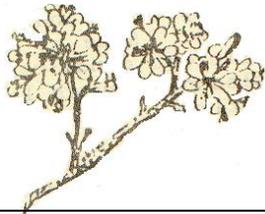


# THE ALMOND TREE

## Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill

The Rev. David Crosby, Assistant Rector  
Jennifer Addington, Editor

July 31, 2013



Dear Immanuel Family,

This past year, I learned that Grace & Gratitude is a powerful expression of thanksgiving here at Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill. We regularly give thanks for the many gifts shared through Self, Service, and/or Substance. This is my open letter of grace and gratitude to you for the many ways you have welcomed me and Chrissie into ICOH, and have begun to shape and form me in my first year of ordained ministry.

I was blessed to come into this place with Mary Sulerud as my clergy mentor; a friend for over 25 years, we shared liturgical groundings that helped us ‘dance with one another.’ It proved extremely helpful as my start date bumped forward two weeks so I could be here with her before Mary took time away. You may recall Chrissie and I moved into the rectory as I began with you. Definitely a time of ‘out of the pan, into the fire’, but it has been all good and very exciting!

My first year was about initiation, questions, and experience which started the process of discovery, understanding, and integration. Some have wondered about my role. During the interim, I functioned as a generalist to observe the overall rhythm, life and flow of this parish. I was a ‘jack of all trades, master of none.’ Even before our vocational deacon Linda Murphy left, I was cast into pastoral care matters which have always been a passion of my own ministry. Anticipating Father Randy’s arrival, I pledge him my support to follow his lead, will offer input when asked or needed, and expect to share some things and ‘divide and conquer’ on others.

How fortunate I was to have five months post-ordination as a deacon to get my bearings as a new kind of liturgical minister. The last seven+ months as priest have filled me with such delight and great joy! If I ever doubted the Lord’s wisdom to call me, I have received affirmations, one after another, as I continue to grow into a new sacramental agent working for the Kingdom of God here on earth. Celebrating the first time as priest in December was memorable, presenting three young confirmands to the Bishop was exciting, offering a full and different Holy Week observance was a great honor, and my first baptisms at Easter filled me with such elation!

I am so grateful for the many ministers in our congregation, lay and ordained. I revel in moments where people recognize us, perhaps not by name, but in ministry as “the pumpkin church.” I am working to enhance and strengthen our relationship with Virginia Theological Seminary and the City of Alexandria. It will be exciting to share new ministry with Randy Alexander.

This past year, Immanuel has exhibited an overwhelming ‘Christ-like’ love through active engagement of one another as Christian community in action. I am excited to grow more in my ministry to and with you as we work together in our shared journey of faith. Thank you for a most amazing first year with and among you.

Peace & Cheers,  
David

## VESTRY NEWS & A MUST-READ ARTICLE FOR EVERYONE:

On July 13th, your Vestry held a mid-year retreat focused on a couple objectives: to open our hearts and minds to our new Rector, and to be intentional about how we handle this leadership transition. But how and who to frame this important discussion? Our answer was closer than first anticipated.

Over the past months, as I thought about our transition to new clergy leadership, three different priests — first Bishop Shannon Johnston at his annual visit, then our former Associate Peter Ackerman when I ran into him dog-walking and finally our new Rector Randy Alexander at one of our meetings — all recommended an article. It's from Forward Movement, a religious publisher in Cincinnati, and is called "A New Rector, A New Congregation: Realistic Expectations for Each."

The beauty, to me, is that it parses the relationship from both sides of the altar — the priest's concerns, the parishioners' concerns. The article describes how together they can be fruitful and flourish, or fail miserably, and the article cites chapter and verse on the latter. (The Bishop's reading recommendation was in response to my question about what *never-never-never* to do with a new Rector.)

The article's author is the Rev. Dr. Francis H. Wade. If that name sounded familiar, that may be because he is a beloved parishioner and occasional preacher here: There may be six degrees of separation in the real world, but two degrees of Frank Wade in the Episcopal Church!

Frank graciously consented to lead our Saturday morning discussion, and it was such a rousing success that the Vestry finally let him go about his day 75 minutes after his stated departure time.

Now all of you will get a chance to experience what the Vestry heard and discussed: **On Sunday, August 11th between 9 a.m. and 9:50 a.m. in the parish hall, Frank will lead a discussion on "A New Rector, A New Congregation" for the whole parish.** In preparation for our discussion, the ushers will have printed copies available this Sunday, August 4th, in the narthex and at the church office during the week. You can also read it (and print it yourself) at [icoh.net](http://icoh.net). You'll learn about the art of "followship," the custom of "pounding" and what new priests and prospective in-laws share in common.

I promise you, you'll learn something new about priests and parishes. Please come join the conversation!

-- *Connie Kurz, Senior Warden*

**PASTORAL CARE CORNER:** Please remember these parishioners in your prayers: Duncan MacDonald, Morgan, Lloyd and Jean Mostrom, Janet Siegrist, Catherine, Mary, Natalie Doyle-Hennin, Bill Frye, Yvonne Pover, Chris Enstrom, Arlo and Katie Lloyd, Samantha Taggart, Judy Bednar.

Please also remember in your prayers members of our extended Parish family: Dean and Charlotte Kellogg, Chris Rarick, Eleanor Boothe Smith, Jim Rarick, Sam Faeth, Anthony Christino, Jr., Jane Burton, Keith Green, Lois, Percy Hays, Alex, Marian, and Bob Love, Tom Hewson, Sr., Danny Christoffersen, Ross Dickerson, Jim Clear, Lindsey Rose, Cathy and Stewart Hoskins, Laura Hudson, Ann and Larry Kaplan, Aubree Bowling, Quinn, Paul and Allene Spence, Erin Monroney.

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

**WHAT'S NEW ON ICOH'S WEBSITE?:** A whole new look! We have switched to a modern, better-organized template for Immanuel's website ([www.icoh.net](http://www.icoh.net)), offered by the Diocese of Virginia. Please try out the three handy buttons in the center of the page, which will give you one-click access to the parish calendar, the latest edition of the Almond Tree, and the popular construction blog for information on the progress of our summertime construction projects. More features will be rolling out in the days ahead, so check back frequently!

**SUPPORTING CHILDREN IN HAITI.** The Haiti Micah Project (HMP) is a faith based non-profit organization which serves the needs of orphaned and neglected children in the City of Mirebalais, Haiti. Presently, HMP provides a daily meal for over 400 street children, as well as educational and medical support. Additionally, HMP runs an orphanage for 23 children, among the poorest of the poor. Parishioners at Immanuel-on-the-Hill currently sponsor 15 children served by HMP, and we have been asked to sponsor another 10 children. Sponsorship costs \$300 per year and there will be a sign-up sheet in the church for those who wish to participate in this ministry. These sponsorships literally save lives. For more information, call Jim Snow at (703) 751-4853 or visit the HMP website at <http://www.haiti-micah.org>.

**HAITI MICAHA PROJECT IS LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS** to help with office tasks needed by the Sponsor a Child Program. HMP now counts over 500 children in the program, with 250 having sponsors. Needed support can be done at home if you have a computer and are familiar with WORD and data entry on EXCEL. Tasks would occur on an irregular time basis. If you are interested, please contact Karen Wires at 703-764-3844 or [knwies@icloud.com](mailto:knwies@icloud.com)



### **CONSTRUCTION**

**UPDATE:** Well, everyone should have noticed that it is much cooler in Immanuel's Sanctuary now. New HVAC units and a new thermostat can work wonders! We have had a hiccup with the Kitchen unit, so we are back on our original schedule instead of ahead of schedule; however, we still anticipate being complete for Homecoming Sunday. In the next few weeks, the ceilings downstairs will be patched and the new fan coil units will start being installed. We are still on budget for the HVAC renovation. -- *John von Senden, Vestry Steward for Resources*



The Dean and President  
of Virginia Theological Seminary

THE VERY REV. IAN S. MARKHAM, PH.D.  
warmly invites you to the

## DEDICATION OF THE CHAPEL GARDEN

Wednesday, October 9, 2013  
(During Convocation)

11:30 a.m.  
At the Chapel Garden

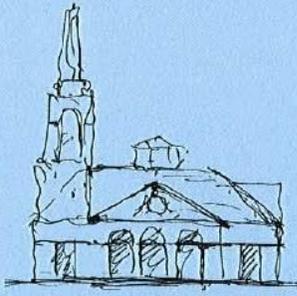
Luncheon immediately following in the Refectory

3737 Seminary Road  
Alexandria, Virginia 22304

Please register online by September 25:  
[www.vts.edu/chapel](http://www.vts.edu/chapel)

Convocation attendees, please RSVP  
on your Convocation registration form.

Questions? Contact Debbie Townsend at  
[dtownsend@vts.edu](mailto:dtownsend@vts.edu) or 703-461-1714.



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## GROUNDBREAKING FOR THE NEW IMMANUEL CHAPEL

Holy Cross Day  
Saturday, September 14, 2013

11:00 a.m.  
On the Grove close to the location  
of the new Immanuel Chapel

Reception immediately following in the Refectory

3737 Seminary Road  
Alexandria, Virginia 22304

Please register online by August 30:  
[www.vts.edu/chapel](http://www.vts.edu/chapel)

Questions? Contact Debbie Townsend at  
[dtownsend@vts.edu](mailto:dtownsend@vts.edu) or 703-461-1714.

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Lectionary Readings and  
Schedule of Services



**August 4, Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost**

Hosea 11:1-11; Psalm 107:1-9, 43; Colossians 3:1-11; Luke 12:13-21  
8 a.m., HEI, 10:00 a.m., HEII

**August 11, Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost**

Isaiah 1:1, 10-20; Psalm 50:1-8, 23-24; Hebrews 11:1-3, 8-16; Luke 12:32-40  
8:00 a.m., HEI; 10:00 a.m., HEII

**August 18, Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost**

Isaiah 5:1-7; Psalm 80:1-2, 8-18; Hebrews 11:2--12:2, Luke 12:49-56  
8:00 a.m., HEI; 10:00 a.m., HEII

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