

ANAM CARA

Holy Innocents' Episcopal Church Magazine





Holy Innocents is a community where the best of the Episcopal tradition is honored and creativity, innovation, diversity, and inclusion are embraced.

We seek to extend the radical hospitality of Christ to all, whether in our buildings or through the web, in the hope that each person's spiritual journey can flourish from individual faith into communal compassion and action. Home to Holy Innocents' Episcopal School, our campus serves on many levels as an engaging, ever-renewing forum for people of all ages to gather, pray, celebrate, mourn, converse, reflect, learn, and teach.

Membership at Holy Innocents is based on desire. If you are baptized (or desire to be baptized), intend to make this parish your principal community of worship, and you will support the ministries of the parish, you may be recorded as a member of the parish. We offer several opportunities throughout the year when new members are welcomed on Sunday mornings. We also offer opportunities for adult Confirmation, Reception and Reaffirmation.

For more information on membership contact Caroline Fleming.

Photos Taken By: Jon Kowacki

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From the Rector

Waiting

The Rev. Michael R. Sullivan
Rector

It seems that I've written about waiting during the season of Advent, oh, a million times. It just fits the season.

But honestly, I think I've misunderstood waiting.

Until recently, my waiting was passive. It meant not doing something to "open" space in my life so that God could clean out my trash, knowing that the Christ Child would arrive and clean me up for a new year! Notice: Jesus was going to arrive and clean me up. He was going to do it. How convenient!

Now to my awakening. I serve as the chaplain to our local fire department. I serve men and women who wait in four houses, just in case we need them. And in hanging out with them, I've learned that waiting is an active discipline. Rather than being what I don't do, holy waiting requires action, preparation, and intentionality in ways I hadn't realized.

In a fire house, anticipation rules. Bells could ring. Engines and sirens could roar. Or not. But anticipation brings shared responsibility. You wash the trucks, dry the lines, test the equipment, charge the tanks, and all with the ordinary, every day tasks of washing and drying clothes, cooking meals, staying fit, calling family, and doing paperwork. Waiting is not passive. It's active and meaningful preparation.

A warning, however. In our world, we are often distracted by the busy-ness of our hurried lives and wrongly believe that such busy-ness is preparation. Most of the time, it's not. Many times it's an anxiety producing process that does nothing but perpetuate more busy-ness. We clutter our lives with tasks and stuff to cover the emptiness we feel from living mostly superficial lives. When we take this same approach to our Advent journey, we either think our journey is up to God, passively waiting on God to fix us and therefore preparing in abstinence, or we go into overdrive, thinking it's all up to us and pushing God aside – in other words, not waiting at all. Either way drives from our hearts and lives the possibility of a new creation and birth. By thinking it's up to God or perpetuating anxious patterns, we suffocate creativity and God's advent among us.

Spiritual maturity requires the same non-anxious intentionality I experience among firefighters. A list is prepared and followed to keep things in order, but also to rhythmically prepare for what could come. By giving rhythm to the ordinary, firefighters prepare for the extraordinary, much in the same way that the church teaches us the rhythms of the Church Year or the Daily Office or Centering Prayer. Intentionality around the ordinary becomes the process of prioritization toward spiritual maturation, taking responsibility for those things we can change, and trusting God for those things we cannot. Perhaps the serenity prayer is a good Advent meditation for all of us to adopt (God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.)

So, I challenge you to let go of the gridlock that comes from two things: thinking Jesus comes to fix if we just sit back and let it happen, or allowing our busy lives to falsely lure us into believing we earn our spiritual maturation.

Instead, actively wait. Prepare. Not anxiously. Just ordinarily.

And on a holy night, just when you need it, the extraordinary will come.

Waiting...

RECTOR'S BOOKSHELF

Our Rector has mentioned the following books recently in sermons or commends them to you for the spiritual journey



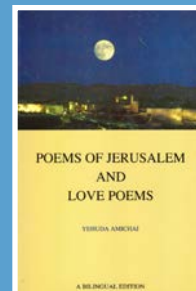
Father Tim's Church Survival Guide

Tim Schenck



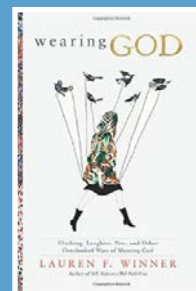
**Yes, and....
Daily Meditations**

Richard Rohr



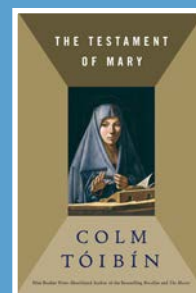
**Poems of Jerusalem
and Love Poems**

Yehuda Amichai



Wearing God

Lauren Winner



**The Testament
of Mary**

Colm Toibin

Come as we begin our journey to Bethlehem to celebrate the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ. Join us as we prepare for Christmas with some of our many Advent offerings this year.

LITURGY & MUSIC OPPORTUNITIES

ORGAN RECITAL & EVENSONG: Join us at 3:15pm on Sunday, December 6, for a 35-minute Organ Recital on the Schoenstein Organ in the Nave played by our very own David Brensinger. Following the recital, there will be an Evensong for the Second Sunday of Advent at 4:00pm featuring music composed by Gibson, Stanford, & Martinson.

CHILDREN'S CHAPEL: On the Second Sunday of Advent, December 6, Children's Chapel will begin during the 9:00am service! Children from Pre-K through 4th grade will leave church during the sequence hymn to enjoy a children's service designed just for them. They will return during the peace.

FRIENDS OF MUSIC CONCERT: On Friday, December 11 at 8:00pm in the Nave, join us as we welcome The Skylark Vocal Ensemble, directed by Matthew Guard. This professional ensemble, comprised of some of the finest choral artists from across the country, sings a program of music for the season. This event is free to the public and is sponsored by Friends of Music.

ADVENT QUIET DAY: Join us for an Advent Quiet Day on Saturday, December 12, from 9:00am to 1:00pm, facilitated by the Rev. Jenna Strizak. We'll meditate on what is revealed to us about the mystery of Christ's incarnation—the first and second comings of Advent—through the sacrament of Holy Eucharist.

CONFIRMATION SUNDAY: Join us on Sunday, December 20 as we welcome the Bishop Robert C. Wright to Holy Innocents for confirmation. Bishop Wright will be celebrating and preaching at both the 8:00am and 10:30am services. Please also look forward to joining us for brunch in Inglett Hall at 9:00am. More information on the brunch coming soon.




MISSION OPPORTUNITIES

HORIZONS GIVING TREE: Sponsor a student and/or sibling of one of our 120 Horizons' scholars through this year's Horizons Giving Tree. To participate, take an ornament card from the tree in Bishop Commons on the **First Sunday of Advent on November 29** and sign it out on the clipboard. After purchasing your gift, bring it unwrapped to the parish before **Wednesday, December 16** so that we can get it ready for our HIEC Christmas Store!

CALLING FOR ELVES FOR OUR HIEC CHRISTMAS STORE: On **December 19, from 8:00am-12:15pm**, we will be hosting a Christmas Store in Parish Hall. Parents of Horizons students will come at this time to pickup their presents, have them wrapped, and get some additional stocking stuffers! If you are interested in being an HIEC Elf for a day - which includes being a wrapper, a greeter, a replenisher and MORE, please sign-up online at the Holy Innocents' website.

HIGH POINT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - READING WITH A STUDENT: There are over 60 students in need of mentors and reading partners at High Point Elementary. If you are available once a week to read with a student during their lunch period, please sign-up through our partner organization Everybody Wins! If you are unable to commit to weekly sessions, there is an opportunity to alternate with another coworker. You can register to read at www.everybodywinsatlanta.org. You may also contact Amy Schlossberg at (schlossberg@everybodywinsatlanta.org). Get started today!




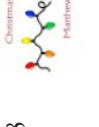


*More information on all of these offerings can be found
on the Holy Innocents' website.*



Advent

Below find our Advent Calendar. This calendar is designed as a guide to help you establish an Advent tradition in your home and is centered on the lighting of the candles of an Advent wreath. Our time of preparing for Christmas has been transformed by the world into a time of busyness and fatigue. We spend a great deal of time, energy, and money in the weeks before Christmas buying gifts, preparing food and decorating our homes. The use of the Advent wreath may assist your family in finding the joy of a Christ-filled Christmas.

Advent Calendar

29		Each day this week light the 1st candle in your Advent Wreath.	30		Choose a book to read together as a family.	1		Offer a prayer of Thanksgiving for happy things that happened this year.	2		Gather food & canned goods to take to the local food bank.	3		Set up your family Nativity scene, except for the Holy Family	4		Make cookies to take to a nearby nursing home.	5		St. Nicholas Day. Put candy in everyone's shoes.
6		Each day light the 1st & 2nd candle in your Advent Wreath.	7		Decorate the Christmas tree together.	8		Put Mary & Joseph across the room from the nativity scene.	9		Read more of your family's Advent Book selection.	10		Make an ornament for you family's Christmas tree	11		Gather up blankets & coats to take to a local shelter.	12		Gather some neighbors & friends and go caroling.
13		Each day light the 1st, 2nd & 3rd candle in your Advent Wreath.	14		Volunteer at a local animal shelter.	15		Make dinner together as a family.	16		Hanukkah begins at sundown. Play the Dreidel Game.	17		Imagine what it was like to travel to Bethlehem by Donkey.	18		Take a drive to see Christmas decorations & displays.	19		Family Movie Night. Make some popcorn & watch a Christmas movie.
20		Each day light all 4 candles in your Advent Wreath.	21		Send a Christmas card or call a friend far away.	22		Finish reading from your family's Advent book selection.	23		Help finish wrapping presents and deliver them to friends.	24		Put Mary & Joseph in the Nativity scene. Add grass to the manger to get ready for the Baby	25		Christmas Day. Put the Baby in the manger.	26		
27			28			29			30			We wish you all a Merry Christmas from Holy Innocents' Episcopal Church For more information on Church events, please visit the Holy Innocents' Website.								



clergy corner

"I'm Spiritual, but not Religious."

The Rev. Lisa M. Zaina
Vicar

I'm fascinated by what people will say to me when they see me in my collar. I was recently at a reception after doing my priest thing, and a woman walked up to me and blurted out "I'm spiritual, but not religious."

I couldn't respond immediately because I had just stuffed a remarkable hors d'oeuvre in my mouth, so she continued, unabated. She offered that she was in a 12-step program and that she had just taken on a new charge who was in recovery as well.

She told me that this person was sort of the bane of everyone's existence, and that she found her difficult as well. But, as time progressed, she began to find a connection with her. Then, her eyes lit up, and she told me that this woman had asked her to accompany her to the birth of her child, and that she had cut the umbilical cord.

I think that I was only able to utter a "Wow, that must have been amazing", before she excused herself and started talking with someone else.

I wasn't too quick on my feet that day, for if I were, I think that I would have challenged her assertion that she isn't religious.

One of the definitions of religion that Merriam-Webster offers is "a cause, principle, or system of beliefs held to with ardor and faith."

According to Merriam-Webster, spirituality is "the quality or state of being concerned with religion or religious matters: the quality or state of being spiritual."

I believe that it is difficult to separate the spiritual and the religious, and this is inherent in the definitions. In 1 Corinthians, Paul wrote "If there is a physical body, there is also a spiritual body. The first man was from the earth, a man of dust, the second man is from heaven. As was the man of dust; and as is the man of heaven, so are those of heaven. Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we will also bear the image of the man of heaven."

We are the image of the man of dust, and we carry the image of the man of heaven. It is with God that we explore and develop our spirituality, looking for and finding the image of the man of heaven in others, and ourselves. When we find the image of the man of heaven, we create our religions as incarnate beings.

Jesus told us that the greatest commandments are to love God, and to love our neighbors as ourselves. Our relationship with God forms our spiritual being, and our relationship with others in community becomes our religion.

J. Philip Newell said, "The depth of our spirituality is based not on whether or not we can say certain things about God but on whether or not we are aware of the presence of God in every moment of life and in every person we meet."

I believe that the woman at the party subscribes to a system of belief.

Particularly as a member of a 12-step program, she has chosen to offer herself, and her challenges, to a higher power. That seems spiritual to me. And, she has chosen to be in community with others, and love even the unlikely ones. That's religion.

She recognized what many of us fail to recognize, even though we call ourselves religious. She recognized that there is no wholeness in separation and that wholeness comes in relationship. Her salvation and healing only can take place if others are healed as well. That's a system of beliefs that is based in an incarnate reality.

In our church home, we are incarnate and spiritual beings who share a religion. As a priest, I like to think that worship speaks to others as it speaks to me. But I know that is not the case. And some worship services speak to me more than other services do.

Just as there are many rooms in the Father's house, there are many doors that lead us to relationship with God and one another. We should be very careful to avoid boxing people into categories like "spiritual, and not religious" because they do, or do not, worship God the way in which we do. Perhaps we can expect to see more of the "spirituals" from time to time if we allow them to explore their inextricably bound religious nature.

Benedictine monk David Steindl Rast said, "Sometimes people get the mistaken notion that spirituality is a separate department of life, the penthouse of existence. But rightly understood, it is a vital awareness that pervades all realms of our being... Wherever we may come alive, that is the area in which we are spiritual."

Brother David also says, "my favorite name for the One I worship in wonder – the only name that does not limit God – is Surprise."

Let's welcome Surprise in our lives in a way that forms, and transforms, us. We may even surprise ourselves.



“To Come” or “To Arrive”

The Rev. Buddy Crawford
Senior Associate Rector

The season of Advent may be characterized by many themes: preparation, anticipation, expectancy and hope, to name a few. The word Advent comes from a Latin word that means “to come” or “to arrive.” So another theme to consider for this short season is that it is a journey. Many religious thinkers have portrayed Christian discipleship as a pilgrimage, and we, as a pilgrim people moving towards a goal of becoming more and more like Christ. Sometimes our journey or pilgrimage takes us through familiar territory, but there are other times when God calls us to enter places that are new, strange, and unfamiliar.

Year after year, the church beckons us to travel through Advent anew to arrive at a stable in the hope of encountering the Christ child. And while there are familiar signposts on the journey - wreaths, hymns, prayers, scripture readings, and the change of liturgical colors - we are always in different places in our lives as we begin the annual sojourn to Bethlehem. We may be in new relationships, there may be a new child in the family, some of us may have started a new career, or maybe this year we are experiencing some loss or grief. In whatever ways our lives have changed or are changing, we come to Jesus from a new starting place. The good news is that from wherever we arrive, Jesus receives us just as we are; assisting us in bearing our joys and sorrows, accepting the gifts or needs we bring to him.

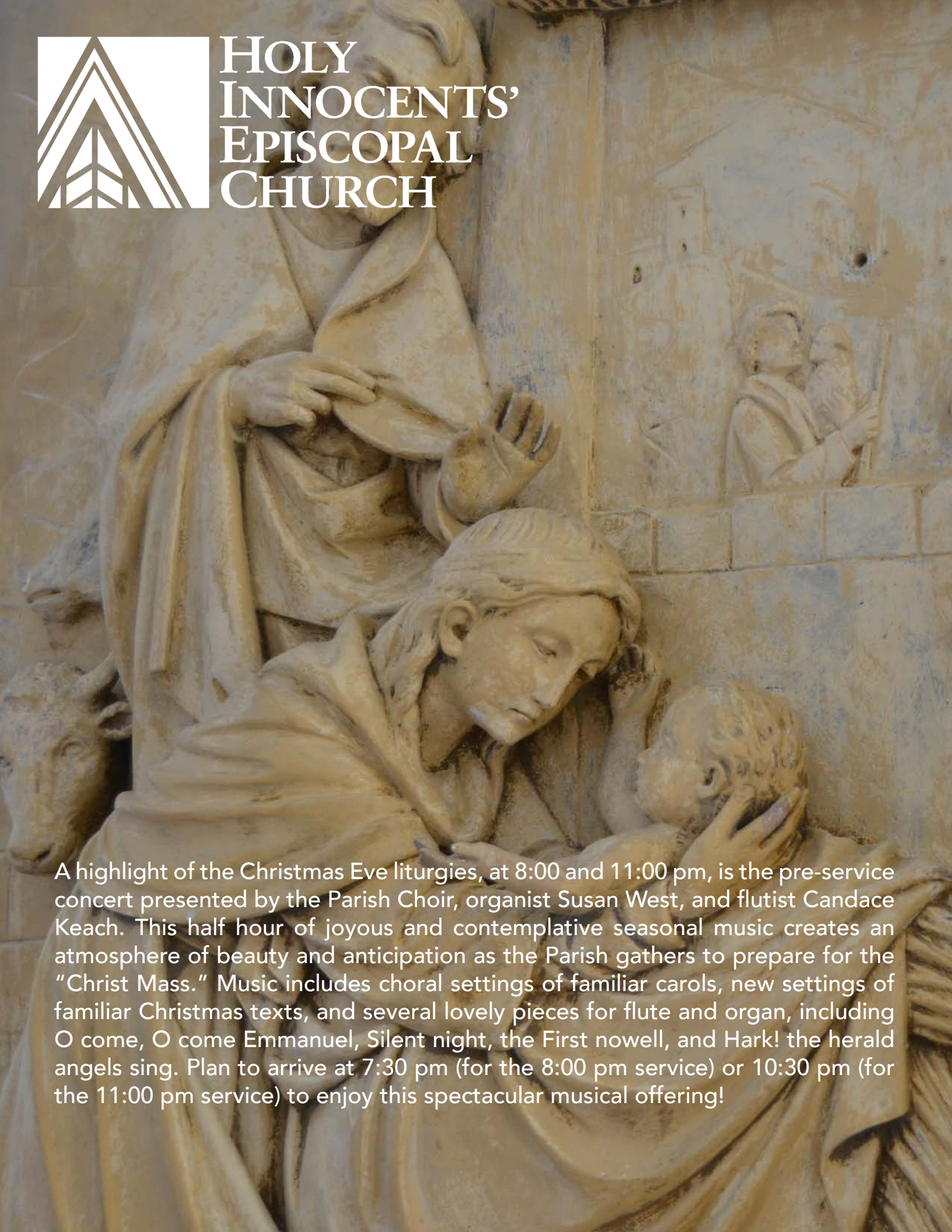
In the 4th century St. Athanasius said that Jesus became what we are in order that we might become what he is. This is not a static statement about the incarnation; it is an invitation for us to begin and to continue on the lifelong pilgrimage of becoming like Jesus. It is a journey of becoming that takes us to new, strange, and unfamiliar places. When we follow in the steps of Jesus we may find ourselves in places where others may be hesitant to venture – with the poor and homeless, the sick and suffering, the abandoned and forgotten. But isn't that what we should expect from a God who arrives as a poor helpless infant, born in a stable?

May your journey this Advent take you to unexpected places.





HOLY INNOCENTS' EPISCOPAL CHURCH



A highlight of the Christmas Eve liturgies, at 8:00 and 11:00 pm, is the pre-service concert presented by the Parish Choir, organist Susan West, and flutist Candace Keach. This half hour of joyous and contemplative seasonal music creates an atmosphere of beauty and anticipation as the Parish gathers to prepare for the "Christ Mass." Music includes choral settings of familiar carols, new settings of familiar Christmas texts, and several lovely pieces for flute and organ, including O come, O come Emmanuel, Silent night, the First nowell, and Hark! the herald angels sing. Plan to arrive at 7:30 pm (for the 8:00 pm service) or 10:30 pm (for the 11:00 pm service) to enjoy this spectacular musical offering!



CHRISTMAS

The Nativity of Our Lord

DECEMBER 24
Christmas Eve Services

Christmas Pageant 3:00 PM

Holy Eucharist * 8:00 PM

Pre-service concert 7:30 pm

Solemn Holy Eucharist* 11:00 PM

with Incense

Pre-service concert 10:30 pm

DECEMBER 25
Christmas Day

Holy Eucharist 12:00 PM

DECEMBER 27
First Sunday after Christmas

Holy Eucharist 8:00 am

Lessons & Carols 10:30 am

Celtic Service 6:00 pm

JANUARY 3
Second Sunday after Christmas

Holy Eucharist 8:00 am

Holy Eucharist 10:30 am

Celtic Service 6:00 pm

There will be no Sunday school
December 27 and January 3



New Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church

Presiding Bishop Michael Curry was installed at the Washington National Cathedral, in Washington, DC, November 1, 2015. He becomes the first African-American Episcopal presiding bishop to lead our 2.5 million-member denomination. Curry preached on how his father was moved to become an Episcopalian after watching a church welcome his then-fiancee to drink from the common Communion cup in the often-segregated 1940s. “The Holy Spirit has done evangelism and racial reconciliation before in the Episcopal Church,” he told a congregation of almost 2,500. But he added: “God is not finished with this church. God has work for us to do. Jesus has shown us the way and we are the Jesus movement, so my brothers and sisters, walk together, children, don’t you get weary.”

The service of almost three hours encompassed the traditions of the church and the diversity Curry, 62, is encouraging it to embrace. He was elected during an unprecedented first ballot at the church’s General Convention this summer after serving 15 years as bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina. He succeeds Katharine Jefferts Schori, the faith’s first female presiding bishop, who served for nine years. While he must lead and tend to day-to-day functions as the faith’s chief executive officer, Curry said his job is more than that. “In this mission moment of the church’s life,” he said, “the primary role of the presiding bishop must be CEO in another sense: Chief Evangelism Officer, to encourage, inspire and support us all to claim the calling of the Jesus movement.”





from the altar



A SKYLARK CHRISTMAS

DECEMBER 11 AT 8:00PM
IN THE NAVE

Featuring Christmas readings from the King James Bible and a selection of gorgeous carols spanning six centuries, A Skylark Christmas is becoming a fixture of the Atlanta music scene and will enhance your holiday season.

*This event is sponsored by Friends of Music
and is free to the public.*



Join us for an Advent Quiet Day on Saturday, December 12, from 9:00am to 1:00pm, facilitated by the Rev. Jenna Strizak. We'll meditate on what is revealed to us about the mystery of Christ's incarnation—the first and second comings of Advent—through the sacrament of Holy Eucharist. We'll pay special attention to Mary and her role in the work of salvation. The day will hold lots of time for creativity and conversation, pondering and prayer.

The Rev. Jenna Strizak

Jenna Strizak serves as Associate Rector at Holy Trinity Parish, Decatur, GA. She loves being a generalist priest—preaching and teaching, administering sacraments, and having holy conversations at the hospital bedside or the bar—working with young children and their families, overseeing pastoral care, and thinking creatively about Christian Formation. She has an M.Div. from Candler School of Theology, Emory University and a BA from Hampshire College in Amherst, MA. Before coming to Holy Trinity in 2012 Jenna served as a hospice chaplain, worked in college admissions, and sold merchandise at folk concerts in New England.

Jenna is a NJ-raised, Western Massachusetts-formed Yankee happily sojourning in the South. She is an avid Sacred Harp singer, loves long road trips and silly board games, and fancies herself a bagel aficionado (read: bagel snob).



From the Chancel Rail

The Rev. Buddy Crawford

Senior Associate Rector

Each issue, we will offer a short lesson about liturgy. Some of them might be about something you see in church while others might give a short reason why we do something or say something. If you have a question you'd like answered here, just email any of the priests on staff! We'll do our best to answer it.

How did the colors of the seasons of the church year come to be?

Episcopalians anticipate clergy vestments and altar hangings to change colors as we progress through the seasons of the Church Year. But this has not always been the case. The early Christian Church preferred white for liturgical use whenever the community gathered. Gradually other colors were added and by the 12th century colors began to be loosely associated with seasons in the Christian calendar. However, there was wide variation in which colors were paired to seasons. Most parishes reserved their best vestments, regardless of color, for festivals, using less fine vestments for regular Sunday use.

In 1570 Pope Pius V appointed particular seasonal colors. But this occurred during the time of the reformation as non-Roman churches, including the Anglican Church, shunned the use of vestments. In fact, no Book of Common Prayer has ever directed the use of colors or vestments for use in worship.

In the 1850s the English Oxford Movement raised a new consciousness within the Anglican Communion regarding sacramental life. This movement began what has been commonly called "High Church" parishes that introduced Eucharistic vestments for clergy, altar hangings, candles on altars, and other liturgical appointments. In the American Episcopal Church change came slowly. There were a few "high" churches in the country, but a hundred years ago in the Diocese of Atlanta few parishes would have possessed

the garments the clergy wear or the altar hangings we see today.

In the use of color, the Episcopal tradition follows that of the modern Roman Catholic Church and with a few exceptions the church year follows this pattern:

- Advent:** Sarum Blue or Purple
- Christmas through the Day of the Epiphany:** White or Gold
- The Season After the Epiphany:** Green
- Lent:** Purple or Unbleached Muslin (Lenten array)
- Palm Sunday and Holy Week:** Red
- Easter Season:** White
- The Day of Pentecost:** Red
- The Season after Pentecost (Ordinary Time):** Green
- Baptisms, Weddings, and Funerals:** White
- Feast Days –** White, unless the commemoration is a martyr, then Red.

Currently, there are some parishes in the Anglican Communion who have returned to the ancient custom of mixing colors and using the better vestments for prominent feast days. We are grateful to have an Altar Guild who lovingly care for our vestments and make sure that clergy and altars are vested according to the liturgical season.

Holy Innocents' Episcopal Church Annual Parish Retreat 2016

FRIDAY, APRIL 15 - SUNDAY APRIL, 17

Holy Innocents is bringing our Parish retreat **Closer to Home** this year. Our annual parish **"Homecoming"** retreat will be held **April 15-17, 2016**.
Location and details to come!



Dr. Amy-Jill Levine

University Professor of New Testament and Jewish Studies

Dr. Amy-Jill Levine, University Professor of New Testament and Jewish Studies, E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Professor of New Testament Studies, and Professor of Jewish Studies at Vanderbilt University, joins us for an extraordinary weekend shared among Temple Sinai and Holy Innocents. One of America's most sought after professors of scripture, Dr. Levine brings warmth, humor, and a provocative approach to reading holy scripture. Always challenging, she will bring great insight to sacred texts as she leads us in Biblical study from both the Jewish and Christian viewpoints.



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Event Schedule

FRIDAY, JANUARY 8

WORSHIP AT TEMPLE SINAI

5:45
PM

Pre-Service
Reception

Mix and mingle with old
and new friends

6:30
PM

Shabbat
Service

“Common Mistakes Jews/Christians
Make about One Another”

7:30
PM

Shabbat
Dinner

RSVP online at the Temple Sinai or
Holy Innocents' website. (\$18 per person)

SATURDAY, JANUARY 9

LEARN AT TEMPLE SINAI

9:00
AM

Text
Study

“How Jews and Christians
Read Scripture Differently”

SUNDAY, JANUARY 10

WORSHIP AT HOLY INNOCENTS

9:00
AM

Woship
Service

“The Good Samaritan in
His Jewish Context”

10:10
AM

Sunday
Education

“Jesus' Parables as Jewish Stories”



cred Words: Universal Messages

A WEEKEND WITH DR. AMY-JILL LEVINE

OUR COMMUNITIES WILL WORSHIP AND LEARN TOGETHER

Friday, January 8 - Sunday, January 10



The bottom half of the image shows a landscape with rolling hills in the distance and a body of water in the foreground. The water has gentle ripples, and the sky is a pale, hazy blue. The overall color palette is warm and earthy, matching the sunset sky above.



pastoral care

The Prayer Shawl Ministry @ HIEC

Kathie Larkin

Head of the Prayer Shawl Ministry

On the first Tuesday of each month, a small group of parishioners gather in the parlor of Holy Innocents' church to knit and crochet. Our initial inspiration was to be part of the ministry begun at The Hartford Seminary as well as the small group ministries that are so important to the life of Holy Innocents. But for the women who gather on Tuesday evenings, the ministry has become so much more. We share knitting patterns, the best places to buy yarn, movies we have seen, books read, our dislike for Homespun yarn that frays and ravels, stories about our families - along with our small triumphs and tragedies.

Why does this ministry mean so much? Simply put, it might be because we want to help people who are sick and need comforting.

I think it is that. But I also believe it is a meaningful ministry because we care deeply for each other. Together we have weathered illnesses, family transitions, retirements, births, and even deaths. People who come often say it is their favorite group. When we were "displaced" during the renovation of our space we had to find a new "home." One of our members volunteered the clubhouse at her apartment. This gift gave her such great joy. We all remember the pride she felt at being able to do something for the women who had given her joy. She passed away shortly after we returned to our regular space, and we often remember her and how much pleasure this simple act meant to her and to us. I think this is who we are - as much as the beautiful shawls we create.

Holy Innocents' can be a big place. If you only come on Sundays or only occasionally you might get lost in our space. The Prayer Shawl Group, like so many other small-group ministries at Holy Innocents, is a place where people connect. We welcome you to the group!

Prayer for Knitters

May your knitting be blessed.
May God touch your hands with love
May God guide your needles with compassion
May God fill your yard with Spirit.

May God touch your heart with peace
May God guide your soul to freedom
May God fill your mind with silence.

May God touch your shawls with warmth
May God guide your community with joy
May God fill our world with hope.

May your knitting be blessed.
Amen



“It’s up to you: Grinch or God?”

The Rev. Joshua Case

Associate Rector for Mission

Here it comes. Do you feel it? You know, that rush of activity that emerges as if out of nowhere and lures us in with jingly-music and the sweet aroma of latte-frappe-whatever to buy, to consume, to bake, and feel good about how tired we are. Ah....Christmas is coming!

It’s amazing isn’t it? How without regard for anything other than going-going-going and buying-buying-buying we can unknowingly being lured into a kind of disembodied existence that calls us to be in conflict with the very work of waiting that Advent aspires. Yep, that’s right, it’s just that subtle. Just as we enter into that time of the year when our liturgical calendar invites us to reflect and anticipate the Incarnation - the radical notion that God was revealed among us as a child born in stark poverty, to an immigrant teenage mother in a barn - we often find ourselves most least reflective.

But what if this year, things could be different? What if this year we had an advent reversal? What if this year rather than allowing ourselves to be sucked into the frenzied existence of elves scurrying about the work of Old Saint Busyness (or is it St. Business), we allowed ourselves to be shaped by a different set of dispositions? What if this year, this new year, prayer and love and service were more than just words that sounded good and more like habits to be embraced by those who know and share the abundance of God with us.

As hard as it may seem, the elements for embracing a successful, less frenzied, more human Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany are already around you. Think about it: over the course of the next six weeks, your Holy Innocents’ Episcopal Church will hold seven sabbaths, three Wednesday evening events for families to share meal together, one quiet

day facilitated by the Rev. Jenna Strizak, and multiple service opportunities for you to focus your holy work towards those most in need.

You see my friends, while church attendance may have become just another one of those “things to do,” to become a people who are about the work of God in the world - the very world into which God became human - we must prioritize the slow baking of faith in our lives so that we can be (re)shaped for the *missio dei* - the mission of God.

Yes, hidden here in the midst of all the hustle and bustle are opportunities for you to say to the Grinch who steals your time and joy, “Not this year!” Yep, that’s right: like it or not, the Grinch is alive and well and the choice is ours to make: make this season about God with us or the Grinch of St. Busyness will make that choice for you. You decide.

Here are three ways that you be intentional about reclaiming Advent/Christmas/Epiphany newly this year:

- Choose to sponsor one of our children on our Horizon’s Giving Tree.
- Sign-up to read: Do you have time at lunch to read with a student at a local school? If so, put your joy to action and commit to taking lunch once a week to read with children.
- Pray. Make praying for children in Georgia part of our your daily discipline. You’ll be amazed at how you begin to see the world differently.

Congratulations to our 2015-16 Missional Grant Recipients & Partners

Emmaus House, Peoplestown
Horizons, Sandy Springs
La Amistad & ESL, Atlanta
Path to Shine, metro-Atlanta

We thank you for your work in the world on behalf of children and for calling us to more prophetic works of faith on their behalf!





children's ministry

"This Year Will Be Different"

Wynn Henderson

Director of Children's Ministry

Growing up every year on the 1st of December, my parents would go into the attic and pull down a box. In it was a small (12 inches) white tipped Christmas tree, many numbered boxes and a small book.

This was my family's Advent tradition. Each evening the six of us would gather around the table where the tree sat perched in the place of honor. Then whose ever day it was - the four children took turns - would open the small book and read the verse for that day. In the early years I would quietly whisper the words to my youngest brother and he would repeat them loudly to the rest of the family.

After reading the day's verse we turned to the boxes. Inside each small numbered box was a corresponding, beautiful small ornament. We would open the box and hook the ornament onto one of the small gold rings glued to the tree's branches.

I must confess that we children got more and more excited as we got closer to the box numbered 25, but what I remember most about this tradition was our delight each year with the beautiful ornaments and how well they matched the verses. I also remembered that for a few minutes the four of us were not arguing about who got to go first or any of the other silly things of which we could think of to bicker. We all enjoyed this small moment of peace and remembered what was really important.

I hope that you all may find small moments of peace this Advent and that this year is different for all of you.

This Year Will Be Different by Ann Weems

Who among us does not have dreams
that this year will be different?

Who among us does not intend to go
peacefully, leisurely, carefully toward Bethlehem,
for who among us likes to cope with the
commercialism of Christmas

which lures us to tinsel not only the tree
but also our hearts?

Who among us does not long for:
gifts that give love?
shopping in serenity?
cards and presents sent off early?
long evenings by the fireside with those we love?
(the trimming devoid of any arguing about who's going to hang
what where?

the aroma of cinnamon and nutmeg mingling with the pine
scent of the tree,

and carols gently playing over our idyllic scene
and the children! The children cheerfully talking about
giving instead of getting?

Who among us does not yearn for
time for our hearts to ponder the Word of God?
moments of kneeling and bursts of song?
the peace of quiet calm for our spirit's journey?

This year we intend to follow the Star
instead of the crowd.

But, of course, we always do
intend the best.

(And sometimes best intentions tend to get in the best of us!)

This year, when we find ourselves off the path again
(and we invariably will!),

let's not add yet another stress to our Advent days,
that of "trying to do Christmas correctly"!

Instead, let's approach the birth of our Lord
with joyful abandon!

And this year
let's do what Mary did and rejoice in God,
let's do what Joseph did and listen to our dreams,
let's do what the Wise Men did and go to worship,
let's do what the shepherds did and praise and glorify God
for all we have seen and heard!

As for the Advent frantic pace, we don't have time for that,
We'll be too busy singing!
This year will be different!

Confirm & Reaffirm

The Rev. Will Stanley
Curate

Beginning this fall, a key aspect of youth formation at Holy Innocents is embarking on a new journey. It's called Confirm & Reaffirm and it will accompany many of our students in their formation over the next two years. We have made a conscious and intentional choice to create a confirmation process that is comprehensive in structure and relationally responsive to the lives of our youth. We are also choosing to move in an integrated direction, one in which confirmation is experienced less and less as a "thing to do" and more and more as a "pivot point" along a longer and deeper journey. We believe this dynamic environment will better allow our youth to come to a Christian understanding of themselves and God in the world.

Many youth currently in 8th, 9th, and 10th grades have already begun this two-year comprehensive process of preparation. If they have not yet been confirmed, then this process would ultimately lead to confirmation (sometime in the Fall of 2017). And a key part of this revamped process comes with an addition: youth who have already been confirmed have joined this process as a part of their spiritual formation at Holy Innocents'. For those students who have been confirmed, this process could lead towards a reaffirmation of their baptismal vows in two years time, as well as other paths. With this new arrangement, youth who have been confirmed will be able to shape the larger process and provide support and encouragement to their friends preparing to be confirmed, all the while gaining leadership skills in the process!

The foundation of our time together is through monthly formation gatherings. These meetings take place during the Sunday "formation hour" (10:15AM-11:00AM) at Holy Innocents. These formation experiences educate participants about the Episcopal Church and the Christian faith through instruction, discussion, and reflection. Students will also keep a journal throughout this process. To aid in our shared formation, another staple of this process will be a one-on-one meeting with me (aka The Rev. Will Stanley) each semester. This meeting will allow me to better understand where each young person is coming from as they embark on this process and allow our adult leadership as a whole to better tailor the process to the needs of our youth.

Another staple of this process will be an expectation of involvement in various outreach and mission opportunities of Holy Innocents. It is an exciting time in the life of our parish and we want our young people to get involved as a pivotal dimension of their formation and preparation for confirmation or reaffirmation. A final part integral to this process will be participation in a pilgrimage experience. In the summer of 2017, we will offer two opportunities for youth to take part in the Church's ancient rite of pilgrimage. We will offer one domestic and one international. Youth will be encouraged to attend either one or both as a way to ground their previous experience in a physical and spiritual journey before they are either confirmed or reaffirm their baptismal vows soon thereafter. Participants in the Confirm & Reaffirm cohort will determine the destinations.

Baptism is the ancient entry rite into the Church. In baptism, we affirm that we belong to the Triune God who is made known to us in Jesus, the Christ, in the power of Holy Spirit. Confirmation in the Episcopal Church is a sacramental and pastoral rite of our Book of Common Prayer (BCP) by which a baptized person makes a mature and public affirmation of the promises made at baptism. In the context of a service of Baptism or Confirmation, the BCP also offers a rite for persons already baptized (or confirmed) to reaffirm their baptismal vows. (See the BCP for the promises made at Holy Baptism, pp. 299-308, and for the liturgy at a service of Confirmation, pp. 413-419).



CONFIRM & REAFFIRM

Confirmation & Reaffirmation Date: Fall 2017

2015-2016 Monthly Formation Gatherings (Please attend 6 of 8)

10/25, 11/15, 12/6, 1/24, 2/24, 3/13, 4/10, 5/15

2016-2017 Monthly Formation Gatherings (Please attend 7 of 9)

Other Confirmation, Reaffirmation and Pilgrimage Habits

- Personal Journaling
- Attendance and Participation in monthly formation gatherings
- Individual meeting with Will in each semester

Liturgy

- Serve as an acolyte
- Attend and journal each of the following liturgies in the 2015-2016 year: 9, 11:15 and 6pm Celtic
- Participate in a Youth Sunday (10/18 & TBD)
- Good Friday: Walking the Stations of the Cross
- Attend the Great Vigil of Easter

Outreach and Mission (Attend at least three)

- Church of the Common Ground
Sandwich Making – 12/13/15
- Diocesan Hunger Walk – 3/13/16
- atlSERVE Mission Trip – July 2016
- Emerging mission opportunities of Holy Innocents' Episcopal Church

Other events and activities for participation in 2015-2016

- Youth Ski Trip (1/16/16 -- 1/17/16)
- “Souper Bowl” – 2/7/16
- Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper – 2/9/16
- Sunday Night High School Youth Gathering
(for 9th – 12th graders)
10/25, 11/15, 12/6, (2016 Dates TBD)

youth ministry

Upcoming Events

Wednesday, December 9

The Parson's Table

5:15 pm - 6:30 pm

Thursday, December 10

Doodling as a Meditation

10:30 am - 1:00 pm

Friday, December 11

Doodling as a Meditation

10:30 am - 1:00 pm

Friends of Music Concert:

Skylark Vocal Ensembler

8:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Saturday, December 12

Advent Quiet Day

9:00 am - 2:00 pm

Sunday, December 13

Holy Eucharist

8 am, 9 am, 11:15 am, & 6 pm

Annual Meeting

10:10 am - 11:00 am

Church of the Common Ground

11:15 am - 1:00 pm

Monday, December 14

Reading Connections

6:00 pm - 7:00 pm

Yoga Class

6:30 pm - 7:45 pm

Wednesday, December 16

The Parson's Table

5:15 pm - 6:30 pm

Thursday, December 17

Ventulett Gallery Opening

6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Women's Time Out

7:00 pm - 8:30 pm

Friday, December 18

Men of HI 3rd Friday

7:00 am - 8:15 am

Saturday, December 19

HIEC Christmas Store

7:00 am - 2:00 pm

Sunday, December 20

Holy Eucharist

8 am, 10:30 am, & 6 pm

Thursday, December 24

Christmas Eve

Church Office Closes at noon

Christmas Eve Services

3 pm, 8 pm, 11 pm

Christmas Pageant during 3:00pm liturgy

Pre-Service Concerts at 7:30 pm & 1030 pm

Thursday, December 25

Christmas Day

Church Office Closed

Christmas Service

12:00 pm

Sunday, December 27

Holy Eucharist

8 am, 10:30 am, & 6 pm

Monday, December 28

Christmas Season

Church Office Closed

Thursday, December 31

New Year's Eve

Church Office closes at Noon

Friday, January 1

New Year's Day

Church Office closed

Saturday, January 3

Holy Eucharist

8 am, 10:30 am, 6 pm

Monday, January 4

Women's Wisdom Circle

8:30 am - 10:00 am

Tuesday, January 5

Prayer Shawl Ministry

7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Wednesday, January 6

The Parson's Table

5:15 pm - 6:30 pm

Friday, January 8

Sacred Words: Universal Messages

Worship at Temple Sinai

5:45 pm: Pre-Service Reception

6:30 pm: Shabbat Service *with AJ Levine*

7:30 pm; Shabbat Dinner

Saturday, January 9

Sacred Words: Universal Messages

Learn at Temple Sinai

9:00 am: Text Study *with AJ Levine*

Sunday, January 10

Holy Eucharist

8:00 am

Sacred Words: Universal Messages

Worship at Holy Innocents

9:00 am: Holy Eucharist *with AJ Levine*

10:00 am: Sunday Education *with AJ Levine*

Holy Eucharist

11:15 am

Celtic Eucharist

6:00 pm



**HOLY
INNOCENTS'
EPISCOPAL
CHURCH**

For more information about events throughout the year subscribe to Hi-Lights, the church e-newsletter, or visit the Holy Innocents' website.

(<http://www.holyinnocents.org/news-events/hi-lights--hie/>)



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Colin Kelly, Past Sr. Warden	Andy Toledo
Debbie Brock	Youth Vestry:
Johnny Foster	Susanne Sokolowski
Will Kelly	Jack Sullivan
Elaine Morgan	Treasurer:
Chris Protos	Rick Shunnarah
Michael Rhea	

