

Hello Immanuel EYC!!

a brief introductory letter from Fr Sam

TO IMMANUEL EYC

From the new Assistant Rector

First off, I really mean to be writing to the Jr and Sr high schoolers. (If you're a parent there's no reason you can't read this but also, like, please help me get it to your teenager or teenagers.)

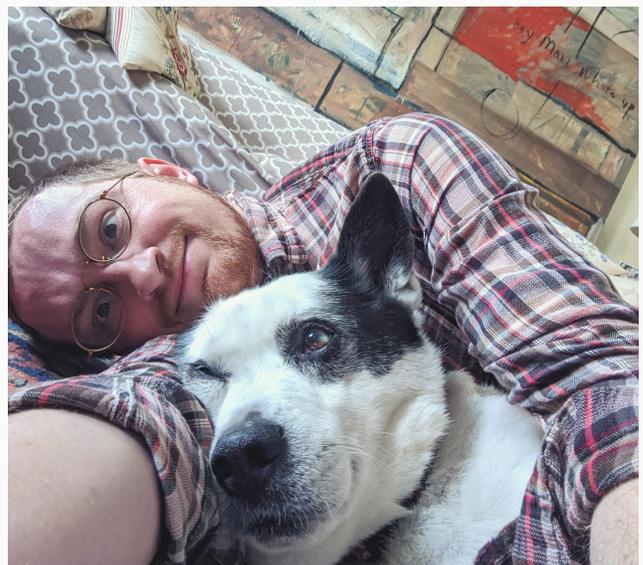
Next: it's a little weird to be introducing myself because I know a bunch of you. Before starting at Immanuel this month I was serving... here at Immanuel as a seminarian who just wanted to preach somewhere my last year of Seminary, and before that I was serving... here at Immanuel as an intern last summer.

So I'm new and meeting people, but many of you have already seen me around quite a bit. I'm going to tell you a little about myself anyway and then you'll see at the end that I want to learn a little about you!

I answer to either Sam or Father Sam, and I am, for the next couple of weeks, a Deacon. If you google what a Deacon, even what an Episcopal Deacon is, the answers are mostly wrong. So to give you an idea; what I *vowed* to do was to live under authority of my bishop, to pray and study scripture, to help and serve those in need, to pattern my life after Christ as I am best able, and to do these things not because of how great Sam is but because of how great Jesus is! That's what I mean by Deacon.



I also just got married. My wife, Mary Margaret, is the Assistant Rector at St Matthew's in Sterling. We have her cat, Raiford (next page), who is named after a historically black disco in Memphis where he was found, and my puppy Ajax (pictured below) who lived with my parents for 3 YEARS while I was in dumb grad-school and couldn't be with my dog! If you have pets and go away to college I will know what you're feeling.



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Now some of you will have heard me describe some of my jobs in sermons or forums. I had a lot of jobs and I talk about them a lot and SOME of them are even interesting. I worked on a vineyard, in a wine tasting room, at a Five Star hotel, in a BBQ restaurant, as a Children and Youth Minister, as a painter, a carpenter, a playwright, a camp counselor, and (pictured here) as the floor manager of a Bronze Foundry.



I've had a lot of jobs, usually 2-3 at a time, most of them for years. Having done all those jobs, I have come to believe that often people might try to get to know you, might literally ask who you are, but what they mean is *what job do you do*. It confuses the whole notion of what a person is and makes it seem like people can only be—or be interested in—one kind of thing.

But people are more interesting. They're almost always interested in dozens or even hundreds of different things. We can't be summed up neatly in little by what we've done or been. For instance, you could know what jobs I've had but not



know about how much I love Raiford, who came with my marriage. You wouldn't know I play guitar, Minecraft, and Dungeons & Dragons. You wouldn't know how much I love Harry Potter and Star Wars, and the Discworld books.

This is my first job as a clergy person. I want to get to know everyone and that's complicated and frustrated by social distancing and quarantines. It's also complicated because some of you, mostly acolytes, have actually seen a lot of me over this past year. So we aren't all starting in the same place.

But I do want to get to know you. As we plan EYC events and activities and we navigate the rules and safety procedures of this very uncomfortable time, I'll be interested in learning who you are. That might mean books you love, games you play, dreams you have... I'll be delighted to get to know whatever you feel like sharing. I'm already really excited to be at Immanuel, and I'm thrilled to start even this very weird year with you. Whether it's zoom or six feet away at the church, I look forward to seeing you soon!

In peace
Fr Sam