



## Power, Peace, and the Call to Love Our Neighbor

by: Pastor Chad

Over the last few days, conversations about Venezuela and forced regime change have raised serious questions for people of faith. Many are wondering how Christians should think about these events and what guidance Scripture might offer. While the Bible does not provide a detailed political roadmap, it does give us a clear moral and spiritual framework for reflection.

In the Lutheran tradition, we often speak of God working through two kingdoms — the spiritual and the earthly. Through earthly government, God seeks to preserve order, restrain evil, and protect human life. At the same time, no nation or leader stands above God's judgment. All political power is limited, imperfect, and shaped by human sin. For that reason, Christians approach political questions with humility, caution, and a deep awareness of our own brokenness.

Scripture reminds us where true trust belongs: "Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the Lord our God." (Psalm 20:7)

At the heart of the Christian life is Jesus' command to love our neighbor. That command challenges us to look beyond national interests and political calculations and consider how real people are affected by these decisions. The well-being of ordinary Venezuelans — families, children, the elderly, and the poor — must remain central to our moral concern. Their suffering is not theoretical; it is personal, and it matters deeply to God.

There is also reason for caution when actions like these begin to take on the shape of a broader pattern. History shows how easily the use of power can become habitual, how quickly exceptional measures become normal practice. When regime change becomes a recurring tool of foreign policy, the temptation to rely on force rather than patient diplomacy, cooperation, and peacemaking grows stronger. Christians are called to examine such patterns carefully, remembering that repeated uses of power shape not only global politics, but the moral character of the nations that wield it.

Lutheran theology is honest about the human condition. Even the most carefully crafted policies are influenced by fear, pride, and self-interest. Because of this, Scripture consistently calls God's people toward peace and restraint. As the apostle Paul writes, "If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all." (Romans 12:18) Any use of force, if it is to be considered at all, must come only after sincere efforts at diplomacy, cooperation, and peacemaking have been fully pursued.

Finally, our ultimate hope does not rest in governments, alliances, or military strength, but in Christ alone. As citizens, we stay informed and engaged. As Christians, we pray for our leaders, seek peace in a troubled world, and continue to serve our neighbors with compassion and courage, trusting that God's reign is advanced not by coercion, but by grace.



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## Altar Guild Meeting

JANUARY 14TH | 10 AM

ROOM 202: PALM CITY

WE WILL BE CLEANING THE CANDLES USED ON CHRISTMAS EVE, SO PLEASE TRY TO COME AND HELP. "MANY HANDS MAKE LIGHT WORK."

WE ARE ALWAYS LOOKING FOR MORE VOLUNTEERS TO HELP WITH COMMUNION OR CARE FOR THE ALTAR.

QUESTIONS HAPPILY ANSWERED BY MARJ SMITH AT 772-286-8974 OR BELINDA LOWE AT 772-634-0194.



# PRESCHOOL UPDATE

BY DR. PATTY

## Dear Immanuel Parents & Church Family,

As we enter a new year, the month of January will be filled with new learning and fun experiences. Welcoming January will bring about reviewing our past lessons but moving on to discover all of the new lessons we will learn and the adventures we will take.

The Fabulous Fours (VPK) class will be reviewing past lessons in the first week of the month, to get ready for the Star Early Literacy test. This will be the second test of the year, be on the lookout for their progress. All the students are now above the benchmark and climbing to reach the highest level of performance, which lets us know they will do well. For the remainder of the year, the children will be working on the 7 essential skills for school readiness: Confidence, curiosity, intentionality, self-control, relationships, cooperation, and communication. This month Ms. Krystal will intentionally teach the skills of confidence and curiosity and will begin to learn and recite "The Lord's Prayer" from Matthew 6:9-13.

The thriving threes are progressing along. They have made it to the beginning of a year filled with more fun within learning. This month they will learn rhyming words and discover how great it is to be themselves. Look for lots of finger puppets and other things they create as they learn more independence in their work. They are continuing to practice their calming techniques in class and will begin learning "The Lord's Prayer" Matthew 6:9-13. Thanks to wonderful teachers like Ms. Sharon and Ms. Daniella, and Ms. Jalissa, the children will be well prepared for VPK.

The terrific twos will be working on following routines; this provides security for them. They will continue to learn rhyming songs and learn how to help keep the classroom clean and safe. Most of their learning this month will contain a mixture of structure and free play. The structure is learning the routines: circle time, nap time, and other scheduled activities and their free play consist of playing freely with blocks, books, and dramatic play materials. Thanks to their devoted teachers for their patience and kindness. Thanks Ms. Darlene and Ms. Katherine.

**Reminders for this month:** We will be closed on 01/19 in observance of Martin Luther King's Day. We will reopen on 01/20. Also keep an eye out on the weather, maybe keep a small jacket in the car and don't forget to check your child's folder daily. Children who are already a part of our Immanuel family can register for next school year on 1/19.

Our January birthdays are Tegan McDaniel-2nd, Eastman Komahrens-3rd, Elias Mann-28th, **Teachers/Staff:** Ms. Kayla-21st, & Ms. Natalee-26th.



## YOUTH MINISTRY UPDATE

BY BRITTANY PERALTA

Hey Immanuel Youth and Families,

As we step into a brand-new year, my heart is so full reflecting on the beautiful December season we just shared together. From our preschoolers shining in their Christmas programs, to the joy of children's bells ringing out on Christmas, it was a season filled with light, wonder, and the unmistakable presence of God among us.

I am incredibly thankful for the continued support of our families and for our amazing Children's Church volunteers who show up week after week as a steady, loving presence in our kids' lives. You are a constant, and your faithfulness matters more than you know. A huge thank you to Ms. Amy as well for her unending love and dedication to our youth program and confirmation program.

January brings a sense of renewal: fresh beginnings, deep breaths, and new opportunities to grow. I'm so excited for another year of fun, faith, light, and spreading the joy that is Jesus with our youth and families.

Here's what's coming up:

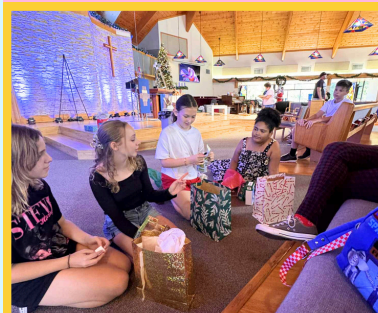
- Confirmation Meeting: Sunday, January 11th, 10:45 AM
- Next Youth Group: Sunday, February 1st, 6-8 PM
- Confirmation Retreat: February 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>

And some disappointing news: Rock the Universe Friday night is SOLD OUT! This is the first time in my five years as Youth Director that this has happened, and it's no surprise with Forrest Frank's popularity! If you're still hoping to attend, we're exploring a group rate for Saturday, January 24th. We'll need at least 10 people to qualify for the group rate of \$89.95, so please let me know by January 15th if you're interested.

Thank you for walking this journey with us. May this new year be filled with hope, laughter, and a bold faith that shines bright in the world.

🌟 Parents and youth: invite a friend to join us! There's always room at the table, and we'd love to welcome new faces into our community.

"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." — John 1:5





# Altar Guild Christmas Luncheon



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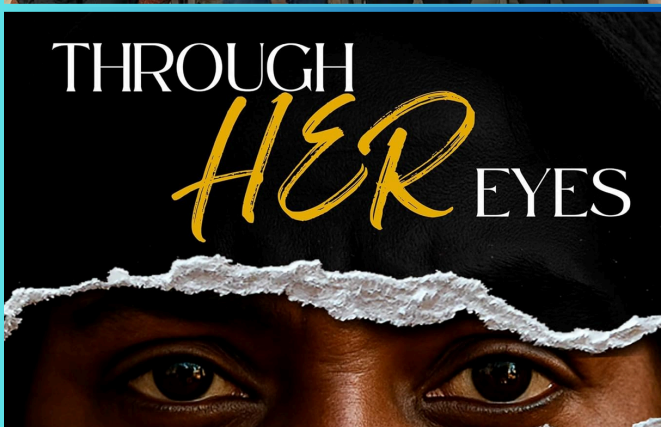
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## THROUGH HER EYES

"THROUGH HER EYES"  
BOOK STUDY,  
HOSTED BY SANDY FOLEY.  
WEDNESDAYS AT THE  
STUART CAMPUS  
5:30 PM – 7:00 PM  
STARTING JANUARY 21, 2026

You are INVITED to join

**The  
CHOSEN**

Small Group Bible Study

Sundays at 6pm in the FDC Rm 202

Open to all- join us as we study the  
story of Jesus and his disciples  
beginning 1/11/2026

THE LORD IS MY  
Light  
AND  
Salvation

PSALM 27:1

### 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.

	November, 2025	YTD 2025
Given	\$116,152.04	\$530,571.13
Budgeted	\$43,362.50	\$476,987.50
Difference	\$72,789.54	\$53,583.63

### Operating Fund Income and Expenses

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

ILC & IELC	YTD 2025
Income	\$1,218,974.43
Expenses	\$1,130,228.90
Difference	\$88,745.53





**Immanuel**

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**SATURDAY, JANUARY 24TH**

**4PM-1AM**



**LECRAE**

**11:15 pm**  
Music Plaza Stage



**Phil Wickham**

**09:30 pm**  
Music Plaza Stage

**AND MORE!**



**Colton Dixon**

**07:30 pm**  
Music Plaza Stage



**Passion**

**10:30 pm**  
Hollywood Stage

**You Can  
Still Order!**



**Order forms are  
back in the lobby**

**PLEASE PICK  
UP YOUR  
OFFERING  
ENVELOPES  
IN THE LOBBY**