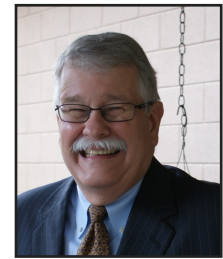


The Vestry

The vestry is a very important part of our church here at Holy Innocents'. There are nine church members on our vestry, and each of them is a member of the vestry for three years. This means that every year, three new people are chosen to become members. At Holy Innocents', the three people who leave at the end of the year help to choose the new members. To become a part of the vestry, a person needs to meet three requirements: They have to be at least eighteen years old; they have to come to church regularly; and they have to be a giver of record. A giver of record is someone who has given money to the church, either through a pledge of money or by writing a check to the operating fund.

The members of the vestry represent the entire church, much like a board of directors represent a company. The vestry has three main goals: to help make sure that the church's money and property are used wisely; to help Father Doug and Mother Michelle make decisions that could affect the whole church, and to speak for the congregation when decisions need to be made. These decisions can include selecting a pastor; choosing delegates to go to the diocesan convention; and filling positions of leadership in the church.



taken care of.

The Senior Warden is selected by the rector. The Senior Warden is elected to serve on the vestry for one year, but can be re-elected up to two times, meaning that one person could serve for three years as Senior Warden. Right now, our Senior Warden is Mr. Bill Cox. He is like the president of the vestry. His job is to make sure that both the congregation and the rector are taken care of. His "vice president", the Junior Warden, makes sure that the church's property and buildings are



By Morgan Toth

Vestry Nominations for 2015?

ISSUE

08

Jan/Feb
2015

Holy
Innocents'
Episcopal
Church

The Defender

Beth Latshaw-Foti,
Editor



Church Defined

in this issue

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Important Dates Coming Up:

January 25

Annual Meeting

9:30 a.m.

Parish Hall

February 1

First Sunday

Fellowship

9:15 a.m.

Breakfast served by
the clergy!

February 6

Church Breakfast

6:30 a.m.

Speakers are from
kidsPack

February 17

Mardi Gras

6:00 p.m.

Dinner in Parish Hall

February 18

Ash Wednesday

12:00 noon. - service

(no music)

7:00 p.m. - service with

music

March 21

Spring Craft Show

9:00 a.m.

Takes place on the
grounds of the church

From the Rector

Dear Friends in Christ,

During his public ministry, Jesus inspired his followers to go forth into the world to proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom of God. This early movement was spontaneous, organic, and filled with the power and energy of the Spirit. However, within the first generation of this initial movement, Christian leaders discovered that certain organizational structures were needed in order to support the ongoing life and ministry of the church. For past two thousand years, Christians have struggled to maintain a balance between the spontaneous life of the Spirit, on the one hand, and the need for organization and structure, on the other.

In this edition of the *Defender* we will be providing some important information about the larger organizational structures that support our life and ministry at Holy Innocents'. As we gather for our Annual Parish Meeting, it is imperative that we are mindful of the fact that we are connected to the whole Body of Christ, the Episcopal Church, and the wider Anglican Communion. On page two, you will find a brief overview of the organizational structure of the church, of which our congregation is a small part. Yet even as we reflect together on the structures that support our common life, may we be always open and responsive to the spontaneous, life-giving power of the Spirit.

In Christ,

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A World Wide Community

Exploring the Organization of the Episcopal Church

One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church

Every Sunday, we proclaim our belief in one church throughout the world. This one church is characterized as holy (*set apart for God*), catholic (*meaning "universal"*), and apostolic (*connected to the early leaders of the church*). Regardless of our denomination affiliations, we are first and foremost identified as Christians – followers of Jesus.



The Anglican Communion

As Episcopalians, our history is intimately connected to the Church of England (or Anglican Church). During the peak of colonial period, the British Empire spread its political influence and power as well as the faith and practice of the English Church. As the British colonies slowly gained their political and religious independence, the churches in those countries remained connected to the "mother church" in England. Over time the notion of the Anglican Communion came to refer to those churches that claimed an historical connection to the faith and practice of the Church of England. Today, the Anglican Communion comprises more than 80 million members in 44 regional and national member churches in more than 160 countries, making it the third largest Christian communion in the world, after the Roman Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox Church.

The Episcopal Church

Our denomination is part of the Anglican Communion and is comprised of 109 dioceses in 16 nations. After the American colonies won their independence, the majority of America's Anglican clergy refused to swear allegiance to the British monarch as was required. As a result, the Episcopal Church was formed. In 2013, the Episcopal Church had 2,009,084 baptized members, of whom 1,866,758 were in the U.S. In 2011 it was the nation's 14th largest denomination

Province IV

The Episcopal Church is divided into nine smaller regions called provinces. These provinces provide resources for local mission and ministry in different parts of the country. The leadership within each province gathers for planning and administration prior to the General Convention, which is held every three years. Province IV comprises most of the southeastern United States.



Diocese of Southwest Florida

The diocese is a relatively small geographical area, or district, under the supervision of a bishop. The diocese of Southwest Florida includes 77 parishes and missions. On any given Sunday, about 13,000 people worship in Episcopal churches in Southwest Florida. The diocese extends along the coast of the Gulf of Mexico, with our northernmost congregation in Brooksville and our most southern on Marco

Island.

Tampa Deanery

Each diocese is subdivided into smaller regions called "deaneries." There are seven deaneries in Southwest Florida. The clergy in each of these deaneries meet monthly for continuing education and collegial support. Deaneries also provide opportunities for localized mission and outreach. The Tampa Deanery has a long tradition of supporting summer mission trip to our companion diocese in the Dominican Republic. Fr. Doug currently serves as the Dean of our deanery.

Holy Innocents' Church

Finally, our local congregation is Holy Innocents' Church. We gather weekly for worship, education, and fellowship. We serve our local community and reach out to others with the love and grace of Jesus. However, as we gather for our Annual Parish Meeting, it is important that remember that we are connected to a much larger

A Vision

"The modernization of our physical facilities is critical to our ability to carry on the mission of all Christian people: spreading the Good News of Christ and caring for our brothers and sisters in need."

Julie Thomas, Holy Innocents' Treasurer

It takes a Vision, a Plan, Worker Bees, Numerous Volunteer Hours, Commitment and Finances. Through hard work, sweat, play, strategic planning, stressful times and happy times so much has been accomplished in the past three years to achieve the refurbishing of Kiser Hall, the expansion of Parish Hall, **and the blessing of an Assistant Rector for three years.**

As we reflect on the past three years, there are so many people to thank. It all began with:

- Father Doug's **Vision**. It was the "Beginning" of it all.
- The **planning**, guidance, **commitment** and dedication from Greg Johnson, Jim White, and our building committee.
- The Congregational Development Committee to drive fundraising activities. The committee members consisted of our Chairperson Paul Thomasson, our creativity member Pat Magnant, and all our dedicated **worker bees** over the three years including: Michael Johnson, Bill Cox, Steve Purifoy, Sara Lemley, Raquel Reddie, and Jill Watson. We also had wonderful support from Arlene Maloney as a Vestry liaison and Deacon Gary Cartwright. The Committee worked numerous hours to create fun events to help achieve our goals. Our events included the very first Cruise Raffle, the "Travel Anywhere You Want" Raffle, Golf Tournaments, Mardi Gras Dinners, Fun Run w/ECHO, Holy Innocents' lunch or dinner at California Pizza Kitchen, Movie Night Out, the money tree, our "Change for Change" Jar, and our Election Support Teams.
- Kelly Black, our former Parish Administrator, and Sue Scott, our Assistant Treasurer and current Parish Administrator, were critical in keeping us straight and on target, helping with communications, and controlling and updating our weekly finances.
- Our Treasurers over the three years: Rob More, Julie Thomas, and Steve Purifoy, who were so important in controlling all the **finances**.
- The Golf Committee: Steve Purifoy, Kenny Cull, Doug Menard, and Don Scarmuzzi spent numerous hours planning, organizing, and recruiting not only players but sponsors and donors, for whom we are so thankful. Without our sponsors and donors, this would not be possible. Everyone seemed to have such a good time that the plan is to make this our "Annual" Holy Innocents' Golf Tournament.
- Our **entire Holy Innocents' Family** for all the prayers, pledges, gifts, fundraiser support, **volunteer hours**, and hard work. Without **YOU**, none of this could have been possible. **Without your continued support going forward, we would not be able to continue serving the community with our new facilities.**

God has truly blessed our Holy Innocents' family. to spread the Good News of Christ and care for our sisters in need.



Now it is our time brothers and sisters in need.



God's
CDC Co-
persons

Sherry Roithmayr



Blessings,
Chair-

Paul Thomasson

