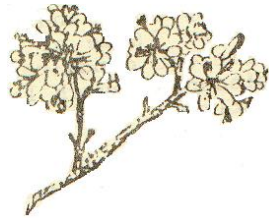


# THE ALMOND TREE

## Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill

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



April 10, 2013

The good that we do, does live on after us.

Dear Friends,

Occasionally when I am talking to my daughter by phone she will put on her neighbor, an avowed atheist, to talk to me about matters of faith. I enjoy these conversations and sometimes think that the best witness I make to the faith is simply not being afraid of his questions. The one that troubles him the most is one that troubles us, as well as St. Paul and any number of other disciples too, the way we speak, teach and have faith in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. To my daughter's neighbor it is either just a lot of smoke and mirrors to make us less afraid of death, or a terrible promise we make to people who have nothing in this life. I have responded to the former by asking him how he felt when his son was born, and then going onto say that resurrection for Christians is about finally being born completely into the fullness of our relationship with God and that our moments of extraordinary joy in this life are clues to what this will be like.

I agree with him in part, that it is easy for Christians to promise a "sweet bye and bye" to those who have little or nothing in this life. Of late I have taken to telling him about our outreach efforts at Immanuel and that these programs and ministries come out of a deep faith in the resurrection at work now in this life. After all, the biblical stories of Jesus' life give us a detailed account of work and ministry that was quite specifically targeted at those who were the least in that society. All of the stories in which we are held accountable for our faith have almost nothing to do with a checklist of beliefs, but rather the extent to which we have been feeding and tending "the sheep", especially the least among us. Of course he wonders aloud if he couldn't just do that without all the hassle of church. I encourage him to do just that, and then talk about the power of being in a community that supports me in this work, holds me accountable for it and in whom I can see the resurrected Christ, at which point we part company with both of us laughing about my attempts to convert him.

I am always grateful to be serving at Immanuel when I have these conversations because the energy with which this congregation serves so many locally and globally who are in need makes it easy for me to have examples of the best of resurrected life that Christian believers can offer. We often think that clergy change lives by erudition and persuasion in the pulpit and in classrooms. Actually I think that almost never happens. The truly persuasive and life-changing acts of Christian faith are what are seen when the people of God, lay and clergy, are in service to the poor, the disenfranchised, the homeless, the hungry, those in prison, the diseased and those broken by life's circumstances. It is when we step out of faith to show how we love as God loves that is such a remarkable gift and example of God's grace and transforming love.

Immanuel has become this sort of community not by accident. In the world of transition ministry our shorthand would be that being a mission-focused congregation is part of your DNA. Generations of clergy at Immanuel, notably the late, great Bishop H. Coleman McGehee and others like the late Henry Mitchell, by their advocacy of justice for African-Americans, women, GLBT folks, the poor and the homeless, early and often, made a mark of Christ's love on this congregation. It couldn't have happened without a congregation made ready and willing by effective worship, preaching, teaching and personal example, who then braved the critics to be advocates of God's justice in the world. It is your resurrection story and gift to the world that needs it desperately. The good that we do, does live on through the resurrected love of Christ in action. Alleluia!

God's peace, Mary

**PASTORAL CARE CORNER:** Please remember these parishioners in your prayers: Duncan MacDonald, Morgan, Lloyd and Jean Mostrom, Nancy Wise, Janet Siegrist, Catherine, Susan Kernan, Mary, Natalie Doyle-Hennin, Bill Frye, Yvonne Pover, Kerry Kelly, Barbara Currie, Chris Enstrom, Paige Packard.

**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, Laura Watt, Marian, Ray Dovell, Adrian and Bob Love, Tom Hewson, Sr.

**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.

**PLEASE HELP US KEEP OUR PRAYER LIST UP-TO-DATE!** Because our extended parish family prayer list had gotten so lengthy and cumbersome, we have done some careful trimming. If we have removed someone who should not have been removed, please let us know and we will happily and prayerfully put that name back in.

**QUARTERLY STATEMENTS HAVE BEEN EMAILED.** Marcus Rarick, our Treasurer has informed me that he has e-mailed the quarterly pledge statements to all parishioners for whom we have an email address. Please look for it in your inbox (and perhaps your spam box if you don't find it). Please let Marcus know if you have not received it. As always, if you change your email address, please be sure to let the office know. Those parishioners for whom we do not have email addresses, or who have requested their statements by snail mail, should expect to receive it sometime within the week.

**ON A RELATED (EMAIL) NOTE:** I occasionally hear from people that they are not receiving our weekly emails "This Week at Immanuel" and other important announcements. If this is the case, please call the parish office with a correct email address and we will be glad to enter you into the system.

**NOW PLAYING ON ICOH'S WEBSITE:** the Sunday Sermon -- ICOH has begun video taping sermons for viewing on YouTube from links embedded on our website (go to: [www.icoh.net/Sermons/](http://www.icoh.net/Sermons/)). Thanks to dramatic improvements in technology, it has become practical and inexpensive to record and store sermons for viewing via the Internet on a regular basis. We are experimenting with a portable camera initially to gain experience and insights, and the Vestry will soon consider a plan for installing a permanent camera somewhere in the Sanctuary that can be operated without distracting from our worship services. Please don't hesitate to contact any member of the Vestry with your thoughts or suggestions.



### **WILL YOU BAKE FOR A GOOD CAUSE?**

Announcing "Immanuel's Great Cookie Challenge of 2013" – a wonderful parish-wide outreach opportunity.

Our goal is to produce 300 dozen home-baked cookies that will be taken by Immanuel's own **Pete Bolton** for a Kairos weekend at Buckingham Correctional Institute outside Dillwyn, Virginia the last weekend of April. Kairos Prison Ministry works in thirty states to bring Christian awareness to prison inmates. In the words of Kairos, *"Prayerfully baked, this part of the ministry shows the men of Buckingham love in a way that goes beyond mere words. When the residents learn that many people put in so many hours for them, it reaches them in a way that our words cannot."* How can you help? Between now and April 23, please bake oatmeal, chocolate chip, molasses, or peanut butter cookies using ONLY the Kairos recipes printed on the yellow flyers in Immanuel's narthex or on our website [www.icoh.net](http://www.icoh.net) (because these are delivered to prison inmates, there are very strict requirements on size and prohibiting add-ins like raisins, etc.). Please pack baked cookies 12 to a quart-size zip lock bag. You can drop off your baked cookies in the ICOH freezer, or participate in the Kairos Baking Day in the ICOH kitchen on Saturday, April 20, from 9 a.m. to noon. Contact Connie Kurz, 703/370-0062, [cgkurz@aol.com](mailto:cgkurz@aol.com)



**DISCERNMENT COMMITTEE UPDATE:** In the wake of Holy Week, the Discernment Committee has resumed its activities. At our Wednesday meeting last week, our Interim Rector and Discernment Coach, the Reverend Mary Sulerud, provided us with some guidance and other benefits of her experience on the approach and conduct of home parish visits for the remaining candidates. These visits began this past Sunday, April 7th.

Following these visits, the Committee will meet to discuss the progress of our discernment, select the best candidate to put forward to the Vestry, and build our brief for that person. Once the name goes forward, the Vestry will enter into discussions with the Committee and, having advised the Bishop, make the "Call" to the candidate proposed. It is our hope that the "Call" will be made in early May and the acceptance will follow immediately. Exactly when the new Rector will join us is unknown at this point, but probably by mid-Summer at the latest. As always, if you have any questions, please contact a member of the Committee, whose names are listed below. *Caroline Bergmark, Tom Brown, Governor Burke, Jim Clausen, Carrie Cuddy, Barbara Currie, Tom Harris, Doug Henry, Wendy John (Chair), Chandley McDonald, Eileen Monnin-Kirby and Martha Sedgwick*

### **SAMARITAN MINISTRY OF GREATER WASHINGTON SUNDAY,**

**APRIL 14:** We welcome the Rev. David Wolf, the Executive Director of Samaritan Ministry of Greater Washington. Founded in 1986 by 12 Episcopal Churches in the DC region, the organization helps improve the lives of more than 1,000 people every year who are homeless or otherwise in need through their innovative *Next Step* program. Mr. Wolf will preach at the 9:15 a.m. service and offer a forum hour to show us how the mission of Christ is carried out through this program supported by our outreach efforts.

### **ICOH MEN'S ANNUAL FISHING**

**TRIP** Ahoy, men of Immanuel. The date of this year's Annual Immanuel Men's Group's rock fishing expedition is **Friday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>**. As in the past, our fishing boat(s) will be departing that morning at sunup from Deale, Maryland (about one hour from D.C./Alexandria). Also as in the past, we'll be gathering the evening before (Thursday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>) at the Herrington Harbour Inn (located nearby the boat launch site) for our traditional Amanly meal) and a good night's sleep. I have reserved a block of rooms in my name at the Herrington Harbour Inn. I am assembling a list of planned attendees and would like to hear shortly from anyone who might be interested in going. You can contact me by e-mail, phone or in person at church. My phone number is 703-751-9238 and my e-mail address is [djohn@jhenergy.com](mailto:djohn@jhenergy.com). Doug John. Deadline is April 19.



### **SHRINEMONT PARISH RETREAT COMING SOON!**

The annual Immanuel Church-on-the Hill (ICOH) parish retreat at

Shrine Mont retreat center in Orkney Springs, VA (about 2 hours away) will be *Saturday, May 25 (noon) through Breakfast Monday, May 27, 2013*. What better way to start your summer than with ICOH friends in a beautiful and relaxing setting?! There will be time for fun, food, swimming, singing, relaxation, spiritual reflection, worship, hiking, yoga, porch entertaining, and spending time with clergy, family, and friends.

**Cost:** \$160 per adult, \$90 for children 8-12, \$40 for children 4-7, free for children 3 and under. There is also a ceiling on the overall rate for families of 4 or more. For those wanting to come up Friday, the cost is \$50 per person (includes Saturday Breakfast). Please contact our interim rector, Mary Sulerud, to discuss scholarship options – full or partial. We would like to collect money before the weekend so please bring checks, payable to "ICOH", with a notation saying "Shrine Mont" to the church office before the weekend.

For more information or **to register**, contact Lisa Frye at [wlifrye@comcast.net](mailto:wlifrye@comcast.net) or Tel. 703-548-8591 (h) 571-214-4735 (c)

Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill  
3606 Seminary Road  
Alexandria, VA 22304  
703-370-6555  
office@icoh.net  
http://www.icoh

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

Lectionary Readings and  
Schedule of Services



**April 14, Third Sunday of Easter**

Acts 9:1-20; Psalm 30; Revelation 5:11-14; John 21:1-19  
8 a.m., HEI; 9:15 a.m., HEII; 11:15 a.m., HEIII

**April 21, Fourth Sunday of Easter**

Acts 9:36-43; Psalm 23; Revelation 7:9-17; John 10:22-30  
8:00 a.m., HEI; 9:15 a.m., HEII; 11:15 a.m., HEIII

**April 28, Fifth Sunday of Easter**

Acts 11:1-18; Psalm 148; Revelation 21:1-6; John 13:31-35  
8:00 a.m., HEI; 9:15 a.m., HEII; 11:15 a.m., HEIII