



IMMANUEL CHURCH-ON-THE-HILL: APRIL 2020

THIS MONTH AT IMMANUEL



Dear People of Immanuel,

I have long been fascinated with the concept of Sabbath, particularly as it is practiced by our Jewish friends and neighbors. It is a time to slow down, to take stock of what is important, and to practice gratitude. The following poem was recently forwarded to me by one of the members of our Benedictine Community, and I have found it to be a helpful entry point for prayer and reflection during this unprecedented time. A necessary caveat, however, is that we must remember and thank very intentionally our doctors, nurses, technicians, researchers, public health officials and so many others who have no time to slow down or reflect in this moment. Our prayers need to be mightily with them. With that said, I offer this poem to you as we are called to shelter at home, hoping you might also find it useful.

God bless you all,

Randy

Pandemic

*What if you thought of it
as the Jews consider the Sabbath--
the most sacred of times?*

Cease from travel,

Cease from buying and selling.

*Give up, just for now, on trying to
make the world
different than it is.*

*Sing. Pray. Touch only those
to whom you commit your life.*

Center down.

*And when your body has
become still,
reach out with your heart.
Know that we are connected
in ways that are terrifying and
beautiful.*

(You could hardly deny it now.)

*Know that our lives
are in one another's hands.
(Surely, that has come clear.)
Do not reach out your hands.*

Reach out your heart.

*Reach out your words.
Reach out all the tendrils
of compassion that move,
invisibly,
where we cannot touch.*

*Promise this world your love--
for better or for worse,
in sickness and in health,
so long as we all shall live.*

--Lynn Ungar

IN THIS ISSUE

"Dear People of Immanuel" from the Rector

Join Us For Holy Week

Report from the Vestry

Resources for Stay-at-Home Immanuelites

Faithfully Sharing God's Gifts

JOIN US FOR HOLY WEEK

LIVESTREAM SCHEDULE

On our website, YouTube, or Facebook

April 5, 2020

Palm Sunday
10:30-11:30 AM
Morning Prayer

Followed by
11:45 AM-12:15 PM
Virtual Coffee Half Hour
with the Rector

April 9, 2020

Maundy Thursday
7:30-8:30 PM
Maundy Thursday Liturgy

8:30 PM
All-Night Prayer Vigil
Facebook Watch Party on
Immanuel's private Facebook
group page
until 11:50 AM Good Friday

April 10, 2020

Good Friday
Noon
Solemn Liturgy for Good Friday

April 11, 2020

Holy Saturday
7:30 PM
Lighting of the New Fire and
Invitation to Parish
to ring bells at home
(more information to follow)

April 12, 2020

Easter
10:30-11:30 AM
Morning Prayer

Followed by
11:45 AM - 12:15 PM
Virtual Coffee Half Hour
with the Rector

Report From the Vestry

Dear Immanuelites,

On March 10th, the vestry met in person for our monthly meeting. We shared dinner provided by Keith June, Senior Warden, and the church was bustling with activity -- vestry in the Fairchild Room and the ALIVE board meeting filling the Parish Hall. Vestry members were dedicated to the many ways of serving our parish this year.

But already the Coronavirus had started to influence our actions. That evening, while we met, an alert from the City of Alexandria let everyone know that an individual who had been in Immanuel Chapel had been diagnosed with COVID-19. We acted to develop plans for the weekend services, determined how we could protect the members of our parish with increased cleaning and the start of social distancing, and prayed for those who had already been exposed to the virus, including those in our community.

Within days, all the plans we had discussed with such excitement and urgency were set to the side, when we learned that the Diocese of Virginia had decided to restrict church gatherings and limit in-person activities. As we processed what that meant for Immanuel's worship services, the vestry and others in our community began making new plans.

Our communications committee, led by Vestry Steward Sandra Graham, came together quickly to record a service led by our priests and seminarians, so that we could have "church" in our homes that Sunday, March 15. Aleta Powell, our parish administrator, and Brooke Roberts and Agnes Soos, parish office volunteers, continued to work helping Rev. Randy and Rev. Susan respond to various needs. Stuart Dahlinger, our Sexton, increased cleaning to limit the spread of this new disease. Sughra Bakhtiari, our Bookkeeper, and Tom Hewson, our Treasurer, made sure checks were deposited and bills were paid. Jane Tavernier, our music director and our talented vocalists came together to add beautiful music to our services. As we all continue to learn more about this disease, we know that this group of staff, volunteers, and clergy will continue to adapt to new information and guidance from authorities to bring church services to us whenever possible.

Our bustling buildings and grounds are quieter, as we and the many other community members who use our spaces stay home. But, our community is bustling in new ways. We gather regularly by whatever means possible -- mostly by Zoom, but also by phone, email, and handwritten notes. And, your vestry has been working with the Rev. Randy and Rev. Susan and other volunteers to quickly adapt as public health directives continue to evolve. Volunteers and the communications committee including Mark Fearer, Scott Hovis, Candy Levin, John Bednar, and Brooke Roberts deserve much praise and thanks, as they work tirelessly to help keep our socially-distanced parish informed of opportunities to gather, taping and now livestreaming services when possible, and sharing reflections, meditations, and regular updates from Rev. Randy.

In this new monthly newsletter, you'll see how many things are planned to continue to connect our beloved community together in the best ways we can in the coming days. We share your longing to be back together in our chapels, hearing the organ live, joining our voices from the pews with those leading us in the choir, and again standing together for the Eucharist.

But we also know that we are doing what we are called to do in this moment as Christians. We are heeding the best guidance possible to protect our siblings in Christ, staying home to slow the spread of COVID-19, and we are showing our love for our neighbors in new and creative ways. **(See VESTRY on back page)**

Resources for Stay-at-Home Immanuelites

Thanks to technology, you can continue to stay in touch with Immanuel: your worship, your friends, your community. Here are some ideas:

GO TO CHURCH ON SUNDAY,

VIRTUALLY: At 10:30 AM on Sundays, we are live-streaming from Zabriskie Chapel, with a service of Morning Prayer that includes a homily. Following the livestream, the service is preserved as a video recording that you can view any time. You can find this online at [Immanuel's website](#), [Facebook site](#), and/or [YouTube channel](#).

PARTICIPATE IN COFFEE HOUR:

Settle in at home with your favorite breakfast beverage and join us online for a coffee half-hour following the Sunday morning service. Father Randy is hosting a Zoom call from 11:45 AM - 12:15 PM just to chat and catch up with everyone. We'll provide details and the link before the call.

ATTEND COMPLINE: Join us for an online Compline service, currently being held on Fridays at 8:30 p.m. Compline is an offering of late evening prayer, sometimes referred to as "Goodnight Prayer of the Church." This is held via a Zoom call, and meeting information will be provided in advance.

SHARE A REFLECTION: We have developed a space on Immanuel's website --"[Community Reflections](#)"-- for sharing thoughts about our current situation. Please take a moment to visit and explore. [Jamie Conrad](#) and [Eileen Monnin Kirby](#) are coordinating this effort and would welcome hearing from you -- everyone is invited to participate!



GET HELP/GIVE HELP: We know some folks may need help right now with tasks they usually do for themselves – and we also know there are people in our community who are ready, willing, and able to assist others. We've established a form on our website through which you can ask for help and find those able to provide it.

[Click here to access the online signup.](#)

If you don't know how to use this online document, [Kathryn Jackson Haskin](#) can help you. Additionally, if you have a request for help that you're not comfortable sharing publicly, remember our [Rector](#) and [Associate Rector](#) are available to be contacted directly.

KEEP UP ON NEWS OF THE PARISH: If you are not now receiving our weekly e-blast newsletter "This Week at Immanuel," we would be happy to add you to our mailing list! Just send your name and email address to office@icoh.net and let us know you'd like to get the e-blast.

JOIN OUR PRIVATE FACEBOOK PAGE:

Yes, Immanuel has a public Facebook page, but we also have a private Facebook group limited to our church community, intended to be a "safe place" for sharing photos and messages that you might not want going out to the whole Facebook world. You do need a Facebook account, and you'll need to follow the steps in the blue box at right to join.

HOW TO JOIN IMMANUEL'S PRIVATE FACEBOOK GROUP

1. Log into your personal Facebook account
 2. In the dialog box, search for: Immanuel church on the hill, alexandria (be sure to remember the comma and alexandria)
 3. Facebook will pull up two accounts. Click on Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill, Alexandria (the other page is the public page)
 4. This will take you to a page with a button that says 'Join Group.' Click to join.
 5. This brings up a statement that 'Your membership is pending approval.' There is also a dialog box in which you must type in a statement indicating that you are a parishioner.
 6. You can then click the 'Submit' button.
 7. Your membership request will generate a Membership Request email to the Communications Committee people who are designated Admins for our group. Once one of them approves your membership, you are in!
- You will then be able to see our posts, comment on them, and post things yourself that you want to share with the group.

Keep it nice and Immanuel friendly!

VESTRY, continued

As your vestry, we will continue to work with Randy and Susan and the Pastoral Care committee to determine the best ways to serve you and keep our community strong. We continue to plan for the future of our church, stewarding funds, ensuring our staff is supported, and maintaining our physical locations.

We look forward to the time when we are able to gather again in person., What a joy it will be to offer an in-person welcome and resume our life in Christ together.

Stay strong and be well.

The Vestry of Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill

PS – If you haven't heard from us by handwritten note, please do send us an email to update your mailing address and contact information. Our parish directory has taken on a new level of importance in these socially-distanced days and we want it to be correct! Send your information to Aleta Powell at apowell@icoh.net.

Faithfully Sharing God's Gifts

As you are able at this time to share some of God's gifts with your church, we would be very thankful.

We appreciate everything you are able to share and your willingness to remember Immanuel through your financial gifts and your continued pledge payments. Like you, Immanuel wants to do all it can during these difficult days.

You can use the [donation screen on our website](#) to make your pledge payment or set up automated giving, a feature which is most helpful to us. You can also mail your pledge payment or additional gifts to Immanuel's church office at 3606 Seminary Road, Alexandria, VA, 22304.

Your faithful generosity is a blessing.



Immanuel is an Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Virginia, and is part of the world-wide Anglican Communion. We are one parish that currently worships virtually online, hoping to soon resume in-person services in two locations: the Zabriskie Chapel (3606 Seminary Road), and Immanuel Chapel (3737 Seminary Road), in Alexandria, Virginia.

Vestry

(all may be emailed at vestry@icoh.net)

Keith June, Senior Warden

Kathryn Haskin, Junior Warden: Buildings and Grounds

Martha Shimkin, Junior Warden: Administration

Jamie Conrad, Register, Adult Formation and Discipleship

Sandra Graham, Communications

Danette "Dani" Gentile Kauffman, Stewardship & Planned Giving

Chandley McDonald, Outreach

Phyllis Sims, Fellowship

Francine Wargo, Evangelism and Newcomers

Hartley Hobson Wensing; Children, Youth, and Family Ministries

Shawn Whitman, Senior Ministry and Pastoral Care

Darrell Wilson, Worship

Tom Hewson, Treasurer

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Laura Snow, Assistant Treasurer

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Staff

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Gilma Balcarcel, Nursery Coordinator

Stuart Dahlinger, Sexton

Clergy

The Rev. J. Randolph Alexander, Jr.

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Rector

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Vicar, International Anglican Congregation

The Rev. Sureshkumar Shanthakumar

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International Student/Priest-in-Residence

Priest Associates

The Rev. Dr. J. Barney Hawkins IV

The Rev. Dr. Ruthanna Hooke

The Rev. Jan A. Maas

The Rev. John R. Smucker

The Rev. Canon Rosemari G. Sullivan

The Rev. Dr. Francis H. Wade

Director of Music

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