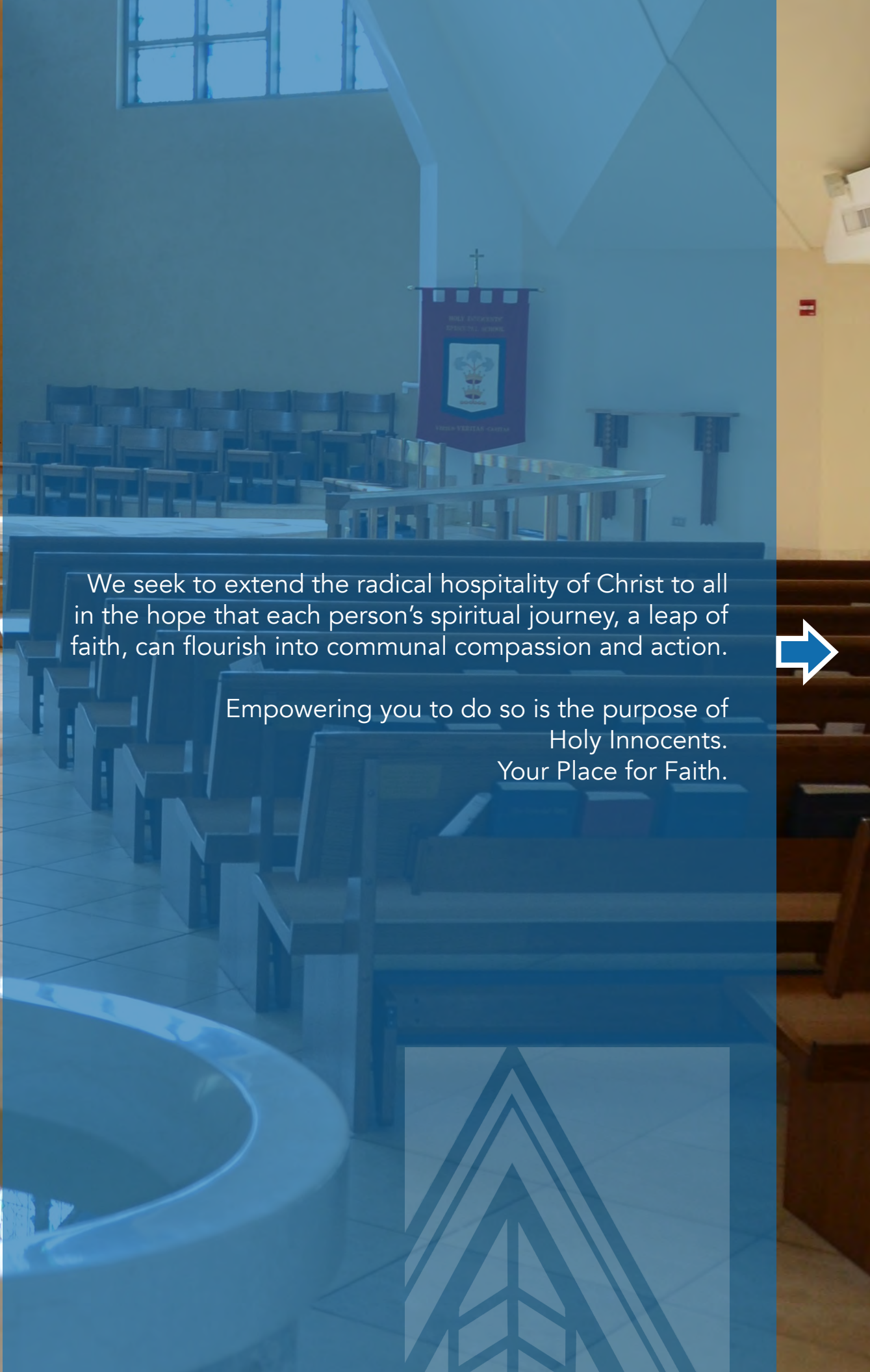




HOLY
INNOCENTS'
EPISCOPAL
CHURCH

Your Leap of Faith
begins here.



We seek to extend the radical hospitality of Christ to all in the hope that each person's spiritual journey, a leap of faith, can flourish into communal compassion and action.

Empowering you to do so is the purpose of Holy Innocents.
Your Place for Faith.





During this year, we have listened and learned. We jumped head first into the heart, mind, and soul of our parish, and in the process, discovered our desire for deeper connections. We desire to know Jesus in our Place for Faith while also taking our faith authentically into daily life. We know that living in isolation does not feed our soul, and taking a leap of faith, we desperately want to connect with one another and God. We seek radiant relationships in liturgy, prayer, care, service, and hospitality. What we desire is a community where our best selves are cultivated and nourished in Christ.

Hear the Good News of Jesus Christ: God desires the very same for us. Through Christ, we discover the radical acceptance God gives to each of us. By seeking to be more Christ-like in all things, we journey through life, not in quiet despair, but surprised by joy. At Holy Innocents, all we do is for this soul purpose of being more like Christ.

Take this journey. Take this leap of faith. Your leap of faith begins here.

Faithfully,

Michael R.

The Rev. Michael R. Sullivan
Rector





Three Steps to a Christ-like Life

PRAY. LOVE. SERVE. These words are central to bearing Christ's light to the world, but unless they are steeped in faith and internalized through God's grace, they are just words on a page. Bringing these values front and center gives us identity, purpose, and direction. Captured on these pages, you will glimpse a vision for Holy Innocents for your leap of faith.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,
and with all your soul, and with all your mind.
This is the first and great commandment.

Matthew 22: 37 (BCP 324)

The Holy Eucharist is the Church's outward and visible prayer to God and for one another. At the altar, we find our sustenance for daily living. In the sounds of children's voices, in the Word proclaimed, in the smells and sights of our glorious liturgy, we experience the depth of our being and reclaim, restore, and retune our hearts to God.

We also pray through learning. Faith Forum, small groups, Bible studies, and book discussions till up the soil of our lives so that God can plant the seeds of growth we all crave in our lives.

Over the last year, our prayer in stewardship has increased through

- expanded children's choir instruction, a new director, and a more than 100% increase in participation
- enhanced musical offerings during our 9:00 and 11:15 liturgies
- a comprehensive children's curriculum for Sunday School, which we have not been able to afford for years
- better curriculum development for youth, both for confirmation preparation and Sunday School
- expanded offerings in the Faith Forum, pushing us to deeper commitment
- explosive growth among 20s and 30s with multiple opportunities for this important age group
- new initiatives for the Celtic Eucharist including more music and resources

Now is the time to take the leap of faith and pray more boldly by:

- making a commitment to attend Sunday liturgies more often
- trying at least one small group for 6 weeks to deepen our connections
- pledging to support our daily prayer to God and for one another.



From the humblest gesture to the most dramatic miracle, Christ's life was a lesson in love. He showed us how to listen and communicate. How to encourage and comfort. How to be a friend. How to work and when to rest. How to be a good steward. How to handle adversity and even how to let go. How to leap. How to live.

A small group has been studying our life in Christ. Asking for input and challenging us to think and believe deeper, they are developing a parish Rule of Life, a guide to how we believe Christ calls us to live with and love for one another. Expected to debut early in 2015, our Rule will provide a framework for leaping toward a deeper life of faith.

Over the last year, our love for one another has expanded through

- Deeper connections through fellowship, especially through The Parson's Table and other community wide events such as the Celtic Festival
- Abiding friendships through small groups
- Training for Pastoral Care givers and support through Care Connection, Guild of the Beloved Disciple, Mount Vernon Towers Eucharist and Study Group, and Second Half luncheons and events

Now is the time to take your leap of faith and love more deeply by:

- expanding our pastoral care groups with additional training
- complimenting our offerings for seniors programming
- supporting new parents and those with children and youth
- providing additional support to nursery workers
- augmenting our support of college students
- providing accessibility to parish events through transportation services
- offering classes to help everyone discern spiritual gifts
- enhancing gathering spaces
- highlighting spaces available for contemplation throughout the week
- pledging to support our care of one another

Come to me all you that travail and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Matthew 11:28



In keeping with our history of birthing and supporting innovative outreach ministries, we are poised for another unprecedented expansion of our outreach ministries while seeking a more focused commitment to some of our parish's most cherished programs.

We believe God is calling us into a new season of service in God's world, service that reflects our love of God in worship and prayer while also mirroring our love of and hospitality toward both friend and stranger.

The vestry has adopted three guiding visions:

- **Serving Children**
We are named for children, the most vulnerable children in our midst. The Holy Innocents were killed by King Herod in an attempt to rid the world of the Light of Christ. But nothing can overcome Christ's light, and as his people, we are called to be that light to the children of our city who are most vulnerable.

Children are at risk through abuse, neglect, exploitation, and deprivation (food, shelter and healthcare). God calls us to more active service to prevent names being added to the Holy Innocents of Our Day, today's children hurt by the Herods of the world.

- **Serving Sandy Springs**
God has planted us here for a purpose: to be a beacon of Christ's light. As one of the largest faith communities in Sandy Springs, we are called to lead boldly to help shape and form our new city community in an attempt to spread the service God desires from each of us.

We are also called to seek those who do not yet know the love of Christ. Many in our midst—right here in Sandy Springs—would not turn to or walk inside a traditional church such as ours, but might seek community or worship in the heart of the city or at an alternative location. Demographics are also changing, with Hispanic and Latino populations often in need of places for worship. We must explore these possibilities if we are to answer God's call for the future while also strengthening our program here at the Church proper.

- **Serving our signature partners**
We have been leaders in outreach for generations. Some of the ministries we support today are programs we helped establish, such as Community Action Center. Other programs, such as Emmaus House, Holy Comforter, and Church of the Common Ground, have enjoyed support from our parish and members. To date in 2014, our parish has committed over \$100,000 to these outreach programs and the development of new ones. And we provided an additional \$105,000 to support outreach through our Diocesan pledge.

We want to strengthen the ties that bind us in service. We must raise the bar of our participation in signature outreach programs by participating and supporting their strategic plans as well as day to day operations

In the next months, we will announce several new and bold initiatives to serve children, expand our ministry in Sandy Springs, and support our signature programs.

We need your commitment to bring this exciting vision to life:

- Pledge generously to provide the additional support critical to this mission
- Take a leadership role in a program that speaks most urgently to you
- Participate personally in one of our many outreach events
- Visit one of our outreach partners to witness the power of these programs

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
(BCP 366)



A photograph of a church interior, showing rows of dark wooden pews in the foreground. In the background, there are tall, narrow stained glass windows with geometric patterns in shades of blue, green, and white. A small, ornate light fixture is mounted on the wall between the windows. A large, semi-transparent blue rectangular overlay covers the right side of the image, containing text. On the left edge of the blue overlay, there is a white arrow pointing left. On the right edge, there is a white arrow pointing right. At the bottom of the blue overlay, there is a stylized geometric pattern of nested triangles.

Christ. Holy Innocents. You.

Christ came to transform a broken world. It is through our hands and feet and faith that his work continues two thousand years later. We dedicate ourselves to letting the message and example of Christ wrap itself around our hearts in an exhilarating new way, shaping our vision, values and actions, and filling our lives with joyous possibility.

Pray. Love. Serve.

