



Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill

Episcopal/Anglican Alexandria, Virginia



THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 14, 2025

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

GAUDETE SUNDAY

Page numbers refer to [The Book of Common Prayer](#).

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

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Kyrie eleison

p. 324

Lord, have mercy upon us. Kyrie eleison.
Christ, have mercy upon us. or Christe eleison.
Lord, have mercy upon us. Kyrie eleison.

The Collect of the Day

The Lord be with you.
People: *And with thy spirit.*
Celebrant: Let us pray.

Stir up thy power, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let thy bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be honor and glory, world without end. *Amen.*

The First Lesson: Isaiah 35:1-10

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing.

The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God.

Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you."

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

The Word of the Lord

Response: *Thanks be to God.*

Canticle 15: The Song of Mary *Magnificat*

Luke 1:46-55

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
my spirit rejoices in God my Savior; *
for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.

From this day all generations will call me blessed: *
the Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is his Name.

He has mercy on those who fear him *
in every generation.

He has shown the strength of his arm, *
he has scattered the proud in their conceit.

He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, *
and has lifted up the lowly.

He has filled the hungry with good things, *
and the rich he has sent away empty.

He has come to the help of his servant Israel, *
for he has remembered his promise of mercy,

The promise he made to our fathers, *
to Abraham and his children for ever.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: *
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

The Epistle: James 5:7-10

Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

The Word of the Lord

Response: *Thanks be to God.*

The Holy Gospel: Matthew 11:2-11

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

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?” Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me.”

As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written, ‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.’

“Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.”

The Gospel of the Lord

People: *Praise be to thee, O Christ.*

Sermon: The Rev. J. Randolph Alexander, Jr.

*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

*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;

People: *and of thine own, have we given thee.*

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The Great Thanksgiving: Eucharistic Prayer II

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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

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The Lord's Prayer

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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.*

*Prayers for healing, with the laying on of hands,
are offered are offered next to the pulpit during Communion*

Post Communion Prayer

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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: Go in peace, to love and serve the Lord.

People: *Thanks be to God.*

SERVING AT THIS EUCHARIST:

<i>Reader/Intercessor:</i>	Rosi Urbine
<i>Altar Guild:</i>	Diana Walker
<i>Usher:</i>	Linda Donahue
<i>Flower Guild:</i>	Martha Manson
<i>Coffee Hour Host:</i>	Jennifer Greiner
<i>Vestry Greeter/Counter:</i>	Brian Rush
<i>Celebrant:</i>	The Rev. J. Randolph Alexander

IMMANUEL CHURCH-ON-THE-HILL

Parish Notes

December 14, 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, 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, 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: Christopher DeMulder, Sydney Onley, Jim Snow, Katherine Warlick, Candy Levin, Susan Stockton, Tiffany McCaslin, Kameran Onley, David Peabody, Kendra Smyth, Martha Byron, Henry James and Jo Ann Toledo.

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: John Carlton Backus, Jr. and Helen Stafford, friends of Dorothy Kellogg. *Rest eternal grant to them, O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon them.*

St. Nicholas Exhibit Tour for children ages 1-18 TODAY after the 10am Eucharist. Get on the Immanuel Family Ministries email list to receive email updates on all our offerings for children. Email Rev. Sarah at sspurlockbiggs@icoh.net to be included!



Our **Wednesday Quiet Prayer** session this Wednesday, December 17th, will be the last of the series this Advent, and will be a quiet eucharist in the Oratory (15 mins of silence, followed by a very short eucharistic celebration, finishing as usual by 6pm). We are happy to announce that **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.

Announcements

WEEKDAY WORSHIP AND STUDY OPPORTUNITIES

All are welcome to participate

Morning Prayer Tuesday, December 16th @ 10:00 a.m., Zabriskie Chapel

Quiet Prayer, Wednesday December 17th, 5:15 - 6:00 p.m.

The Oratory Chapel inside Immanuel Chapel

Weekly Bible Study: "*The Gospel of John*" Thursday, December 18th

@10:30 a.m. online via Zoom.

Look for login details in your weekly eBlast email.

Compline, Friday December 19th @ 8:30 p.m, online via Zoom

WEDNESDAYS IN THE WORLD with *The Rev. Sarah Spurlock Biggs*

Join Sarah for fellowship this **Wednesday, December 17th** from 10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. at the Alexandria Pastry Shop, Bradlee Shopping Center on King Street. **All are welcome!**



Every Member Pledge Campaign Update: 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.



SENIOR ADULT MINISTRY AND FELLOWSHIP: DECEMBER ACTIVITIES

FESTIVE HOLIDAY TEA AND CAROL SING

Join us on Tuesday, December 16 in the Parish Hall for a Festive Holiday tea and plenteous goodies at 2pm. Afterwards, we will adjourn to the chapel for a carol sing. Pianist extraordinaire and our own Immanuel Choir bass section leader Daryl Ott will be taking your requests, together with Rick Glassco on the chimes, so think ahead and be ready to call out all your favorite carols. You know...those songs that make the season bright!

Please RSVP to Karen Besser at karen.besser@gmail.com, so that we know how many cookies, cucumber sandwiches and festive candies to have on hand.

THIRD WEDNESDAY LUNCH AT GOODWIN HOUSE-ALEXANDRIA on December 17 at noon in the Fillmore room. Please join us for luncheon and conversation. RSVP to Mother Susan (sparsons@icoh.net) if you are not a resident of Goodwin House, and to Susan Kernan (skernan40@aol.com) if you are a resident.

Upcoming Schedule for Advent and Christmastide

December 21	8:00 a.m.	<i>Fourth Sunday of Advent with Holy Eucharist Rite I</i>	Zabriskie Chapel
	10:00 a.m.	<i>Lessons and Carols with Holy Eucharist Rite II</i>	Immanuel Chapel
	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

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 and clicking our **Red SignUp Genius Button** or scanning the QR code at left. 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!**



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.



CHRISTMAS GREENS, FLOWERS and MUSIC DEDICATIONS

This Christmas season you are invited to make a donation to help offset the cost of our Christmas greens and flowers, and/or the special music at our Christmas Eucharists. To make a memorial or thanksgiving donation for a loved one, or to make a thanksgiving dedication for some blessing, please complete and send this form along with your check to the Parish Office or place it in the alms box in the narthex. Names will be printed in our Christmas bulletins for all donations received **by noon** on **WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 17TH**. Please print all names very clearly, or email names to DEDICATIONS@ICOH.NET. Any amount is welcome and appreciated.



GREENS/FLOWERS: \$ _____

Given by:

Phone Number: () _____

In Thanksgiving for:

In Memory of:



CHRISTMAS MUSIC: \$ _____

Given by:

Phone Number: () _____

In Thanksgiving for:

In Memory of:

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

ICOH.net



DEDICATIONS@ICOH.NET

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. *First Sunday in October, November & December 2025*
 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