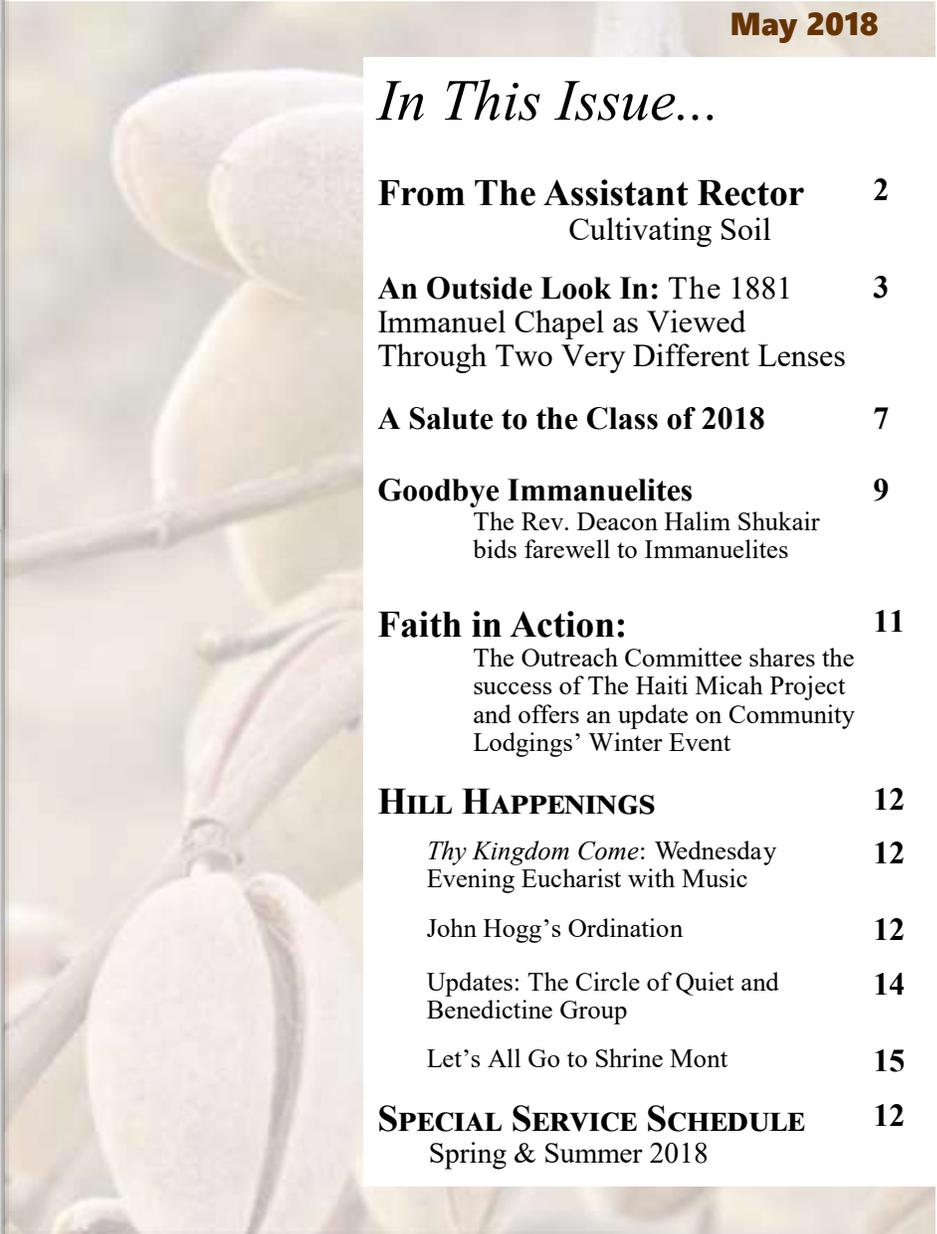


THE ALMOND TREE

NEWSLETTER OF IMMANUEL CHURCH-ON-THE-HILL



May 2018



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Cultivating Soil This Summer



We are rapidly approaching summer. The temperature is warming up, flowers are in bloom, and traffic is ever increasing on 95 South towards the beach (making my commute home not too much fun).

As we approach summer, it's easy to transition from the busy school and program year and begin to fill up our schedules with vacations, sports, and barbecues. Often, that leaves little room for worship on Sunday mornings, and we see church attendance decrease during the summer months. Many people forget the Church is alive and well...yes, even in the summer!

I encourage a new way of thinking of summer plans this year. As I look about and see flowers springing up and people planting fruits and vegetables in gardens, I can't help but think of the parable of the sower (Mt. 13:1-9). In Jesus' parable, he tells of a farmer scattering seeds on the ground. Some seeds fell on the path and were eaten by birds because the ground had not been cultivated or tilled. Other seeds fell on rocks, where there was not enough soil, and they were scorched. Other seeds fell on thorns. The ground was not prepared in any of these situations for the seeds, and so they did not take root. Only the seeds that fell on good soil took root, sprung up, and produced crops above what was expected. A strong faith in God does not take root in passivity or by osmosis; a strong faith is cultivated and takes continued and consistent work on our part, in the context of the church community. When it comes to our own faith, the faith of our children, and even that of others in our church, it is our responsibility to cultivate, nourish, and encourage deeper engagement and study.

Next Sunday, May 20th, we will be celebrating the Feast of Pentecost. The name "Pentecost" comes from a Greek word meaning "fiftieth", referring to the day falling fifty days after Passover. The Hebrew name of the originally Jewish holiday is Shavuot, the day wherein the Jews celebrate receiving the law from God; the Christian celebration Pentecost shifts the focus from receiving the law to the Church's mission, founded on the one who fulfilled the law, Jesus Christ. On this day, we celebrate the Holy Spirit's descent upon the followers of Jesus, so that all people gathered, Jews and Gentiles, became the Church. No one individual can be the Body of Christ. We are important and varied, with different gifts, and we all play a role. Being the Body of Christ requires our time, dedication, and work, in response to the amazing gifts God has given us.

As the Church, we are to live as Christ's Body in the world, sharing our faith stories, spreading God's love, and regularly being nourished by his Word. We learn to do this by being active in the Church. So, even during the summer, even amidst travel, find the time, make the time to be nurtured in your own faith and to nurture that of those around you. This may mean seeking out a new church wherever you travel, which can be a fun experience, especially noting things in worship that look similar to Immanuel and other things that may be different. I'd love to hear about your summer experiences, what churches you visit, how you experience the love of Christ in your day-to-day, and what new ways you have worked to cultivate your relationship with Jesus. The seeds are being scattered; what kind of soil will you provide for them?

In Christ,
Rachel

THE REV. RACHEL RICKENBAKER
Assistant Rector

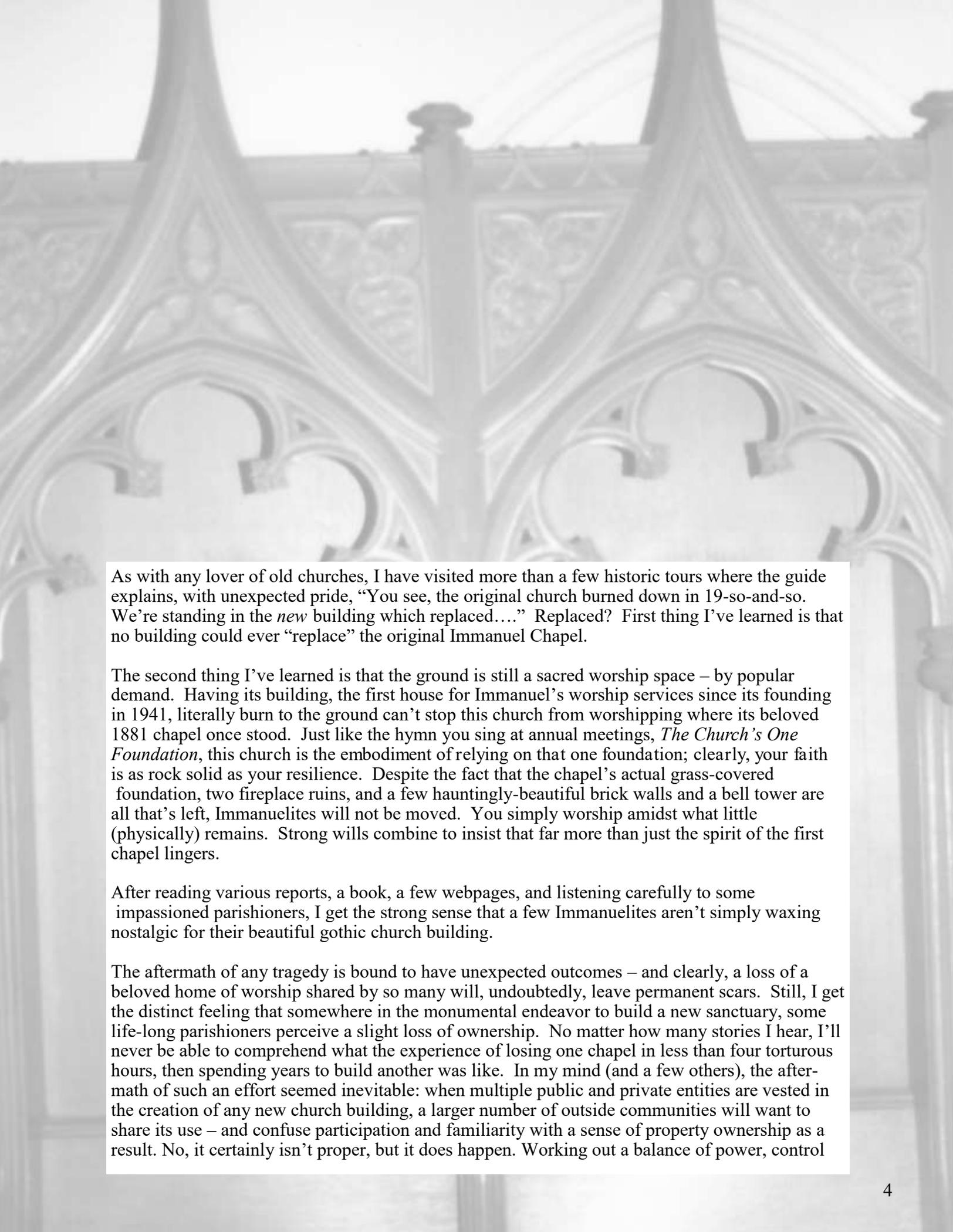
An Outside Look In : The 1881 Immanuel Chapel as Viewed Through Two Very Different Lenses

A Parishioner's gift of photos prompts a staff member to convey how second-hand accounts, and shared personal experiences of life after the loss of Immanuel's beloved 1881 chapel, present a strong testimony about the inner strength of this congregation.



Three stained glasses windows from the original 1881 chapel were installed in the side Oratory of Immanuel Chapel, along with a bench often used by former President Gerald Ford and his family. Additional pieces of stained glass were used in the new Altar Cross. All photos in this article were take by Nancy Bishop.

Last September – and just weeks on the job -- John Hogg surprised me with my first and only official tour of Virginia Theological Seminary. To be frank, I don't remember the specifics of everything he told me about every location on this maze of a campus, where clusters of stately brick and stone buildings were surrounded by great expanses of impossibly-perfect, verdant lawns. What I do remember was his insistence on my seeing the site where Immanuel's first chapel once stood – and how he slipped in descriptions that were, oddly, present tense. Since then, I've gotten used to hearing parishioners speak of the first Immanuel Chapel, often called "Seminary Chapel" or simply "the old chapel" like they were standing inside of it just yesterday. As someone who experienced a church's dissolution as a child, I wondered what it is that still draws Immanuelites to a space where a complete building used to stand. Yes, many fawn over the big, spanking new chapel next door, yet just as many revere the space that once held their church. These never-before-seen photos that photographer and returned parishioner Nancy Bishop gifted to the church several weeks ago, gave me the perfect excuse to dig a little deeper. Discretion dictates that I can't tell you most of what I've heard in my oral history lessons; however, I want to share all that you have taught me about this parish's unwavering resolve to keep the first Immanuel chapel alive.



As with any lover of old churches, I have visited more than a few historic tours where the guide explains, with unexpected pride, “You see, the original church burned down in 19-so-and-so. We’re standing in the *new* building which replaced...” Replaced? First thing I’ve learned is that no building could ever “replace” the original Immanuel Chapel.

The second thing I’ve learned is that the ground is still a sacred worship space – by popular demand. Having its building, the first house for Immanuel’s worship services since its founding in 1941, literally burn to the ground can’t stop this church from worshipping where its beloved 1881 chapel once stood. Just like the hymn you sing at annual meetings, *The Church’s One Foundation*, this church is the embodiment of relying on that one foundation; clearly, your faith is as rock solid as your resilience. Despite the fact that the chapel’s actual grass-covered foundation, two fireplace ruins, and a few hauntingly-beautiful brick walls and a bell tower are all that’s left, Immanuelites will not be moved. You simply worship amidst what little (physically) remains. Strong wills combine to insist that far more than just the spirit of the first chapel lingers.

After reading various reports, a book, a few webpages, and listening carefully to some impassioned parishioners, I get the strong sense that a few Immanuelites aren’t simply waxing nostalgic for their beautiful gothic church building.

The aftermath of any tragedy is bound to have unexpected outcomes – and clearly, a loss of a beloved home of worship shared by so many will, undoubtedly, leave permanent scars. Still, I get the distinct feeling that somewhere in the monumental endeavor to build a new sanctuary, some life-long parishioners perceive a slight loss of ownership. No matter how many stories I hear, I’ll never be able to comprehend what the experience of losing one chapel in less than four torturous hours, then spending years to build another was like. In my mind (and a few others), the aftermath of such an effort seemed inevitable: when multiple public and private entities are vested in the creation of any new church building, a larger number of outside communities will want to share its use – and confuse participation and familiarity with a sense of property ownership as a result. No, it certainly isn’t proper, but it does happen. Working out a balance of power, control



and ownership, while taking the desires of all parties involved into consideration, had to be unbelievably difficult. Far less complicated arrangements have irrevocably destroyed other parishes; Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill was incredibly strong to survive the process.

Which might explain why a virtual inferno could not destroy the spirit of the first Immanuel Chapel. I learned that it's not just a memory of "what was" that wouldn't fade away. In addition to being an inviting memorial garden, the site is a transformed, living, breathing sanctuary with devoted worship space. On Immanuel's office voice mail, I state "We worship in two chapels..." however, this church really worships in three: the site of the first Immanuel is truly an open-air chapel. Parishioners have taught me that it's just as valued as the Zabriskie and Immanuel chapels, and worthy of the Easter vigil worship service traditionally begun at this outdoor church each year. And, just like the former brick-n-mortar version, it offers 24-7 access to all who want to pray on sacred, hallowed ground.

I can't tell you what a strong testament it is – to those of us who never had the fortune of ever stepping foot inside of the 1881 Chapel – to see what an authentic "church as the true body of Christ" looks like, and a near-perfect model of how it can heal and rebuild after a tragic loss. "The church is made up of people; the church isn't the building" is a phrase I've heard all my life. Thanks to all of you, I have a deeper appreciation of what that statement really means.

- Aleta Y. Powell, Parish Administrator



Immanuelite Graduates of 2018



CHASE CARLETON PHILLIPS

Auburn High School
Christiansburg, VA

Submitted by Jackie Phillips

GRIFFIN WRIGHT PHILLIPS

Trinity Episcopal School
Richmond, VA

Submitted by Jackie Phillips



Griffin Phillips '18 tallied most total points in a season in nearly two decades.



CHARLOTTE ROSE TAYLOR

Bachelor of Arts (with Honors)
- English Literature and History (major)
Christopher Newport University
Newport News, VA

Submitted by Mary Taylor



SPENCER J. WISE

Bachelor of Arts
- Political Science (major)
- Economics (minor)
Hood College / Frederick, MD

Submitted by Jim Wise

Goodbye Immanuelites



My friends, two years have passed since I first came to Immanuel as Seminarian. As I meditate on these years, I realize that God has answered my prayers to be able to walk the Christian Journey with God's people.

The Lord blessed me with a parish community that reflects God's love and mercy for the world. Your love to me began with your welcome and continues with your prayers as I transition to my new responsibilities and new city, Dearborn, Michigan.

Please know that I am grateful beyond words that you have shown me what it means to exercise my ministry of servanthood as deacon for others.

I have come to know so many wonderful people and there is much that I have learned. I am grateful to you for your kindness and generosity, which you have shown me in so many ways. I am thankful to Father Randy Alexander who has been a fantastic mentor, and who inspired and motivated me during my time here. I am thankful for Mother Rachel Rickenbaker for her support and encouragement.

I am grateful to my lay committee for giving their time, talent and wisdom to support me in my development as a Christian minister by walking together as fellow pilgrims and disciples who share in common the joys and struggles of life and faith and growing and learning together (Mark Fearer, convener, Eve Anderson, Gerry Anderson, David Atwood, Jennifer Eckel, Nancy Reuschel and Rosi Urbine).

Finally, I want to thank all of you for your love, prayers, and support. It is hard to leave you, but as I said in the beginning of this thank you note, you really taught me to experience Jesus as Immanuel-God with us.

And if you are ever in Dearborn, MI you are welcome to visit me at Christ Episcopal Church 120 N. Military, Dearborn, MI 48124. My email: halimshukair@gmail.com

May the peace of Christ reign in your hearts always! God bless!

Salam,

The Rev. Deacon Halim Shukair

Faith in Action

This new feature column of The Almond Tree allows our Outreach Committee to shine a spotlight on a specific ministry sponsored in part by Immanuel's Outreach Ministry; allowing you to get an closer look at the initiatives that you financially support.

THE HAITI MICAH PROJECT: For several years, Immanuel has been a major parish supporter of the Haiti Micah Project (HMP), a faith based non-profit organization committed to addressing the life-threatening needs of children living in the city of Mirebalais and the surrounding Central Plateau of Haiti. HMP was founded in 2005 to address the increasing numbers of orphaned and at-risk children living on the streets, a situation later exacerbated by the major earthquake in 2010. Today, HMP operates a group home for 29 children and young adults, many of whom came from wretched slum conditions. To address rampant hunger, HMP operates a daily meal program of a nourishing hot meal to over 450 children. In 2015, HMP opened a vocational education building where various courses are taught to provide training in computers, sewing, auto mechanics and other fields. The latest challenge is to provide opportunities for some young adults to pursue education beyond high school and, to that end, HMP has established a scholarship fund.

Haiti Micah Project is led by the Rev. Joseph Constant, President and Board Member. A key to HMP's successful ministry is that it partners with Haitian counterparts in Mirebalais who implement the programs. Involvement and leadership by Haitians promotes confidence and support among the local community.

Immanuel supports HMP in two ways. The first is through individual sponsorships of children. For a dollar a day (\$365) you can sponsor a child, and your contribution will help provide food, clothing and an educational stipend. In May and June, you'll be given an opportunity to sign up to sponsor a child! The Outreach Committee awarded a \$4,000 grant to support HMP's program mission of providing the "...life-saving needs of a daily meal, clean water, healthcare, clothing, educational assistance, and vocational training for children and young adults living in Mirebalais, Haiti that will prepare them for responsible lives in their community after graduating from high school." Have questions or need more information? Contact Jim Snow, Immanuel's representative to HMP, at JamesBSnow@verizon.net. Thank you for supporting HMP.



Father Joseph Constant with Children in the HMP home in Mirebalais

COMMUNITY LODGINGS UPDATE

On Saturday, February 17th, Community Lodgings (CLI) celebrated the 30th anniversary of its founding by the Region 4 parishes at the Belle Haven Country Club. The late Dan Kelly and Jim Papile were Immanuel's early representatives as this ministry sought to address the scourge of homelessness in Alexandria through the establishment of transitional housing, then a rarity in the city. From modest beginnings and despite strong financial headwinds in the late '90s, CLI has been firmly established in Arlandria as a beacon of hope for local residents and a civic resource. CLI now owns 3 apartment buildings, one of which was recently taken down to the studs and completely renovated to serve participants in CLI's Transitional Housing Program. The Fifer Family Learning Center continues to provide quality after school programs and a safe haven for nearly a hundred school-age kids. Through the outreach of Immanuel and other parishes, we continue to support CLI financially and with gifts in kind through the Christmas Families programs. As part of the anniversary celebration, Immanuel and the other parishes in Region 4 were recognized for their part as CLI founders. CLI and Immanuel are making a difference. For more information, contact Doug Henry at ddhenry1@gmail.com or visit www.communitylodgings.org.



Sunday, June 24th @ Noon
The Welcome Center
Virginia Theological Seminary
3737 Seminary Road



Food, fun games, well wishes and merriment.

Men, women, teens and children: EVERYONE is Invited!

HILL HAPPENINGS

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



WEDNESDAY EVENING EUCHARIST WITH MUSIC MAY 16, 2018, 6:30PM, ZABRISKIE CHAPEL

Thy Kingdom Come is a prayer movement that is encouraged by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Presiding Bishop, taking place from Ascension Day (May 10th) through Pentecost Sunday (May 20th).

Churches and communities around the world will gather during these days for intentional prayer, that friends, families, and neighbors would come to know Jesus Christ.

On **Wednesday, May 16th**, Immanuel's evening Eucharist at 6:30pm., will be a time for intentional prayer — and will include the singing of hymns with organ accompaniment.

In addition to attending this special service, we encourage everyone to take the opportunity to attend Morning Prayer at 10:00am. each morning next week, for one or more days, in Zabriskie Chapel. For more information on Thy Kingdom Come, visit <https://www.thykingdomcome.global>.

BREAKFAST BIBLE STUDY: Immanuel's monthly Saturday morning Breakfast Bible Study will be this Saturday, May 19th — back on our normal schedule of meeting the third Saturday of each month. We gather in the Fairchild Room at 7:30 am. for breakfast, with Bible study beginning at 8 AM. We promise to be done by 9 a.m! Our theme for this year is Truth and Integrity. This month we will read John 15:1-10, using the African Model of Reflection. Come, be fed in body and spirit with food, fellowship and God's word. For more information, please contact Chrissie Crosby (cmcfaddencrosby@gmail.com)

JOHN HOGG'S ORDINATION

1:00p.m, SATURDAY, JUNE 2, 2018

Immanuel Chapel

God willing, and the people consenting, our Director of Children, Youth, and Family Ministries, John Hogg, will be ordained into the Diaconate at 1:00 p.m. at Immanuel Chapel. There will be a reception immediately following, in the Zabriskie Parish Hall.





THE DAY OF PENTECOST
The Right Rev. Robert W. Ihloff, Bishop Associate
Preacher

8:00a.m., Holy Eucharist, Rite I, Zabriskie Chapel

10:30a.m., Holy Eucharist, Rite II, with Baptism and Confirmation
 Immanuel Chapel (3737 Seminary Road, Alexandria, VA)



May 20th, 5:30p.m!



Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill
needs to hear from parents!

Come to our very special Family Fair on Sunday May 20 starting at 5:30p.m. in the **Zabriskie Parish Hall**. We'll serve fried chicken as the main dish for dinner. If able, please feel free to bring any side dish you wish to share. Refreshments will be provided, and coolers with ice will be ready to chill any additional beverages.

After dinner children and youth may attend a special Sunday School. **Parents will be invited to share their hopes and expectations of the children and youth ministries at Immanuel.**

We would love to see you and, more importantly, hear from you!

A staffed nursery is provided. Questions? Contact John Hogg, Director of Children Youth and Families (jhogg@icoh.net)

**3 Hellmers + 1 Wood = Concert for
 Trumpets, Violin, Organ & Piano**

Grant Hellmers
 St. Paul's Alexandria, VA - Organ & Piano

Bruce Hellmers
 Sydney, Australia - Trumpet

Judy Hellmers
 Sydney, Australia - Violin

Andrew Wood
 Alexandria, VA - Trumpet

Wednesday, May 16, 2018
7:30 p.m.

St. Paul's Episcopal Church
 225 South Pitt Street, Old Town, Alexandria

Music by Cazzafi, Gardner, Bach/Bivaldi,
 Messiaen, Rachmaninov and others

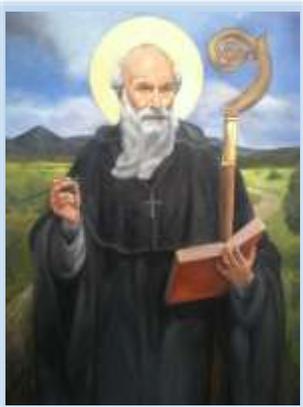
Reception following the concert

703-349-3311, grant@stpaulsalexandria.com

THE CIRCLE OF QUIET: NEW TIME AND LOCATION FOR THE SUMMER

Beginning next Sunday, the Day of Pentecost, May 20th, The Circle of Quiet will meet after the 10:30a.m. service in the Meditation Room, Immanuel Chapel. We will return to our Zabriskie location in mid-September.

In our busy and stress-filled lives, it is often hard to listen to the still, small voice of God. Come and learn about using meditation as a means to practice listening for God, and the impact it can have on your life.



Join Immanuel's Benedictine Study Group!

Open-ended Listening Session– June 5, 2018

Are you looking for a life in balance? Are you seeking to study with other Christians who are striving to study and share in a small group setting? Immanuel Church-on-the Hill Benedictine Community is a small study group that began to study the scripture based Rule of St Benedict in 2010. Benedictine roots are in the Anglican tradition and in the liturgy in the Book of Common Prayer.

We meet to study the Rule of St Benedict, an ancient rule that still guides communities all over the world. While the Rule was written for monastic communities, it is applicable and guides us in how to live a life in balance, with a focus on five main areas: prayer, work, study, renewal and hospitality. **The Study of the Rule of St Benedict** helps people who live in all kinds of settings and all forms of Christian faith.

This group is an open group made up of members from Immanuel as well as members of other faith traditions, and we welcome all who come. We meet the first and third Tuesdays, from 7-8 PM in the Fairchild Room at the Zabriskie Chapel. We study a portion of the rule and offer reflections around the room. We close our group with Compline/Evening prayer.

On Tuesday, February 6th our group started the study of a new book, *Radical Spirit: 12 Ways to Live a Free and Authentic Life* by Sister Joan Chittister — a book focused on humility.

Please join us as we begin the first of three sessions on the second chapter in *Radical Spirit* — with the remaining sessions on this chapter, "*What are the Spiritual Implications*" scheduled **May 15th**. On June 5th, we'll have an open-ended listening session where people can share whatever they may feel moved to share with our group. All are welcome.

GOING TO SHRINE MONT?

Share Your Photos and Reflections with Immanuel!

Some in our church family can't make the trip to Shrine Mont this year — let's help them feel included. We'd love to publish a collection of personal spiritual reflections, poems and prose, digital photographs, and personal stories about our Cathedral with the larger Immanuel community in the June issue of **The Almond Tree**. The deadline for submissions is **Monday, June 4th**, which can be emailed to apowell@icoh.net or dropped off at the church office in the basement of Zabriskie.

Finally, we ask that the subjects of personal photographs — particularly those of people in solemn moments of prayer — be asked for their consent prior to submission for publication.

Let's All Go to **SHRINE MONT!**



Immanuel's annual parish retreat at Shrine Mont, Orkney Springs, Virginia (about 2 hours away) is scheduled for Memorial Day weekend. We'll meet Saturday, May 26, 2018 at noon and leave after breakfast on Monday, May 28th. What better way to start your summer than with your fellow Immanuelites in a beautiful and relaxing setting! We'll make time for food, swimming, singing, relaxation, spiritual reflection, worship, hiking, yoga, entertaining on the porch, and having fun with clergy, family, and friends.

The full weekend rate is \$180 per adult, \$95 for children 8-12, \$40 for children 4-7, and it's free for children 3 and under. For those wanting to come up Friday, the rate is \$55 per adult and \$30 per child age 4-12 (which includes Saturday breakfast).

Please contact our rector, the Rev. Randy Alexander, to discuss full or partial scholarship opportunities. You can also pay with credit card by going to Immanuel's website <http://www.immanuel-on-the-hill.org/shrine-mont-retreat.html> or simply follow the "Shrine Mont" link from our home page.

If paying by check, we'll need to receive your check in the office **no later than May 21st**, made payable to Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill, with the notation "Shrine Mont" on the memo line.

If you cannot attend the retreat but **would like to help pay for someone else to attend**, your contribution would be most welcomed!

For more information, contact Lisa Frye at lsfrye323@gmail.com, at home on (703) 548-8591



In Our June Issue: Hogg Ordination and Shrine Monti

www.jcohn.net

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



JOIN US THIS SPRING & SUMMER !

MAY 20	Day of Pentecost The Rt. Rev. Robert W. Ihloff Bishop Associate and Guest Preacher at 8a.m. and 10:30a.m. Eucharists	8:00 a.m., Holy Eucharist Rite I, Zabriskie Chapel
		10:30 a.m., Holy Eucharist Rite II, Immanuel Chapel, followed by Bishop's Reception, The Welcome Center
MAY 25-28	Parish Retreat at Shrine Mont Memorial Day Weekend	Orkney Springs, VA
June 2	John Hogg's Ordination	1:00 p.m., Immanuel Chapel
JUNE 10	Mass-on-the-Grass	10:30 a.m., Zabriskie Gardens
June 15	Office Summer Hours Begin	Monday through Friday, 9am.—1pm.
June 24	Rev. Rachel's Baby Shower	12:00p.m., The Welcome Center