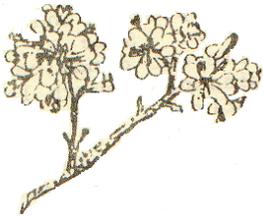


THE ALMOND TREE

Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill

The Rev. Mary Sulerud, Interim Rector
The Rev. David Crosby, Assistant Rector
Jennifer Addington, Editor



February 13, 2013

Dear Friends,

As my mother waited in her hospital room for the cancer surgery that was to happen later that morning, she was nervous, but remarkably optimistic, counting herself among those fortunate enough to have been attentive to her own health and to have had a physician who listened to her, made a diagnosis and moved her into appropriate medical treatment quickly. Just before the nursing team came to take her to the OR, a Roman Catholic priest, sent by my grandparents, came into the room to pray, anoint her and give her what was largely understood at that time in the church as “last rites.” She was polite, but went into surgery furious, feeling that her physician and her family had not told her the truth. She not only came out of the surgery well, but went on to enjoy 35 cancer-free years of life.

Given her sense of betrayal, her recovery of a faith life took a while. It was 10 years before she went back to church for anything other than my brothers’ baptisms, first communions and confirmations. This story, happening when I was 16, shaped how I thought about the healing ministry of the church for a very long time...with very great apprehension and suspicion. Having participated in healing ministries in all of the congregations I have served I have come to think quite differently about what Christ offers in this act of laying on of hands and anointing with healing oil.

Of the many names we give Jesus, “healer and physician of our souls” reflect the many times that Jesus enters a village or city and heals all of the sick who are brought to him. These acts of healing bring throngs of people near to receive this visible sign of God’s kingdom breaking into human life. In the gospels, disease, deformity, and demonic possession are on par with sin as examples of how our lives are broken and the extent to which God seeks in Jesus to heal and restore us to fullness of life.

The advent of medicine as we practice it today has often meant that the ministry of healing has been practiced in religious settings either as a dramatic cure for those who had sufficient faith or as a last rite for those who probably were dying, except by divine intervention. Both of these are real distortions of what the gospels tell us Jesus was doing: returning people to lives of wholeness and holiness so that they might become disciples and participants in the kingdom of God. The service of healing as offered in the BCP 1979, the Book of Occasional Services and Enriching Our Worship offer within the context of Holy Eucharist the opportunity to seek the laying on of hands, anointing and prayer so that we may be sustained by Christ and healed of our brokenness in body, mind or spirit. In those prayers on behalf of the people present and others, I have seen what a wonderful hymn called, O Christ the healer, describes with these words: “How can we fail to be restored, when reached by love that never ends?” I don’t often see “the cure” in healing services, but I almost always see a powerful restoration of hope and possibility. As my mother said near the end of her life when another priest came to visit, “I can’t do much, but I can do something to be a better person today because of this healing prayer.”

This Lent we will offer services of healing at 11:15 on two Sundays, February 24th and March 17th. The full rite will be offered at 11:15. At 8 and 9:15 we will have healing stations after each service so that those who would like to have healing prayers for themselves or on behalf of others may remain in the church and receive this ministry. Because of this, at the 9:15 service limited announcements will be made after the peace. I invite you as the Spirit of God moves you to participate in this offering of Christ to you and, in the words of another hymn, be bold to say, “Heal me hands of Jesus, and search out all my pain: restore my hope, remove my fear and bring me peace again.”

Faithfully yours, Mary+

PASTORAL CARE CORNER: Please remember these parishioners in your prayers: Duncan MacDonald, Morgan, Lloyd and Jean Mostrom, Nancy Wise, Janet Siegrist, Mary Goeser, Catherine, Susan Kernan, Mary, Natalie Doyle-Hennin, Bill Frye, Yvonne Pover, Kerry Kelly, Barbara Currie, Janice Corbett, Rick Murphy,

Please also remember in your prayers members of our extended Parish family: Joan Aldretti, Dean and Charlotte Kellogg, Chris Rarick, Susan Shallbetter, Tom Stasz, Eleanor Boothe Smith, Stephen Miller, Jim Rarick, Irv Schiff, Patricia Smith, Josie Guardipee, Helen Butler, Sam Faeth, Lawrence Sanchez, Paul, Joan Cummins, Eric Reading, Sr., Cameron, Sue Rehnke, Laurie, Caitlin Rivers, Patricia Ryan, Chris Stanek, Dana Hengst, Lois and Don McCorvie, Anthony Christino, Jr., Dru Eckard, Elesa McFadden, Mike Hart, Jane Burton, Marsha Porter, Laura, Keith Green, Evelyn Rowe, Meg Clontz, Chris Moore, Lois, Steve Wells, Percy Hays, Nancy Engleman, Alex, Patrick Ogden, Laura Watt, Chris Enstrom, Marian, Ray Dovell.

Those serving in the U.S. and overseas: Todd Bates, Paul Bednar, Yolanda Bednar, Ian Phillips, John Patrick Miller, Philip Smucker, Jon Anderson, Nicole DeBien, Noah Barker, Kendra Smith.

DID YOU KNOW...Sundays during Lent are considered Sundays “in” Lent, while Sundays during Advent are considered “of” Advent. What’s the difference? During Advent, Sundays are part of the season, while during Lent, Sundays are “extra” – not part of the 40 days of Lent. They are like mini-Easters, which means that if you give up things like coffee or chocolate – you can indulge on Sundays without guilt!

ALMOND TREE ON LINE. As you all know by now, we are no longer mailing the Almond Tree out to all parishioners, it simply is too expensive. We are posting it on the website as soon as it is published. In the past, Jennifer has been sending out a parish-wide email that it is available by clicking on the link to the website. That has proved cumbersome and confusing to many people. Now, look for an email from her with a direct link to that day’s Almond Tree. All you will need to do is click on the link, and you will go directly to the newsletter, bypassing the website itself.



BIBLES ON TAP

BIBLES ON TAP: Looking for a group to join to discuss the Bible, join in outreach opportunities, talk about life, or just enjoy the occasional night out with friends? Then come

join us for Bibles on Tap!

“Bibles on Tap” is a group of adults, ages 20-39, who meet once a month at Café 1823 at VTS to discuss the upcoming gospel lessons, enjoy the Seminary Pub’s atmosphere and relax with new and old friends. Our group is a mix of singles, couples, and parents who come together for fellowship and theological discussion. Please join us and feel free to bring a friend!

Our next meeting is Wednesday February 20th, 7:30 p.m. at Café 1823 (Virginia Theological Seminary Pub). We will discuss the gospel lesson and readings for Sunday February 20th.

Questions? Contact Lindsay McGahuey-Yates at Lbmyates@gmail.com or [571-243-9114](tel:571-243-9114).

SCHOOL FOR THE SPIRIT COMING AFTER EASTER: HELP US MAKE IT MEET YOUR NEEDS AND INTERESTS

Come join us in one of ICOH's longstanding spiritual growth, learning and fellowship opportunities at School for the Spirit for the seven weeks of April 7 through May 19. School for the Spirit's simple dinner together and classes in the spring and fall are a longstanding part of ICOH's “inreach,” education and spiritual nurturing. This Spring, we will take the best of ICOH's many years of School for the Spirit and at the same time make those changes that might appeal to a broader participation. Classes being considered are Children's Spirituality; Literature and Faith; Restorative Justice in Luke's Gospel (led by Rev. Mary Sulerud); Bible Workbench (led by Rev. Bill Dols); Science and Faith; Christianity, Pacifism and Just War; and what all of us can learn from 12-Step Programs. We really need your help in the one-minute, two-question survey at the link below to see what would make School for the Spirit especially meet your needs this spring, including whether to offer it on Sunday or Wednesday evenings.

Please take the one minute, two-question survey here: <http://tinyurl.com/bem478p>



CALLING ALL ARTISTS – We will be following the Stations of the Cross as part of the noon liturgy on Good Friday, March 29. Each of the 14 Stations, we hope, will be

illustrated by an ICOH artist. We are looking for artists to depict a particular moment from Jesus' passion. We are looking for diversity in media – painters, sketch and print artists, sculptors, textiles (quilts, needlework, etc.), for this worship. Youth participants are particularly welcome. Since the Stations will be in the Chapel this year, (where space is more limited than in the Parish Hall), if you are interested in participating, please contact either of the clergy for guidance on size specifications.

LENT IS HERE. Recently, +Bishop Shannon led some clergy through a pre-Lenten Retreat, where we examined Traditions & Choices, Expectations & Changes for clergy in first calls, after recent moves, and in new relationships. He cited part of a prayer in the Palm Sunday liturgy [BCP 272], “Mercifully grant that we may walk in the way of suffering, and also share in his resurrection; ..” adding, “We cannot do Holy Week, let alone the Triduum, without doing Lent properly.” It was a time of great teaching and wonderful counsel with dialogue. Some Lenten practices involve taking on something more on rather than foregoing that which we always receive, i.e., beer, chocolate, etc. The Bishop emphasized what we give up as a ‘spiritual fast,’ to deny ourselves something that is meaningful and daily as part of our discipline. I invite you to consider this season of Lent as time where the temporal life we all share might be invaded by the eternal life we all seek. I wish you all a most holy and blessed Lent ~ David+

ANNUAL HEIFER FAIR, SUNDAY,

FEBRUARY 24: Sunday School will be holding the annual Heifer Fair on Sunday, February 24, following the 9:15 service. Heifer International is a global organization that provides livestock and training to families struggling with hunger and poverty. Each class will pick an animal and ask the congregation to join in and purchase shares. The fair will feature games, snacks and more information about this outstanding organization. A donation makes a wonderful gift. Gift cards will be available. Please join us!

DISCERNMENT COMMITTEE UPDATE



The Discernment Committee has done the hard work of identifying the applicants we will consider in the next phase of the search process. Beginning a little later this month, the committee will conduct 30 – 40 minute Skype

interviews with those applicants and continue the evaluation of those we wish to consider for further discernment. Following the Skype interviews, a smaller set of applicants will be invited to visit ICOH individually, become acquainted with the physical plant, and meet with the committee. More discernment and committee decisions will happen after these encounters. Return visits by members of the committee to the home parishes of those remaining applicants still under consideration will then follow. By then, the committee should know the preferred candidate for the position of our next Rector. By all accounts, the process is on track, moving ahead at a good pace, and working, we hope, toward a successful conclusion. Your Discernment Committee: **Caroline Bergmark, Tom Brown, Governor Burke, Jim Clausen, Carrie Cuddy, Barbara Currie, Tom Harris, Doug Henry, Wendy John, Chandley McDonald, Eileen Monnin-Kirby, Martha Sedgwick.**

THANKS FROM ALIVE! Thanks to everyone who contributed food or wrote a check to Alive! during January. Your donations were greatly needed and gratefully received. Immanuel's next collection will be in June.

STEWARDSHIP - Dr. J. Clif Christopher, a United Methodist minister and founder of Horizons Stewardship, was the keynote speaker at Diocesan Council. Author of several books, including “Not Your Parent’s Offering Plate” and “Rich Church-Poor Church,” he spoke to the downward trend in church giving which requires a radical change in Stewardship. Dr. Christopher urged us to change our message, refocus our efforts, and make Stewardship a year-long campaign. He challenged us with “What difference does the Church make?” We must begin by “making our case” and promoting our product which strives to change hearts, minds and lives. Please look for more information regarding Stewardship from the clergy and vestry in the coming weeks.

DISCOVER YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFTS

A lunchtime workshop, Sunday, March 3, 12:15 to 2:00 p.m.

Discover Your Spiritual Gifts: a lunchtime workshop, Sunday, March 3rd, 12:15 to 2:00 p.m.

You may not think of yourself as gifted--but you are. You are gifted by God in your creation and baptism: you have been given special gifts that are intended by God for building God's kingdom in this world. We call these particular gifts, "spiritual gifts", and they are such things as teaching, hospitality, proclaiming the Gospel, helping, pastoring, praying, and prophecy. Would you like to learn more about your own unique spiritual gifts, and discover ways that God might intend for you to use them?

Please join us for a lunchtime workshop in the parish hall after church on **Sunday, March 3rd**, where we will have a light lunch and then explore (1) what spiritual gifts are, (2) what gifts you yourself have within you, and (3) how these gifts give you passion and energy for serving God in the world. Child care will be available. Hope to see you there! **Sign up on the sheet in the narthex (chapel foyer)--be sure to sign up for child care** so we know whether we need it and if so, how many children.

For more information, contact the Rev. Corry Weierbach by email (corryweierbach@gmail.com), phone ([703-956-0410](tel:703-956-0410)), or ask another member of our Leadership group: Sara Fein, Hance Haney, and Betty Wanamaker.

*Spiritual
Gifts* 
Class

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Lectionary Readings and
Schedule of Services



February 17, 1st Sunday in Lent

Deuteronomy 26:1-11; Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16; Romans 10:8b-13; Luke 4:1-13
8:00 a.m., Great Litany and HEI; 9:15 a.m., Great Litany and HEII; 11:15 a.m., Great Litany and HEII

February 24, 2nd Sunday in Lent

Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18; Psalm 27; Philippians 3:17—4:1; Luke 13:31-35
8:00 a.m., HEI; 9:15 a.m., HEII; 11:15 a.m., HEI with Healing

March 3, 3rd Sunday in Lent

Exodus 3:1-15; Psalm 63:1-8; 1 Corinthians 10:1-13; Luke 13:1-9
8:00 a.m., HEI; 9:15 a.m., HEII; 11:15 a.m., HEII