Special Issue

THE ALMOND TREE

NEWSLETTER OF IMMANUEL CHURCH-ON-THE-HILL

November 2017

After 13 Years of service, Jennifer Addington, Parish Administrator, *retired. This* Special Issue *of* "The Almond Tree" *is Dedicated to her.*

Family Ties

The Rev. David Crosby

Some Immanuelites may not realize that I interviewed with Sam Faeth+ regarding the Associate Rector position one week prior to her deciding to 'medically retire.'

Arriving that day, Sam+ stood in the doorway to her office as we greeted one another. I turned toward the parish office, looked in, and said, "Hello, Jennifer!" Jennifer replied, "Hello, David!" with a big grin across her face.

Turning back to Sam+, I said, "By right of full disclosure, I should tell you that your Parish Administrator is dating my brother-in-law." Sam+ laughed, and placing her left hand on my right shoulder, she said, "David, we know about some of the skeletons ~ you'll have to tell my about the rest!"

Sam+ retired, and I thought the opportunity to serve at Immanuel and work alongside Jennifer was lost ... until Immanuel called Mary Sulerud as their Interim, and the Diocese told me to give the church another look.

And, as they like to say, the rest is history.

Jennifer's son Jake Lewis, granddaughter Maya Lewis, husband Rod McFadden, daughter-in-law Erin Lewis, grandson Xander Lewis and Jennifer.

"By right of full disclosure, I should tell you that your Parish Administrator is dating my brother-in-law ..."

- The Rev. David Crosby

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To Jennifer, with love and gratitude

The Rev. Dr. Sam Faeth, Rector Emerita

Over the years, offhand remarks, comments and questions have led me to believe that people have gotten quite the wrong impression of life in a church office. They imagine the rector reading scholarly tomes, sipping fine English tea from a bone china cup, and offering wise advice to the bishop. They picture the parish administrator dutifully typing the Sunday bulletin, answering the occasional phone call, filing her nails, and reading a beach novel during the downtimes.

Ha! On the occasion of Jennifer's retirement, I'd like to give you a peek into the whirlwind - the maelstrom of activity which Jennifer has managed with grace, faith and aplomb these many years.

The phone is ringing when Jennifer arrives, always early. Whether it is the first phone call of the day, or the last minute request on Good Friday, each and every caller feels Jennifer's full attention, courtesy and experience. She is as polite to the unbalanced soul looking for their lost cheetah as she is to the bishop. She treats each caller as the beloved child of God that they are. She is often the first contact that people have with Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill. We cannot be adequately grateful for that good fortune.

When the phone is momentarily quiet, Jennifer is hard at work on a multitude of projects. Sunday bulletins do not fly out of the copier without a great deal of preparation – hymns, readings and other liturgical information to insert, updates to announcements, pastoral care lists, birthdays, the upcoming calendar etc. The vast majority of that information comes from other sources, and it rarely comes in as early as it should. Jennifer is the master of the gentle reminder, herding us all toward a Sunday liturgy that is reverent, celebratory and welcoming. She makes it look easy. It is not.

One exceptionally busy day, as I fussed with the copier and Jennifer handled a thousand simultaneous details, the doorbell rang. I groaned but Jennifer smiled and said, "Ministry happens in the moment." She was right.

I was always in awe of Jennifer's ability to stop formatting an Almond Tree to answer a phone...hang up a phone call and smile at the person who had appeared at her desk…return to the formatting of the newsletter…answer a question I called across the hall…refill the copier..respond compassionately to a request for assistance..return to the Almond Tree… graciously make a last minute change to that same Almond Tree.

Jennifer is the consummate professional – capable, gifted, unflappable, and smart (ask her anything about grammar!) but what truly sets Jennifer apart is that her work as a parish administrator is her vocation – her unique gift for serving the Lord she loves. I have heard her pray, with deep compassion, with people on the phone or in person. That collection of angels on Jennifer's desk is NOT there for decoration. They are REAL angels, learning their angel-craft from the best.

I once told Jennifer that she could NOT retire until I did. She was, as always, true to her word. I am grateful for that. No rector could have asked for a better, more faithful, more discreet and trustworthy colleague and friend. My gratitude knows no bounds for the privilege and blessing of standing in the whirlwind with such a companion. I love you, Jen, and wish you and Rod all the joy that the future can hold.

That Perfect Choice

"Late 2008, I received a notice of a Waltz (with lesson!) at the French Embassy. That sounded like a good date but there was a problem: I didn't have a date. I called my youngest sister, who lived closest to me, for suggestions and she said, "I have ***the perfect choice"*** *(or words to that effect). That perfect choice was (and is) Jennifer and we've been married for over two years. But it started with a waltz!"*

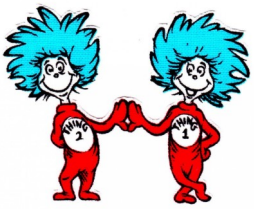
- Rod McFadden

Jennifer,

To a lady who laughs heartily, listens attentively and loves generously: keep doing whatever makes your soul sing!

With love and gratitude,
Stef
a.k.a. Thing 2

- Stephanie Raponen



Extraordinary card made by the talented young artists at Valley Preschool for Jennifer.

Another extraordinary card made by the talented artists at Valley Preschool for Jennifer.

Photos of Jennifer and the students of Valley Drive Preschool courtesy of :

Chrissie Crosby

And

Cindy Hodgkins
Brandy Reber
Valley Drive Preschool

Jennifer,

Thank you for your hard work, dedication, and love for Immanuel church-on-the -Hill. I appreciate your guidance and help. You made everything work.

Enjoy your retirement. Do everything that you've always wanted to. Please stay in touch. Janice

- Janice Corbett

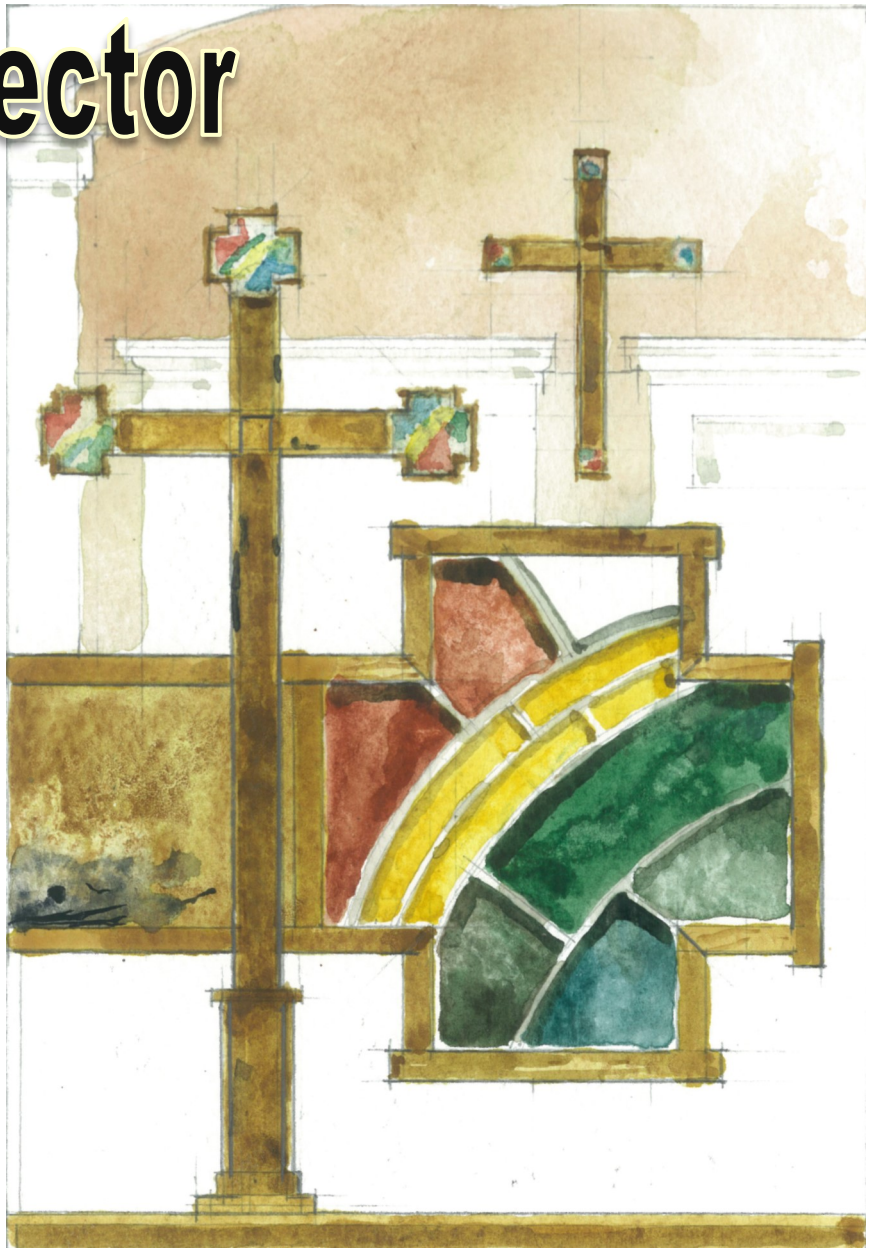
Begin with Shoes

Where to begin? Shoes. It's the first thing I noticed about Jennifer all those years ago, when I walked into the office at St. Christopher's Episcopal... Jennifer is the one who buys those really FUN high heels that you'd love to wear, but never would. And She REVELS in wearing them. But, truthfully, she prefers being barefoot to all else - wearing the "sandals" she bought in Thailand - which are little more than bells that jingle when she walks. Lovely.

So, Shoes... Candy on the desk (give a hug, get candy)... Jeopardy on Fridays with Whit Barker... Wine on the patio, or in the living room, or wherever... Kate/Jen/Helen lunches/dinners that have been part of us for E.V.E.R.... Lifelong friendship is one of God's great gifts, and Jennifer is THAT lifelong friend. Caring, Sensitive, Loving, Intelligent, - Jennifer!

- Helen Spence

From Our Rector



How does one even begin to thank Jennifer for her years of service to this parish? Well, I would begin by saying that, for Jennifer, serving as Parish Administrator at Immanuel was not just a job. It was clear to me from early on that Jennifer viewed this position as a ministry, as a way of exercising her faith while serving God's people here. I think everything else flowed from that starting point.

This service extended to the newcomer calling to inquire about service times, to the couple calling to inquire about a wedding, to the family preparing for a Baptism, or to the member who might have left their glasses in church. She dealt lovingly and professionally with venders and contractors, with our many tenants, with various service professionals, and with the scheduling of outside groups. I also knew that I could trust Jennifer to keep a confidence, that what I or parishioners shared with her would not be broadcast.

I also always appreciated Jennifer's sense of humor, and her openness to a good laugh (sometimes even at my expense!). She was also very devoted to our prayer life together, as the staff often joined in praying Morning Prayer at the beginning of the day.

I am blessed to say that I worked with Jennifer, and I wish her and Rod all the very best as she engages this new chapter called retirement. May she enjoy more time with her family, and also more time for new ways to continue exercising her ministry.

—Randy

The Rev. J. Randolph Alexander
Rector

Dear Ones,

Our letter of transfer has been received, from Immanuel Church on the Hill, to St. Christopher's Episcopal Church in Pensacola. Nevertheless, when John and I got word that we were now "official" at St. Christopher's, we felt a pang of sadness and nostalgia, because in our hearts we will ALWAYS be Immanuelites!

When we first came to Immanuel in the spring of 1998, you opened your arms to us and made us your own, kind of like Jesus.

Many of you knew that I was a homesick Southern girl, even though I liked living in the exciting atmosphere of our nation's capitol. But you made me (us) feel at home, and soon it was apparent that we WERE home while at Immanuel.

Immanuel exudes those qualities that the Lord loves: inclusiveness (no matter what political party one claims), outreach (who knew that pumpkins could be so popular?), and above all, love for everyone.

John and I want to thank you from the bottom of hearts for all the laughter, music, community, and LOVE you gave us. Some of you, we know, will be lifelong friends. We want all of you to know that this special place will always be a part of us.

Our new church is a good one, and seems to be a dynamic place with lovely people.

The priest, Susan Sowers, is a West Point graduate, who left the Army as a full colonel, and served in Iraq and the Pentagon. And she's a VTS graduate! Yay!

Our home is always open to any of you; we mean that! So please come see us! (Fresh just-caught-yesterday seafood and sugar white sand beaches are waiting!)

We 'll never forget you. We love you all.

Kyrah and John von Senden

Katherine Maas with daughter, Caroline Hicks.

Dear People of Immanuel,

We are having trouble finding words sufficient to express our deep gratitude for the love and support we received after Georgia's sudden death on Memorial Day weekend. So many of you wrote cards, letters, and emails, offered in-person condolences, called to check in, attended her funeral, or simply were present with us in prayer and in worship. Even in our grief, we have felt God's love through the community we have in Immanuel. We look forward to continuing to heal here throughout many years to come. Thank you and God bless.

Katherine H. Maas

Dear People of Immanuel,

The Rev. Rachel (Shows) Rickenbaker with her husband, The Rev. James Rickenbaker

I am so grateful to God and to you all for the opportunity to serve with you as your new assistant rector. So, first and foremost, thank you all.

As a newcomer to some extent, and as someone who has a passion for working with newcomers, you will hear me talk often about evangelism. It makes me glad to know that I can talk about evangelism at Immanuel without too many people cringing. Many of you have had the opportunity to practice it through ministries such as the pumpkin patch. It is indeed part of our calling as Christians ("Go, and make disciples of all nations…"; Matthew 28:19).

The word "evangelism" means "good news" and shares a common root with the word "angel" (messenger). Unlike proselytism, evangelism is not a means of coercing people to the Christian faith. It involves sharing your faith with another, in words AND in actions, with the intention of spreading the good news of Jesus in the world. This is something of which we should not be ashamed, anxious, or embarrassed.

"I'm not good at talking to others about faith," you may say. Evangelism is something that gets easier with practice. The more we practice articulating our faith, particularly by studying Scripture, praying, becoming more involved in the church, and through, of course, talking with others, the more natural this task becomes. You will soon see that there are more opportunities than ever imagined to share Christ's love with people in your day and along the way. And, you may find that unexpected people share Christ with you, as well.

Over the next few months, you may see me floating around at Immanuel, dropping in to various ministry meetings and forum hours. I look forward to continuing to learn about Immanuel. Two ministries with which I will be working much of the time include newcomers and evangelism, as well as pastoral and congregational care. Yet, I am not limited to those ministries and always welcome your ideas, as God places them on your heart. I also welcome coffee and lunch dates, if you're interested in talking about the ways the Holy Spirit is working in your life. I am excited to be on board and to get to know each of you better, as we work together to grow deeper in our faith and in the sharing of the Gospel.

In Christ,

The Rev. Rachel Rickenbaker

Goodbye Immanuelites

To my dear friends and family at Immanuel. It's hard to believe that it's actually been over 13 years since I first walked through the doors on a cool March morning and interviewed with the Rev. Steve Wade for the position of Parish Administrator (after having met with Carrie Cuddy, the then-head of the search committee a couple of days earlier). I remember feeling totally confident that this was where God was calling me to be, and apparently, it was so. Steve (as I remember) pretty much hired me on the spot. I didn't even give my then employer the customary 2-week notice, but something like 5 days, which did not endear me to the Fairfax County Public School system!

It has been a remarkable journey, with Steve, then Sam Faeth (proving again how small the Episcopal Church really is, Sam was presented for ordination to the priesthood by my late husband, the Rev. Lloyd Addington!). Following Sam's retirement, I had the privilege of working with the interim rector, the Rev. Mary Sulerud, and now, for the past four years, the Rev. Randy Alexander, a wonderful "boss" and brother in Christ.. Throw in a few of the "assistants" – Corey Weierbach, Peter Ackerman, and my brother-in-law, David Crosby, and I look with awe on the priests with whom I have had the pleasure to serve.

It has been a wonderful, joyous, life-affirming time in my life, and I have made many friends who will remain friends for life. (Along with a spectacular new husband and two phenomenal grandchildren!) I thank you all for the trust, the help, the challenges, and the joy of serving God and this congregation in this wonderful place. As I leave, I have also to thank you for the generous parting gift and for the surprise luncheon. I am a blessed woman for having been here to share this time with you.

— Jennifer Addington

Hill Happenings

The Special Event Calendar of Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill

Save the Date: Immanuel will host its fantastic Advent workshop and wreath making on Sunday, **November 26th from 12:45-3:00pm**, in the Parish Hall at Zabriskie Chapel. There will be lunch, wreath making materials and plenty of opportunities for fun, fellowship and a little learning. Please stay tuned for more information to come. In the meantime, if you have any questions or would like to volunteer, please contact John Hogg, Director of Children, Youth, and Families jhogg@icoh.net or call (703) 370-6555 **ext. 207**.

The **Immanuel Senior Ministry** invites our parish seniors and their families and friends to an "**Advent Ceilidh**" on Sunday, December 3rd from 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm in Zabriskie Parish Hall. A Ceilidh (pronounced "kay-lee") is a Celtic gathering with music, dance & poetry. Wear your tartan or kilt, sample sweet and savory holiday treats, partake in tea or a wee dram, and enjoy "home grown" entertainment. RSVP by November 24th to Jeannie Cummins at (703) 370-6555 **ext. 205** or jceconsulting@comcast.net (subject line: RSVP for Advent Celebration).

Seating is limited to 60 guests. Let us know if you need a ride so we can try to make arrangements.

Announcing a Pilgrimage to the Holy Land
August 20-31, 2018

We invite you to consider a pilgrimage to the Holy Land next August. The trip is available to 22 persons and offered on a first-come basis. For more information please visit our webpage:

http://www.icoh.net/Learn/Pilgrimage-to-the-Holy-Land/

This opportunity builds upon our relationship with the American Friends of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem (AFEDJ). Last January, we had a forum hour presentation by **John Lent**, Deputy Director of AFEDJ, on the current plight of Palestinian Christians in Israel. Following that visit, John encouraged us to see the Holy Land for ourselves. He got us in touch with **Iyad Qumri**, a tour guide with over 20 years of experience, operating as Qumri Pilgrimages.

The cost based on double occupancy is estimated at $2,200 per person with a limited number of single rooms at an additional $520. Air fare and trip insurance are not included in this estimate. Those going on the pilgrimage will arrange their own air fare, which will be at least another $1,000 per person.

To reserve a place, we ask for your nonrefundable deposit of **$150 per person**, payable to Immanuel, with the memo notation of "Holy Land Pilgrimage". If you're unsure whether to participate, but still interested, let us know that also and we will put you on a reserve list.

2017 PUMPKIN PATCH REPORT

From The Outreach Committee:

Thanks to everyone who contributed to the success of our 24th Annual Pumpkin Patch – all of you unloaders, bakers, cooks, salespeople and clean-up crew. This year was particularly demanding, since the Patch opened on October 1. But many of you rose to the occasion. The Patch is truly a team effort, and your participation resulted in another successful year.
Special thanks go to the Valley Drive Pre-School, whose parents helped unload, bake and sell, and who plan on being even more involved next year. We look forward to expanding our partnership with them. Preston O'Neill, president of the preschool, coordinated their volunteers – thanks Preston!

It would be impossible to mention every person who contributed to this effort, but particular thanks are in order for:

- John Bednar – IT and operations
- Julie Bruns – bulk sales
- Stephanie Harris – truck manager
- Candy Levin, Jen Davis and John Bednar – volunteer coordinators
- Lissa Soergel – staffing reminders
- Laura Snow – baking czarina
- Dorothy Kellogg – soup czarina
- Melinda Ashton, Rebecca Cooper and Susan Gildersleeve – apple crisp production czarinas
- Jim Snow – financial czar (with back-up from Marcus Rarick)
- Caroline Bergmark – clean-up coordinator

A new feature this year was the brain child of Phyllis Sims, who suggested that those who can no longer help with the unloading could provide lunch for the unloading crew. Phyllis recruited Diane Adams, Linda Donahue, Rollin Huntington, Dani Kauffman, Bill Kilpatrick and Connie Kurz to prepare side dishes and grill sausages on unloading day (and Diana and Paul Beckmann contributed a beer keg) – a well-received gesture of thanks.

The Daily Coordinators are a crucial element in the smooth operation of the Patch, and they did a fantastic job of opening and closing, supporting the volunteers at shift changes, checking on supplies and managing the receipts: John Bednar, Julie Bruns, Sarah Glassco, Debbie Hewson, Richard Hobson, Dani Kauffman, Eileen Kirby, Sudie McGahuey, Everett Post, Susan Post, Linda Serabian, Phyllis Sims, Catherine Stanish, and Rosi Urbine.

We had a fantastic year – our third best ever! And Saturday October 28 was the best day in the history of the Patch – gross receipts that day totaled **$16,722**.

For the entire month gross receipts totaled **$130,509**. Sales of baked goods, soups and apple crisps totaled **$16,721** (which is 100%, minus taxes, for Outreach). After subtracting the Navajo share and Aunt Virginia's sales tax, the Outreach Committee will receive in excess of **$63,000** to fund the ministries we support (due to some late-arriving donations the exact figure has yet to be determined).

***Thank you Pumpkineers* – get ready for next year, our *25th* anniversary!**

www.icoh.net

Immanuel Church -on-the-Hill
3606 Seminary Road
Alexandria, VA 22304-5200

Join Us for Worship

8:00 a.m., Holy Eucharist-I, Zabriskie Chapel
9:00 a.m., Holy Eucharist-II, Zabriskie Chapel
9:30 a.m. Morning Prayer, Zabriskie Chapel
10:15a.m., Forum Hour, The Fairchild Room
11:00 a.m., African-Caribbean Eucharist, Zabriskie Chapel
11:15 a.m., Holy Eucharist-II , Immanuel Chapel
5:00 p.m., Holy Eucharist-II, Immanuel Chapel