



4 June 2021

Dear Members and Friends of Immanuel,

I write to you today with the latest news and developments in our regathering efforts. We have yearned, together, for these announcements, which I am now pleased and honored to make. Our efforts towards regathering have been multi-faceted, they have required nimbleness and frequent adjustment as the pandemic situation has changed, and they have involved the dedicated, sacrificial work of so many in our Parish. I outline below new developments in several areas of our life together, some of which have already been announced in Church.

Worship

Starting this Sunday, June 6th, our Sunday schedule of services will be as follows:

8 AM Eucharist—in Zabriskie Chapel (this service continues, having re-started a few weeks ago)

10:30 AM Eucharist—in Immanuel Chapel (the service from the Grove now moves indoors) This service will also be live-streamed, going forward. Our current plan is to offer livestreaming in perpetuity, building on key learnings from the pandemic. Livestreaming is an ongoing ministry to those who are ill, or traveling, or those who have moved away and are alumni/alumnae of Immanuel.

6 PM Eucharist—a simple outdoor service, behind Zabriskie Chapel (weather permitting) This service is offered as a pastoral response to those who are not yet quite ready to return indoors for worship. We will monitor, on an ongoing basis, whether it seems to be meeting this need. Please bring your own lawn chair!

Weekday worship opportunities:

Wednesdays at 6:30 PM—in Zabriskie Chapel (this Eucharist was also re-started a couple of weeks ago)

Fridays at 8:30 PM—Compline, by Zoom call

No reservations are now required for any of these services. We will continue to ask, for now, that all wear masks at the indoor services, largely as a protection for our children who have not yet had the opportunity to be vaccinated. We will also continue, for now, to offer Communion in one kind only (the Bread); the Church has long taught that receiving either the Bread or Wine is a full Communion and full reception of the Body and Blood of Christ. We will have soloists at the 10:30 Eucharist, along with an informal “pick-up” choir over the Summer, with our choir returning full-force, God willing, in September.

Other worship-related ministries:

The Flower Guild have already starting providing beautiful flower arrangements for our services—thank you! Special thanks go to Candy Levin, Head of the Flower Guild.

The Altar Guild will soon be resuming their work. If this ministry of service to Our Lord and this congregation (preparing the Altars, caring for the linens and other supplies used in worship) speaks to you, we are looking for some new members of the Guild! You may contact Aleta Powell in the Parish Office: office@icoh.net.

Likewise, **Ushers** play a key role in our services; ushering is a great way to get involved and meet more people, and to help our services run smoothly. Please reach out to Marcus Rarick, our Head Usher, if this ministry interests you. You may contact Marcus directly at marcus.rarick@gmail.com. This is also a great opportunity for families to serve together; training will be provided.

Acolytes—Our tentative plan is to have only a crucifer for the Summer services, and a full team of acolytes returning in the Fall. We're also looking to add adult acolytes. Contact Fr. Sam (ssheridan@icoh.net) if are interested in joining this ministry.

Coffee Hour—We're working on this! The goal might be to offer a simple, outdoor coffee hour after the 10:30 Eucharist.

The **Nursery** will not be re-opening for now, but we hope to announce its opening soon.

Staff

During the pandemic the staff have been working creatively from home and also performing required duties in the Parish offices. Starting on Tuesday, June 1st, the staff have now begun regathering in the offices, on a schedule quite similar to that followed before the pandemic.

Tenants

The Valley Drive Nursery School has been fully in session since October, having used our extensive grounds, the playground, and the rear deck very creatively and effectively. The AA group will be returning soon, as will the Dignity congregation, who will re-gather in Zabriskie Chapel on June 12th. The Washington Metropolitan Philharmonic will resume its rehearsals in the Parish Hall in September. Fitness classes have already resumed, or will be resuming soon. I don't have details yet on the regathering of the Muslim congregation and a few other groups who meet with us.

Funerals and Committals

Sadly, there are several funerals and services of committal that we could not hold until very recently. We will be scheduling some of those services now.

Pastoral Visits

The clergy can now make pastoral visits in most situations, and we are eager to make those visits! Whether it be to bring Communion, to meet for lunch, or to meet in our offices, there is a lot of catching up to do. Please call or email individual clergy to schedule. We hope to re-engage our lay Eucharistic visitors soon, as well.

This has been a unique, challenging time for the Parish, to say the least. Yet God has clearly shown up, and God's people have been faithful, creative, and resilient. There are certainly losses to mourn, we will make some missteps, and we will need to stretch our muscles and re-connect with each other.

Now also presents an especially timely opportunity to invite friends, neighbors, or colleagues who might be searching for a Church home to join us at Immanuel. This may include some folks who have drifted away from Church, but who are now more receptive and interested. My advice always is just to say, "Come and see!" and leave the rest up to God and the welcoming spirit of Immanuel.

God bless you all,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Randy". The letters are cursive and slightly slanted to the right.

The Rev. J. Randolph Alexander, Jr.
Rector