, so we all share the work together. I'll definitely stand in for him when he goes on sabbatical this summer.

I get to do a little bit of everything around here, and I love it. As you know I don't sit still very well, so the flexibility and variety of jobs is a good fit. This Fall Bill asked me to be his vicar for Stewardship. We put together an energized team that has met every Monday afternoon since June! Chris Protos has been the chair with Greg Euston, Nora Hattauer, and Julie Skaggs joining the team. Each Saturday you have been receiving an email with a weekly reflection on different areas of ministry we are highlighting this year.

Your generosity continues to make miracles happen through our community. We hope and pray you will be able to pledge of your many blessings to keep supporting the work we feel called to do, Nurturing Faith and Cultivating Community. Your pledge card and more details will be in the mail to you in early October. Thank you!

Stewart



KIRKIN' O' THE TARTANS

Sunday, September 29 at the 10:15 AM service

Join us for the annual Kirkin' o' the Tartans, a cherished tradition where parishioners of Scottish descent bring their clan tartans to be blessed.



This special service celebrates our Scottish roots and the contributions of Scotland to the Episcopal Church. The St. Andrew's Society will lead a lively procession with tartan banners, bagpipes, and drums at the 10:15 AM service.

Did you know the Episcopal Church owes its first bishop to Scotland? After the American Revolution, Samuel Seabury was consecrated as the first American bishop in Aberdeen, Scotland, since English bishops required an oath to King George III. This unique connection between our churches is symbolized in the Episcopal flag's blue field and white crosses in the pattern of St. Andrew's cross.

Celebrate our shared history, enjoy the vibrant tartans, and let the sound of pipes and drums stir your spirit!

MINI PARISH MEETING

Sunday, September 29 9:15 AM in Inglett Hall

The Church Staff is providing breakfast on this fun day, and then during this gathering, you'll hear important updates from our Stewardship Committee, vestry leadership, and clergy. We'll cover topics like our church's finances and the progress of the master plan process. Most importantly, this will be a time for us to listen to one another, share in the blessings we celebrate, and express our hopes for the future.

And let's set the record straight—the rumor is NOT true! We are not announcing a capital campaign, but we do want to share and celebrate all the wonderful things happening in our community.

Come and be part of this important conversation as we continue to nurture our faith and cultivate a strong community and faithful future together!

CONNECT

Walk in Love

THE REV. RUTH PATTISON

People love, love, love their dogs. They're proud of them, tell stories about them, share pictures. They're devoted and indebted, they buy them toys and Halloween costumes, they feel 'rescued' by their rescues, and are companioned by their canine devotees.

I had a joyful little thought about one of the Offertory Sentences the other day that made me chuckle. The Offertory Sentence I'm thinking of is the one I use most often. Most clergy use it most often. You know it:

"Walk in love as Christ loved us,
and gave himself for us,
an offering and sacrifice to God."

It tickled me to suddenly think, "Well there ya have it! That's it! right in front of me:

People ~ "walking in love" ~ out there with dogs.

That's what it means, that's what it looks like, that's how we do it, this offering.

We tend. We treat. We set aside our own comfort.
We take care. We delight. We afford.
We put up with shenanigans.
We clean up. We companion. We feed. We play.
We walk. . . in love.

Sure, the animals are cute and everything, but it's the love that's so compelling. So life changing. Love keeps us alive!

The Offertory Sentences are on p. 376 in the BCP. It's a list of sentences (all from scripture), like a primer for each of us to work out our own theology of Stewardship, and how it is that we bring ourselves, our souls and bodies, our God-given gifts, and make an offering.

So, I'm thinking, what a beautiful theology of stewardship, to offer our God given gifts and natural resources, to walk in love; to create a habitat of love in the world. To offer all that we have, to God, for the love of the world: an oasis of kindness, goodness, gentleness. And to walk in it, by the doing of it. To be in it, ourselves, to be in, the love.

I'm craving the big love. The walking in love. The falling in love. All of it like a wrap, a mantle of love, garmented in love. All of the neighborhood and people in condominiums and apartments, coming out for a breath of fresh air and green space, to find love and human community, and dog-walking. Strangers, walking in love all around us in our neighborhoods, surrounding us in love, because that's what they do:

They walk, in love.
They walk their dogs, in love,
They stroll their babies, in love,
They hike around with companions and partners, in love.
They walk. . .
in love.

All the world a sacred offering to God.



SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE & LUNCHEON

On Wednesday, October 30, we will gather for a Service of Remembrance at 11:00 AM in Christ Chapel. This is a meaningful time to honor and remember loved ones. Following the service, join us for a delicious luncheon in Inglett Hall—an opportunity to connect and share stories with friends.



DYNAMIC DUO CHRISTMAS CONCERT & LUNCH

Get into the holiday spirit on Wednesday, December 11, with lunch at 11:30 AM, followed by a delightful Christmas Concert featuring our very own Randy Romig and his friend Cathy Adams on our Steinway piano. They'll bring joy to the season as they "tickle the ivories" with festive tunes!

CHILDREN AND YOUTH



Knowing Wisdom

RENEE STEPHENS

"For wisdom is more mobile than any motion; because of her pureness she pervades and penetrates all things. She is a breath of the power of God and a pure emanation of the glory of the Almighty."
Wisdom 7:24-25

My friend gave me the cutest little succulent plant as a housewarming gift. It's about the size of a baseball, and it fits perfectly in my palms. The ceramic pot is white with black speckles and a gold rim. It's perfectly round at the bottom but the rim is asymmetrical. The speckles on the pot are also irregular. Some are big, some are small, some are streaks, and some are very dark while others are faint. It gives me so much joy to hold this little plant and contemplate all its uniqueness.

Often I feel like I am looking at an inverted picture of the night sky. The speckles are stars lighting up the galaxy, and some of them are streaking by so fast you would miss them if you blinked. But some are so big and bright that they constantly draw your attention, while still others are so far away that you barely see their little flicker. But as your eyes adjust to the darkness, you see more and more light shining all around you and the more you look around, the more you notice. All of it was indeed there all along but we just couldn't see it until we took a moment to let our physical nature catch up.

This is the nature of our earthly walk. We sense something in our spirit long before we can sense it in our bodies. You know deep in your soul when something feels right and when something feels off, and part of our journey is learning how to strengthen and trust those instincts. When God spoke to Elijah at Mount Horeb, God did not speak out of the great wind, or the earthquake, or the fire, but with a still, small voice. Elijah heard that still, small voice and responded. And with practice, we too, can hear it and respond. So, take that pause and let your eyes adjust to the darkness. Contemplate the beauty in your life. Reflect and give space for your soul to lead with the wisdom it already knows. And know that your faith community is here to help your nurture that light.

Stewardship

MEGAN ATKINSON

Church stewardship is about dedicating whatever we have—our time, talents, and finances—to serve the church and its ministries. While financial contributions are important and support the daily operations of the church, not everyone can give in this capacity. However, every church member has something to offer. Our unique skills, passions, and availability can be put to good use in various church programs.

Volunteering in the church is not only essential for the life and growth of the congregation, but it's also deeply nourishing for the soul. Giving your time to serve others can reduce stress, promote a sense of purpose, and foster a stronger connection with both God and our fellow church members. In many ways, volunteering is an act of faith—it's a way to trust that when we give, we receive far more in return. So, whether one has an hour a week or a few hours a month, our time and talents are our faithful gift to the church community, and our involvement helps build up the body of Christ.

If you are looking for a way to get more involved in at Holy Innocents', the youth program has several opportunities for engagement this school year—whether it's mentoring, helping organize events, or assisting with teaching. With your help, we can create lasting memories for our students, nourish their relationship with Christ, and promote healthy habits in volunteerism for their future.



EVENTS FOR CHILDREN & YOUTH



Buddy Bags

October 1-25

Our students will be collecting items during the month of October to create buddy bags for our unhoused friends. You can bring your items to church or use our Amazon wish list to have

them shipped directly. The youth will assemble these bags and distribute them to our church members during the Fall Festival on October 27th to keep in their cars for those in need.

GLOW

October 2

Come and GLOW with us as we continue our series about renewing our strength through spiritual disciplines. Kids will have fun discovering tools to use in their day to day lives to find respite from the constant demands of school and extracurriculars. Come hang out with friends, share a snack, and play some pumpkin games on October 2, 6:00- 7:00 PM. Kids ages PreK-5th grade.



Blessing of the Animals

October 6

Calling all pet owners! Our youth group and 4th-5th graders will be hosting this event and will provide tons of fun and fellowship for our pet families. We are also collecting old Halloween costumes for Agape Youth

and Family Center, an organization that serves underserved children. Please bring your pet and your old costumes and join us at 5:00 PM!

Youth Halloween Party

October 20

All 6th-12th graders are invited to a special youth group on October 20th from 4:00-7:00 PM. We will enjoy delicious Halloween treats, watch a spooky movie, and play some awesome Halloween games!



Fall Festival & Trunk or Treat

October 27th

Join us after 10:15 worship for an exciting Fall Festival & Trunk or Treat! Children and children at heart are invited

to wear costumes to Sunday School and worship and then stay after for a Fall Festival and Trunk or treat where we will enjoy some time of fellowship and celebrate the change of season. Enjoy some festive food, a petting zoo, train rides, and trunk or treat!



Dollywood

November 1-3

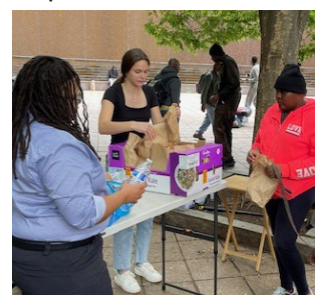
The youth group is heading to Dollywood November 1-3! All 6th-12th graders are invited for a weekend of fun and fellowship in Pigeon Forge, TN. The cost is \$475 plus extra cash for fast food on the

way there and back. We'll head to our beautiful airbnb on Friday night, spend all day Saturday exploring the rides, and head back Sunday after a devotional. Friends are welcome to join us but must attend 3 youth group events before we depart.

Youth Sandwich Build

November 17

On Sunday, November 17th our youth group will host the sandwich build in Parish Hall for Church of the Common Ground. Our group will help assemble sandwiches immediately after the worship service and then head to Atlanta to deliver them and participate in worship with our community friends. We should be back at the church by 2:30 PM. Transportation is provided and friends are always welcome. Please RSVP by November 13th to save your seat on the bus.



HI Youth Basketball

November 17

It's time for some fun with basketball! The Holy Innocents Youth Basketball, season is open for registration! All kids in grades 2-5 are welcome to join us. Register online.



SAVE THE DATE

Groups for Men & Women

Learn more | holynnocents.org/groups

READING CONNECTIONS

OCTOBER 21

6:00 PM | Conference Room

Readings Connections is the women's book club! The book for October is *Woman on Fire* by Lisa Barr.

Kathie Larkin | kathie.larkin@retired.paceacademy.org

WOMEN'S WISDOM CIRCLE

MONDAYS

8:30 AM | Zoom

Start your week with authentic, in-depth conversation in light of the wisdom sayings throughout the ages.

Abbie Hattauer | abbiehattauer@gmail.com

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

FIRST TUESDAYS

7:00-8:30 PM

Open to all, the Prayer Shawl Ministry offers a chance for service to others as well as a time for socializing.

The Guild of Knitters meets monthly at the church on the first Tuesdays of the month from 7:00-8:30 PM and makes prayer shawls, which are kept at the church and delivered to those who are ill or grieving.

Kathie Larkin | kathie.larkin@retired.paceacademy.org

MEN'S DINNER & A BOOK

NOVEMBER 12

6:30 PM | Private Home

The next Men's Dinner and a Book is Tuesday, November 12 at 6:30 pm and the book is *The Wager: A Tale of Shipwreck, Mutiny and Murder* by David Grann. John Harris is hosting at Jeremy Webber's house. All men at Holy Innocents are included and invited.

Jeremy Webber | jhwwebber@gmail.com

THIRD FRIDAY | MEN OF HI

OCTOBER 19

7:30 AM | Frost Youth Center

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

Charles Crosby | charles@corepm.net

Memorial Gifts

Received July 16-September 13

IN MEMORY OF MARY MARVIN WALTER

Lucy B. Edmunds

IN MEMORY OF HELEN JOHNSON

Margaret and Harry Boone

IN MEMORY OF NETTIE SILVA

Janet and Howard Clark

IN MEMORY OF DON HART

the estate of Marlene & Don Hart

IN MEMORY OF MIKE SHORTAL

Marilyn and Manny Rouvelas, Francis (Skip) and Nita Fennell, Michael Haddon and Janis Haddon, Jill Massey, Bill and Diane Clark

IN MEMORY OF STEVE LARKIN

Judy Bicknell, Mary Vaughan, Janet and Howard Clark, City of Bogart, Bernard A Rolfes, Jr, Lynne and Warren Wood, Alpha Tau Omega Alumni, King and Judy Rogers and family, Martha Ross, Jane and Mackie Gober, Chris and Rosalyn Devine, Charles Greenfield, Pam and Marion Rivers, Elaine Morgan, Helga Lemoine, Margaret and Harry Boone, Bill and Diane Clark, Ann Farrar Seagle, Marilyn and Curtis Kimball

UPCOMING EVENTS



Newcomers Dinner

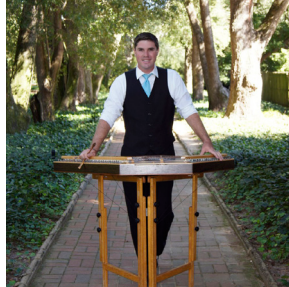
October 3, 6:00-8:00 PM

Join the Holy Innocents' Church Clergy, Vestry, and Welcome Team for a BBQ dinner while making new friends. Alex Allen is hosting, RSVP online!

FOMA: Matthew Dickerson, Dulcimer

October 6

Come and hear the unique Alpine sounds of the hammered dulcimer; played by virtuoso artist Matthew Dickerson, who tours regularly on the instrument. The hammered dulcimer is acquainted with many countries and regions, often heard at Bavarian, Swiss, and Austrian festivals as well as folk events in Hungary, and other Eastern European countries. The "sweet sounds" [dulcimer = sweet sounds (Greco-Roman origin)] will be perfect in the intimate acoustics of Christ Chapel. We hope you'll join for this "sweet sounding" opportunity on Sunday, October 6 at 4:00 PM.



Volunteer to Teach Basic ESL Classes

October 7-December 18

LaAmistad returns to Holy Innocents offering adult immigrant students in our community the opportunity to improve their English fluency in its English for Successful Living (ESL) program. The curriculum focuses on the use of English for everyday situations, and volunteers are trained and mentored by experienced and certified ESL professionals. Speaking Spanish is not required; conversational English is the goal of this basic class. Classes run October 7-December 18, on Mondays and Wednesdays, 7:00-8:30 PM.

Contact Howard Clark | ghowardclark@gmail.com.

Gallery Opening: Spaces & Places

October 17

Art lovers are invited to a special gallery opening from 6:00-7:30 PM showcasing the works of two remarkable artists, Susan Westmoreland and Sharmila Ghose Roy. Both artists bring unique perspectives to their art, drawing inspiration from nature, travel, and everyday life, but their approaches are as diverse as they are captivating.



Men of HIEC: Low Country Boil

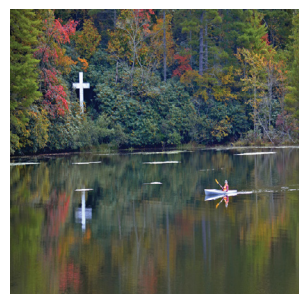
October 6

Join the Men of HIEC for food, fellowship, and fun at our annual Low Country Boil on the banks of the Chattahoochee. \$30 per person, includes food and beverages. Sign up online.

Iconography Workshop

October 6-11

This year, we will be painting the icon of Jonah. Jonah may well be the perfect prophet for this moment as we think and pray on our election, our nation, and our world. Where is God in all of this? Where is Jonah? Where are we? Noted iconographer Mary Jane Miller will be joining us again and leading us in prayer, reflection, and conversation around this unique icon of faith, daily from 9:00 AM-4:30 PM. The class is open to all but limited to 15, register online.



Save the Date: Parish Retreat at Kanuga

February 14-16, 2025

Looking for the perfect way to spend Valentine's and President's Day Weekend? Join us for a relaxing and fun-filled Parish Retreat at Kanuga Conference Center from February

14-16, 2025!

This weekend getaway is an ideal time to reconnect with your church family, enjoy fellowship, and recharge in the beautiful setting of Kanuga. Whether you prefer a cozy room at the Inn or a family-friendly cottage, there's something for everyone.

Mark your calendars and plan to join us for a weekend of worship, reflection, and community! More details to come soon—don't miss out on this special retreat!



**HOLY INNOCENTS'
EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

805 Mt. Vernon Hwy NW
Atlanta, GA 30327

