

THE ALMOND TREE

Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill

The Rev. Corry Weierbach, Interim Associate Rector

February 8, 2012



THE DAYS AHEAD

Joyous and emotional, stirring and bittersweet — this past Sunday was one for ICOH's record books as hundreds of us gathered to celebrate the ministry of our dear Sam Faeth and to thank her for her extraordinary leadership in this place we love. Sam has left an indelible impression on us all and has given us strength that we can draw on in the days, months and years ahead. She has left us in a good place to take the next steps forward.

In his marvelous sermon, Barney Hawkins likened Sam's ministry among us to that of a baker, patiently working her ingredients, coaxing the best out of every one of them, making the whole loaf rise to new heights. As Bishop Shannon Johnston told the Vestry last Wednesday night when he drove from Richmond to have dinner with us, "You will be strong in the days ahead, because Sam has formed this parish, each of you, for ministry." Bishop Johnston went on to describe ICOH as one of the Diocese's landmark churches — healthy, vibrant, full of strong lay leadership. "You will soar," Bishop Johnston predicted.

So who will lead us next, and where will we go?

The Reverend Cornelia Weierbach will "hold down the fort" for the next few months, while the Vestry searches for an Interim Rector. We are delighted to have Corry return after her able assistance during Sam's recent sabbatical. As Interim Associate Rector, she will preach (and arrange for other clergy to do so, too), attend to pastoral care matters and lead our Lenten series.

We will call an Interim Rector in the coming weeks, depending on availability. The interim will act as a parish priest with "added value," if you will. He or she has received special training to support congregations in transition, to help a church to discern its mission and prepare it to call a new leader. The interim will lead all of us — from smallest child to oldest adult — in describing *who we are* and *what we seek* in our next rector. Once that's done, the Vestry will appoint a search committee to identify and interview candidates in what will be a nationwide effort.

The search for an interim is quick and targeted. The Vestry and Wardens, at our retreat Saturday, came up with a short list of qualities we hope we will find in one person at a price the parish can afford. The very capable Lindsey Ryland of the Bishop's deployment office is already sending us appropriate candidates to review. Some of you had a chance to talk with Lindsey on Sunday as she represented Bishop Johnston at Sam's farewell. A sub-committee — comprised of both Wardens and Vestry members Sue Gilbertson, Bryan Phillips and Martha Shimkin — expects to receive three to five candidates from the Bishop to consider. Interims are typically with a parish from 12 to 18 months.

ICOH has been led by an amazing and inspiring group of men and now one woman in our 70-year history. Please pray for your Vestry as we take the next steps in finding our new leader.

Tom Kerns, Senior Warden; Connie Kurz, Junior Warden

PASTORAL CARE CORNER Please remember these parishioners in your prayers: Duncan

MacDonald, Morgan, Lloyd Mostrom, Nancy Wise, Bobbie King, Marcia, Tom Murray, Janet Siegrist, Becky Graham, Mary, Annie, Catherine Sinclair, Sam Faeth, Sky Beaven, Chris Stanek, Jessi Macleod, Yvonne Pover, Ethel Hoffman, Margaret Messenger Kerekes, Linda Murphy, Sally Guy Brown, Robin Eckert, Barbara Fornoff, Vivian Gray.

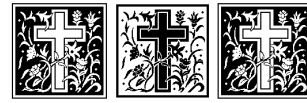
Pease also remember in your prayers members of our extended Parish family: : Joan Aldretti, Doris Allen, Robert Amick, Karen Beattie, Mike Black, Tim Boyd, Cardiss Collins, Doris Doyle, Gene Gray, Lucas Hawley, Mary Lou Johnson, Dean and Charlotte Kellogg, Tennille Littleton, Chris Rarick, Sue Rehnke, Lucien Russell, Susan Shallbetter, June Sheets, Ellen Shreve, Cheryl Stratos, Suzanne Tellechea, Alexander Droneberger, Tom Stasz, Denise Boucher, Eleanor Boothe Smith, Bill Rarick, Wilson Carter, Biruta Kelly, Jeff Kucine, Mimi Evans, Stephen Miller, Chuck, Jim Rarick, Irv Schiff., Dan Abeyta, Butch Lovette, Shelby, Scott, Mikeala Stevens, Barbara Read, Jim Pearson, Joyce Faeth, Mary Goeser, Patricia Ryan, Bob Davies, Patricia Smith, Josie Guardipee, Clinton Ross Fitzgerald, Helen Butler, Wally and Gerry Clinton, Judy Wagner and her family, Millie and Ray Dovell.

Serving our country at home and abroad: : Todd Bates, Paul Bednar, Tom and Anne Duffy, Philip Smucker., Ian Phillips, Liza Conrad, Jason Zook, the Chaplains of the 173rd Airborne.

GRACE CHURCH LENTEN SPIRITUAL

RETREAT On Saturday, March 3, Grace Church will host a day of reflection and prayer with renowned priest, author, and retreat leader, Fr. Martin Smith. Fr. Smith will invite participants to "heed to the voice of the Christian martyrs, recalling us to the personal adventure of intimacy with God. Christianity is not a message or a set of beliefs but an experience." Parishioners of all Alexandria Churches are welcome to take advantage of this retreat, which will take place Saturday, March 3, in Merrow Hall at Grace Church, 3601 Russell Road, from 8:30 am to 3:00 pm. Continental breakfast and lunch are included in the \$35 fee. You can register at the Grace Church web site:

<http://www.gracealex.org/Events/EventView.asp?EventID=15634>



Lent begins

2012 LENTEN SERIES: COMMUNITY TIME WITH GOD AND EACH OTHER

Lent is an ideal time for quiet reflection and drawing nearer to God. This can be done, of course, on an individual basis, but it can also be a wonderful exercise of renewal for a faith community. This is particularly true for us at Immanuel in this time of transition. This year's Lenten Series will be a series of Sunday evening conversations, consisting of a soup supper followed by a time of quiet conversation about the deep questions of our faith community. We will focus on one question each week:

- What is our relationship with God in Jesus Christ?
- How does our relationship with God drive our life at Immanuel?
- What is, and what could be, the place of our Christian community in our lives?
- What mission is Jesus encouraging us to engage in here, now and in the future?
- What focus does God desire for us at this time of transition?

This series will begin on Sunday, February 26, and continue for all the Sundays in March (the 4th, 11th, 18th and 25th). We will begin at 5:00 p.m. and end promptly at 7:00 p.m. each week. We hope the early hour and Sunday evening timing will allow all members of Immanuel an opportunity to join this conversation and refresh the relationship they have with God and each other. Please join us. **Soup makers:** We are also looking for volunteers to make delicious soups for these Sundays! Please call the parish office if you can help. Thank you!

SHROVE TUESDAY PANCAKE SUPPER:

Tuesday, February 21 in the Parish Hall beginning at 5 p.m. All are welcome. Come and enjoy the fellowship of our parish family before Lent begins. Cost is \$5 for adults, \$2.50 for children under 12 with a maximum of \$15 for an entire family.

ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICES: Wednesday, February 22 -- Holy Eucharist and Imposition of Ashes will be available at 7:30 a.m., 12:00 noon and 7:30 p.m.

THANK YOU! Dear friends, i could not have dreamed of the healing and grace that would come with a farewell celebration such as the one we shared last week. My heartfelt thanks to all who came, who sent prayers or notes, who prepared such a feast, who sang, who gifted me with such love and generosity. Until we meet again, may God guide you into new adventures and hold you in love. *Sam+*

Monday, February 6, 2012

Yesterday was an emotional day for our partner congregation Immanuel Church on the Hill. The Rev. Dr. Margaret Ann Faeth (known to us all as Sam) was the celebrant at the 8am and the 10am. This was her last service as Rector of the Congregation. In July 1996, Sam joined the clergy staff; she then served as Assistant, Associate, Priest-in-Charge before finally becoming the Rector in February 2008. For over sixteen years, Sam had been part of that congregation.

Virginia Theological Seminary was well represented at the two services. The Rev. Dr. Barney Hawkins preached a moving sermon that reflected on the nature of ministry; members of the congregation included both faculty, staff, and students. As we prayed for Sam, there were tears as members of the congregation remembered all those moments when Sam had been their pastor, teacher, preacher, and friend.

I am delighted that Sam is planning to stay in the neighborhood. As I explain to all members of staff and faculty who move on from the Seminary 'once you are part of the Seminary, you are also part of the Seminary.' Today in this commentary, I extend the same promise to Sam Faeth. You have served at Immanuel Church on the Hill with distinction; you are a DMin Faculty Associate; you have been part of this place in important ways. Please do remember that the Seminary remains your home; and we look forward to frequent visits as you ease into the next season of your life.

The Very Rev Ian Markham,
Dean and President

**The Very Rev. Ian S. Markham,
Ph.D.
Dean & President, Virginia Theological
Seminary**

invites you to the launch of the

**Chapel for the Ages Capital
Campaign**

Thursday, February 16, 2012

**5:15 p.m. - Eucharist
Lettie Pate Evans Interim Chapel**

**6:30 p.m. - Festive Reception
Scott Lounge and Refectory**

**Virginia Theological Seminary
3737 Seminary Road
Alexandria, Virginia 22304**

**The favor of a reply is requested by
February 8, 2012,
Debbie Townsend
chapelfortheages@vts.edu**

VESTRY MOVING FORWARD: On Saturday, February 4, the Vestry met to begin planning the year ahead as we move into new and exciting territory. The following Vestry assignments were made:
Senior Warden: Tom Kerns
Junior Warden: Connie Kurz
Register: Kerry Kelly
Action: John von Senden, Kerry Kelly
Community and Nurturing: Susan Gilbertson, Mary-Jo Cooney
Resources: Hance Haney, Bryan Phillips
Worship: Brooke Roberts, Laura Snow
Growth and Education: Tony Christino, Martha Shimkin
Please be ready to step forward and give what help you can in whatever ways you are able!

Outreach to the Dominican Republic

On a beautiful fall Sunday in October, 2002, our forum hour presentation featured the Rev. Bob Snow and his wife Ellen, Episcopal missionaries to the Dominican Republic. At that time, most of us didn't even know the Episcopal Church was present in that Caribbean nation. Contrary to that perception, Bob described a dynamic evangelistic and rapidly growing church that was serving some of the poorest of the poor. Bob and Ellen's visit was the spark for our outreach commitment to the Dominican Republic.

Dominican Episcopal Church is indeed dynamic in its growth. In the last 10 years, the Diocese of the Dominican Republic has nearly doubled the number of its churches and congregations to almost 70. In addition, there are 27 Episcopal schools providing some of the best elementary and secondary education in the country. Many factors account for this growth but a primary reason is that the church stresses outreach to the poor. In the Dominican Republic, 42% of the people live below the poverty level; 20% of Dominicans live on one dollar a day or less per person; and 56% do not go beyond 8th Grade.



Rural poverty is rampant in Angelina where we have a mission church

The Dominican Episcopal Church is a diocese in the U.S. Episcopal Church. Thus, we have a bond between them and us that transcends our different nationalities, languages, and cultures. Yet it is these differences that make our relationship with Dominicans so interesting and worthwhile. A traditional Episcopalian is often wonderfully surprised how the Book of Common Prayer has been adapted to a traditional Spanish Caribbean culture resulting in enthusiastic, vibrant, and colorful worship.

There have been six mission trips from Immanuel to the Dominican Republic since 2003, ranging in size from 2 to 10 persons. Each time, we were met with the warmest hospitality from our Dominican hosts. Each trip was a combination of a work project with a tour of some of the major church facilities in the southern and eastern portions of the country. Our principal connection has been with San Marcos School and Church in the City of Haina, about 30 km west of the capital of Santo Domingo. Haina is a crowded, dirty, and bustling working class city with a high rate of poverty. In the middle of it all, San Marcos School provides a quality education and is among the flagships of the Episcopal Church.

San Marcos is the largest school in the church system with over five hundred students attending classes in morning and afternoon shifts. In the Dominican Republic, education is the only way for a child to get out of poverty. The Church makes great efforts to give education to the poor. On average it costs \$300 to provide an

education for a child in an Episcopal school. The Church requires every family to pay something, even if it is just a few pesos a week, in the belief that a tangible investment makes for more commitment. However, for many students, an education would not be possible without scholarship support from American sponsors.

For many years, Immanuel parishioners have supported the scholarship program. This year, over 40 children will benefit from a scholarship, without which they would face a rather bleak future. Our mission teams have met these children and their teachers and it is making a difference. Our scholarship funds go to a U.S. charity, the Dominican Development Group, headed by our friend, Dr. Bob Stevens, a missionary with the Diocese of Southern Florida. Bob insures that the funds get to the Diocese of the Dominican Republic to benefit the intended school. Check out the DDG website at: <http://dominicandevlopmentgroup.org>.

Immanuel Outreach has also been important in several respects. At the request of the Dominican Bishop, we provided some financial assistance to a struggling seminarian, Vicente Peña, who was subsequently ordained and now serves the church in the poor city of Banao. We also provided funds toward the construction of the new San Marcos Church, and a beautiful stained glass window designed by our own Tom Kerns.

Immanuel's outreach to the Dominican Republic is led by Everett Post and Jim Snow. The Outreach mission work in the Dominican Republic has given Immanuel a world view on the work of the Episcopal Church and a direct means to improve the lives of our brothers and sisters in Christ in that country.

For more information on the Dominican Episcopal Church, there are two short YouTube videos at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TKlh5NaLZIA> and <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oQ0p0RfCeus&feature=related>.



Enthusiastic students at San Marcos School in Haina



Our Mission Team in 2010

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Lectionary Readings and
Schedule of Services



February 12, Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany

2 Kings 5:1-15ab, Psalm 42; 1 Corinthians 9:24-27; Mark 1:40-45
8:00 a.m., HEI; 10:00 a.m., HEII

February 19, Last Sunday after the Epiphany

2 Kings 19:9-18; Psalm 27; 2 Peter 1:16-21; Mark 9:2-9
8:00 a.m., HE I, 10:00 a.m., HEII

February 26, First Sunday in Lent

Genesis 9:8-17; Psalm 25; 1 Peter 3:18-22; Mark 1:9-13
8:00 a.m., HEI; 10:00 a.m., HEI