

Be the light

# GOOD NEWS

JULY 2023

A monthly publication of Immanuel Lutheran



## Pastor's Monthly Message

# Slow, But Steady

by Pastor Rebecca Craig

Everyone who knows me, knows I'm not a patient person. And I learned a long time ago not to pray for more patience, because God just gives me more things to be patient about.

Admittedly some days it feels like I take two steps forward and three steps back when it comes to making some of the updates we want over at the Stuart site. I was all excited that we finally we were getting estimates in for the painting of the facility—only to find out after waiting for two weeks that one of the painters didn't want the job. So, it was back to the drawing board finding more people to come in and give estimates.

We did determine that we are going to, if possible, sell the organ at the Stuart site, as we are living into the reality that even finding an organist at the Palm City site is proving to be nearly impossible. Getting rid of the organ opens up space possibilities for us both up front as well as in the back where the speakers are, and lets us now move forward with setting up the technology upgrades we've been waiting to do.

Thanks to Pete Morello's donation, we were able to get a temporary sign in place back in May and are working on applying for the funding for a more permanent sign.

At Synod Assembly we were informed about a Vision to Action grant that we can apply for by August for up to \$25,000. We just have to come up with a ministry "project" we want that money to go toward.

Given our focus at the Stuart site will be on the 50-70 year-old range, we are putting our heads together

to consider what sort of ministry projects might target this demographic in our area. (If you have thoughts and suggestions, please feel free to bring them to me.)

I do want to give a shout-out to Belinda Lowe and Kim Shrum, both members of our congregational council, and Karen Gumm, our Stuart secretary, for all their back-breaking work and labor over at the Stuart site helping to get a lot of the stuff that was cluttering the front of the sanctuary and the Fellowship Hall back rooms cleaned out. That was a big task! Our hope is that we can get those two back rooms in good enough shape that we can put Family Promise families in them so we don't lose our entire Fellowship Hall for the week. (Seems to never fail that whenever Family Promise families are in the Fellowship Hall, it's raining outside when we try to do fellowship hour out there.)

We have had some flooring donated to us from Coastal Flooring, we just have to pick it out. Jodi Dudeney, one of our Stuart council representatives, and I have a date set up to



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## Pastor's Message

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go pick out what flooring we would like in the offices and the sacristy area.

We're also working on getting a landscaper in to spruce up the outside areas to make it more inviting. We intend on cutting a door into the men's room from the sacristy area so the only entrance isn't from outdoors.

Now that we have the 35th Anniversary, VBS, and Synod Assembly out of the way, I'm hoping to spend more time focusing on getting a lot of these other tasks done over there.

So while progress seems slow, it is steady and we are moving forward. Just maybe not as quickly as my impatient self would like. But I learned a long time ago that sometimes waiting does have its benefits and rewards. Christians should know this after two thousand years of waiting. ■

Have a  
Happy & Safe  
4th of July



## President's Message

# Visitors Welcome!

by Pete Morello, Council President

Our new parking lot at the Palm City location is moving towards completion! Thank you, congregation, for your support during this process. I would also like to thank the Council and the LIFTT committee for their ongoing work to bring this dream to life. I think we should put up a sign “CHURCH PARKING VISITORS WELCOME” some may say that the sign should say “All Are Welcome,” but I have seen that sign around some other churches and found that it might not always be true? I think a lot of people see that and scoff, knowing while they may be welcome to sit and worship, they will not necessarily be invited to participate in the life of the congregation. I truly feel that our congregation is a reflective and welcoming one, that is always looking to build relationships. That being said, why do I think that “Visitors welcome” is more appropriate? It is because we want you to visit us and share in “the good news” with us. If you find that we are the place that you feel like you can grow in your faith and strengthen your relationship with God, then please stay. If you visit with us and you are not really into the “Whole worship and sermon thing” but you feel a great need to serve at a soup kitchen, then please stay and have that grow your faith and strengthen your relationship with God. I think if we put up a sign at our new parking lot as well as verbally daily welcoming more visitors to our Immanuel Facilities Palm City and Stuart, it will help us focus on our new mission “Be the light”. Allowing us to “Be the Light” that lights the path of growth, faith, and community for the new visitors I am sure we will have.



Romans 15:7 Paul writes, “Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.” And how does God welcome us? Extravagantly! ■







## Deacon's Message

# Stephen Ministry

by Cheryl Gundersdorff, Deacon

You have seen Stephen Ministry advertised on the pre-service slides and in the print publications, but you may be wondering what Stephen Ministry is all about. The mission of Immanuel's Stephen Ministry is: "To share Jesus' unconditional love by supporting and ministering to people in need and assuring them of Jesus' healing power and presence."

Our Stephen Ministers fulfill this mission as they meet one on one with people experiencing difficult situations. What do we mean by difficult situations? Some examples are: loss of a loved one, loneliness or discouragement, unemployment or job crisis, relocation, new baby or miscarriage, hospitalization, spiritual crisis, chronic illness, aging, divorce or separation, terminal illness, recovery after an accident, recovery after a disaster. Stephen Ministers bring distinctively Christian care through confidential listening and support as they share the warmth of God's love.

This service is free of charge to Immanuel members and our community. Immanuel is one of several churches in Martin County who offer this ministry.

While life can sometimes be challenging, you don't have to go through those challenges alone. Having your own Stephen Minister is Jesus wrapping his loving arms around you. To learn more about how Stephen Ministry can help you, contact Stephen Leader Deacon Cheryl Gundersdorff 221-8939 or 485-1954, ask any Stephen Minister (they wear blue Stephen Ministry name badges), or our pastors.

If you feel the Holy Spirit is nudging you to become a Stephen Minister you can talk with any of us for more details. ■



## Stewardship Message

# Our Privilege to Partner with God

by Paula Tsufis

Why are we here? Pastor Dwight Zscheile who is the Vice President of Innovation and Professor of Congregational Mission and Leadership at Luther Seminary says in his new book *Leading Faithful Innovation: Following God into a Hopeful Future*:

"It's not actually up to us to fix the church or to solve all of the world's problems. We can't make ourselves right either. These things are God's work and we can trust that God will get it done. Meanwhile we have the privilege of partnering with God to help people make meaning out of their lives, discover the difference Jesus makes, and find their purpose as member of God's holy and eternal community."



How do we then make our focus our partnership, our relationship with God as a foundation for this work? In the gospel of Matthew, the prophetic "Immanuel" birth narrative and the ending Great Commission to make disciples assure us that God is always with us. What is our response? Following Christ, our teacher through the ancient

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## CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL

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& Small Groups

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Jodi Dudeney

jldportstlucie@aol.com

# HURRICANE PREP TEAM

It's Hurricane Season! We have many members within our community who will need assistance the next time we wind up in that dreaded "cone of uncertainty" putting up their shutters. We will also need a crew of volunteers to help put the tarps up around the church.

If you are interested in being part of our hurricane prep team that we call and mobilize in the event of an approaching hurricane, please contact Pastor Chad Fair: [pastorchad@ilcpalmcity.org](mailto:pastorchad@ilcpalmcity.org)

We now have more ways for you to give!



Mobile

Text: IPCGIVE to 77977



Online

[ilcbethelight.org](http://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.

	May 2023	YTD 2023
Given	\$32,615.82	\$213,376.60
Budgeted	\$45,340.00	\$249,360.00
Difference	(\$12,724.18)	(\$35,983.40)

### OPERATING FUND INCOME & EXPENSES

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

Through 05/31/2023	ILC & IELC
Income	\$471,155.71
Expenses	\$515,462.93
Difference	(\$44,307.22)



## Stewardship (...continued from page 3)

faith practices Scripture highlights. These practices center first on a relationship with God and then always outward towards others, our community and generosity to our church mission, the poor and needy.

### Daily Prayer

“When you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.” (Mt. 6:6)

### Weekly Worship

“Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.” (Mt. 4:10)

### Daily Bible Reading

“As for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit.” (Mt 13:23) ☆

### Serving in and beyond the Congregation

Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.” (Mt. 5:16)

### Nurturing Relationships

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’” (Mt. 22:37-39)



### Generous Giving

“If you wish to be perfect, go, sell your possessions, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.” (Mt. 19:21)

Scripture provides a very compelling answer to “Why are we here?” and an exciting focus for our future as a congregation that illuminates God’s call to relationship and a life of meaning and purpose. ■

## IMMANUEL STAFF

### Lead Pastor

Chad Fair

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### Pastor & Media Director

Rebecca Craig

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### Deacon

Cheryl Gundersdorff

[cherylgundersdorff@ilcpalmcity.org](mailto:cherylgundersdorff@ilcpalmcity.org)

### Organist & Choir Director

Vacant

### Contemporary Worship Leader

Brittany Lustig

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### Director of Early Learning Center

Rebecca Painter

[IELCDirector@ilcpalmcity.org](mailto:IELCDirector@ilcpalmcity.org)

### Children, Youth & Family Director

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### Secretary – Stuart

Karen Gumm

[ImmanuelStuartLC@gmail.com](mailto:ImmanuelStuartLC@gmail.com)

### Sexton

Leeona Reid

Text: 772-444-5148

## 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](mailto:ilcmedia2655@gmail.com)



# Children, Youth & Family

*Be a Light*



## VBS CAMP



*Be a Light*







## Children, Youth and Family

# VBS, Mission Trip & A Wedding!

by Brittany Lustig, Youth Director

Hello Immanuel! It's been a beautiful Summer so far. We had a blast during Stellar VBS! Learning about shining Jesus' light was perfect timing as we launched our new vision statement: Be The Light! God sure works in amazing ways. Thank you to everyone who helped volunteer and made our Stellar Week come true. It was one of the most beautiful spaceships I've ever seen. Also, a big thank you to our congregation that helped support our week by donating food and supplies! I appreciate you all so much. I know we're truly blessed to have such a wonderful community to share God's love with.

We just took 11 of our high school youth to Savannah, Georgia. We continue to grow in our faith and spread the word of God everywhere He allows us to. Our youth had a great time learning more about themselves and their own faith as well as being humbled throughout the community in Georgia. We worshipped together every night and we made incredible memories and connections with each other and the other churches there. Thank you to all who supported our kids. Between the fundraising and the prayers, we are truly blessed to have such incredible support.

Please send prayers my way as I enter this month ready to finalize all wedding preparations. The church is throwing me a shower too! I feel so overwhelmed with love from all of you. Thank you for continuously sharing your support and advice with me as I embark on this stage of my life. Sending my love to all of you. Have a wonderful Summer and remember to shine as we live up to Being the Light! ■

## Youth Mission Trip



WEDDING DETAILS CAN BE FOUND AT:  
TYPE IN LOWERCASE  
ZOLA.COM/WEDDING/SEMANDBRITTANY  
PASSWORD: MARRYME2023

*Brittany & Sem*



# Council SPOTLIGHT



**Roberta Virta**  
Stuart Representative

I am a child of God, blessed beyond measure. My name is Roberta Lindberg Virta, born the eldest of three children, in Duluth, Minnesota. I was baptized, confirmed, and married in Gloria Dei Lutheran Church and have been a member of the ELCA in some location since birth. I married, had two little girls, moved several times due to my husband's advancing career, and arrived in Stuart in 1986. I was fortunate to work at local Social Security offices and retired in 2009 with thirty-eight plus years of Federal Government service. My husband left in 1994, I was devastated, but God surrounded me with His love and the love and support of family and friends. In 2008, at age 38, my youngest daughter died unexpectedly of a heart attack, and once again God surrounded me with love and support. I have had multiple sclerosis for over forty years but I have been blessed with medication which has stopped its progression.

*(continued on page 9...)*



**JULY 4TH - 1 PM**  
**STUART LOCATION**

**Hot Dogs & Brats Provided**  
**Sign up to bring sides/desserts**  
**& to help with set-up, grilling & clean-up**  
**Bring a game to play!**

**Contact: Carol Heiss**  
**772-678-1371**



## SNACK BAGS

If you would like to participate in filling our "Snack Bags", give me a call so I can add you to our list. If you are Thrivent member and are not going to be using your Thrivent "Action Team" this year, please consider using it for the "Snack Bags". The requests that we have for the "bags" is so gratifying. Thanks to everyone who contributes to our "Snack Bag" ministry. Your contributions are so appreciated. As we all know, food is getting more expensive every day, so any help at all is greatly appreciated. Again, thank you all so much. We couldn't do this without you! For more information or to volunteer please call Karen Coombs at 772-475-3312





## Early Learning Center Summer Fun!

by Natalie Davis

Hey Immanuel Friends, Summer is here and we are having the best time ever. These last few weeks have flown by. We graduated our amazing VPK students, ended a fabulous school year and started having fun at summer camp. As we have transitioned into summer, our days have been filled with crafts, water play, visits from our real-life superheroes and the bubble truck. We want to personally thank Martin County Sheriff Department for taking the time to visit our students, as well as the Fire Department for showing our students what real life superheroes look like. We look forward to seeing the animals from the Hobe Sound Nature Center, a visit from Kona Ice, more waterplay days, 4th of July celebrations and lots of laughs.

Immanuel Early Learning Center has added a few amazing teachers, Ms. Camille, Ms. Maddie and Ms. Adriana. These wonderful teachers will be a great addition to our two- and three-year-old programs. Our goal is to expand the preschool and we are very excited. With this expansion, we are always looking for donations of toys and books. In addition, we have a few spots available for full-time students. Help us spread the word throughout the community, as we look to the future of receiving new friends to help, the start of shaping their future.

As always, we are very thankful to have such amazing students and most importantly amazing parents that help tremendously make our vision here at Immanuel Early Learning Center stay alive. We couldn't do it without you. ■



### **Council Spotlight** (...continued from page 8)

Today my life is full of joy and blessings. My oldest daughter lives in Jacksonville which is close enough for me to be an ever-present Grandma. My two grandchildren just turned 19 and 21 and are both in college. I love my church and church family and am honored to be a member of council since our merger. I serve as Host Coordinator for Family Promise at our site which truly is a program of "God's work, our hands." I volunteer for AARP Tax Preparation each year at the Blake Library. I serve Al-Anon Family Groups to help the family and friends of alcoholics and those suffering addiction. Politics has become a passion as I see pain and injustice all around. I continue to pray for God's guidance and His will for my life. I give Him praise and thanksgiving for my beautiful and blessed life.



## Adult Education

### Deborah Circle

2nd Monday of the month  
3 pm • Rm 201

\*not meeting during summer\*

### 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. Will not meet July 5th due to 4th of July holiday.*

## 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  
\*No July/August Meeting\*

### 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 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](http://www.immanuelpalmcity.org/update-information)

# Ministries & Groups

## 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: July 12th**



## HARLOTS & Heroines

of the Bible

Wednesday, July 19 & 26  
5:30 PM • Stuart FH  
*Bring your own dinner*  
*\*Does not meet July 5th or 12th*

## Prayer Chain Ministry

There is always a need for prayer. 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.

(From May 20-June 13 call Jill Swartz 219-2388 with requests.)





## Souper Sundays

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

To volunteer, scan the QR code or go to [ilcbethelight.org/serviceopportunities](http://ilcbethelight.org/serviceopportunities)

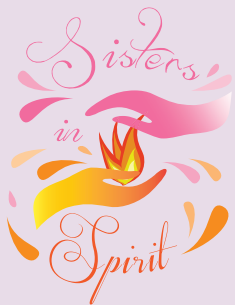


## Altar Guild Meeting

The Altar Guild does not meet in July or August, but we are always looking for volunteers to help with communion at all services at both locations.

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 will next meet **July 18th, 7 PM at Panera Bread** in Palm City. Contact Deacon Cheryl Gundersdorff 221-8939 or 485-1954 for more information and to RSVP.

## STEPHEN MINISTRY

What is the mission of Stephen Ministry? To share Jesus' unconditional love by supporting and ministering to people in need and assuring them of Jesus' healing power and presence. To learn how Stephen Ministry can help you, contact Stephen Ministry Leader Deacon Cheryl Gundersdorff 221-8939 or 485-1954, ask a Stephen Minister wearing a blue name badge, or our pastors.



## Music Ministries

**Contemporary Worship Team**  
Sundays @ 8 am • Sanctuary  
Contact Brittany Lustig  
[brittanylustig@ilcpalmcity.org](mailto:brittanylustig@ilcpalmcity.org)

**Bell Choir**  
Practices Tuesdays @ 6 pm  
Contact Sandy Foley  
772-240-6753  
\*on summer hiatus\*

**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 Lustig  
[brittanylustig@ilcpalmcity.org](mailto:brittanylustig@ilcpalmcity.org)  
\*on summer hiatus\*

## Share a Shawl



Do you know someone who could use some extra love of Jesus? Shawls knitted or crocheted by members of Immanuel are in the baskets in the Palm City lobby for you to share with them. Immanuel's prayers go with the shawls that they may feel the warmth of His loving presence.



**Immanuel**

[ilcbethelight.org](http://ilcbethelight.org)

**PALM CITY:**

2655 SW Immanuel Drive  
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772.287.8188

**STUART**

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Stuart, FL 34994  
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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](http://ilcbethelight.org)

**Stuart**

Sundays:

10:00 am Traditional

# Summer Painting Party!

**Saturday, July 29th**

**1:00 - 3:00 PM**

**Stuart Fellowship Hall**

Learn to paint this "Footsteps"  
beach scene led by Pastor  
Rebecca. All supplies provided.

11x14 canvas

Wine available or BYOB

Cost: \$20



Sign up in the Palm City Narthex or Stuart  
Fellowship Hall or online at  
[ilcbethelight.org/paintingparty](http://ilcbethelight.org/paintingparty)