



## Things Which Were Cast Down Are Being Raised Up

THE REV. T. STEWART LUCAS

One of my favorite prayers in the church year comes near the end of the Good Friday service. You might miss it if you're not listening for it—it's quiet, poetic, and full of meaning. We also pray it at ordinations, when new clergy are blessed and sent into ministry. It begins:

*O God of unchangeable power and eternal light: Look favorably on your whole Church, that wonderful and sacred mystery... let the whole world see and know that things which were cast down are being raised up, and things which had grown old are being made new...*

This prayer is called a collect—a traditional form of prayer used in Episcopal worship. It's been part of our liturgy for nearly 100 years, with roots reaching back to ancient Christian texts written in Latin and passed down for centuries.

What I love about this collect is how it captures the heart of Holy Week. Good Friday is the most solemn day of the year. We remember the suffering and death of Jesus. But right in the middle of all that sorrow, this prayer offers a glimpse of Easter hope: God is not finished. Even when things feel broken or lost, God is still raising us up, renewing us, and making all things new through Jesus.

That's why we pray it again at the Easter Vigil, the beautiful service late Saturday night that marks our movement from darkness to light, from death to resurrection. It's no wonder it's also said at ordinations—because ministry is a sign that God's work continues through us. Ministry, like resurrection, is God's work done in and through human lives, often quietly, often painfully, usually imperfectly, but always hopefully.

The Church itself—the people and the structure, the tradition and the possibility—is a “wonderful and sacred mystery.” And that mystery is still unfolding.

So, if you're newer to the Episcopal Church or to Holy Week, I hope you'll join us for these sacred days. Come wave palms on Palm Sunday. Come experience the quiet beauty of Maundy Thursday. Come to Good Friday—even if it feels unfamiliar. The choir will lead us through that powerful liturgy, accompanied by a chamber orchestra performing Gabriel Fauré's Requiem. Then come back for Easter morning, when we proclaim again that Christ is risen, and all things are being made new.

And as you walk through the week, listen for this prayer. Let it become your own. Its promise isn't just for the Church—it's for you, too.

May you know this Holy Week that what feels cast down can be raised up. That what feels worn out can be made new. And that God's love is still working in and through you.

Faithfully,  
Stewart+

# HOLY WEEK & EASTER WORSHIP

## **PALM SUNDAY | APRIL 13**

**8:00, 10:15 AM & 6:00 PM • POTLUCK BRUNCH | 9:00 AM**

The celebration of Jesus, the triumphant entry into Jerusalem. We begin by blessings the palms and shouting hosannah and end with the gathering gloom of the week ahead with the reading of the Passion at our four regular serices. Please bring a dish to share for the potluck brunch in Inglett Hall.

## **HOLY MONDAY**

After his entry into Jerusalem, Jesus visited the home of Lazarus and his sisters Mary and Martha. In the Gospel of John, Mary anoints Jesus' feet with a costly ointment. Our seminarian Marycelis preaches as Bill celebrates and offers an anointing prayer in Christ Chapel at 6:00 PM.

## **HOLY TUESDAY**

In the Gospel of John, Jesus predicts his crucifixion. We mark this night by walking the way of the cross through the eyes of women by reading reflections from the book Women of the Passion. Ruth leads this service that concludes with communion in Christ Chapel at 6:00 PM.

## **HOLY WEDNESDAY**

Sometimes called Spy Wednesday, the day recalls the betrayal of Judas. We pray for those we love, but we also do the hard work of praying for our enemies and for forgiveness. Stewart celebrates communion in Christ Chapel at 6:00 PM.

## **MAUNDY THURSDAY | APRIL 17**

**6:00 PM IN CHRIST CHAPEL AND LIVE-STREAMED**

This is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate Holy Week by sharing in food, fellowship, and connection. This will be a warm, welcoming atmosphere with activities for all ages to mark the Last Supper. Whether you're a long-time member or a first-time guest, we welcome you to bring your family and friends for a night filled with joy and warmth to mark this special occasion. Catered Mediterranean dinner is \$10 per adult. Children and youth are free.

The evening concludes with the stripping of the altar in the Nave as the all night vigil with the Reserved Sacrament begins in Christ Chapel.

Read more in Ruth's article on the next page.

## **VIGIL OF THE SACRAMENT**

**APRIL 17 UNTIL APRIL 18, 10:00 AM**

The reserve sacrament is taken to a small altar set up in Christ Chapel which is decorated as a garden. All are invited to come and watch with the Lord and spend time in prayer anytime through the night until the vigil ends with a brief service of Morning Prayer at 10:00 am in Christ Chapel. Sign up for an hour online.

## **GOOD FRIDAY | APRIL 18**

**12:00 PM IN THE NAVE AND LIVE-STREAMED**

Join us for a solemn and moving Good Friday Liturgy on Friday, April 18, at noon at Holy Innocents' Episcopal Church. This powerful service will include scripture, prayer, and reflection on Christ's passion and death, culminating in a profound musical offering—Gabriel Fauré's Requiem, performed by our adult choir and chamber orchestra. Fauré's transcendent setting invites us into a space of deep contemplation, hope, and beauty, even in the shadow of the cross. This service is expected to last about an hour.

## **EASTER VIGIL | APRIL 19**

**8:00 PM IN THE NAVE AND LIVE-STREAMED**

Perhaps the most triumphant and joyful service of the year, this service marks the moment when Jesus was raised from the dead to bring new life to the world. The Vigil begins in the Memorial Garden with a kindling of the new Paschal fire and gradually moves into the Church. With choir, organ, brass, incense, four baptisms, and the first Eucharist of Easter, we celebrate the defeat of death and the promise of new life.

## **EASTER DAY | APRIL 20**

**8:00 AM: HOLY EUCHARIST IN CHRIST CHAPEL**

**9:30 AM: EASTER EGG HUNT**

**10:15 AM: HOLY EUCHARIST IN THE NAVE**

**11:15 AM: YOUTH EASTER EGG HUNT**

**1:00 PM: SPANISH SERVICE IN THE NAVE**

**6:00 PM: CELTIC SERVICE IN CHRIST CHAPEL**

The Church celebrates Christ's joyful resurrection as a community with singing, prayers, preaching, and praise. The rector will preach as we celebrate with choir, organ, brass and a beautifully decorated church. The 10:15 AM service will be live-streamed.

## Maundy Thursday

THE REV. RUTH PATTISON

As a priest, I cannot walk into Christ Chapel, break bread, and pour wine at the altar, bless them, and consume them, as the body and blood of Christ. Did you know, that in the Episcopal Church, it is forbidden for a priest to celebrate Eucharist, alone? I cannot, by myself, make Eucharist. I must have you. "For where two or three are gathered in my name," Jesus said, "there am I in the midst of them." Sacrament, and the spiritual life itself, happen in the context of relationship. In a context where we are gathered.

Where do we get these notions? From the vignette of the Last Supper in the upper room, on what we call Maundy Thursday. This is our heartland. We anchor ourselves annually in this Holy Night, for it is particularly in this context that we know it to be true, the absolute necessity of community.

Maundy Thursday is a bit of a reenactment of the last supper. Yes, the one where he washed their feet. The one where he gave them a new commandment to love one another. The one where he gave them the gift of his own peace. And yes, the one where he broke bread and poured out wine, to give us his everlasting holy presence.

Our reenactment this year will be authentic.

We will set tables (and floor) for a family style love feast. We will break bread and pour wine at each table to make Eucharist together. With water basins and pouring jars, we will wash one another's feet.

All right there, in Inglet Hall, at 6:00, Thursday night, April 17.

Like he did, we will gather with our friends. We will do what he did, so we experience it deep down in our bones. We will soak up the new commandment through our feet. We will know the necessity of community to love, to serve, to breathe peace, to break bread and drink wine to know it to be Christ's body for us.

Love me. Jesus said. By loving each other.

This is how the world will know my love.

By knowing you, and yours.



## Our Easter Hope

RENEE STEPHENS

At the parish retreat, the kids and I bagged up 75 servings of s'mores so that when it came time for the bonfire, it would be easy for everyone to grab their s'more kit and start roasting. It went perfectly, everyone who wanted a s'more had one with about 20 leftover. When we got home, I was unpacking my car and noticed the box of leftover s'more kits. At the same time, I noticed the neighborhood kids all playing together nearby. I called to one of them that I knew, "Liam, do you guys want some s'mores?" and without hesitation they all yelled "Yes!!!" ran over. They all chattered at the same time: "I love s'mores!!" "Thank you!!" "Can I have two??" "Where did you get these??"

I responded, "I'm so glad you guys like s'mores! These are left over from our church retreat, and I didn't want them to go bad. Take as many as you want." They were ecstatic and started devouring these little bags of marshmallows, chocolate, and graham crackers without even waiting for a fire. They were so happy and so full of gratitude.

Something that I carried home from the parish retreat that was just extra to all of us turned out to be such a treasure to the neighborhood kids. Something that we had in abundance was spread out into the world.

What a powerful metaphor this is for the love and hope of Jesus Christ that we carry. Something that we carry around in our own hearts and bodies can overflow into the world when we let it. This is true no matter your life experience. You can be a child with hardly any life experience and still be a beacon of God's love in the world. You can also be sick, grief stricken or heartbroken and still shine with the light of Christ.

This is why the apostle Paul writes, "we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us." (2 Cor. 4:7). Life is short. Things can change in an instant. The thing that never changes is the grace and love of God who is ever present through our joys, milestones, heartaches and suffering. We are the vessel of God who pours out unconditionally and that's what we celebrate on Easter morning.





# SUMMER SABBATICAL



## שַׁבָּת shabat

### A REFLECTION BY BILL MURRAY

I don't do it well. The injunction and requirement for Jews and Christian alike is at the very beginning in Genesis. The idea is so important that God quite literally did it first. I am not clear if God needed to do it or if God was just giving us a great example of how to live a healthy life. After spending six days creating the ordered world, God "rested on the seventh day." (Genesis 2:3) In Hebrew, God shabat. It can mean "rested" or "stopped working." We are all asked to do the same every week. As a people who follow God, we are called to rest from our labors. Why? Because God did it first. And because we are supposed to be reminded that the world will keep turning without us. Yep. Resting is a gentle reminder that God is in charge.

The idea of Sabbaticals, a season of rest for those working in the church, comes from this same root idea. Sabbaticals are a practice in the church that honor the rhythm of work and rest, offering space for renewal and study after a long season of labor. It is not purely a time to nap and snack. And because each person is different, each sabbatical will take different forms.

For me, that listening will happen in a few different ways. I plan to spend time in prayer and quiet with the monks at the Monastery of the Holy Spirit in Conyers. I need to step away from the routines of evening meetings, weekend responsibilities, hospital visits, and funerals—important work, but work that rarely leaves space for deep rest or reflection.

I'll also be visiting some National Parks—Alaska and Maine are calling!—and reconnecting with family I don't often get to see. And yes, I'll be

leaning into my passion for church growth. I'm planning to visit churches in a variety of contexts, read books on congregational vitality, and meet with leaders who are doing bold, creative ministry. Some of that might sound deadly boring to others—but I couldn't be more excited.

This sabbatical is about fine-tuning—about shifting from the leadership that retired debt and celebrated our first 150 years to leadership that will carry us forward to growth and expansion. I want to be attentive to where the Spirit is leading us as a church, and I'm grateful for this time to renew, imagine, and prepare for the next chapter at Holy Innocents'.

The timing is simply coincidental that Dr. Sean Vogt, our Director of Music, will also be taking a sabbatical at the same time, May 12-August 13. His time away will include studying organ importation with Dr. Jeffrey Smith in Bloomington, Indiana. He hopes to take some time with his wife to enjoy Paris and France for a few weeks. He will then rejoin Dr. Smith in London for a study intensive on how to improvise on musical themes. (Improvisation is playing the organ without music or notation to cover transitions during the service.) He hopes to raise his skill in this important part of the ministry he leads at Holy Innocents.

Sabbaticals are meant to be a breather for everyone. A time for us to take a break. A time for the church to engage and think and pray on what comes next when we return. A time to give thanks for the amazing journey of the last seven years. A time to plan and dream about the next seven years. God is serious that we need to take a rest and put down our burdens from time to time. I give thanks that Holy Innocents will be the first church in my 27 years of ministry to give me such a break. Thank you.



# SABBATICALS AT HIEC

## INVESTING IN REST, RENEWAL, AND GROWTH *A NOTE FROM THE VESTRY*

As a congregation, we are all deeply committed to caring for those who guide us spiritually. Our priests dedicate themselves tirelessly to ministering to our community, offering pastoral care, teaching, preaching, and leading us in worship. Just as we recognize the importance of rest and renewal in our own lives, we also acknowledge that our clergy need time away to recharge, reflect, and grow in their calling. This is why we have established a dedicated Sabbatical Fund—to provide our priests with the support they need to take meaningful sabbaticals. Thank you for being an integral and loving part of this plan.

### WHAT IS THE SABBATICAL FUND?

After extensively researching existing plans across multiple Episcopal dioceses, we found that most churches lack concrete policies and dedicated funds to implement a structured Sabbatical Program. The Vestry took a proactive approach to ensure our clergy could take sabbaticals without financial strain. Through the generosity of our parishioners and responsible financial planning, we created the Sabbatical Fund. This fund enables our priests to receive supplementary funding in addition to their full salaries for an even more significant rest, refreshment, and growth opportunities. Rather than calling for a love offering, the goal was to create a sustainable solution with the opportunity to be available for clergy and certain eligible staff members (collectively, “eligible staff”).

### HOW IS THE PLAN STRUCTURED?

In addition to initial funding from the Church’s unrestricted reserves, annual deposits will be made to the fund from the Church’s operating budget, which will enable eligible staff to plan for enriching sabbaticals that align with their professional and personal goals. To ensure the sabbatical is purposeful and supported, staff members submit their goals and plans for their time away to the Vestry before their sabbatical. This framework aligns expectations and ensures the funds are utilized effectively. The financial support from the Sabbatical Fund, combined with their full salaries during their leave, underlines the church's appreciation for their dedication and service.

### WHAT IS THE GOAL OF THE PLAN?

We are thrilled that the Church is in a financial position to provide additional monetary gifts for future clergy sabbaticals. By doing this, we hope to create a lasting impact that underscores our recognition of their hard work and dedication. We are excited about the opportunities this initiative will bring and look forward to witnessing the positive effects on our clergy, staff, and church community.





# FAQS FOR SUMMER 2025

## WHAT IS A SABBATICAL?

The word sabbatical comes from the biblical concept of Sabbath, meaning “to rest” or “to cease.” In scripture, the Sabbath is sacred time — time set apart for rest and reconnection with God’s presence.

A sabbatical is not a vacation. It’s a dedicated time for prayer, study, rest, and spiritual growth. It’s also a time for the congregation to discover new rhythms and gifts, as others take on leadership roles and gain fresh insights into the life of the parish. In this way, a sabbatical blesses not just the clergy but the whole community.

## DO OTHER CLERGY GO ON SABBATICAL?

Yes. Sabbaticals are a common and healthy part of long-term ministry. Most Episcopal clergy who have served the same parish for at least seven years take a sabbatical. Research shows these times apart strengthen both clergy and congregations.

According to Bill’s Letter of Agreement, he accrues two weeks of sabbatical leave per year. As of June 30, 2025, he will have completed seven years of service at Holy Innocents.

## HOW LONG WILL BILL BE AWAY?

Bill’s sabbatical will last 14 weeks. His final Sunday before sabbatical will be May 11, 2025, and he will return to the pulpit on Sunday, August 17, 2025.

## WHO WILL LEAD THE CHURCH?

Leadership of the parish during this time will be in the capable hands of the Vicar, the Vestry, and a Sabbatical Support Team.

The Rev. Stewart Lucas and Senior Warden Hayley Kelley will serve as the primary points of contact. The Rev. Ruth Pattison continues her role with Pastoral Care and Preaching. Other key areas of parish life will continue without interruption, thanks to careful planning and the faithful leadership of our vibrant staff and vestry. Our School Chaplains are also ready to assist as needed.

## CAN I CONTACT BILL THIS SUMMER?

Out of respect for the purpose of sabbatical, we ask that parishioners not contact Bill during his time away. This includes emails, texts, phone

calls, or social media messages. Sabbatical is a rare and sacred opportunity to disconnect from the demands of parish life — and that disconnection is part of what makes it so valuable.

If you see Bill around town, feel free to say hello — but please do not call on him to perform pastoral duties or engage in parish matters.

## IS BILL PREPARING TO LEAVE?

Not at all! In fact, part of the sabbatical agreement is that clergy will remain with their parish for at least one year after returning. Bill has shared with the Vestry that he is deeply committed to Holy Innocents and excited for what’s ahead.

## HOW CAN WE SEND HIM OFF — AND WELCOME HIM BACK?

We’ll celebrate Bill’s leave-taking with a special brunch on Sunday, May 11, where he’ll share more about his sabbatical plans.

When he returns, we’ll host a Low Country Boil on Saturday, August 16 in the Parish Hall — complete with delicious food and fun music! Stay tuned for details and let us know if you’d like to help with either event.

## WHO WILL BE LEADING MUSIC DURING SEAN’S SABBATICAL?

Sean has arranged for **Leslie Boyette** to supply during this time playing the organ and directing our choir. He grew up in South Carolina where he attended Furman University and received a Bachelor of Music degree. He attended Georgia State University and received a Masters of Sacred Music degree, studying Organ with Dr. Tim Wissler. Leslie has served as Organist/Choirmaster for Episcopal Churches in Georgia and Texas, notably thirteen years at St. Andrew’s in The Pines in Peachtree City, Georgia. Leslie is a longtime member of the Association of Anglican Musicians and currently sings in the Cathedral Choir and Schola at The Cathedral of St. Philip when he is not substituting for various churches in the metro Atlanta area. Leslie is also employed full-time as a Paralegal for a law firm in Midtown.

## WHAT IF I HAVE OTHER QUESTIONS?

Feel free to reach out to any member of the Sabbatical Team: Jenny Cantrell, Tricia Carlson, Bill Clark, Rosalyn Devine, Jackson Oliver, and Joan Plunkett.

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## HELP US CREATE EASTER JOY FOR OUR COMMUNITY!

Holy Innocents' Episcopal Church is proud to host this year's Easter Joy event in support of Solidarity Sandy Springs! Together, we're spreading Easter magic by collecting donations, assembling baskets, and hosting a giveaway for local families in need. Learn more by scanning this QR code.

**Donation Deadline: April 11, 2025**



## READING CONNECTIONS

APRIL 7

6:00 PM | Inglett C

Join us in Inglett Hall C to discuss *The Faculty Lounge* by Jennifer Mathieu, a novel about high school teachers balancing personal and professional struggles.

Michelle Driscoll | [dris1296@yahoo.com](mailto:dris1296@yahoo.com)

## CHILDREN'S CHOIR

APRIL 13, 9:00 AM

Sing in the Palm Sunday processional and anthem. Meet at Sunday school at 9:00 AM.

## THIRD FRIDAY | MEN OF HI

APRIL 18

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](mailto:charles@corepm.net)

## EASTER EGG HUNT

APRIL 20, 9:30 AM

Bring a basket and meet at the playground entrance for our annual hunt. Kids will search by age group, then gather inside for refreshments before worship.

## EASTER EGG HUNT

APRIL 20, 11:30 AM

After worship, 6th-12th graders can join a special egg hunt with prizes like gift cards and squishes. Bags provided!

## YOUTH GROUP

APRIL 23, 11:30 AM

The youth group will be serving dinner at Holy Comforter Episcopal Church on Wednesday, April 23rd from 5:00-8:00 PM! About 60% of this congregation lives with mental illness and comes for a worship service on Wednesday nights at 6:30 PM. Our group will provide and serve dinner for those who attend the service. Sign up on Realm.

## MEN OF HI RETREAT

APRIL 25-27

Gather at Lake Logan Episcopal Center for a weekend of renewal. Activities include hiking, golf, and fishing. Register on Realm. Contact John Harris ([harris4338@gmail.com](mailto:harris4338@gmail.com)).

## MEN'S DINNER & A BOOK

MAY 13

6:30 PM | Private Home

Join us for dinner and a discussion of *The Right Stuff* by Tom Wolfe, hosted by Tony Clarke.

Jeremy Webber | [jhwwebber@gmail.com](mailto:jhwwebber@gmail.com)

## VBS: ROAD TRIP

JUNE 2-6

This year's theme, based on Joshua 1:9, reminds kids that God is always with us. Open to rising Pre-K to 5th grade. Rising 6th grade+ can be youth leaders. Cost: \$85.

## Memorial Gifts

RECEIVED FEBRUARY 25-MARCH 31

IN MEMORY OF  
JACK COURTNEY

MARILYN AND CURTIS KIMBALL  
THE JAMES M. BARKER FAMILY



# HOLY INNOCENTS' EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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Atlanta, GA 30327



*Alleluia,  
Alleluia!*