

# GOOD NEWS

A monthly publication of Immanuel Lutheran



## Pastor's Monthly Message

### Fond Farewells

by Pastor Rebecca Craig

**I** am really bad at good-byes. And like most people, even when I know some changes are ultimately going to be good changes, they're still hard. On the one hand, I know I'm following my dream. I know I'm being led to this new adventure in my vocation and that it's the right thing for me to do. God gave me a certain set of gifts and is now leading me to a call where those gifts will be utilized in a way I've always wanted to use them.

Yet, that still comes with a lot of grief and sadness. When you're a pastor, the grief is somehow even more difficult, because in order for me to completely focus on my new congregation and to help make way for the new, incoming pastor here, I can't really have a lot of interaction with Immanuel members (not even on social media) once I am gone for at least that first year. So while I'm gaining a new community, I'm losing another, and that loss is palpable. It's hard to distance yourself from relationships you've spent the better part of eight years developing.

And my goodness have we been through a lot these past eight years! I'd barely just arrived when the senior pastor I was called to work with here at Immanuel announced his retirement about six months later, and I was faced with deciding whether to leave or pivot my role from focusing on adult education ministries to holding things together for the next eighteen months or so during the interim process. I don't regret staying instead of leaving as I do believe I wound up being the stability



Madrigal dinner, 2019

and consistency that was needed here. During that timeframe, I also took over the publications role as we were forced to let the media position go due to financial constraints left in the wake of a departing senior pastor.

If you're wondering who will fill that publications role now, a lot of that job will fall to Brittany Peralta, our Youth Director and Contemporary Worship Leader

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since she has the creative "flair" necessary for that role. We wind up wearing a lot of hats here at Immanuel! I know some of how that role currently is done will change—honestly changes that should have probably been made some time ago but simply weren't for one reason or another.

Then, once Pastor Chad came on board, I was hopeful once things settled down that I could again start maybe turning my focus back toward the adult education realm... only to have Covid hit us, and we found ourselves scrambling to figure out that new reality. Financially we began to struggle, as did every congregation in the United States, let alone the ELCA, and we began having conversations about the possibility that we would no longer be a congregation that could sustain two full-time pastors. So I began to consider my options for my future, and began to think about what kind of call would I want to go to next.

Then seemingly out of nowhere, we were presented with the possibility of merging with Prince of Peace in Stuart. I know some feel that this merger is why I am leaving, but that is simply not the case. The merger kept me around a year longer than I would have stayed otherwise, and I feel I was very much the right person to love on the Stuart congregation and help them through this transition. And as I understood my role at the time, I felt I could be a pastor that could provide the Stuart site with pastoral care and stability during a painful time as their entire identity had to shift and change.

However, once I realized that mission redevelopment was going to become my primary duty

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# Painting Party



Over \$500 was raised for the Youth Gathering at this event! Thanks to Kim Shrum & her Thrivent Action Team for providing all the supplies and food.





**Arts & Crafts Fair  
in the FDC**

Want to be a vendor for only:  
**\$30?**

Contact Belinda  
772-634-0194

March 16th  
10am-2pm

Food sold by  
Immanuel Youth



**Around the Table**

Lenten Midweek  
Wednesday nights starting 2/21  
@ 6 pm  
Stuart Fellowship Hall

Learning and building our  
community around the table.  
Guest speakers and food provided.



Wednesday Night  
**YOUTH GROUP**

All meeting in 201 at 5:30 pm—7 pm  
Game, Lesson, Snacks, etc.

Elementary School: 2nd Wednesdays  
Middle School: 3rd Wednesdays  
High School: 4th Wednesdays

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going forward, I knew at that point I was not the right person for the job. I'm an introvert by nature, so going out and hitting the streets, networking, etc. isn't in my wheelhouse. I thought initially maybe it could be something I would learn to like if it meant not having to uproot my life. I quickly realized, that would not be the case. A small part of why I left Hollywood was I didn't enjoy the networking aspects that were required to truly be successful in that industry.

I feel in order to give Immanuel the best possible chance it can to truly thrive, it will need someone over at the Stuart site whose passion is redevelopment. Those pastors exist, and the merger has now made this site more appealing to potential mission redevelopers. Thus, I feel that in order to be true to my sense of call, it is only right for me to pursue what I feel God has called me to do in order to also make way for someone else who will be following their passion and what they feel God is calling them to do in the realm of redevelopment.

So I continue to feel confident that while God is calling me elsewhere, God has a new path in store for Immanuel and that there is a pastor out there that God has already selected to come here.

While my time here was never exactly what I originally expected (ministry rarely is), it has been an honor and a privilege to walk through all these somewhat tumultuous times with you.

I will miss you all deeply. God's peace and blessings to you all. ■

## CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL

### President

Pete Morella  
shipperpete@gmail.com

### Vice President

Drew High  
drewhigh7@gmail.com

### Secretary

Kim Shrum  
kim.shrum2011@gmail.com

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Kyla Mericle  
mrsmericle1112@gmail.com

### Service

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mbalow45@gmail.com

### Learning

Sandra Foley  
fschoolmarm@aol.com

### Property

John McCluskey  
John@Floridaoutdoorsrv.com

### Faith, Fun & Fellowship & Small Groups

Belinda Lowe  
lovymille@comcast.net

## THRIVENT MEMBERS

Just a reminder that you have until March to direct your "Thriven Choice Dollars." Do not leave this "free money" on the Thrivent table. The website has changed. If you need assistance navigating it, call Karen Coombs at 772-475-3312.

Remember that if you are a Benefit Member of Thrivent, you are allowed two (2) Action Team projects per year. Associate Members are allowed one (1). Action Teams are worth \$250 each.

Again, please don't leave this funding unused!

Don't know what to use it for?

Call Karen Coombs at 772-475-3312.



**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.

	January 2024	YTD 2024
Given	<b>\$59,384.34</b>	<b>\$59,384.34</b>
Budgeted	<b>\$37,480.77</b>	<b>\$37,480.77</b>
Difference	<b>\$21,903.57</b>	<b>\$21,903.57</b>

### OPERATING FUND INCOME & EXPENSES

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

Through 12/31/2023	ILC & IELC
Income	\$130,078.66
Expenses	\$83,930.64
Difference	\$46,148.02



# Preschool Update

by Natalie Davis

Hey Immanuel friends and families,  
Time is moving fast here at Immanuel Early Learning Center. February was full of Valentine's love and treats. We took class pictures, and continued to learn our ABC's and 123's. Spring Break is upon us, and we are hosting a fun Spring Break camp for our current preschool friends. The classrooms will be covered with shamrocks and leprechauns for Saint Patrick's Day fun. Then we will be able to celebrate Easter and enjoy our Easter egg hunt. In addition to all our fun, we will start summer registration for summer camp. Stay tuned for summer information. Thank you for your continued support and have a great month.



## IMMANUEL STAFF

Lead Pastor

Chad Fair

[pastorchad@ilcbethelight.org](mailto:pastorchad@ilcbethelight.org)

Deacon

Cheryl Gundersdorff

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

Pianists/Organist

Sarah Miller, Joyce Milligan,  
Clarence Smith

Contemporary Worship Leader

Brittany Peralta

[brittanyperalta@ilcbethelight.org](mailto:brittanyperalta@ilcbethelight.org)

Director of Early Learning Center

Natalie Davis

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

Children, Youth & Family Director

Brittany Peralta

[brittanyperalta@ilcbethelight.org](mailto:brittanyperalta@ilcbethelight.org)

Office Manager

Shea Johnson

[sheajohnson@ilcbethelight.org](mailto:sheajohnson@ilcbethelight.org)

Administrative Assistant

Sheri Muller

[sherimuller@ilcbethelight.org](mailto:sherimuller@ilcbethelight.org)

Sexton

Maria Mejia

## 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)



## 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  
During Lent, it will be  
"Thoughts on Thursday" and  
will meetin on Thurs., March 14

### Hungry Men - Men's Bible Study

Tuesdays • 7 am  
Palm City FDC

## 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 • Location Varies  
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.ilcbethelightorg/update-information](http://www.ilcbethelightorg/update-information)

# Ministries & Groups



## Altar Guild Meeting

The Altar Guild will meet on Wednesday, March 13, at 10 AM in Room 202 of the FDC in Palm City. We will be reviewing the schedules for Holy Week and Easter, and taking reservations for our Spring luncheon. We welcome ALL interested volunteers to help serve communion or care for the altar.

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

## STEPHEN MINISTRY

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.



## Sisters in Spirit Women's Ministry

Want to deepen your faith? Join the Sisters in Spirit Women's Ministry Bible study. We meet the 3rd Tuesday at 7PM at Panera Bread Palm City. Contact Deacon Cheryl Gundersdorff 485-1954 for more information and to RSVP.

## Prayer Chain Ministry

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

For the Prayer Chain contact Lynnea Valpatic 772-485-7075 or [leeleefl@bellsouth.net](mailto:leeleefl@bellsouth.net)

For prayer list at the altar contact Deacon Cheryl 772-485-1954 or [gunders@bellsouth.net](mailto:gunders@bellsouth.net)





## 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)



## Thoughts on Thursday



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

Due to Lent, Word on Wednesday will be "Thoughts on Thursday" on March 14th at 5:30 at Townies Tavern in Palm City.

# MEN'S BIBLE STUDY


## HUNGRY MEN

TUESDAY, JANUARY 23RD @ 7 AM  
IN THE FDC

### NEW WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

*"The Book of Hebrews"*

The 2nd Monday of each month.  
Starts at 3:00 PM in room 201.



RSVP: Deacon Cheryl  
772-485-1954

We also assemble layettes to donate to Care Net Pregnancy Center.

**Items needed:**  
receiving blankets,  
3-6mo. diapers,  
3-6mo. onesies,  
socks.

## Music Ministries

**Contemporary Worship Team**  
Sundays @ 8 am • Sanctuary  
Contact Brittany Peralta  
[brittanyperalta@ilcbethelight.org](mailto: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](mailto:brittanyperalta@ilcbethelight.org)

## 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



**Immanuel**

[ilcbethelight.org](http://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  
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Permit No. 144

OR CURRENT RESIDENT

# HOLY WEEK SERVICES

*(All services except the Sunrise & Stuart Location service will be livestreamed.)*

Maundy  
Thursday  
March 28

Stuart - Noon  
Palm City - 7pm

Service &  
Stripping of the  
Altar

Good  
Friday  
March 29

7 pm  
Musical &  
Dramatic  
Service of  
Shadows  
(Palm City Site)

Holy  
Saturday  
March 30

7 pm  
Meditative  
Service  
(Palm City Site)

Easter  
Sunday  
March 31

Palm City  
Sunrise Service  
7:12 am  
Contemporary  
9:30 am  
Traditional  
11:15 am  
Stuart  
10 am Traditional