



Celebrating Community, Faith, and Fellowship

GOOD NEWS



We Belong

THE REV. DR. BILL MURRAY

I can truly say that I was an Episcopalian from the womb. My parents joined the Episcopal Church when my mom was pregnant with me. She was invited to an expectant mother's group. Little did any of us know that fifty years later four of those families would still be interwoven in faith and life. I grew up with a deep sense of connection with God, the church, and very specifically with those families who had all left their small hometowns to come to a new place and a new life. We became family and are all connected to this day, wherever our lives take us.

I've been thinking a lot about belonging lately, about how rare it can be, and how deeply we all long for it. I just assumed everyone had an experience like mine. Now I realize how precious and important those connections are and can be.

The world feels so loud right now. There's a constant hum of distraction — politics, technology, the pressure of daily life. Even the good things, like work, friendships, and family, can sometimes pull us away from one another rather than bring us closer. It's easy to feel scattered, even isolated. This isn't a particularly new problem. People have always needed to be reminded that we're meant to live connected lives. That we don't just exist alongside one another; we belong to each other.

Paul puts it beautifully in his letter to the Romans: "So we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another." (Romans 12:5) That one sentence

carries so much. In just a few words, Paul offers us a vision of the Church that's both beautifully simple and deeply profound. We are many — many hearts, many voices, many stories — and yet we're part of something larger than ourselves. We are one in Christ. Not because we're all the same, but because we're bound by love and belong to one another.

Belonging in this body isn't just about showing up on Sundays, though that matters. It's made real in the things we do together: both the ordinary and sacred. We feel it when we pack backpacks for school kids, make sandwiches for neighbors who are hungry, or just take time to talk and listen after church. We feel it in small groups, in shared prayers, in the quiet work of the Flower Guild, and in the music of the choir. We feel it when we wrestle with big questions in Bible study or just show up to sit beside one another in hard times.

That's what belonging looks like. Not perfect. Not polished. But deeply connected.

So, if you've been waiting for a sign to lean in, this is it. If you've been wondering where you fit, let's talk. If you are hoping and praying for a family, a community in which to belong, then you are not alone. Whether you've just arrived or have been part of this place for years, your presence matters. Your gifts matter.

In God's family, what is important is the love and time we share together. We belong to one another. And that's not just a beautiful idea, it's the truth.

Bill +

THE VICAR'S VIEW

THE REV. T. STEWART LUCAS

GRATEFUL FOR A WONDERFUL SUMMER

As we step into the fall season, I want to pause and say thank you once again. This summer was extraordinary in so many ways—not only for the joy of ministry we shared together, but also for the way this parish pulled together during Bill's sabbatical. Our remarkable staff, dedicated wardens and vestry, faithful ministry chairs, and gifted musicians made these months rich with life and spirit. I'm especially grateful to John Porter, Trey Davis, KC Crewdson, and Stefanie Taylor who stepped in to help in our liturgies. Truly, it has been a season of grace.

Now, how good it is to welcome Bill back, both in the office and in the pulpit! We are grateful for his return and look forward to the vision and energy he brings as we enter a new program year together.

EPISCOPAL SCHOOLS SUNDAY | SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 7

We are especially excited for this year's celebration that we have been planning together for several months. This will be a joyful morning where parish and school life come together in worship, learning, and fellowship.

- Guest Preacher: The Rev. KC Crewdson, Middle School Chaplain
- Music: The HIES School Chorus will join our parish choir, with Zack Wright, Director of Middle and Upper School Chorus, at the organ
- Breakfast: The school will host a delicious breakfast during the Adult Forum
- Forum Conversation: Head of School Paul Barton, The Rev. Dr. Stefanie Taylor (Head Chaplain), Director of Admissions Tyler Sant, and Religion Department Chair Dr. Evan Bassett will lead a conversation on enrollment, Episcopal identity, the school's strategic plan, and the joys and challenges of forming young people in today's world.

This year marks 66 years of ministry at Holy Innocents' Episcopal School, and we look forward to celebrating that legacy with you. Come hungry for breakfast, worship, and a lively conversation about the mission we share in raising up a new generation in faith, wisdom, and love.



ADULT FORUM

WE BELIEVE IN ONE GOD SERIES

2025 marks 1700 years since the fourth-century church crafted the Nicene Creed (325 AD). Since this is a notable anniversary, the Rev. Dr. Gabrielle Thomas will teach this four-week class where we will explore some of the controversies that led to the Council of Nicaea (from which early forms of the Creed resulted) and what was at stake for those involved. We will consider why the doctrine of God is important to Christian leaders in the fourth century, and its significance in the life of church today.



Dr. Thomas is Assistant Professor of Early Christianity and Anglican Studies at Candler School of Theology, Emory University. She previously served as a lecturer in early Christianity and Anglican studies at Yale Divinity School. An ordained priest in the Church of England, she completed her PhD in Historical Theology at the University of Nottingham while working in full-time parish ministry. Thomas is a keen ecumenist and served as the first woman on the Anglican-Oriental Orthodox International Commission (AOOIC). Dr. Thomas has published three books. When she's not teaching or writing she serves as the Theologian in Community at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in downtown Atlanta.

“FIRE IN MY BONES: JEREMIAH, TRUTH-TELLING, AND THE WORK OF HOPE”

On Indigenous Peoples' Day weekend, October 12, we'll look at the prophet Jeremiah, whose calling was both a burden and a gift. What does his prophetic witness to truth, justice, and restoration teach us as we reflect on the stories of this land and its peoples? Join the clergy for a rich study of scripture and conversation about how God calls us to tear down, build up, and live with hope.

FORMATION LED BY HOLLY CHESSER

Join us for a special two-part Sunday morning forum series with longtime parishioner Holly Chesser, who teaches Upper School English at the Lovett School. Holly holds a B.A. in English Language and Literature from the University of Virginia and an M.A. in Educational Psychology from the University of Connecticut. She and her husband Pat have been part of Holy Innocents for many years and are celebrating the birth of their first granddaughter in Denver. She will be joined by the Rev. John Porter.



THE TRICK AND THE TREAT OF CREATION

On Sunday, October 26, as we approach All Hallows' Eve, we will explore the two creation stories in Genesis and the competing images of God as just and merciful—leaving us with the timeless rabbinic question: should humankind have been created at all?

FROM FRANKENSTEIN TO CLONES: PLAYING GOD

On Sunday, November 2, as we observe All Souls and All Saints, we will help us examine human beings as creators in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* and Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go*. Together we'll wrestle with the haunting question: What obligation does the creator have to its creation?

EVENTS

PRAYER SHAWL | SEPTEMBER 2, 7:00-8:00 PM

Knit, crochet, or work on your own project while socializing. Shawls are given to those who are ill or grieving. Meet in the Parlor the first Tuesday of every month.

Contact Cammie Ives: cammieives@gmail.com

WOMEN OF HI: MAHJONG | SEPTEMBER 5, 6:30-9:00 PM

An evening of games, laughter, and light snacks. For players familiar with the basics. Bring your own beverage; RSVP on Realm and note if you have tiles or a 2025 Mahjong card.

COLLEGE CONNECTION | SEPTEMBER 15

Help keep our college students connected! Sign up to send care packages throughout the year to another student—it's a meaningful way to share love and support.

Contact Megan Atkinson: matkinson@holynnocents.org

THIRD FRIDAY: MEN OF HI | SEPTEMBER 19, 7:30 AM

Enjoy warm hospitality, engaging discussions, and a fresh breakfast. Come for the conversation, stay for the fellowship. **Contact** Charles Crosby: charles@corepm.net

CHURCH OF THE COMMON GROUND | SEPTEMBER 21

Help pack 120+ lunches for the unhoused after the 10:15 AM service. Worship follows at 1:00 PM in Woodruff Park.

Contact Robin Hickey: hickeys5040@gmail.com

YOUNG ADULTS: PUTTSHACK | SEPTEMBER 21, NOON

Join other 20s & 30s for fun, carpool from the church or meet there. Cost: \$10. Bring friends and your mini-golf skills. RSVP on Realm to save your spot.

FOYERS | SEPTEMBER 21

Connect with fellow parishioners in a small group setting. Groups of 6-8 are formed with a starting host. Each group sets their own meeting schedule; everyone hosts once during the year. Sign up at the table in Bishop's Common.

Contact Phyllis Weisser: pcweisser@yahoo.com

FOMA CONCERT: EARLY BIRD | OCTOBER 5, 4:30 PM

EarlyBird presents Silk & Sequins, an hour-long concert blending sacred music and shimmering sound. Featuring six local professional singers, the program spans Renaissance, Japanese inspired, English romantic, and contemporary works.

BOOK CLUBS

Bucket List Book Club

October 7, 1:00 PM

Fahrenheit 451

by Ray Bradbury

Reading Connctions

September 8, 6:00 PM

Tom Lake by

Ann Patchett

Men's Dinner and a Book

September 9, 6:30 PM

Endurance: Shackleton's Incredible Voyage by Alfred Lansing

HOLYINNOCENTS.ORG/EVENTS

PARMELEE UPDATE FROM BILL

Well done, Holy Innocents! When I left on sabbatical, I shared that our siblings in South Dakota were in need to \$30,000 to rebuild their Holy Innocents after a fire. The response has been exceptional and overwhelming! We have now sent them checks for over \$34,000 to bridge the gap and help them grow. The consecration for the new building has been set for Tuesday, September 23. Thank you for helping out a Holy Innocents in need and being the helping hands that another church needed.

SEPTEMBER 2

Bucket List Book Club
Prayer Shawl

SEPTEMBER 5

Women of HI: Mahjong

SEPTEMBER 7

Episcopal School Sunday
Youth Group: AG Rhodes

SEPTEMBER 8

Reading Connections

SEPTEMBER 9

Men's Dinner and a Book

SEPTEMBER 10

GLOW

SEPTEMBER 14

Club 45: Waffle House
CCG Sandwich Build
Youth Group

SEPTEMBER 15

College Connections
Registration Ends

SEPTEMBER 19

Men of HI: Third Friday

SEPTEMBER 21

Young Adults: Putt Shack
Youth Group: Study Hall
Foyers Registration Ends

SEPTEMBER 24

Club 45: Kickoff Event

SEPTEMBER 25

Newcomer's Dinner

OCTOBER 1

Youth: Buddy Bags
GLOW

OCTOBER 5

Children's Choir
FOMA: Early Bird
Blessing of the Animals

OCTOBER 7

Bucket List Book Club
Prayer Shawl

OCTOBER 13

Reading Connections

OCTOBER 16

Ventulett Gallery Opening

OCTOBER 17

Men of HI: Third Friday

OCTOBER 19

Stewardship Ingathering
Youth Group

OCTOBER 26

Fall Festival
Club 45: Halloween Party



Memorial Gifts

RECEIVED
JULY 10-AUGUST 26

IN MEMORY OF
CHARLES HUNT BROWN III
AND JOHN POPE ELLIOTT

MINNIE BOB CAMPBELL

YOUTH MINISTRY

Building Bridges, Deepening Faith

MEGAN ATKINSON

One of the greatest privileges of my time here at HIEC has been serving our youth. Week after week, I get to witness their curiosity, their faith, and their joy in building community together. Whether we are studying Scripture, serving others, or simply sharing a meal and laughter, I see Christ at work in their lives. These moments remind me that youth ministry is not just about programming or events. It is about walking with young people as they discover God's presence and love in real and tangible ways.

Now, I am grateful and excited to begin a new chapter in ministry. In addition to leading our youth here at HIEC, I have been invited to also walk alongside the youth of Our Lady of Guadalupe. This opportunity is not about dividing my energy but about multiplying the possibilities for our young people. Together, our two congregations will be creating shared experiences, including special events and retreats, where our teenagers can come together, learn from one another, and establish friendships across our communities. I believe this collaboration will strengthen not only the lives of our youth but also the life of the wider Church.

This partnership is a reminder that the Body of Christ is bigger than any one parish. When we come together, we discover the richness of

God's love expressed in different communities and traditions, and our faith is made stronger. As the Apostle Paul reminds us, "For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others" (Romans 12:4-5). I am eager to see how God will use this season to grow our youth in wisdom, courage, and compassion.

Of course, ministry is never something we do alone. It is always a shared effort, rooted in prayer, supported by mentors, and sustained by the love of the congregation. If you feel called to support our youth in this new adventure, I would love to hear from you. Whether through helping with events, providing meals, or simply showing up as a caring adult presence, there are many ways to make a meaningful impact. Your encouragement, prayers, and participation mean more than you know.

Thank you for entrusting me with the care of our youth here at HIEC, and for joining me in prayer as I step into this expanded role. I am confident that God is already at work, preparing the way for deep friendships, transformative experiences, and joyful fellowship among our teenagers. I look forward to all that is ahead and to sharing this journey with you.

YOUTH GROUP: AG RHODES | SEPT. 7

STUDENTS IN GRADES 6-12 ARE INVITED TO JOIN US ON FROM 1:15-4:30 PM FOR A SPECIAL YOUTH GROUP OUTING TO AG RHODES NURSING HOME, WHERE WE'LL HOST A FUN EVENT FOR THE RESIDENTS. THIS IS A GREAT CHANCE TO GIVE BACK, EARN SERVICE HOURS, AND MAKE MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS. TRANSPORTATION IS PROVIDED—JUST BE SURE TO RSVP ON REALM TO SAVE YOUR SPOT ON THE BUS!

DOLLYWOOD | NOVEMBER 7-9

STUDENTS IN GRADES 6-12 ARE INVITED FOR A WEEKEND OF FUN AND FELLOWSHIP AT DOLLYWOOD ON NOVEMBER 7-9! WE'LL STAY IN A MOUNTAIN CABIN, ENJOY THE PARK, AND CONNECT OVER MEALS, GAMES, AND LAUGHTER. THIS TRIP IS ALL ABOUT BUILDING LASTING FRIENDSHIPS THAT HELP STUDENTS STAY ENGAGED IN CHURCH LIFE. SPOTS ARE LIMITED SO SIGN UP FAST!

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Faith in the Everyday

RENEE STEPHENS

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight." Proverbs 3:5-6

The other night, my 7-year-old, Samuel, was having a snack and suddenly said, "Mom, I used to love to eat peanut butter on cinnamon graham crackers after I got out the pool at night at the beach and my fingers were suuuuper wrinkly."

I had so many thoughts at once: This is oddly specific. We didn't even have cinnamon graham crackers at the beach this year. What memory is he reaching for? What's the significance and why now?

I fumbled through a response like, "Did you really? That sounds really fun," hoping that somehow my love and presence were enough to honor his reflection.

But I've thought about it every day since. Was he saying something more? Did I miss it? Was I enough in that moment?

Then it occurred to me, this is how life and faith often feel. We want to be present. We want to respond with wisdom and love. But often, we're unsure, and doubt creeps in: Did I say the right thing? Did I miss what God was doing? Am I even enough? And these are the thoughts that keep us up at night.

Thankfully, God reminds us that we don't have to have all the answers. Proverbs 3:5-6 urges us to trust, not in our own understanding, but in God's understanding. That trust often takes shape in community; people showing up for one another in ordinary moments and it's in these everyday conversations that we are reminded that we are not alone and that all of us struggle in different ways.

So, if you've ever wondered if your presence was enough, or feared you missed what God was doing, know that you are not alone. God is always working. And we are never alone. So let's connect in the upcoming weeks and months, encourage one another, and trust that God is weaving every moment into something holy.



GLOW | SEPTEMBER 10

**FAMILY DINNER AT 5:30 PM,
PROGRAM FROM 6:00-7:00 PM**

**KICK OFF THE NEW YEAR WITH GLOW
A FUN, FAITH-FILLED EVENING FOR
KIDS IN PREK-5TH GRADE! WE'LL
SLOW THINGS DOWN AND HELP KIDS
RECONNECT WITH GOD THROUGH
SIMPLE, MEANINGFUL SPIRITUAL
PRACTICES THEY'LL EXPLORE (AND
TAKE HOME A HANDS-ON REMINDER
THEY MAKE THEMSELVES!)**

**THIS YEAR, WE'RE ADDING A
FAMILY DINNER AT 5:30 PM, SO
COME HUNGRY FOR FOOD, FUN, AND
FAITH.**

**PARENTS ARE INVITED TO STICK
AROUND FOR WINE AND CONVERSA-
TION WHILE THE KIDS DIVE INTO THE
EVENING'S ACTIVITIES.**





HOLY INNOCENTS' EPISCOPAL CHURCH

805 Mt. Vernon Hwy NW
Atlanta, GA 30327

Episcopal School Sunday | September 7



Celebrating Community, Faith, and Fellowship

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