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

February 12, 2016

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

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THE SIGNIFICANCE OF LENT

The word "Lent" comes from the Old English word for "lengthen," referring to the lengthening of the days during this time of year in the Northern Hemisphere. It is, therefore, a season that looks forward and points towards the arrival of more light, and a new season.

Lent as a *spiritual* season is meant to do the same. The Church offers this season as a time to take inventory -- of our relationship with God and with other people -- as we prepare for the great Christian feast, and season, of Easter. The season lasts for 40 days, not counting the Sundays that fall within it. It draws upon the 40 days Jesus spent in the wilderness and, to a lesser extent, the 40 years the children of Israel wandered in the desert, and the 40 days and nights Noah and his family spent on the Ark.

The tradition of giving up something developed as a way to remember Christ's sacrifice for us when we might miss the thing we have given up, but others take on some added discipline, perhaps something that we have felt we need to do or have been called to do.

LITURGICAL CHANGES IN LENT

On the First Sunday in Lent at the 8 a.m. Eucharist, we will follow age-old Anglican tradition and pray the Great Litany, the first service that was translated into the English language. We also will omit the ancient praise- shout "Alleluia" throughout the season, and our liturgical color will change to purple, the traditional color of penitence, as well as waiting and expectation. We will also work to make more space for silence in all of our liturgies, more of a time apart from our busy and often noisy lives.

Here is the new line-up of Vestry officers and stewards:

Senior Warden ..... Doug Onley
Junior Warden ..... Tom Hewson
Register ..... Caroline Bergmark
Stewardship and Planned Giving ..... Tom Brown
Outreach ..... Bill Kilpatrick
Resources ..... John Bednar
Senior Ministry ..... Jeannie Cummins Eisenhour
Evangelism and Newcomers ..... Janice Corbett
Children, Youth, and Family Ministries ..... Eileen Monnin-Kirby
Adult Formation and Discipleship ..... Everett Post
Pastoral Care ..... The Rev. David Crosby
Worship in Two Chapels ..... Rosi Stewart
Communications ..... Dorothy Kellogg
Fellowship ..... Caroline Bergmark

NEWS FROM COSTA RICA Hello again! My name is Kate Snow, and I am a parishioner teaching at the **Hogar Escuela in Costa Rica this year through the Young Adult Service Corps. The school provides for children of poor** and single mothers a safe place to learn, play, and grow. I feel like I learn something new everyday, although sometimes my job is extremely challenging. My days are long, and since the kids come from poor upbringings, discipline problems can take up entire class periods. For a long time, I stressed over whether I was doing my planned lessons and activities the "right" way. While I have been doing my research and doing my best, it simply just doesn't always go as planned when working with such small kids under these circumstances. I have also started to learn that it is okay! They will eventually learn how to pronounce the letter "B" and the letter "D" distinctly, and the world will keep spinning even if I end up with finger paint in my hair. What counts is that these kids have a safe place to learn, grow, and be loved. This is a luxury many of their counterparts around the world can only dream of, and that they would not otherwise receive if Hogar Escuela was not there for them. I feel truly blessed to be a small part of it all.

Please visit my blog http://puravidayasc.blogspot.com/ for more information about my year abroad, and to learn how to donate to my mission. Thank you, and God Bless you all!

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR ANNUAL ORAL REHYDRATION THERAPY OUTREACH PROJECT: For the 9th year, Immanuel is teaming with our neighbors up the hill at Temple Beth El to prepare packets of dry ingredients shipped under the auspices of the United Nations & other relief agencies to scenes of natural or man-made disasters where water supplies have been compromised. We need your help! On **Tuesday evening February 16 and Thursday evening February 25** from 6:30-8:00 p.m. we need about 30 volunteers to prepare materials. On **Sunday, March 6, between 9:00am and 3:00 p.m.** we need everyone possible to help assemble the packets. These activities take place at Temple Beth EI, 3830 Seminary Road. Enter the building through the rear parking lot. Questions? Contact Jim Wise (jrwise52@hotmail.com or 703-642-8225).

EYC NEWS This past Saturday, February 6, eleven of Immanuel's EYC (Episcopal Youth Community) gave the gift of their time to help others. Accompanied by four adult advisors, they went to Arlington Food Assistance Center (AFAC) and helped pack just over 650 meals for those in need in and around our community. This was a remarkable feat and one that should make all of us proud to have such incredible youth as members of the congregation. All of our youth are a gift and a blessing to Immanuel Church on the Hill.

Left to Right Carrie Cuddy, Peter Beckman, Bridget Beckman, Chrissie Crosby, Emma Cuddy, Summerson Houck, Andy Biache, Lily Bertles, Maddison Eaton, John Hogg, Isabel Frye, Timo Kirby, Corey Wargo-Bergmark, Rachel Wilson, Addie Biache.

THE ASSOCIATE RECTOR'S CORNER:
Pastoral Care Ministry Needs

Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill parishioners have always cared for one another, whether offering a ride to a doctor's appointment or to church, making phone calls or maybe visiting someone who lives alone, writing cards to offer prayers and encouragement, providing meals for someone recovering from surgery or who has welcomed a new baby, or other forms of short-term or maybe long-term help.

For those who need help with transportation to appointments, need assistance with shopping runs, or who want to attend church on Sundays or other parish activities during the week, we're casting the net again, hopefully farther and deeper, for any ad hoc transportation resources within our parish.

From time to time, we hear from people looking for housing, either temporary or long-term. If you know of rental properties needing tenants, or homes yearning for a family, that would be helpful to know.

Occasionally, we receive pleas for legal guidance, to mitigate unfortunate circumstances or changing life situations. It would be good to develop an informal catalogue of legal consultants.

A food ministry is also something we offer as needed. This involves coordinating meals to be carried in or delivered to assist individuals or families during the recuperative time of healing and rehabilitation.

Lastly, the clergy are regularly contacted to assist with financial matters. This area is hard to manage, especially with fleeting discretionary funds. If you are moved to contribute to the discretionary funds of the clergy, checks should be written to Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill, and designated to the rector's or associate's discretionary fund. Clergy sometimes direct honorariums received for other pastoral ministries to discretionary funds to assist in this ministry.

If any of these needy areas might be a ministry which you could support from time to time, please make your availability known to me or Fr. Randy. Thank you.

Blessings & Peace,
David+

LENTEN OPPORTUNITIES
At Immanuel and elsewhere

We are pleased to announce this year's Lenten series: "BE NOT AFRAID"
We live in a world gripped by fear, from fear of terrorism, to violence, to our own suffering and death. This fear, in one form or another, informs much of our political conversation, it influences the lives of our children and youth, it crosses religious traditions, and it can encourage us to retreat, to focus only on ourselves and our own needs. Yet a central message of Scripture, echoed by the angels to the shepherds in the fields when Jesus was born, is "Be Not Afraid." This phrase, with some variation, occurs prominently throughout the Bible. In our series this year we will ask how our Christian faith, and some other faiths, speaks to this basic fear. The forums last an hour each, from 9:15 to 10:15 a.m., on the following Sundays, in the Parish Hall at Zabriskie Chapel:
Feb 14: Judaism and Islam on "Be Not Afraid"--Rabbi Brett Isserow of Temple Beth-El and Salih Sayilgan, Islamic scholar, former VTS seminarian and Islamic chaplain at Georgetown University
Feb. 21: Children, Our Fears, and "Be Not Afraid'
Feb. 28: Christian Scripture and Liturgy in the Face of Fear
March 6: Immanuelites Facing Fear with Faith
March 13: Anglican Voices from the Front Lines: International Anglican Students Share their Stories

Other opportunities are:

VTS Lenten quiet day: The Rev. Dawna Hall will lead a Lenten Quiet Day at Virginia Theological Seminary on Sat, Feb 20 from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. exploring illuminated letters through prayer, contemplation and creative activity. "We will loosely keep the ancient hours in a modern context." Those interested are asked to sign up (see attached web link) by this Thursday, Feb 11. The discounted cost for ICOH and for anyone in our Benedictine group is $25. See link here:
http://www.vts.edu/podium/default.aspx?t=52416&eid=2353494&bl=/

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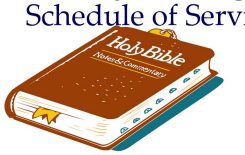
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Lectionary Readings and
Schedule of Services



February 14, The First 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., HEI, 10:30 a.m., HEII
February 21, The Second 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; 10:30 a.m., HEII
February 28, The Third Sunday in Lent
Isaiah 55:1-9; Psalm 63:1-8; 1 Corinthians 10:1-13; Luke 13:1-9
8:00 a.m., HEI; 10:30 a.m., HEII