

THE ALMOND TREE

NEWSLETTER OF IMMANUEL CHURCH-ON-THE-HILL



March 2020

In This Issue...

FROM THE RECTOR

The Rev. J. Randolph Alexander, Jr. writes about the value of gathering together in community 2

FROM THE ASSOCIATE RECTOR

The Rev. Susan Parsons offers a Lenten reflection on surviving through tough times 3

THE REV. PATTY ALEXANDER INSTALLED AS RECTOR OF SAINT DUNSTAN'S, BETHESDA 4

THE MORE THE MERRIER: Recent Celebrations at Immanuel Offered Fellowship, Fun, and Learning Opportunities

The Rev. Dr. Frank Wade leads a forum hour on his latest book *Biblical Fracking* 5

Family Night is Now *Fellowship Night*: Godly Play Storyteller Sarah Glassco describes giving a demonstration of the program to adults and youth at Immanuel's first Fellowship Night 6

The Center Pole thanks Immanuel and shares its story of success 8

A New Deacon in the Diocese: Photos of the Rev. Deacon Sam Sheridan's ordination 10

The Zabriskie Society debuts new logo over cocktails in the Scott Lounge 11

Help Needed, Help Offered by Immanuelites *Plus* A New Change to The Almond Tree 12

Laissez les bons temps rouler: Immanuel's Senior Adult Ministry hosts a Mardi Gras Dinner Party with true Louisiana flair 13

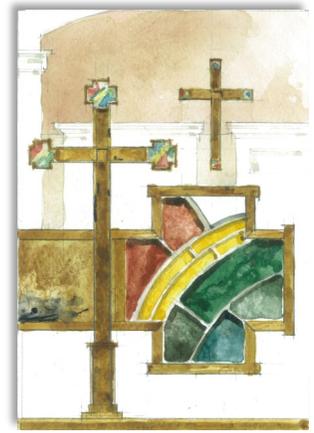
HILL HAPPENINGS 17

DEDICATIONS FOR EASTER FLOWERS, MUSIC AND A STRING QUINTET 19



From The Rector

THE VALUE OF GATHERING TOGETHER



As any of the folks who sing in our choirs or serve as acolytes know, we gather before our services for a prayer. I often say something in those prayers along the lines of “thank you, Lord God, for the privilege of gathering today as your people.” I really mean that prayer, but it is easy to take that gathering for granted, and for the prayer to become almost perfunctory.

I don't think I will ever take the privilege of gathering together for granted again, whenever we emerge from this pandemic and the social distancing it has required. As I have said before, we are a parish who like each other (thank God!); we shake hands and hug and kiss and pat each other on the back. We support each other through good and bad, we pray together, we anoint, and we weep together. So much of that, of course, seems now very off-limits. It is almost as if part of our Lenten observance this year has included giving up far more than saying Alleluia. It has involved giving up gathering, itself.

This is, of course, how it must be. We are all working to flatten the curve of disease progression, with the hope that this mitigation will allow our health care system not to be overwhelmed.

Where is God in this? Right here with us, as our parish name itself, Immanuel, reminds us. Our God, who took on our very flesh in Jesus Christ, is no stranger to suffering, disease, and death, and thank God for that. Our God is with us in every kindness we can offer one another, whether through a wave or through a digital greeting. God shows up when we check on those who might be alone, or afraid, or ill. God shows up as we name our fears nakedly and honestly. God shows up when we remind each other that all shall be well, and to remain calm and hopeful, even as we acknowledge our fear, our anger, and our confusion.

We will, of course, make clear announcements about our schedule changes, electronic offerings, and ways to be involved.

Thank God for the community of Immanuel, whether we are meeting in person or through various forms of communication media. Let's take care of one another, let's take care of the stranger (whatever form that stranger might take), let's pray, let's believe, let's share, and let's never again take for granted the great privilege of gathering together.

God bless you all,

Randy

The Rev. J. Randolph Alexander
RECTOR



From The Associate Rector



SURVIVING YOUR WILDERNESS EXPERIENCE A Lenten Reflection

Just outside the door on the deck is a small tree that was most surely dead when I first gazed upon it at a friend's house. So dead it was given away by the friend. All of fall and through the winter it sat bare limbed, looking dreary. With spring, it has come alive, first with green buds, which have now become tinged with a hint of pink. Green. To me that's what spring is; it is

green. Not pink or yellow, it's that new green that is everywhere right now if you have eyes to see it. Green is supple, juicy, and alive with possibility.

But the green of new life is hard to see at the moment. Of course, we are in Lent. The church has sticks instead of flowers, our music is subdued, and most of us are at the stage where we are wondering what possessed us to choose this particular Lenten discipline. Most years, the world around us seems to be taunting our austerity, but not this year, the whole world is in Lent, even if they would not understand or talk about the current financial and health crisis as a Christian discipline. We are in a wilderness; threatened, uncertain, maybe frightened.

As people of God, as followers of Jesus, we know how to survive in the wilderness, we know the way out. We've the stories of our ancestors, we know what Jesus did, we've survived our own wildernesses before. We pray, we resist the temptation to do evil, though it is enticing, we remember to thank God for our blessings and for what God has done for us, we pray, we stay together with calls and email and even - gasp - snail mail. We worship, online or alone or with family. And we pray.

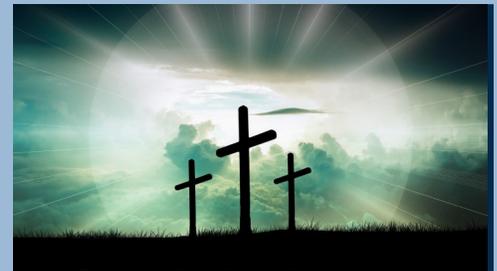
God is flowing through us, reminding us endlessly, of the power we have to engage the darkness out there and the dark within us - the guilt, loss, grief, or whatever it is that is haunting us. The fresh, new green of creation promises resurrection.

If you wish to have someone to stand with you, to hear about your wilderness experience, call or email me.

May the fresh green of new life in Christ flow through us all.

Susan

THE REV. SUSAN D. PARSONS
Associate Rector



*God is flowing through us,
reminding us endlessly, of the
power we have to engage the
darkness out there and the dark
within us - the guilt, loss, grief, or
whatever it is that is haunting us.*

The Reverend Patricia Phaneuf Alexander Installed as Rector

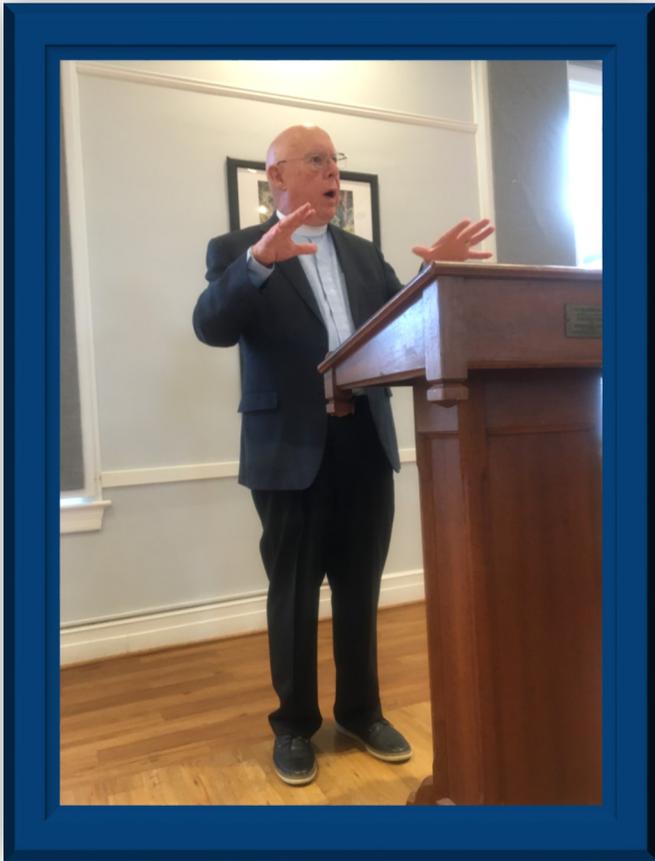
SAINT DUNSTAN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
Bethesda, Maryland
December 7, 2019



From left to right, front row: The Rev. Patricia Phaneuf Alexander, Phyllis Sims, Caroline Bergmark, Francine Wargo, Keith June, Jim Wise. *Left to right, back row:* The Rev. David Crosby, Chrissy Crosby, Danette “Dani” Kauffman, Mike Eaton, Dodd Sims, Doug Onley; Diane Adams; and The Rev. J. Randolph Alexander.

Quite a few Immanuelites were in attendance on December 7th for the Celebration of New Ministry and Installation of the Rev. Patty Alexander as Rector of St. Dunstan’s in Bethesda. The Rev. Randy Alexander preached, we gathered for this photo afterwards, and a festive reception followed.

LARGE TURNOUT AT FORUM HOUR WITH BOOK SIGNING

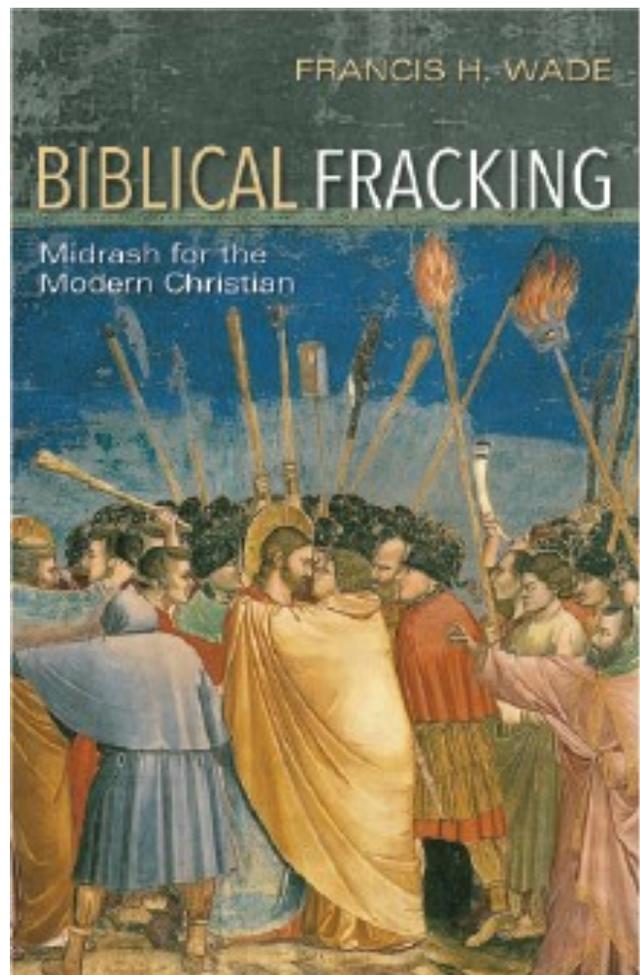


The Rev. Dr. Frank Wade is a graduate of The Citadel and Virginia Theological Seminary. He served congregations in his native West Virginia for seventeen years before twenty-two years at St. Alban's Parish on the grounds of the Washington National Cathedral. He has taught at two seminaries and twice served as chaplain to the General Convention of the Episcopal Church. Previous books include *The Art of Being Together* and *Transforming Scripture*, as well as several sermon anthologies.

This past December, over seventy parishioners packed into the Zabriskie Parish Hall to hear Immanuel's Priest Associate, the Rev. Dr. Frank Wade, led a forum hour highlighting his latest book, *Biblical Fracking: Midrash for the Modern Christian*, and a possible approach to deeper Biblical understanding that it represents.

The forum was well received, with several arriving with books they purchased in advance; and Frank's wife, Kerry Kelly Wade, sold nearly 40 books on site.

We know of two parishioners who purchased signed copies as surprise Christmas gifts for their spouses!



GODLY PLAY INTERGENERATIONAL WORKSHOP

At Fellowship Night on February 16, the Fairchild Room was packed with adults and youth for a workshop I led, to share with them the experience of Godly Play.

Godly Play was designed for children, but adapted from the adult Ignatian Contemplation model of meditation, using imagination to “live” the experience of a Bible story. For 16 years we have used Godly Play as part of Immanuel’s worship for our 3-7 year-olds, but few adults in the parish have attended Godly Play sessions.

Godly Play uses sacred stories from the Bible. Wooden figures of people and animals, models of buildings, and other objects help children visualize the story. After each story, the teller and listeners wonder together about questions suggested by the narrative, e.g., What happened here? How did the people feel? How did God’s actions affect the people’s lives?

Through wondering, the children begin to form their own ideas of God, how God works, and what that means for them. They can “replay” this story or another, or respond with art.

Lessons begin with centering and silence, lighting a candle, and a prayer. I chose The Exile and Return as the story for this workshop. Using a sandbox representing the desert, I began...The desert is a dangerous place. No one goes there unless they have to...

People watched intently as I drew the outline of Jerusalem and the Temple, then moved the wooden “People of God” into the desert, their feet crunching in the sand. I dropped a heavy chain across the desert, symbolizing the barriers to returning. The exiled people wept in Babylon and turned toward Jerusalem to pray. The conquerors destroyed the temple, twice. Finally the people were allowed to return to Jerusalem, but some stayed behind because they had learned that



(Left to right) Sarah Glassco demonstrates a multi-sensory teaching technique as Rick Glassco, Hartley Hobson Wensing, and Matt Haskin look on.



God was with them wherever they went.

The story was followed by theological wondering and the changing of the light, a beloved ritual where watch the smoke from the snuffed candle spread out into the room, just as we each carry God's light out into the world.

— Sarah Glassco, Godly Play Storyteller



Photos courtesy of Kevin Wensing.



The Center Pole Thanks Immanuel



December 4, 2019

Many Thanks to Immanuel Church, the Outreach Committee and all the Parishioners:

Center Pole would like to thank you for your continuing support for our community food bank on the Crow Indian Reservation.

Center Pole was originally founded as an Immanuel Outreach project by Daniel M. Kelly, Nancy Kelly and Andy Biache, twenty years ago, all who have died in the last several years. Audrey Rosselot, who also died, was an avid supporter and member of Immanuel.

The work at Center Pole is carried on by the next generation: Susie Kelly, Derek Kelly, Chris Kelly and Peggy Wellknown Buffalo and her children, clan children and grand children.

Here is a report on what you helped us create and the outlook for the future. I have also attached a pdf of our 2020 project, a redesign of our infrastructure and a new Sustainable Indigenous Discovery Center. Center Pole's food program started with a simple mission twenty years ago: Peggy Wellknown Buffalo wanted to feed hungry children on her reservation located in rural southeastern Montana.

She knew that without enough food, there was little to no chance of peace, empowerment, success, sovereignty or healthy ways in the community. As a reservation resident all her life, she knew the pain of hunger, what she calls "the worst pain." If one is hungry, one cannot think of anything else but short term survival.

Until the mid-20th Century, Crows were master growers, hunters and gatherers and produced their own food. They shared their bounty in the community and had the competitive edge over local non-Indian farmers.

In the 1920s, a series of government laws tied Native food producers hands and then the plague of 1960s government entitlement programs set in.



Today, Center Pole is working to rekindle the native entrepreneurial spirit in the area of food production and in creating a reservation food economy. Center Pole is training a workforce of Native interns in food sovereignty (growing, composting, gathering, hunting), traditional foods, agritourism and non-profit management. Many were previously homeless and unemployed. Many are parents with children to support. Some are recovering addicts. Some are college students. All are our "food interns." (See photo below) This transition to food independence is not immediate and solving the hunger issue here takes multiple approaches, since twenty-five per cent of children on Indian reservations are currently hungry every day.

In addition to its food sovereignty approach, Center Pole has developed a reservation-based system to transport and distribute "recovery foods," otherwise wasted, about-to-expire food that food outlets in Billings are



required to remove from their shelves. Forty percent of food produced in the United States ends up in the dump. That is 133 billion pounds a year. Center Pole simply redistributes these foods to the hungry on reservations. Remaining vegetable matter is composted to regenerate our soil.

Currently, Center Pole transports and distributes about 120,000 pounds of recovery foods per month, over a million pounds per year. Food is distributed from the Center Pole's warehouse in Garryowen every weekday and is also transported into the communities of Crow Agency and Lodge Grass on the Crow Indian Reservation and Busby and Lane Deer on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation. (See photo page 8.) During the distribution, a meal or snack is served for the elders and other in need of the community. In the month of November, we served food boxes to 8,563 community members.

For a year and a half, we were hauling our recovery foods in an old horse trailer and truck until last week when an organization called Foundation for Community Vitality in Billings gave us a food truck. This summer, Susie's brother Derek, built us a "coolbot," an insulated storage room cooled by air conditioners that costs about 1/10 of the cost of commercial refrigeration.

This food is sorely needed right now because of the situation in the Crow community. One thousand tribal jobs were lost, when the tribe shut down, the only grocery store and the tribal building burned, and homes were flooded. Sounds bad and it is, but the Northern Cheyenne situation seems more bleak with homeless people living in a ditch, cooking in #10 cans, over open fires.

We thank you for your help and continuing support.

Sincerely,

Peggy Wellknown Buffalo

Peggy Wellknown Buffalo, Executive Director, The Center Pole

Susie Kelly

Susie Kelly, Program Director, The Center Pole



The Center Pole is a Native non-profit organization founded in 1999. The campus is located at the foot of the Little Big Horn Battlefield National Monument on the Crow Indian Reservation in Montana. Originally a youth development organization, we have expanded our work to include projects for a stronger Crow community.

The expansion includes an alternative energy demonstration project, work in the area of food sovereignty, a digital archives, an indigenous media and education center and a radio station to give the Crow people a voice.

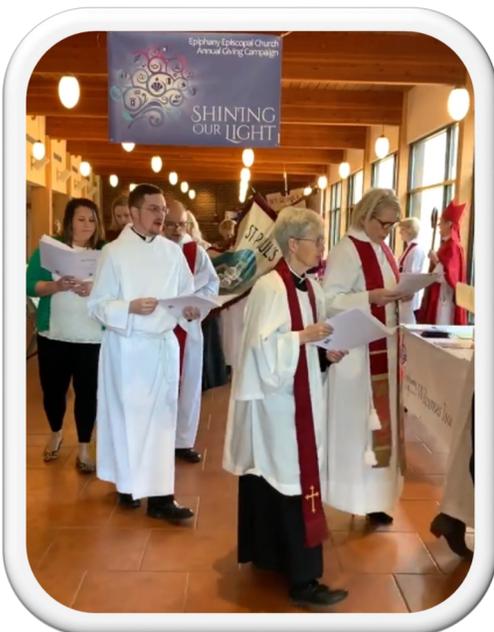
Founder and Executive Director Peggy White Wellknown Buffalo, (far left) gives food to people in need.

A New Deacon in the Diocese

One of our Seminarians, Sam Sheridan, was ordained to the transitional diaconate at Epiphany Episcopal Church, Oak Hill, Virginia, on Saturday, March 7th.



Two largest photos courtesy of Doug Onley



Screen shot of processional courtesy of Epiphany's Facebook page:
<https://www.facebook.com/EpiphanyEpiscopalOakHill/videos/2472269296422313/>

Zabriskie Society

Thirty-three members of Immanuel's Zabriskie Society and guests attended a reception on Saturday, February 29 to celebrate, thank and honor all Zabriskie Society members for their generosity and confidence in the future of Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill.

Zabriskie Society members socialized, enjoyed hors d'oeuvres, champagne, entertaining music and thoughtful comments by the Rev. Randy Alexander. He told memorable stories of the founding visionaries, as well as the vital work of other past and present members of the Zabriskie Society.

The Rector also called guests' attention to the new identification or logo for the Zabriskie Society. He noted the importance of the "infinity" symbol in our identification to stress the enduring and unending spirit of Immanuel's ministry and mission.



(Left-to-right) Front row, seated: C. Kerry Kelly Wade, Danette "Dani" Kauffman, the Rev. Randy Alexander, Tony Rogers, Dick Hobson and Kay Hobson/ **Second row:** Jan Campbell, Patricia Rogers, Chandley McDonald, Sally Guy Brown, Agnes Soos, Debbie Hewson, Alisa Biache, and The Rev. Dr. Frank Wade/ **Third row:** Shawn Whitman, Mark Fearer, Marie Repsher, Hugh Campbell, Ken McDonald, Melinda Ashton, Tom Brown, Tom Hewson, Richard Rogers, Jamie Conrad, Andy Biache, and Brad Ashton

The Zabriskie Society recognizes parishioners who have made Immanuel or one of its trust funds a beneficiary of their will or other planned giving program. There is no minimum gift amount required for a gift from your estate to become a member of the Zabriskie Society.

More than 60 current and former living parishioners have made a commitment to support Immanuel's ongoing mission and ministry to the community and the world.

You, too, can become a member of the Zabriskie Society. For more information, contact Danette "Dani" Kauffman, Vestry Steward for Planned Giving at danettekauffman@starpower.net

Help Needed, Help Offered for Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill

During this period, we recognize that some members of our community may need help with some activities they normally would do themselves - especially those of us who are at a higher risk of serious complications from any respiratory disease. At the same time, we know that we are a community of people who are willing, ready, and able to offer help. In order to connect those who need help with those who can do so, we're starting an online shared document - [available through a shared form online](#) - that our parishioners can use to ask for help and offer to help.

For those of you who are less familiar with using an online document like this, you can also email Kathryn Jackson Haskin at kathryn.jackson41@gmail.com, and she'll add your request to the list. Please include your name, a brief description of the request, and the best phone number or email address to reach you.

If you are someone who is willing to help with different tasks and you believe you can do so without putting yourself at risk, we encourage you to visit the spreadsheet to see what's needed.

Additionally, if you have a request that you are not comfortable sharing with others in a public forum like this online spreadsheet, please know that our Rector and Associate Rector are available to be contacted directly. They will keep needs discussed private, and they can also help facilitate getting those needs met with as much discretion and privacy as possible.

If you have any questions - on either the help needed or help offered - please contact Kathryn at the email above. If you do not have internet access, feel free to call Father Randy at (703) 370-6555 ext.#201 or Mother Susan at ext.#202.

Now We'll Have it Both Ways: One Newsletter Becomes TWO Publications



Many readers like having a monthly newsletter — with a focus on events — while others praise us for the longer, thicker issues with more than one feature article. You've spoken, and we've listened, so now we're giving you two publications to satisfy everyone's needs.

Our beloved newsletter, **THE ALMOND TREE**, will expand to a quarterly magazine beginning this June, with an emphasis on feature articles that have a unique, Immanuel-community connection, and expanded coverage from our church ministries. In addition, we will offer a smaller news bulletin *This Month at Immanuel* that will focus on the activities and events taking place on our church calendar each month. Both publications will be issued electronically and in print, with plenty of hard copies available for pick-up at Zabriskie.

Finally, a note on our magazine's feature article saluting Immanuel's veterans: Since the deadline has long passed, we can't accept any new names; however, we will expand the stories of those who previously submitted names of veterans, as our new magazine format will allow us the space. We encourage all who have *previously submitted* names to include up to a full page on your/ your veteran's service experience.



Laissez les Bons Temps Rouler!

On Saturday, February 22nd, the most jovial revelers in all of Alexandria were “letting the good times roll” at the Senior Adult Ministry’s Mardi Gras dinner party in the parish hall.

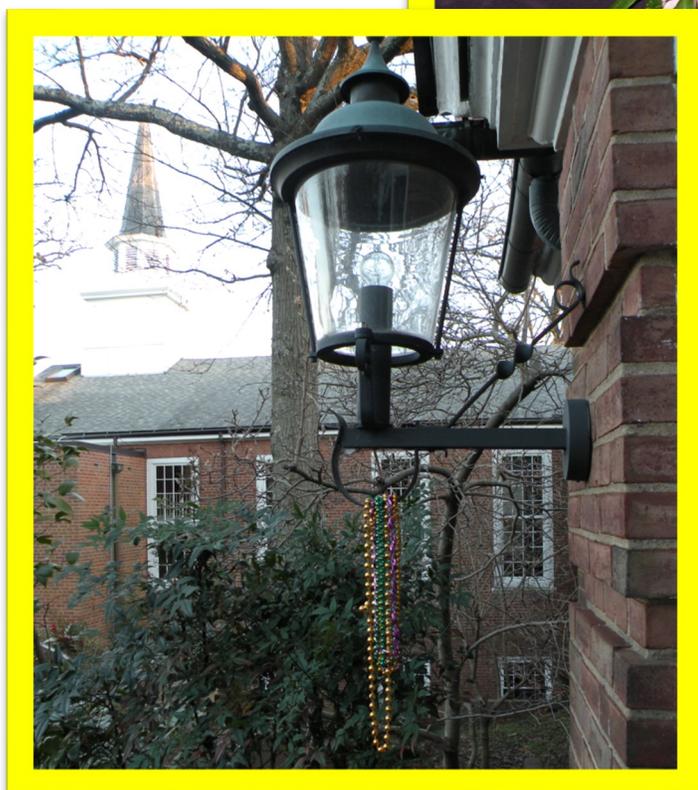


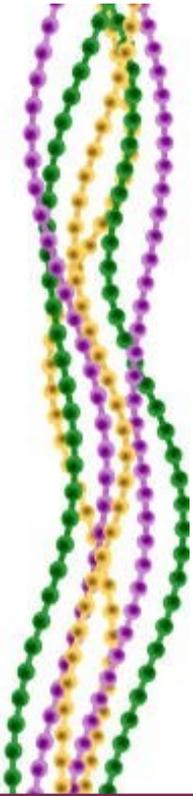
Filled to capacity, a great time was had by all who attended the Senior Adult Ministry's Mardi Gras Dinner Party on the lucky date of 2-22-20. Revelers feasted on shrimp creole, chicken andouille and sausage jambalaya, and vegan nola red beans and rice; followed by the traditional king cake. Entertainment host and juggler Barry Sperling held center stage and assisted juggler/uni cyclist Scott Dineen. Music set the festive mood throughout the entire evening, courtesy of the Dave Miller Jazz Band.

Trivia games taught us all about the popular sayings and traditions of the pre-Lenten celebration, and revealed the symbolism of the traditional Mardi Gras colors: Purple - the color of royalty, symbolized "justice", Gold for "power", and (fittingly) Green symbolized "faith".

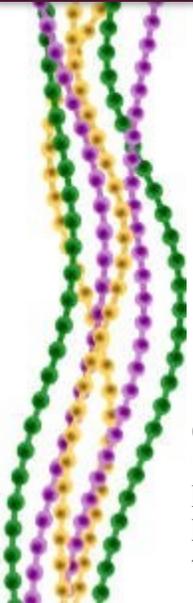


(Left to right) Jessi MacLeod and Rosi Urbine greet our Mardi Gras Queen, Chandley McDonald.

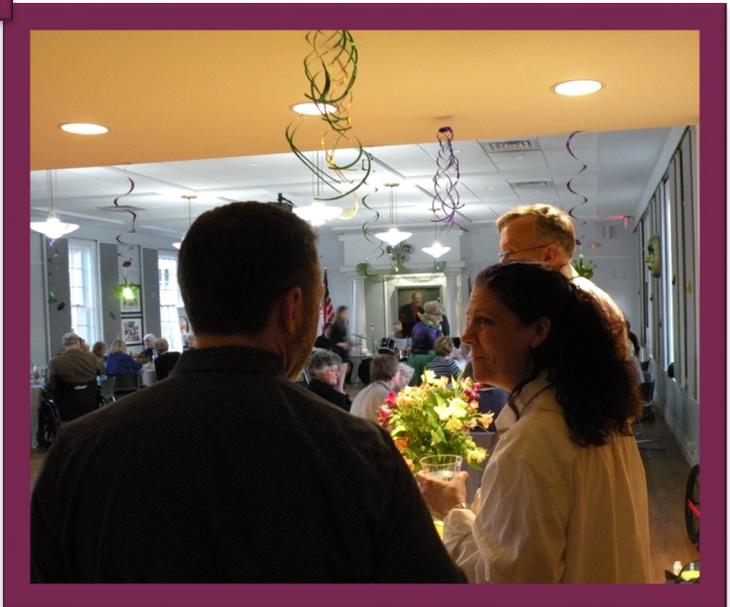




Jim and Nancy Wise.



(Left to right) Shawn Whitman, Vestry Steward for Senior Adult Ministry and Pastoral Care, chats with Caroline Bergmark and Dodd Sims, who are tending bar.





Chandley McDonald and Jim Clausen: Queen and King of the Mardi Gras

(Left to right) Waiter Sofia shares a laugh with fellow waiters Nicky, and his sister Isabella



Bartender Dodd Sims poses with his wife, Master of Ceremony Phyllis Sims



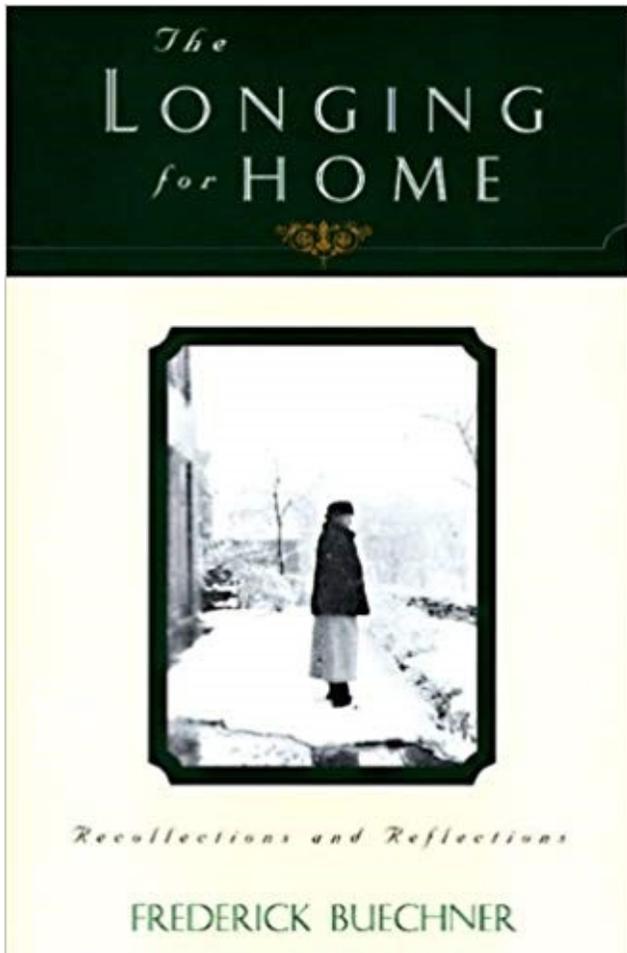
HILL HAPPENINGS

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

Though we must suspend our Lenten Book Group for the moment, let's continue reading the book together. And those of you who haven't read it can now still join us. Then, when we are all together (physically) again we'll gather to rejoice and reflect on this powerful book.

JOIN OUR LENTEN BOOK GROUP

The Longing For Home: Recollections and Reflections by Frederick Buechner



For Frederick Buechner, the meaning of home is twofold: As a word, it not only recalls the place where we grew up and that had much to do with the people we eventually became, but also points ahead to the home we long for: the home we find in God. *The Longing for Home* aims to create space for the Holy Spirit to provide clarity and guidance to those who search for meaning in a world that all too often seems meaningless.

Several gently-used books can be purchased for only \$6 from Mother Susan or Aleta weekdays in the Parish Office. To purchase a copy, email office@icoh.net with "Lenten Book" in the subject heading.



The Parish's annual **Shrine Mont** weekend is an unparalleled opportunity to get away from civilization, really get to know other Immanuelites, and grow spiritually. As in past years, we have reserved Shrine Mont for **Memorial Day weekend, May 23rd-25th**.

If you've treasured the event and wondered how you could give back, you're in luck — we are looking for volunteers to help organize this year's weekend. Please contact the Senior Warden, Keith June (keithjune@earthlink.net), or Jamie Conrad (jamie_conrad11@comcast.net) if you would like to be involved. We also ask that you start thinking now about whether you will be attending and how many members of your

Good Friday appeal to support Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem hospitals: Immanuel has a longstanding relationship with the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem, including many Immanuel pilgrims who have worshipped with Palestinian Episcopalians in the Holy Land as well as hosting seminarian Halim Shukir and parishioner Hossam Naoum (now Bishop Coadjutor of the Diocese of Jerusalem). Please consider participating in a Good Friday appeal to support one of that Diocese's many important ministries -- medical and rehabilitation support to poor Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank -- through these two Diocesan hospitals: the Jerusalem Princess Basma Center and the Ahli Arab Hospital, Gaza City. To learn more about these important ministries, visit our website <https://afedj.org/>. Immanuel pilgrims in 2018 visited and were very impressed with the Princess Basma rehabilitation center for children with disabilities. These facilities are meeting pressing medical and rehabilitation needs of large numbers of Palestinians that have seen significant uncertainties in support over the past few years. They would benefit immensely from your help. Please make contributions on-line at the AFEDJ website. Thank you.



YOUTH CONFIRMATION CLASS NOW FORMING: All youth — 8th grade and above — who have yet to be confirmed are encouraged to contact the parish office and sign-up for our Spring confirmation class. Confirmation is scheduled for Sunday, June 14th.

All event schedules are subject to change as directed by the Diocese of Virginia.

EASTER DEDICATIONS 2020

As 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. Names will be printed in the Easter Celebration bulletins for all dedications. Please print all names very clearly, or email to **DEDICATIONS@ICOH.NET**.



EASTER FLOWERS: \$ _____

Given by: _____

Phone Number: () _____

In Thanksgiving for: _____

In Memory of: _____



EASTER MUSIC: \$ _____

Given by: _____

Phone Number: () _____

In Thanksgiving for: _____

In Memory of: _____

Easter Strings Quintet at Immanuel

Please indicate your special gift below with a checkmark . Sponsors and Patrons are listed on our website's Music page for at least three months.

Strings Sponsor \$100

Strings Patron \$200



In Thanksgiving for: _____

In Memory of: _____

Look for Our NEW QUARTERLY The Almond Tree: A Magazine of Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill to debut this June!

www.icoh.net

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



Easter Celebration and Worship

Schedule Updates -- As They Happen -- On Our Website

www.ICOH.net

Worship schedule subject to change as directed by the Diocese of Virginia