THE ALMOND TREE

Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill

The Rev. J. Randolph Alexander, Jr., Rector
The Rev. David M. Crosby, Associate Rector
Jennifer Addington, Editor

September 10, 2015

"I said to the almond tree, 'Sister, speak to me of God.' And the almond tree blossomed." Nikos Kazantzakis

HOMECOMING SUNDAY – IN MORE THAN ONE SENSE!

We will begin our regular Sunday worship in Immanuel Chapel at Virginia Seminary this Sunday, September 13th. Our Eucharists will be at 8 and 10 a.m., and we will have our annual Homecoming Potluck Luncheon immediately following the 10 a.m. Eucharist. The luncheon will be held in our newly-renovated Parish Hall at Zabriskie Chapel. This promises to be an important day in the life of our parish, following so much giving, building, planning, and organizing by so many, for so long.

That Sunday will also mark the beginning of our year-long lived experiment of worshipping in both Immanuel and Zabriskie Chapels. As you know, all of our Sunday activities (worship, education, and fellowship) through the end of December will take place at Immanuel Chapel and in surrounding buildings. Starting in January, and continuing through the end of the program year, we will worship in some combination in both Chapels.

HOMECOMING POTLUCK LUNCH: Please plan to attend our first parish-wide social event in the beautifully renovated Parish Hall: the Homecoming potluck luncheon, following the 10:00 a.m. Eucharist.

This is a great chance to re-connect with your parish family after the summer break, share fun and fellowship, and of course, sample the culinary creations of some of Northern Virginia's best cooks and bakers! All are invited – please come!

This is a potluck event, so please bring a generous-sized dish (serving 8-10) according to the list below:
Last names beginning with A-F: side dishes
Last names beginning with G-L: desserts
Last names beginning with M-Z: main dishes (including vegetarian)

Dishes can be dropped off in advance. This year, we're even offering curbside service: beginning at 9:15 a.m., we will have someone stationed at the sidewalk in front of the Parish Hall to meet your car and take your contribution to the kitchen.

IMMANUEL TO OFFER CHORAL EVENSONG WITH CHURCH OF THE RESURRECTION…On Sunday evening September 20th, choirs from Immanuel and the Church of the Resurrection will offer the classic Anglican service of Choral Evensong. The service will begin at 6pm in Immanuel Chapel, and there will be a light reception afterwards. This will be a good chance to worship with some of our other brothers and sisters in Christ from our area.

GREETINGS FROM COSTA RICA: Greetings to my fellow Immanuel parishioners!

I hope you all are well. Alejandra (my co-teacher and fellow YASC-er) and I have arrived safely in Costa Rica! So far it has been a whirlwind. We have visited both sites of the Hogar Escuela (one in San José and one in a nearby town called Heredía), and we will be working two days a week in each one and doing administrative work on Fridays in the office. Both schools are absolutely gorgeous and the children, who range in age from 6 months to 12, are absolutely adorable. This year will be very busy, as the school has barely any English teaching materials and no current curriculum to follow. However, we are up to the challenge. Both sites of the Barrio Cuba are located in extremely poor areas, and offer the gift of a good education and a safe-haven to children who might otherwise not have those resources. Even though Costa Rica has public schools, they are dramatically underfunded and supported. Although the Hogar Escuela is an Episcopal parochial school, most children pay little to nothing due to their economic situations.

Throughout the rest of this week, Alejandra and I will be creating lesson plans and purchasing materials to help our students learn English, a skill that would undoubtedly help them obtain good jobs that would allow them to escape poverty. We are currently creating an Amazon wishlist of items we would like to purchase, so if any individual parishioners would like to help us out, we will be making that link available soon.

Again, thank you for all of Immanuel's unending support. It means the world to Alejandra and me, and despite all the challenges, we both feel so incredibly blessed to have this opportunity. I truly believe this experience will allow us not only to help establish an English program at Hogar Escuela, but also learn from the wonderful Costa Rican people and grow emotionally and spiritually in the process.

Blessings,
Kate Snow
University of the South, Class of 2015

THE ALEXANDRIA TUTORING CONSORTIUM needs dependable volunteers able to tutor kindergartners and first graders one-on-one once or twice a week in literacy skills in the Alexandria public schools. Sessions for both are 30 minutes, at the school, during the school day, from October through May. Substitutes are available when needed. Training, lessons plans, and materials targeted at each child's reading needs are provided. For more information and to register, please go to www.alexandriatutors.org. Contact 703-549-6670, ext 119 or atc@opmh.org if you have questions.

Jan Campbell, tutor from Immanuel Church on the Hill,

ATTENTION IMMANUEL SENIORS: Mark your calendars for **Thursday, September 24th** and put on your traveling shoes for a day trip to beautiful **Rippon Lodge** in Woodbridge. We will depart from Zabriskie parking lot by van or bus at 10:15 a.m. and should be back at the church by 3:30 p.m. at the latest. Parishioner Elaine Davies will lead us on a private tour of the property, the second oldest house in Prince William County. Built in 1747 by Richard Blackburn, the historic home lies on high ground overlooking Neabsco Creek. Learn about the strong tie to the Washington Family, the fabulous garden parties in the 30s and 40s, and the Admiral who searched for Amelia Earhart. Following our tour, we will head to Madigans in Occoquan for lunch, and there should be a little time to stroll the town with its shops and galleries before we return.

Please call Jennifer Addington in the parish office to reserve your spot as soon as possible, because the house can accommodate only a limited number of people for tours.

20 DAYS AND COUNTING UNTIL PUMPKIN SUNDAY!!

PUMPKIN SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4, will be here before you know it, with orange orbs of pumpkin perfection heading to Immanuel's 22nd annual Pumpkin Patch. All of the profits from that month-long event will go to Immanuel's outreach program supporting the needy in our community and abroad. A successful Pumpkin Patch will help us reach even more communities in need.

YOU CAN HELP NOW and prepare for the Pumpkin Patch:

- **plan to attend the September 27 Forum Hour** at 10:30 a.m. for a training session for the Pumpkin Patch. Based on consumer demand, this year we will accept credit cards for the first time, and you can learn all about our new, incredibly easy-to-use Square-based system for approving these transactions.
- **sign up to work the Pumpkin Patch** on the signup board in the chapel entryway.
- **start cooking and freezing** soups (packaged in standard quart-size containers that you can find under the signup board in the entryway) and breads, being sure to list the ingredients to help customers avoid allergy issues. Remember, much of our profit for outreach comes from food sales!
- **stay tuned for the Preliminary Pumpkin Proclamation 2015** with more dates, contacts, and information!
- **mark your calendar** for the great Pumpkin Unloading on Sunday October 4. Trucks will also come on Wednesdays, October 14 and 21.

The Pumpkin Patch still needs 2 day managers, for Tuesdays and Fridays. Here is what is involved:
Work with Operations Manager, other Daily Coordinators and the Food Coordinators to ensure the Patch opens, runs and closes appropriately.

- Collect the honor box contents and ensure the first shift has the Notebook, cashbox, iPad and that they are ready to open.
- Ensure Patch opens each day at 10:00.
- Ensure excess cash is deposited into the safe at regular intervals.
- Ensure the Patch is cleaned and organized at regular intervals. Ensure each shift of volunteers is properly prepared for their shift.
- Ensure the Patch lights are turned on by approximately 16:00.
- Plan to close Patch as soon after 20:00 as possible without kicking customers out.
- Ensure wagons are covered, food is returned to the Kitchen, lights are extinguished, final cash is deposited in the safe and the Notebook, cashbox and iPad are stored in the Office.

Oh and have fun.

Meanwhile, feel free to contact either of the following if you have questions or suggestions: John von Senden jvonsenden@comcast.net, or Jim Wise jrwise52@hotmail.com

Advent Retreat
Listening to Your Life
December 4-6
Leader: The Rev. Dr. Sam Faeth
Holy Cross Abbey

The gifted and prolific author and preacher, Frederick Buechner, once described his vocation as a balance between listening and telling the truth. He writes,"*If I were called upon to state in a few words the essence of everything I was trying to say both as a novelist and as a preacher, it would be something like this: Listen to your life. See it for the fathomless mystery that it is. In the boredom and pain of it no less than in the excitement and gladness: touch, taste, smell your way to the holy and hidden heart of it because in the last analysis all moments are key moments, and life itself is grace."*

The theme of this year's Advent Retreat will be "Listening to Your Life." Using selected passages from Buechner's anthology of the same title, we will explore the spiritual practices of paying attention - finding God in the midst of our own day to day experiences. In the season of waiting and hoping, we will explore a variety of ways to look for, identify, and share the grace that shapes our days.

The Rev. Dr. Sam Faeth, Rector Emerita at Immanuel, will be the retreat leader. She wanted retreat participants to know that Buechner's book - an anthology of 366 excerpts from his writings - is NOT necessary for the retreat, but is available in bookstores and online for any who may wish to use it for daily reflection.

The retreat will be held at Holy Cross Abbey in the foothills of the Shenandoah Mountains by the Shenandoah River on a 1200 acre farm near Berryville, Virginia. The Cistercian monks of Holy Cross Abbey have been praying on the Berryville property since 1950; retreat participants will benefit from this location steeped in prayer as they explore the retreat theme. Cistercians observe silence at all times to aid reflection, prayer, and listening to God. During the Advent Retreat, silence will be observed except in the program sessions. For more information about Holy Cross Abbey, consult the website http://www.virginiatrappists.org/.

The retreat will begin on Friday afternoon, December 4, shortly before the evening meal and will end after the noon meal on Sunday, December 6. Participants needing a ride to the Abbey may contact the retreat carpooling coordinator, Carla Murray, at tigmurray08@gmail.com or 703-751-9241.

The $350.00 registration fee includes all materials, comfortable accommodations, individual rooms each with a bathroom, and all meals. Two scholarships given in memory of Charles Willis are available; please contact the Rector for scholarship assistance.

Registration is limited to 14 persons; please reserve your space using the accompanying form. If you have questions about retreat logistics, please contact Mary Ann Rehnke, mrehnke@verizon.net or 703-836-7142.

Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill

Advent Retreat
Holy Cross Abbey Retreat House
December 4-6, 2015

1. First person registering for retreat

Name_____

Address_____

Daytime Telephone _____ **Evening Telephone** _____

E-mail _____

2. Second person registering for retreat

Name_____

Address_____

Daytime Telephone _____ **Evening Telephone** _____
E-mail _____

Number of registrants _____ x $350 = _____ Total registration fee

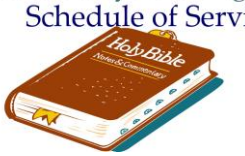
Please make check payable to Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill and label it Advent Retreat. Return this form and your check to the Immanuel Church office, 3606 Seminary Road, Alexandria, Virginia 22304. Please put Advent retreat on the envelope.

If you need to cancel your registration and there is no one on the waiting list who can take your place, Holy Cross Abbey retains the $50.00 per room deposit. All but $50.00 of your registration fee would be returned to you.

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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Lectionary Readings and Schedule of Services



September 13, The Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost, First Services in Immanuel Chapel
Proverbs 1:20-33; Psalm 19; James 3:1-12; Mark 8:27-38
8:00 a.m., HEI; 10:00 a.m., HEII

September 20, The Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost
Proverbs 31:10-31; Psalm 1; James 3:13—4:3, 7-8a; Mark 9:30-37
8:00 a.m., HEI; 9:15 a.m., HEII, 11:15 a.m., HEI

September 27, The Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Esther 7:1-6, 9-10; Psalm 124; James 5:13-20; Mark 938-50
8:00 a.m., HEI; 9:15 a.m., HEII; 11:15 a.m., HEII