



Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill

Episcopal/Anglican Alexandria, Virginia



THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 21, 2025

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

Page numbers refer to The Book of Common Prayer (the small red book with a cross).

THE WORD OF GOD

Opening Acclamation

p. 323

Celebrant: Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

People: *And blessed be his kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.*

The Collect for Purity

p. 323

Kyrie eleison

p. 324

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

The Collect of the Day

The Lord be with you.

People: *And with thy spirit.*

Celebrant: Let us pray.

We beseech thee, Almighty God, to purify our consciences by thy daily visitation, that when thy Son our Lord cometh he may find in us a mansion prepared for himself; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

The First Lesson: Isaiah 7:10-16

Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test. Then Isaiah said: "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel. He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted."

The Word of the Lord

Response: *Thanks be to God.*

Psalm 80:1-7, 16-18 *Qui regis Israel*

- 1 Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock; *
shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.
- 2 In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, *
stir up your strength and come to help us.
- 3 Restore us, O God of hosts; *
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.
- 4 O Lord God of hosts, *
how long will you be angered
despite the prayers of your people?
- 5 You have fed them with the bread of tears; *
you have given them bowls of tears to drink.
- 6 You have made us the derision of our neighbors, *
and our enemies laugh us to scorn.
- 7 Restore us, O God of hosts; *
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.
- 16 Let your hand be upon the man of your right hand, *
the son of man you have made so strong for yourself.
- 17 And so will we never turn away from you; *
give us life, that we may call upon your Name.
- 18 Restore us, O Lord God of hosts; *
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

The Epistle: Romans 1:1-7

Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for the sake of his name, including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ..

The Word of the Lord

Response: ***Thanks be to God.***

The Holy Gospel: Matthew 1:18-25

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to Matthew
People: *Glory be to thee, O Lord.*

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

"Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall name him Emmanuel,"

which means, "God is with us." When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

The Gospel of the Lord
People: *Praise be to thee, O Christ.*

The Sermon: The Rev. Susan D. Parsons

The Nicene Creed

p. 326

*We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.*

*For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.*

*We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.*

The Prayers of the People

Confession of Sin and Absolution

p. 331

*Most merciful God,
we confess that we have sinned against thee
in thought, word, and deed,
by what we have done,
and by what we have left undone.
We have not loved thee with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.
For the sake of thy Son Jesus Christ,
have mercy on us and forgive us;
that we may delight in thy will,
and walk in thy ways,
to the glory of thy Name. Amen.*

The Peace

Celebrant: The peace of the Lord be always with you.
People: *And with thy spirit.*

Welcome and Announcements

Want to give electronically? While the alms basin is being passed, you can also make an offering online using your bank account, debit, or credit card: just scan the code below. Thank you for your gift to Immanuel.



THE HOLY COMMUNION

The Offertory

Clergy: All things come of thee, O Lord; and of thine own, have we given thee. p. 343

The Great Thanksgiving: Eucharistic Prayer II

p. 340

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: *And with thy spirit.*

Celebrant: Lift up your hearts.

People: *We lift them up unto the Lord.*

Celebrant: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: *It is meet and right so to do.*

Sanctus and Benedictus

p. 334

The Lord's Prayer

p. 336

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

Celebrant: Alleluia, Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us

People: *Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.*

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, *have mercy upon us.*

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, *have mercy upon us.*

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, *grant us thy peace.*

Celebrant: The Gifts of God, for the People of God.

Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you,
and feed on him in your hearts by faith,
with thanksgiving.

*If you are physically unable to come to the Altar, please let an usher know
that you would like to have Communion brought to you.*

Almighty and everliving God, we most heartily thank thee for that thou dost feed us, in these holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and dost assure us thereby of thy favor and goodness towards us; and that we are very members incorporate in the mystical body of thy Son, the blessed company of all faithful people; and are also heirs, through hope, of thy everlasting kingdom. And we humbly beseech thee, O heavenly Father, so to assist us with thy grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do all such good works as thou hast prepared for us to walk in; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honor and glory, world without end. Amen.

The Advent Blessing

May Almighty God, by whose providence our Savior Christ came among us in great humility, sanctify you with the light of his blessing and set you free from all sin. *Amen.*

May you, who rejoice in the first Advent of our Redeemer, at his second Advent be rewarded with unending life. *Amen.*

And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you for ever. *Amen.*

The Dismissal

Clergy: Let us go forth in joy, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.

People: *Thanks be to God.*

SERVING AT THIS EUCHARIST:

<i>Reader/Intercessor:</i>	Susan Gildersleeve
<i>Altar Guild:</i>	Diana Walker
<i>Usher:</i>	Tom Brown
<i>Flower Guild:</i>	Candy Levin
<i>Vestry Greeter/Counter:</i>	Caroline Bergmark
<i>Celebrant:</i>	The Rev. Sarah Spurlock Biggs

IMMANUEL CHURCH-ON-THE-HILL

Parish Notes

December 21, 2025

**IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST we welcome you
to Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill!**

Immanuel is an Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Virginia, and is part of the world-wide Anglican Communion. Immanuel was founded by the Virginia Theological Seminary. We are one parish that worships in two locations: the Zabriskie Chapel (3606 Seminary Road), and Immanuel Chapel (3737 Seminary Road) on the seminary grounds. Immanuel Chapel offers a fully-staffed nursery for our infant and toddler parishioners.

Visitors are encouraged to fill out a visitor card — located in the pews or display stands at the entrances of the chapels. Please give your card to an usher or place in the collection plate. Thank you.

For the latest information on our online worship service and to view a video of our most recent service, please visit our website (www.icoh.net).

PRAY FOR PARISHIONERS: Ann MacNamara, Jim, Nancy, Spencer, and Zuzanna Wise, Carolyn Ferguson, Catherine Sinclair, Chris von Schoening, Craig Jackson, Cynthia Morton, Cy Murphy, David Phillips, Debbie Hewson, Gary and MeiLung DeVight, Gordon Johnson, Hugh Campbell, Jane, the Jim and Lisa Clausen Family, John Richards, Joseph, Kenny, Marcus Rarick, Mary Jane Ruhl, Nancy Bishop, Natalie Doyle Hennis, Norma Taliaferro, Rollin Huntington, Susan Montague, Thom Hussey, Tom and Martha Shimkin, and Wendy Hoge.

PRAY FOR OUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY: Andrew Davis, Ann Langdon Days, Ann Woodward, Barbara Kellner, Barbara Sagan, Becky Smith, Betsy Fox Berry, Brian and Joyce, Bridget Rice Rose, Caleb Lusk, Carol Ording, Charlotte Kellogg, Cicely, Donna Becker, George Rustigian, Gerry and Nan Hardison, the Rev. Harry Benjamin, the Howerton Family, Hudson Milligan, Jack Allen, Jackson Sirhal, Jean Couban, Jodi Wilson, Joe Micelli, the Rev. John Hogg, Joseph and Elaine Kelly, Judi Rhodes, Leea Gorman, Lilly Pinner, Louise Jackson, Lysbeth, Marcia Richardson, Margie Lidoff, Marie, Mary Horner, Mary Muniz, Marty Childs, Matt, McQuade Milligan, Melvyn and Stacy, Michael, Paul, Peter Blackledge, Rosemary Wensing, Russ, Ryan Willis, Sofia, Soundary Dilan, Stacey, Stephen Miller, Stephen Spurlock, Susan Little, Thomas Henry, Tim Williams, Tony, Val, Wesley Johnson, and Winnie Kidd.

Pray for those who are celebrating birthdays this week: David Philips, Holly Morton, Katydean Price, Jason Donahue, Debbie Hewson, Carol Crossmire, Amy Parks, and Drew Parks.

Pray for those serving around the world: Noah Barker, Ian Phillips, Todd Bates, Jason Osborne, Michael Hussey, Scott, and Philip Pretzinger.

Those who have died: Aggie Fortune, victims of the *Chanukah by the Sea* celebration at Bondi Beach, Sydney, Australia; and the victims of the Stockton, CA shooting at a child's birthday party: Susano Archuleta, Maya Lupian, Journey Rose Reotutar Guerrero, and Amari Peterson. *Rest eternal grant to them, O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon them.*

BLUE CHRISTMAS PRAYER SERVICE, TODAY

4:00PM, ZABRISKIE CHAPEL

We invite everyone to this service of prayer, music, and reflection that we hope will help bring a sense of God's presence and healing at a time of year when so many experience feelings of grief, loss, and hardship.

Announcements

WEEKDAY WORSHIP AND STUDY OPPORTUNITIES

All are welcome to participate

Compline will Resume Friday, January 2nd @ 8:30 p.m, online via Zoom

Morning Prayer Tuesday, January 6th @ 10:00 a.m., Zabriskie Chapel

Weekly Bible Study: *"The Gospel of John"* will Resume Thursday, January 8th
@10:30 a.m. online via Zoom.

Look for login details in your weekly eBlast email.

IMMANUEL CLERGY DAY AT THE VIEW ALEXANDRIA, SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21ST

The View is a retirement community affiliated with Goodwin Living, right across the street from Goodwin House, Alexandria. The Rev. Susan D. Parsons is leading this Eucharist at 11a.m. today.



WEDNESDAYS IN THE WORLD with *The Rev. Sarah Spurlock Biggs* Will resume January 7th, 2026

Join Sarah next year for fellowship this **Wednesday, January 7th** from 10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. at the Alexandria Pastry Shop, Bradlee Shopping Center on King Street. **All are welcome!**



Our **Wednesday Quiet Prayer** sessions will resume, as before, 5:15 -6 pm in the Oratory, from **Wednesday, January 7th through March 25th**. This will provide a wonderful opportunity to enter into the call of Lent, for quiet prayer and preparation, which is deeply counter-cultural in this season which can be so dominated by consumerism. We invite all to join us.



Every Member Pledge Campaign Update: As of December 9th, we have received 102 pledges so far, totaling \$561,650. This includes 6 new pledges and 57 who increased from last year. We hope for a total of \$725,000.

If you have not yet made your pledge please do so as soon as possible. You may return the pledge card that was mailed to you, or you may pledge by scanning the QR code at right, or pledge through [our website](#), by clicking the "Pledge Here" button.



Upcoming Schedule for Advent and Christmastide

December 21	4:00 p.m.	<i>Blue Christmas Prayer Service</i>	Zabriskie Chapel
December 24	4:00 p.m.	<i>Christmas Prelude with Full Choir, and Brass</i>	Immanuel Chapel
	5:00 p.m.	<i>Christmas Eve Festival Holy Eucharist Rite II with Full Choir, and Brass</i>	
	8:40 p.m.	<i>Christmas Prelude with Choral Ensemble, and Brass</i>	
	9:00 p.m.	<i>Christmas Eve Festival Holy Eucharist Rite II with Brass</i>	
December 25	11:00 a.m.	Christmas Day Holy Eucharist with Organ and Carols	Zabriskie Chapel
December 29	8:00 a.m.	First Sunday After Christmas with Holy Eucharist Rite I	Zabriskie Chapel
	10:00 a.m.	First Sunday After Christmas with Holy Eucharist Rite II	
January 4, 2026	8:00 a.m.	Holy Eucharist Rite I	Zabriskie Chapel
	10:00 a.m.	Youth-led Sunday with Holy Eucharist Rite II	
January 11, 2026	8:00 a.m.	<i>Epiphany Sunday (transferred) with Holy Eucharist Rite I</i>	Zabriskie Chapel
	10:00 a.m.	<i>Children's Epiphany Pageant with Holy Eucharist Rite II followed by Festive Reception in the Welcome Center</i>	Immanuel Chapel

SIGN-UP TO SERVE: DECEMBER - FEBRUARY 2026

MANY NEEDED FOR CHRISTMASTIDE: IT'S EASY AND ONLINE



Sign-up to Serve in our Sunday Services *through February 2026* ONLINE by visiting the landing page of our website at [ICOH.net](https://www.ICOH.net) and clicking our **Red SignUp Genius Button** or scanning the QR code at right. If you're a student planning to spend occasional weekends home, feel free to **sign-up for only a Sunday or two**. Training for all lay ministries available upon request. **THANK YOU for your participation!**



Creation Care Tips: Is Your Wrapping Paper Recyclable?

Be mindful of our planet this holiday season and choose gift wrap that can be recycled or is made from recycled content. A lot of gift wrap isn't recyclable because of the coating on the paper, which is often shiny and laminated. You can also reduce holiday waste by using decorative boxes that do not require wrapping and that can be recycled.

The Environmental Protection Agency encourages consumers to reuse gift bags and tissue wrapping paper, and not discard them after a single use. While tissue wrapping paper is not recyclable, it is compostable as long as it is plain and free of glitter or metallic foil.

If you find yourself accumulating more tissue wrapping paper than you need or can store, here are some creative ways to reuse it by crafting gifts: <https://modpodgerocksblog.com/crafts-with-tissue-paper/>

Questions? Contact Denise Freeland: eco.voce@verizon.net

COME JOIN US ON THE IMMANUEL BUS TO RICHMOND WITH THE INTERFAITH CENTER, WEDNESDAY JANUARY 21

For the past several years, the Social Justice committee has joined with other Immanuelites for a stimulating and fun bus trip and day in Richmond to meet with our representatives, learn about the Virginia legislative process, and advocate – with Vestry concurrence – on behalf of Immanuel on one or two issues important to our faith.

This year, we will be following up on further legislative action regarding higher education opportunities in Virginia’s prisons and easing zoning restrictions on those Virginia churches that want to use part of their property for affordable housing.



The Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy is the overall sponsor of this exciting day. For more information, or to make sure you have a place on the bus, please talk to [Kathryn Haskin](#), [Jamie Conrad](#), or [Julie Bruns](#); registration is required (see QR code at left), and we can defray the fee for anyone who requests it.

Lunch will be provided.



BEWARE of Questionable Emails without “ICOH.net” Extensions

Immanuelites, cyber criminals are at it again; we’ve received several attempts to compromise our security with phishing emails posing as parishioners (by name) and as Father Randy under fake accounts.

Should you receive a request for any information on Immanuel that doesn’t come from the icoh.net extension, please do not hesitate to forward it to Aleta at apowell@icoh.net for verification.

Let’s remember to keep everyone involved and affected by these cyber attempts in prayer.



Retiring in the New Year? Consider Ways to Give to ALIVE!

As mentioned in our weekly eBlast, Immanuel rose to the occasion for our inaugural diaper/wipe/formula drive. We thank all who contributed to our total of 380 pounds of needed diapers, wipes and formula last month.

Now more than every, ALIVE! Can use your help. Consider becoming a volunteer — or donating — by scanning the QR code at right or visit <https://qrco.de/bgX7Sd>.

Thank you.



CLERGY AND STAFF

The Rev. J. Randolph Alexander, Jr. (ralexander@icoh.net) Rector
 The Rev. Susan D. Parsons (sparsons@icoh.net) Associate Rector
 The Rev. Sarah Spurlock Biggs (sspurlockbiggs@icoh.net) Assistant Rector
 Signa Strom (sstrom@vts.edu) Seminarian
 Beatrice Osumba (bosumba@vts.edu) Seminarian
 Dr. Jane Tavernier (jtavernier@icoh.net) Director of Music
 Aleta Y. Powell (apowell@icoh.net) Parish Administrator
 Tim Lawhorn Sexton
 Tom Hewson (thewson@icoh.net) Treasurer
 Mollie Lambert (mlambert@icoh.net) Assistant Treasurer
 Mike Morgan (mmorgan@icoh.net) Finance Manager
 Tamika Martin (tmartin@icoh.net) Audio Visual Technician
 Mina Sultani Nursery Director
 Miguelina “Mimi” Guzmann Hospitality Assistant

THE VESTRY

Amy Thomas Senior Warden
 Caroline Bergmark Junior Warden: Buildings and Grounds, Registrar
 Peter Kent Junior Warden: Administration
 Mark Fearer Social Justice
 Matt Haskin Worship
 Rich Hobson Outreach
 Taylor Houck Adult Formation and Discipleship
 Dave John Fellowship
 Doug Onley Stewardship and Planned Giving
 Mary Ann Ring Children, Youth, and Family Ministries
 Brian Rush Senior Ministry, Pastoral Care
 Kristin Whitman Newcomers and Communications
 Sydney Onley Youth Representative

SCHEDULE OF SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES

8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite I, Zabriskie Chapel
 10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite II, *First Sunday of every month*
 3606 Seminary Road, Alexandria, VA

10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite II, Immanuel Chapel
 3737 Seminary Road, Alexandria, VA

Online

www.immanuel-on-the-hill.org
[Immanuel's YouTube channel](#)

PRIESTS ASSOCIATE

The Rev. Dr. Sarah Coakley
 The Rev. Dr. Ruthanna Hooke
 The Rev. Jan A. Maas
 The Rev. John R. Smucker
 The Rev. Dr. Francis H. Wade

RECTOR EMERITA

The Rev. Dr. Margaret Ann (Sam) Faeth

MISSION STATEMENT: Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill is a Christian community in the Episcopal tradition, striving to be in relationship with God and each other as Christ has taught us, actively attempting to sense and to serve God’s plan with great love. We are guided by Mark 16:15: “Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel,” to learn, discern, and proclaim the Good News by being active ministers in the various communities where we live and serve.



PARISH OFFICE

3606 Seminary Road, Alexandria, VA 22304
 Telephone: 703•370•6555, Monday-Friday 9am-5pm

ICOH.net



Ways to GIVE