

Be the light

NOVEMBER 2023

GOOD NEWS

A monthly publication of Immanuel Lutheran



Pastor's Monthly Message

Navigating Forgiveness

by Pastor Rebecca Craig

As Christians, we understand that grace and forgiveness are at the core of our theology. We look to Jesus, who cried "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do," even as he was dying on the cross. We hear we are to forgive seventy times seven in Matthew 18.

In last month's newsletter, Pastor Chad even highlighted how it's a good thing most of us do not have our worst moments held against us.

However, I think it's important to also acknowledge that sometimes our worst moments can cause immense harm to others, and while as Christians we are called to forgive those who harm us, we cannot forget that forgiveness is a process. Even Jesus outlined a process regarding forgiveness for the body of believers that involved accountability and repentance. His steps involved going to the individual (if it's safe), then taking it to a smaller group to address, and then finally the wider community if the first two failed. Forgiveness came after the person repented.

Now, we know that you will not always get repentance from someone who has wronged you, and forgiveness at that point becomes more about you just being able to release the anger and hurt that holds you captive. This becomes more about your own liberation from the harm they have done.

As someone who has worked a lot with abuse and trauma victims, I want us to make sure we are careful and mindful of this process so that we never

shame a victim into trying to forgive before some of these steps have been completed.

Desmond Tutu, in his "Book of Forgiving," outlines a few of these steps. The first two involve telling the truth and telling your story. Silencing victims and then expecting or shaming them into forgiving without the ability to publicly tell their story or tell the truth about what happened is its own form of spiritual abuse and re-victimizes and traumatizes the person who was harmed/wronged. We many times see this happening in the church, trying to cover up and hide embarrassing situations and then shaming the victim into forgiving without any of this accountability.

While the ultimate goal of forgiveness is of course to have reconciliation, just like the reconciliation we have with Christ, that is not always safe or possible in the midst of our human messiness and we must recognize that reality. Sometimes forgiveness when there is a lack of repentance on the part of the wrong-doer and/or a continued pattern of behavior that goes unchanged, involves releasing the relationship as the necessary outcome. Asking an abuse victim to forgive an abuser when they're going to just turn around and do the abuse all over again is its own form of abusive behavior.

Also, given forgiveness is a process, it takes people time and there is no timetable on how long it takes someone to get there. Telling people to "get over it" or "move on,"

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Pastor's Message

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especially when these steps have not been followed or completed, is dismissive and harmful.

Jesus didn't hide the scars of his abuse. He bore them at his resurrection for all to see. Forgiveness did not wipe away the reality of what happened. In fact, Jesus forces us to confront and wrestle with the scars of his abuse. He won't let us ignore what happened to him. We can't pretend the crucifixion wasn't a thing.

What Jesus' forgiveness did, however, was create a path forward. It created a future. The relationship between the victim and the offender will most likely forever be changed, so forgiveness does not mean things go back to the way they were. There may be a new way forward, but it will be different from before.

Luckily for us, along with that forgiveness from Jesus comes a new life and a new creation, where hopefully not only the things we've done to others are forgotten, but that the traumas and wrongs that have been done *to us* will be wiped away as well, forging that new future and new relationship. ■



Fall Painting Party



Saturday, Nov. 11

1-3 pm

Stuart Fellowship Hall

Cost: \$20

11x14 all supplies provided

Proceeds will go toward beautification efforts at the Stuart site.
Snacks & Champagne Punch provided or BYOB

Sign up online & pay w/ pushpay or paypal
ilcbethelight.org/paintingparty
or sign up sheets in the Palm City lobby or Stuart Fellowship Hall.
Checks made payable to Immanuel w/ painting party in memo
Must pay in advance to secure your seat.



It's time to order those beautiful, long-lasting wreaths and swags for Christmas decorating! Catalogues and order forms are available in the narthex or visit the website: sherwoodfundraiser.com/ ILCPalmCity Make checks payable to Immanuel Lutheran Church.
Deadline, Nov. 6 for local delivery, Nov. 9 for direct delivery.

Save the Date

16th Annual
Festival of Trees & Lights

November 14th - 18th

The Flagler of Stuart
201 SW Flagler Ave, Stuart

Featured Special Events

Wednesday, November 15
Joy to the Girls

Friday, November 17
A Not So Silent Night
"Black Tie & Blue Jeans"
Held at Rockin' H Ranch

Saturday, November 18
Family Day
Breakfast & Photos with Santa

Tykes & Teens is a registered 501c3 not-for-profit agency providing mental health services to children and their families regardless of ability to pay.

Benefiting: **tykes & teens**

Tykes & Teens has been a leading provider of the highest quality evidence-based mental health services and programs for children and adolescents for more than 25 years with the goal of strengthening local families by ensuring that all children have access to high-quality counseling and mental health services, regardless of financial status.

To download the event schedule and/or purchase tickets, visit their website at:

tykesandteens.org/festival-of-trees-2023

Immanuel will again be participating with a tree themed: **BE THE LIGHT!** If you'd like to contribute, simply put "festival of tree of lights" in the memo of your donation

PRESCHOOL UPDATE

by Natalie Davis

Fall is here and the fun festivities have begun. Teachers have been working hard teaching the children their ABC's and 123's. The classrooms are fully decorated with Fall décor created by the children. October was spooktacular, filled with treats and laughs. As we move into November, we will celebrate Thanksgiving and have a feast. We will also begin to prepare for our annual Christmas program. We are super excited for these next few months. As always, we appreciate your continued support. Have an amazing November.

CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL

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shipperpete@gmail.com

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& Small Groups**

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lovymille@comcast.net

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Jodi Dudeney

jldportstlucie@aol.com

Christmas Decorating



Palm City

Sunday, November 26 - 12:30 pm
Lunch & cookie exchange after 11:15 worship
Bring a dozen cookies to exchange with others.

Stuart

Sunday, December 3 - 11:00 am
Chili & cornbread lunch w/cookie exchange
Bring a dozen cookies to exchange with others.

New Partners in Ministry Class

Thursday, November 9th at 6 pm

Sign up sheets are in the Palm City Narthex &
Stuart Fellowship hall
or contact Pr. Chad at
pastorchad@ilcbethelight.org



Mobile

Text: IPCGIVE to 77977



Online

ilcbethelight.org



Envelopes

MONTHLY GIVING REPORT

A report of our combined Palm City & Stuart giving compared to the approved budget the congregation agreed to at the annual meeting.

	September 2023	YTD 2023
Given	\$44,740.28	\$364,951.49
Budgeted	\$45,340.00	\$442,065.00
Difference	(\$599.72)	(\$77,113.51)

OPERATING FUND INCOME & EXPENSES

Our year-to-date operating income and expenses using the latest report of the treasurer.

Through 09/30/2023	ILC & IELC
Income	\$920,894.43
Expenses	\$935,111.01
Difference	(\$14,216.58)

Walking in the Light

ILC Stewardship Annual Financial Response 2023

by Paula Tsufis

"I love that Immanuel doesn't just talk about Jesus and faith, they put it into action through Family Promise, The Festival of Trees and Lights, the soup kitchen and involvement in the community. It's restored my faith in the church and why I started attending."

- Anonymous Immanuel worshiper

As followers of Jesus, we learn to give with abundant generosity reflecting God's amazing grace for us all. As we receive Christ's forgiveness, we learn how to reflect God's amazing grace to others by forgiving those who sin against us. We learn how to live out our faith in work, community outreach, financial generosity, rest, and prayer.

We "Walk in the Light" by:

- enjoying God's gifts with gratitude
- living by the teaching of Jesus
- giving generously
- giving and receiving forgiveness
- balancing rest and work

This fall you will receive a letter asking you to make an "Estimate of Giving" ("pledge") for 2024 to support Immanuel Lutheran congregation "Being the Light" in our community through faith lived out in action. This estimate assists church leadership to thoughtfully plan for ministry in the coming year.

Prayerfully consider God's call to increased financial generosity as an important commitment to walking in the light of Christ. Thank you for your continued generous support of our ministry at Immanuel!

Commitment Weekend will be December 2 & 3!



Music, Singing & Holiday Fun!
LET'S CELEBRATE JESUS

CHRISTMAS
Love & Lights
FESTIVAL

DECEMBER 8TH, 6-8 PM
IMMANUEL PALM CITY # 2655 SW IMMANUEL DRIVE

Only \$5 Donations

IMMANUEL STAFF

Lead Pastor

Chad Fair

pastorchad@ilcbethelight.org

Pastor & Media Director

Rebecca Craig

pastorrebecca@ilcbethelight.org

Deacon

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Roger Rossi

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Natalie Davis

IELCDirector@ilcbethelight.org

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Sheri Muller

sherimuller@ilcbethelight.org

Sexton

María Mejía

MONTHLY GOOD NEWS DEADLINE

The deadline to submit items for the monthly newsletter is the 15th of each month. Items received after the 15th may or may not make it into the newsletter. To submit items, send an email to:

ilcmedia2655@gmail.com

Adult Education

Deborah Circle

2nd Monday of the month
3 pm • Rm 201

Sisters in Spirit

3rd Tuesday of the month
7 pm • Panera

Word on Wednesdays

2nd Wednesday of the month
5:30 pm • Townies

Bible Study

Wednesdays • 5:30 pm
Stuart Fellowship Hall
Bring your own dinner.
Does not meet on the 2nd Wed of the month due to Word on Wed.

Fellowship & Service Ministries

Quilts of Valor

Weds 6:00 pm • Room 202
Info: Jackie Koch, 772.834.8058

Altar Guild

2nd Wednesday of the month
10 am • Room 202
Info: Marj Smith, 772.286.8974
or Belinda Lowe, 772.634.0194

Stephen Ministry

2nd Monday
6:30 pm in Room 202

Super Sundays

Every Sunday @ 4:30 pm • FDC
Immanuel's Weeks to help are the 1st, 3rd and 5th Sundays
Contact: Marcie Balow
772.283.0982 or
mbalow45@gmail.com

PLEASE UPDATE YOUR INFORMATION

Some of our member information in church windows is out of date. We would greatly appreciate it if you would please go to our website and fill out the online information form:
www.immanuelpalmcity.org/update-information

Ministries & Groups

Deborah Circle

Are you looking to expand your Biblical knowledge and draw closer to Jesus? Come to the Deborah Circle Bible study the 2nd Monday at 3PM in room 201 as we explore the gospel of Matthew. Contact Deacon Cheryl 221-8939 or 485-1954 for more information and to RSVP.

Word on Wednesdays

2nd Wednesdays • 5:30 pm at **Townies**
TAVERN

Join Pr. Rebecca for our Word on Wednesday this month at Townies Tavern in Palm City.

Next Word on Wednesday: November 8



HARLOTS & Heroines

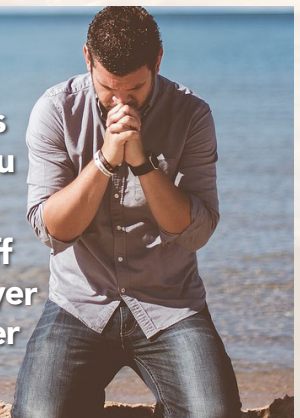
of the Bible

Every Wednesday*
5:30 PM • Stuart FH
Bring your own dinner
**Does not meet Nov. 8 or Nov. 22*

Prayer Chain Ministry

Our Immanuel prayer chain is always available to pray for you or those you know in need of prayer.

Contact Deacon Cheryl Gundersdorff
221-8939 or 485-1954 to request prayer or to become a member of our prayer team.



Souper Sundays

Immanuel Lutheran volunteers serve every first, third and fifth Sunday.

To volunteer, scan the QR code or go to ilcbethelight.org/serviceopportunities



Music Ministries

Contemporary Worship Team
Sundays @ 8 am • Sanctuary
Contact Brittany Peralta
brittanyperalta@ilcbethelight.org

Bell Choir

Contact Sandy Foley
772-240-6753

Chancel Choir

Suspended until further notice

Cornerstone Singers

Saturdays @ 5:15 pm
Sanctuary

Children's Choir/JAM

Wednesdays at 12:30 pm • FDC
Contact Brittany Peralta
brittanyperalta@ilcbethelight.org



Altar Guild Meeting

The Altar Guild will meet on Wednesday, November 8, at 10 AM in the Stuart Fellowship Hall. We will be covering the holiday schedule and will discuss our Christmas luncheon. ALL volunteers are welcome to join us in serving communion or caring for the altar. PLEASE come.

For more information, call Marj Smith at 772-286-8974 or Belinda Lowe at 772-634-0194.

Sisters in Spirit Women's Ministry



Do you want to know Jesus more than you do now? Join the ladies of Sisters in Spirit as we get to know Jesus through the Experience the Heart of Jesus Bible study. We meet the **3rd Tuesday at 7PM at Panera Bread in Palm City**. Contact Deacon Cheryl Gundersdorff 221-8939 or 485-1954 for more information and to RSVP.

STEPHEN MINISTRY

We are grateful to God for bringing us three new Stephen Minister trainees. Please keep them in your prayers as they grow in their skills over the next five months.

People who are hurting need to know that someone cares about them. This is what Stephen Ministry is all about. Stephen Ministers truly care and are great listeners. To get you connected with a Stephen Minister contact your Stephen Ministry leader: Deacon Cheryl 221-8939.



Attention Thrivent Members!

Please remember to use your Action Team benefit before the end of the year. The following programs can use your help: Snack Bags, Soup Kitchen, Tykes and Teens: Festival of Trees and perhaps an event of your choice. Please do not leave the "money" unused. For those of you, who have already used your Thrivent Benefit, Thank you!

Reminder: Your Thrivent Choice Dollars are also available until the end of March. Please direct those dollars also! Thank you!
Call Karen Coombs
772-475-3312



Immanuel

ilcbethelight.org

PALM CITY:

2655 SW Immanuel Drive
Palm City, FL 34990
772.287.8188

STUART

2200 NW Federal Hwy
Stuart, FL 34994
772.692.1171

Nonprofit
Organization
US Postage
PAID
Stuart, FL
Permit No. 144

OR CURRENT RESIDENT

Worship Schedule

Palm City

Saturdays:

6:00 pm

Relaxed Traditional

Sundays:

9:30 am Contemporary

11:15 am Traditional

*watch our livestream of
all Palm City services:*

ilcbethelight.org

Stuart

Sundays:

10:00 am Traditional

Thanksgiving Eve WORSHIP

November 22nd

6 pm @ Stuart Site

followed by

Pie Social

STUART FELLOWSHIP HALL

*If your last name begins with A-L please bring a pie and drop it off
prior to worship in the Stuart Fellowship Hall.*