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Holy Family Institute
Holy Family Specialized Learning
Nazareth Prep



AFTER A FRIGID WINTER, HEATING BILLS CAN BREAK THE BANK.

WE CAN HELP.

[HFI-PGH.ORG/ENERGY-ASSISTANCE](https://hfi-pgh.org/energy-assistance)

Holy Family partners with Duquesne Light to provide **year-round energy assistance** for low and fixed-income households through a Customer Assistance Program (CAP). With the help of our compassionate Case Managers, clients maintain essential utility service through coordinated access to resources. CAP has community offices in Aliquippa, Beaver Falls, McKeesport, McKees Rocks, and Swissvale to make services accessible across the region. **Each year, the program helps nearly 40,000 households keep the lights on!** Visit hfi-pgh.org/energy-assistance for more information.



HOLY LIGHT

WINTER 2026

A NEWSLETTER OF HOLY FAMILY INSTITUTE

BRIDGING GENERATIONAL GAPS THROUGH MUSIC, ART, DANCE, AND STORYTELLING

In 2025, Holy Family Institute launched the new Artful Spirits program, supported by a grant from the Lilly Endowment. The goal of the program is to revitalize children's participation in worship through dynamic and joy-filled arts activities. The program is rooted in Pittsburgh's Black church community, with several churches from the historic Hill District participating in its first year of programming. At Artful Spirits, children ages 7-12 are invited to explore faith through color, texture, movement, music, and story. They are encouraged to wonder, ask questions, and express what they're discovering about God, themselves, and the world around them.

Like many of Holy Family's programs, Artful Spirits partners with other organizations in the community to deepen and enrich their programming. In addition to the participating churches, two prominent organizations are contributing their expertise in the arts: Hill Dance Academy Theatre (HDAT) and Point Park University. HDAT has operated in the Hill District for more than 20 years, providing training in Black Dance traditions, history, culture, and aesthetics to students ages 3-18. Point Park is Pittsburgh's only Downtown university, offering degrees in a broad range of areas, including their renowned Conservatory of Performing Arts.

In December, Artful Spirits launched with an event at Point Park's Pittsburgh Playhouse, a state-of-the-art performing arts center in the heart of Downtown Pittsburgh. Attendees got to know one another and the program while enjoying a performance and a look "behind the curtain" at the Playhouse. Parents, grandparents, and children alike were excited to see the breadth of opportunity available in the arts, and to see the experience and resources that Point Park will bring to Artful Spirits.

Continued inside ➔



Artful Spirits participants and staff with
Point Park University President Chris Brussalis

BRIDGING GENERATIONAL GAPS (CONT'D.)



Trying out the stage at the Pittsburgh Playhouse.

On March 21, Artful Spirits will host its second event, a dance performance in partnership with HDAT called "A Celebration of Goodness: A Celebration of Hope and Culture." The event will preview the program's curriculum and highlight its ties to the Hill District, taking place at HDAT's Morgan-Lee Arts Center and featuring the Pittsburgh CAPA High School Gospel Choir along with congregants of three nearby churches: Bethel AME Church, Grace Memorial Presbyterian Church, and Wesley Center AME Zion Church.

Participating churches are at the heart of the Artful Spirits program. Church leaders are involved in high-level decision making, ensuring that programming and curriculum meets the needs of their congregation. The program is intergenerational

by design, encouraging experiences to be shared between children and adults and allowing them to learn, create, and reflect together in a flexible format that adapts to highlight their congregation.

Artful Spirits adds a joyful new facet to Holy Family's programming and expands our impact in the Pittsburgh community. The program invites community members to take an active role, creating spaces where children and adults can embrace creativity as a vital part of worship and honor the rich traditions of their church. As the program grows, Holy Family hopes that it will create stronger, more connected communities.



SPEND A DIME, GIVE A DOLLAR

Support deserving Nazareth Prep students by redirecting your taxes through Pennsylvania's tax credit programs. Get a credit equal to up to 90% of your donation, effectively donating one dollar at the cost of just 10 cents! Details at hfi-pgh.org/tax-credits. Contact Susan Neszpaul, Chief Development Officer, at 412-239-9014 or neszpaul.susan@hfi-pgh.org for more information.

HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY FROM MOUNT NAZARETH LEARNING CENTER!

The little ones at Mount Nazareth Learning Center celebrated Valentine's Day with arts and crafts, treats, and lots of smiles! To learn more about the Learning Center, contact Michelle Harrison at harrison.michelle@hfi-pgh.org.



SPECIALIZED LEARNING IS A TEAM EFFORT WITH PARTNER SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS



Students at HFSL benefit from small class sizes and individualized instruction.



A student reads to a visiting therapy dog in the school library.

Each morning, buses and vans pull up in front of Holy Family Specialized Learning (HFSL) from across the Greater Pittsburgh area, sporting the names of 16 different schools and districts. The students at HFSL come from their home districts for a variety of reasons, but each one receives an education tailored to address their specific needs and highlight their unique strengths.

One of the pillars of HFSL is a grounding in restorative practices—helping students understand the impact of their actions, repair relationships, and build a strong school community. School staff incorporate restorative practices into every part of the day to instill in students that the focus is on building accountability, accessing empathy, and nurturing growth, and not on punishment.

The team at HFSL collaborates closely with partner schools to ensure that each student is supported while they build the skills and behaviors necessary to transition confidently back to their home districts and thrive. Said one parent, "My son would never have graduated and found his way without Holy Family [Specialized Learning]."

HFSL PARTNERS

- Aliquippa
- City Charter High School
- Gateway
- Highlands
- North Hills
- Northgate
- Norwin
- Penn Hills
- Propel Schools
- Quaker Valley
- Riverview
- Shaler Area
- Steel Valley
- Sto-Rox
- Urban Pathways Charter School
- Woodland Hills

HONORING OUR LEGACY, INVESTING IN OUR FUTURE

Nancy Robinson was born and raised in Pittsburgh, graduating in 1963 from Mt. Nazareth Academy, a former high school operated, like Holy Family Institute, by the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth. With the Sisters as role models, Nancy developed a strong sense of compassion and service to the community.

In 2020, Nancy joined a book club with several other women to learn more about and discuss social justice and racial equity. One of these women was former HFI Board Member Sister Maria Kruszewski. In their conversations, Sister Maria told Nancy about the work Nazareth Prep is doing to close the education-to-employment gap and increase opportunities for students of all backgrounds.

When she learned more about how the organization is working toward equity and opportunity for the community, Nancy knew she wanted to be a part of it. "The work being done at Nazareth Prep is exactly what we need," she said, "helping students reach their full potential and connecting them to people and resources that can help them along the way."

To support the mission and vision of Nazareth Prep, Nancy chose to include Holy Family Institute in her will. Gifts of this kind ensure that our work can continue to create opportunities for children and families in our community far into the future.

Thinking about your legacy? To learn more about planned giving or any of the ways you can support Holy Family Institute and Nazareth Prep, contact Susan Neszpaul, Chief Development Officer, at 412-239-9014 or neszpaul.susan@hfi-pgh.org.



Mt. Nazareth Academy students help with a gardening project at HFI in 1957.