



# 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



May 25, 2017

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

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### A NOTE FROM OUR GRADUATING SEMINARIAN

The Easter season opens and ends with the passage from John which details Jesus visiting the disciples in the locked room and giving them the Holy Spirit. With the peace of Christ and the Holy Spirit breathed upon them, they are sent out to do the work of Christ. My family and I have come to know Jesus better and have experienced the Holy Spirit at Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill.

Paige and I joined Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill in 2009 and are saddened that the time has come for us to move to a new parish. In 2010, Paige and I were married in the 1823 chapel. In 2012 Emma was born and on May 11 of this year, we welcomed Libby Alice. We have seen the parish grow and its fruitful ministry flourish. I am not sure anyone truly understands the power of pumpkins without seeing our pumpkin patch. This June, I begin as the Assistant Rector at St. David's Church in Ashburn, Virginia. My primary focus will be children, youth and family formation. While I have received an excellent seminary education at VTS, I am blessed to have been formed in such a covenant community as Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill. The formation extends from the Wednesday evening Lenten series to youth group, where the youth taught me as much if not more about Jesus than the adults were able to teach them.

Immanuel has such a call towards mission and there is so much to do in order to serve the Kingdom. I lament that I was not able to do more in some areas. However, the church recognizes the call for each of us to contribute in covenant community and the invitation is always awaiting. For those young and old, Immanuel is a place to discern God's call for you.

With Sam Faeth, Mary Sulerud, Randy Alexander, Peter Ackerman, David Crosby, a parish discernment committee, many pumpkins, and a host of other people, I prayed, listened and am responding to a call to the priesthood. Immanuel has a long history of cultivating members of the body of Christ for ordained ministry and I am grateful to have discerned with you. Thank you! I graduated from VTS on May 18 and, God willing and with the consent of the people, I will be ordained to the transitional diaconate at 10:30 a.m. on June 10 at Epiphany, Herndon. All are welcome to attend.

I am unable to articulate the amount of gratitude I have for all of you in your partnership in the Gospel. I do know that Christ is Risen! The breath of the Holy Spirit has been received and we are called to continue the work of Christ and living in Christian community. The peace of Christ remains with us and we have all felt the Holy Spirit move and work among us at Immanuel. Immanuel has left a lasting imprint upon us and it is the work of that very same Spirit. As I vow to carry that work into the world, I will remember you always. In closing, I recall Philippians, "I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine thankful for your partnership in the Gospel from the first day until now." Alleluia! Thank you!

*Will Packard*

**Please join us for Will's ordination:**

**10:30 a.m., June 10**

**Church of the Epiphany, Oak Hill/Herndon**

**3301 Hidden Meadow Drive, Oak Hill, VA**

**Please let the office know if you need bus or carpool transportation.**



Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ, I came to Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill in 2008, during a very tumultuous time in my life. You opened your doors and your hearts to

me, and I felt truly and warmly welcomed. It was only a couple of weeks until Sudie and MaryAnn asked if I would like to join the choir, where I sang for several years.

It was here at Immanuel that I ended my 17 year sabbatical in the Roman Catholic Church and was received on January 4, 2009 into the Episcopal Church once again from which I started my walk with Christ as an infant.

I have received many calls during my life, and some of these started when I was 10 years old. It was in July 2012, when I finally answered the call to Ministry by the Holy Spirit. My formal discernment started soon after and in April 2015 I was made a postulant for the diaconate. I am now in my fifth quarter of nine in the Deacons' School, and will start my internship July 1, 2017.

Internship brings many new responsibilities for me in the church as well as many demands upon me and my time. One of those demands is that I leave Immanuel, a congregation that has supported me for the last nine years. This is not unique to me, but it applies to all the other diaconal postulants as well, who, upon their commencement of internship, must leave both their presenting church as well as any church with which they have had close ties.

I am writing this to thank all of you for your help, understanding, and fellowship over these nine years. It is hard to imagine my life without you.

I would also like to thank Fr. Randy for the opportunity to preach at Shrine Mont on my last Sunday, May 28, 2017. I want to leave you with the best gift I can give.

Grace and Peace,

*Katherine*

Katherine V. Ferguson



**THANKS TO OUR WONDERFUL IMMANUEL CHOIR** and its leader, Dr. Jane Tavernier, for all the superb musical offerings throughout the year, and especially for the stirring rendition of Hyden's *The Creation* last Sunday.

Gerry Anderson  
Karen Besser  
Jamie Conrad  
Jeannie Eisenhour  
Sarah Fite  
Allan Gervacio \*  
Sarah Glassco  
Doug John  
Paul Lartey  
Daryl Ott \*  
Everett Post  
Joan Raybold  
Paul Smyth  
\*denotes Section Leader

Terry Arnold  
Jim Clausen  
Dotty Eisenhour  
Angelika Farren\*  
Denise Freeland  
Rick Glassco  
Sandra Graham  
Dorothy Kellogg  
Sudie McGahuey  
Doug Pickett  
Susan Post  
Emily Riley\*  
David Temoshok

**Thanks also to the members of our talented bell choir:**

Caroline Bergmark  
Rick Glassco  
Beth McGahuey  
Joan Raybold

Dotty Eisenhour  
Sarah Glassco  
Sudie McGahuey

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*The Senior Ministry outing to the Hillwood Estate on May 16th. 16 parishioners joined the trip and explored the gardens and mansion!*

## GRADUATION AT VIRGINIA THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY



**The Rev. Randy Alexander, Roz Kerns, Pilar Padrón, and the Rev. David Crosby**



**The Rev. Peter Ackerman (former Associate Rector), the Rev. David Crosby, and Pilar Padrón**



**The Rev. Peter Gachira, the Rev. Randy Alexander, Will Packard, and Halim Shukair**



## VESTRY

### VESTRY CORNER

It is important to keep our members informed about what the vestry has been working on. As always, we encourage feedback from our members on how best we can grow and meet our community needs. The vestry set 5 goals for this upcoming year. These include:

- a. **Expand Community** – We have a vibrant parish that continues to grow and prosper. With growth comes additional energy and resources to better meet our community needs. This year, we have launched a few initiatives to continue this trend. These initiatives include (1) supporting a new Kenyan Congregation, (2) starting a 5 p.m. Evening Service in conjunction with VTS and Episcopal High School, (3) expanding our Newcomers program to welcome visitors and new members and help inform them about our history and rich program offerings, (4) provide additional resources to further strengthen our CYF programs-the lifeblood of our future, (5) increase activities under our Senior ministries programs, (6) initiate new approaches to broaden Immanuel exposure, and (7) follow-up with the lapsed.
- b. **Deepen Community Ownership/Participation**- As people participate, they become more involved and gain greater ownership in our community. Some of our initiatives include: (1) creating the position of volunteer coordinator to better match people's interests with programs and needs, (2) encouraging the vast array of our small organized community gatherings and parish-wide events, (3) create interesting forum hours to discuss important issues, (4) hold coffee hours to encourage getting to know each other better, (5) continuation of our annual Shrine Mont retreat over Memorial Day weekend for fun and relaxation, and (6) succession planning to bring in new leadership and talent.
- c. **Staffing and Administrative Needs**- Our staff allows us to meet the large array of community needs and expand our reach. This year we will need to find replacements for the Rev David Crosby and our long time Parish Administrator, Jennifer Addington. In addition, this year we have increased John Hogg's hours and added the Rev Peter Gacharia to the staff. Finally, we are undergoing a process to standardize our leases for our renovated space.
- d. **Enhanced Stewardship & Planned Giving**-- Stewardship and planned giving are important elements in being able to support, expand and enrich our programs. It's like gas in the car, the more gas in the tank, the farther one can go. This year, there will be new efforts to update and reorganize our three existing trusts (Endowment Trust Fund, Callaway Trust Fund, and the Memorial Garden Trust) and promote their mission and importance.
- e. **Discipleship**- Our most important mission remains to preach and spread the gospel. This year we hope to focus on increasing our sense of reverence, continuing to cultivate a culture of testimony, modeling Christian witness in our local community, and promoting reconciliation and greater understanding.

*Tom Hewson, Senior Warden*

(From John Bednar) The base of the steeple, in need of some attention for quite some time, has been recently renovated. We kept the spire with its natural look. Many thanks to J & L Painting of Alexandria and to Doug Onley for his inspiration of adding a splash of color to the coat of arms.

Below are the “Before Photos”



And these are “After Photos”



**EYC AND ANOTHER PYM (PARISH YOUTH MINISTRY) WEEKEND.** Once a year a weekend retreat is offered at Shrine Mont to all youth in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade from all over our Diocese. It is a weekend led by youth, such as Immanuel's own Abby M, and is specifically for youth. It is always an incredible time for reflection, formation, fun, and fellowship for everyone who attends. This year Immanuel was able to send three of our youth, Cadence, Thomas, and Zach who were joined by our friend Maddie from Christ Church. These weekends truly are a gift for the youth to attend and a blessing for a congregation to be able to send them.



From Left to Right: John, Cadence, Maddie, Thomas and Zach



Just your average dance with trash bags and tin foil.



Thomas, Abby and friends walk the Labyrinth



8<sup>th</sup> Grade PYM 2017

**VACTION BIBLE SCHOOL NEEDS YOUR HELP.** We have a number of children from Immanuel registered to attend this year's wonderful VBS from June 25-June 30. Unfortunately, we currently do not have enough volunteers registered to help. All talents and gifts are welcome and there is a place for everyone to help at VBS. If you are interested in helping at any point during the week, please go to <https://ccalexvbs.wordpress.com> to register by June 1. Registration for campers is of course still open until June 1 and all welcome.

**LIKE ANOTHER WAY TO HELP?** Even if you are unable to volunteer your time there is another great way you can contribute to VBS. Below is a list of supplies we are looking to gather and use in the various crafts and art projects throughout the week. Any and all donations are greatly appreciated and can be dropped off in the box located outside of John Hogg's office door.

#### Items for VBS Donation

- Plastic bottles from laundry detergent (Tide, etc)
- Plastic bottles from dishwashing detergent (Dawn, Palmolive)
- Paper towel tubes
- Metal soup cans (clean with labels and tops removed)
- 3" styrofoam balls
- Large paper bags
- 5"-6" plastic lids
- Gallon sized milk jugs (washed out)
- Acorns (in good condition)
- Pine cones

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**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**



Lectionary Readings and  
Schedule of Services



**May 28, the Seventh Sunday of Easter, Shrinemont Parish Retreat Weekend**

Acts 1:6-14, Psalm 68:1-10, 33-36, 1 Peter 4:12-14, 5:6-11; John 17:1-11

8:00 a.m., HEI, 10:00 a.m., HEII

**June 4, The Day of Pentecost**

Acts 2:1-21; Psalm 104:25-35, 37, 1 Corinthians 12:3b-13; John 20:19-23

8:00 a.m., HEI; 10:30 a.m., HEII

**June 11, The First Sunday after Pentecost**

Genesis 1:1—2:4a; Psalm 8; 2 Corinthians 13:11-13; Matthew 28:16-20

8:00 a.m., HEI, 10:30 a.m., HEII