

*Our mission is to introduce all people to
Jesus Christ and the exhilarating power and
undefeatable joy He brings to life!*

JANUARY 2022

GOOD NEWS

A monthly publication of Immanuel Lutheran

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Online Worship IS Worship

by Pastor Rebecca Craig

At our February 2020 council meeting, we approved the purchase of equipment to give us the ability to livestream our services. Two weeks later, we were forced to go to online worship only due to the pandemic outbreak, and boy did we look smart!

Now, I'm hearing many clergy and people saying that "online worship isn't real worship," and seeing a push to get people "back in the sanctuary."

While I absolutely love seeing people back in the sanctuary, I'm going to admit, this view that those who

remain online are somehow not truly participating in a community of faith is disappointing for me to hear.

In 2011, long before the pandemic and while in a previous call, I helped my congregation get online and livestreaming our services because it's a much-needed ministry for those who are shut-in, and great for our snowbirds who didn't attend during the winter months as well as just being able to connect people from across the country to our worship services.

While the pandemic definitely has shown us that for many, in-person worship is what they need and desire,

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God with us
Immanuel
LUTHERAN CHURCH
& EARLY LEARNING CENTER

2655 SW Immanuel Drive
Palm City, FL 34990
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immanuelpalmcity.org



Pastor Rebecca's

MONTHLY MESSAGE

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there's another segment of the population where either online worship is preferable, or even necessary as their only option. One of our former youth directors still tunes in from Arizona and has been able to stay connected virtually to, as she calls it, "her church," even participating in one of the Pathways Small Groups that we started as a "virtual" group.

So when I heard that some congregations were "shutting down their livestream" for a few weeks to try and force people back into the sanctuary if they wanted to worship, I was quite sad and even a little angry to hear this. It absolutely ignores and diminishes the people who, for whatever reason, rely on virtual worship in order to hear God's Word and participate in a worship service.

To be clear, we will not be doing this at Immanuel. Our livestreaming ministry (yes, it's a ministry) was in the works prior to the pandemic and will remain a ministry going forward, regardless of how long the seemingly never-ending variants of Covid-19 keep cropping up.

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NEW YEAR, NEW PRESIDENT



*by Pete Morello
Council President*

Happy New Year to everyone! I hope that everyone had a very Merry Christmas celebrating the birth of our Lord. I love being able to take part in our services. This year I recited a monologue from the perspective of a shepherd. This monologue, written by Pastor Rebecca, talked about how even though this

shepherd felt like an outsider and others from the town looked down on him, Jesus did not. Jesus was inclusive, not exclusive and his "Good News" was for everyone. That is the exact reason my wife, Emily and I started attending church at Immanuel. Serving on the council as the Communications Chair and then the Vice President has been great, I am really looking forward to working hard to fulfill the role of President.

John McCluskey achieved so many things for Immanuel as president of the council. One of those wonderful things was the culture of transparency he created between the council and the congregation. Seeing the benefits of that open relationship I will be sure to follow that lead. With that in mind let us talk about the Annual Voter's Meeting. Although many of you attended, I would like to summarize the meeting for those who could not make it. The Voters elected, Pete Morello (me)—President, John Gustafson—Treasurer, Belinda Lowe – Evangelism/Communications, Michael Keese—Learning, Marcie Balow—Service, Rex Noble, Jr.—Property, Doug Crawford—Stewardship to two-year terms. Drew High—VP/Administration and Kim Shrum—Worship were elected for one-year terms.

The Nominating Committee also worked hard to add members to key areas supporting our council members. Each Council position is a volunteer role so having help allows each member to undertake a few more initiatives without having to do it all themselves.

John McCluskey, Dave Vanderslice, Shelly Grimmelman, Andy Jankens, and Karen Coombs will be leaving the Council this year. All have served to make Immanuel stronger so please say hello and thank them for their service.

The Voters also approved our 2022 Ministry Plan (Budget). The Ministry Plan sets forth the initiatives we would like to undertake in 2022. We can only do so with your support. The plan projects an increase in giving of 4% per family over the 2021 giving estimates. Please take some time to reflect and please contribute in a way that brings you joy. I want to make sure that all members of Immanuel are "Cheerful Givers" and help contribute to our mission "... to introduce all people to Jesus Christ and the exhilarating power and undefeatable joy He brings to life!"

I am excited as we enter 2022. We have two great pastors leading us forward, a strong Council, and a well-developed Ministry Plan. I look forward to working with them and all of our members in the upcoming year. ■

JESUS CHANGES US



by Cheryl Gundersdorff
Deacon

Once upon a time (for real by the way), some fishermen friends, who were ordinary men, providing for themselves and their families, arose early one morning to begin their ordinary day with their ordinary job of fishing. They were good Jewish men who loved God and worked hard.

They had no higher schooling, no special credentials, no important seat in the synagogue. Day after day, their lives were pretty much the same, doing the same things in the same way.

Until...until the day a local carpenter showed up and issued an invitation to drop their nets and follow him. Perhaps it was Jesus' gleaming eyes penetrating into their souls, the persuasive tone of his voice, the working of the Holy Spirit, or perhaps all three, but all these men knew was that Jesus had called them by name and they dropped their nets and followed him into the unknown. Their ordinary lives would never be the same again. Jesus was about to make their hearts, souls, and minds new and different. That change in them forever changed the world; for with Jesus, nothing in life remains the same.

Jesus is not finished changing people. That includes you and me. When we believe Jesus is our Lord and Savior, we cannot remain as we are. We must be changed in order to live as Jesus' followers. It is a life long journey of change as we draw closer to Jesus each day as indicated in 2 Cor. 3:18: "And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit."

Our sinful human nature resists change of course, which pleases the devil. He does not want us to become more and more like Jesus. Ignore him and keep your heart and mind on Jesus. Allow Jesus to work his goodness in you and make you new and different than the person you used to be. Jesus does not want stagnant followers. He wants followers to be alive in the Spirit and live their lives being as a reflection of him.

As we begin a new year, let us all as the body of Christ, rejoice that he is making us new. This newness will, like the disciples, forever change our world. ■

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

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Technology will always have glitches and issues, and is subject to things like lightning strikes, apparently, almost every year in Florida, but we are always working to improve what we put out there and try to make it as consistent as possible.

Because online worship IS worship. You are hearing the Word of God preached and while you may not physically be present in a sanctuary with your fellow believers, you are gathered with multiple other believers who are doing the same thing you are doing across the country, and even sometimes across the globe. The mere fact that you could be in Egypt, Germany, Australia, etc, and still be able to tune in and connect with Immanuel is a blessing. If you're right here in Palm City and cannot or even prefer not to attend in person, we are grateful for your presence in whatever form it takes.

Pr. Chad and I recognize that the future of The Church is going to have to adapt to our ever-changing lives and realities. Providing more online engagement and resources is one of the things we intend to focus on in 2022.

Continuing to hear God's Word, finding ways to stay connected to a community of faith, and growing in your faith are what is important—and we will continue to explore new ways in which to reach as many people as possible—even if it's something "we've never done before."

I hope you all had a blessed Christmas and Happy New Year! ■

CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL

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FROM THE CHOIR LOFT AND ORGAN BENCH

by Jim Peppers

Cantor/Organist/Choir Director

It was 203 years ago when Austrian villagers attending Christmas Eve mass in St. Nicholas Church in Oberndorf first heard the now famous "Stille Nacht." The words were written 2 years earlier by a young priest in Austria, Joseph Mohr, not long after the Napoleonic wars. Mohr played the guitar and sang along with the choir director, Franz Xaver Gruber who had written the melody to be sung on Christmas Eve in 1818. The organ was flooded in the church by the river Salzach which flooded the church and the organ. Eventually the river claimed the church which exists no more. An organ builder and repair man working at the church took a copy of the 6 verse song to his home village. It was picked up by a couple families of traveling folk singers, who performed it around Northern Europe. Later the Strasser family would perform it for the King of Prussia in 1834. The Rainer family singers debuted the carol outside Trinity Church in New York City in 1839. Now the carol is translated into 300 languages. The 3 verses we sing in English were from the original German vs. 1, 6, and 2. ■

We now have more ways for you to give!



Mobile

Text: IPCGIVE
to 77977



Online

immanuelpalmcity.org



Envelopes

MONTHLY GIVING REPORT

A report of our giving compared to the approved budget the congregation agreed to at the annual meeting. We're including last year as a comparison as well

	Nov. 2021	Nov. 2020	YTD 2021	YTD 2020
Given	\$37,620.52	\$58,495.62	\$409,772.00	\$477,488.55
Needed	\$40,240.00	\$55,865.00	\$482,880.00	\$536,304.00
Difference	(\$2,619.48)	\$2,630.62	(\$73,108.00)	(\$58,815.45)

OPERATING FUND INCOME & EXPENSES

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

Through 11/30/2021	ILC & IELC
Income	\$871,774.99
Expenses	\$903,923.15
Difference	(\$32,148.16)*

*Does not include PPP Loan. PPP: \$91,290.00, Difference: \$59,141.84

NEW PLAYGROUND

Thanks to your generous donations for our LIFT Campaign, work began the day after Thanksgiving on our new playground and over the course of the next two weeks, we had the final product! The IELC children have been loving their new equipment and space!



IMMANUEL STAFF

Lead Pastor

Chad Fair

pastorchad@ilcpalmcity.org

Pastor & Director of Publications

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pastorrebecca@ilcpalmcity.org

Deacon

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cherylgundersdorff@ilcpalmcity.org

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Contemporary Worship Leader

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Director of Early Learning Center

Beth Tatem

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Text: 772-444-5148

Zacary Tatem

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Prayer Requests

To add someone to the prayer list contact:

Sheri at sherimuller@ilcpalmcity.org

To add someone to the prayer chain contact:

Cheryl Gundersdorff: 772-221-8939

cherylgundersdorff@ilcpalmcity.org





Brittany Lustig

YOUTH & FAMILY UPDATE

What a fantastic December we had! Some of the middle school and high schoolers met us on December 4th and helped John and Judy Wakeman put up the Christmas decorations. Ellen and Tom Higgins were also there too and what a team they all made! The kids had a blast and we ended the event with a White Elephant bonanza! Thank you again John and Judy! We really appreciate you hosting the party. It's always really fun to put the decorations up, but what goes up must come down. On the 8th of January we will be having another get together to help put the decorations away. If we have 10 middle/highschool students to help, we are thinking of doing an escape room! Please let us know if you'd like to participate because we need all the help we can get. We're planning to go to Rock the Universe in Universal Studios Theme Park on Januray 28th & 29th. We need at least ten for that as well. If you're interested please let me, or Mrs. Amy, know as soon as possible. The music line

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CHILDREN, Y



YOUTH & FAMILY

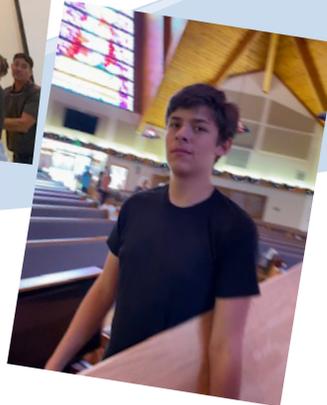
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up is absolutely amazing! I'd also like to say thank you to everyone who participated in providing gifts to the Real Life Children's Ranch. Here are some pictures from this past month of our youth. I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas and may your year be filled with peace, prosperity and love. ■

Upcoming Events

- Un-Decorating: January 8th
- Confirmation: January 9th
- Rock the Universe: January 28th-29th

Decorating



JAM
(JESUS THROUGH ART & MUSIC)

COUNCIL SPOTLIGHT



Belinda Lowe

Evangelism/Communications

Belinda Lowe is a 69 years young native Bahamian, married to Paul Lowe, and has three children and four grandchildren. Despite being semi retired, she still works part time when needed as a caregiver. You will find Belinda actively involved in many community projects throughout the Treasure Coast area. She is one of those people that likes to help wherever she can. She has been President of the General Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC) in Hobe Sound for the past six years. She came to Immanuel four years ago with one of our members as her caregiver and fell in love with the spirit and vibes that were generated so she joined. Having been raised Catholic, she felt it was time for a change and decided Immanuel was the perfect fit. She serves Immanuel in several different capacities, including Altar Guild, the Immanuel Host Coordinator of Family Promise, and now as a member of our Council in charge of Evangelism and Communications. "I love a challenge and hope I can meet this one. God Bless." ■



A LONG SLOW EPIPHANY

by Paula Tsufis, Stewardship Committee



One thing I've come to appreciate as I get older is the liturgical year that many Christian denominations follow. The beginning of January highlights the Epiphany Season that immediately follows Christmas. It starts with the visit of the wise men following a star to Jesus and ends with Jesus's face shining on a mountain in the Transfiguration story. We get stories that reveal who Jesus is in the world and who we might be as well.

In my mind, I think of an epiphany as a quick event. Sort of like when the light bulb suddenly appears above someone's head in a comic strip or cartoon. For me the revealing of who Jesus is has been a long, slow process. It started in earnest about 20 years ago when I attended a women's retreat. The retreat leader, a wise woman, said try to spend some time each day in Scripture and with God in prayer and your life will be changed. Note: she did not advocate that we change our lives, rather that we turn to God to do the heavy lifting through the Word and God's grace. This transformation takes time. This approach is very different to that in which our culture advocates that we continuously strive for self-improvement and, maybe more importantly, "self-curation" on social media. God changes our hearts so that they are aligned with the heart of God. We become "disciples," people following our teacher Jesus to spread this Good News and to work on renewing God's world. The new Pathways small group program at Immanuel with its focus on Prayer, Study and Service is a great opportunity to start on this exploration of discipleship with others.



Through this process of "repenting" or turning towards God we are also challenged to bear the "fruits of repentance." The fruits of repentance are those outward expressions of a transformed life and a changed heart. They include sharing what we have with others. The new year is a good time to reflect on impoverished families in our community struggling to meet basic needs. How might making a plan for charitable giving this year reflect your increasing compassion for others and a new spirit of generosity? My New Year's resolution: continue to be open to God's slow, steady revelation to me. To listen daily in prayer and Word and to allow God to shape my life with loving purpose, gratitude and generosity. ■

EARLY LEARNING CENTER



by Director Beth Tatem

Hope everyone had a wonderful Christmas and may you have a very Happy New Year!!

Reminder there is NO SCHOOL on Monday, Jan 17th for Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday.

Please remember that we are starting to take registration for Summer and Fall, so sign up as soon as possible to insure a spot for your child. If you need the enrollment papers, please see Ms. Beth in the office. The summer program will start May 31st and run through July 29th. We will be having a camp for older children as well. The ages will be 2 years old to Kindergarten. ■

SANTA VISITS

Immanuel Early Learning Center



Christmas Program



Thrivent Choice Dollars

Thank you to the following for donating your Thrivent Choice Dollars to Immanuel.

Louis N. Renault



As the anniversary of our LIFT campaign approaches, we have much to celebrate and much to look forward to. With the roof and playground now completed, next on the docket is the parking lot. We've already begun the permitting and engineering work but these are not speedy processes so we are in the hurry up and wait phase. The LIFT committee and council have also started to identify other capital projects of need and a target number to keep in a capital reserve account for things such as AC replacements. While there is certainly much to celebrate, there is even more to be thankful for. Thank you for your dedication to Immanuel and the LIFT campaign, as of the date of this publication we have raised over \$366,000.

Thank you!!!!

Join Pastors Chad and Rebecca for their weekly podcast discussing the weekly text more in-depth. Available on our website or on our app.

ADULT EDUCATION

Deborah Circle

2nd Monday of the month
3 pm • Choir Room

Sisters in Spirit

3rd Tuesday of the month
7 pm • Choir Room

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 Alice Windle, 772.220.1590

Stephen Ministry

2nd Monday
6:30 pm in Room 202

Wednesday Bridge Group

Wednesdays at 1 pm
Choir Room

Souper 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

*Carry-Out only until further
notice*

Change To Offering Envelopes

The number for your offering ID has changed, so whether you use the envelopes or not, please pick them up in the Narthex to get your new ID number.



Deborah Circle Women's Ministry

Is 2022 the year you resolve to grow in your faith? The Deborah Circle Bible study fellowship meets only once a month, the 2nd Monday in the choir room, at 3PM for an hour. We are currently studying the Gospel of Matthew. You don't need to be well versed in scripture to enjoy this study. We do an in-depth study of one chapter each month with a study sheet to follow along. For more information and to RSVP contact Deacon Cheryl Gundersdorff 221-8939.

STEPHEN MINISTRY

Are you feeling overwhelmed and need to feel God's presence a bit closer? God's answer to your prayer might be to have a Stephen Minister who can listen and walk with you for a while as a Christian friend. If you would like to have your own Stephen Minister, contact your Stephen Leader, Deacon Cheryl Gundersdorff, 221-8939.



Prayer Chain Ministry

One way to grow in your faith is to spend time with God praying for those in need of prayer. The Immanuel prayer chain ministry invites you to join us. It is super easy: you receive a call with a prayer request, you pass the request on to the next person on the chain, and you include the prayer request in your daily prayers. For more information or to request prayer for yourself or someone you know contact Deacon Cheryl Gundersdorff 221-8939





Souper Sundays

Immanuel Lutheran volunteers serve every third and fifth Sunday.

To volunteer, contact Marcie Balow at 283-0982 or mbalow45@gmail.com or sign up in the Narthex

Sisters in Spirit Women's Ministry



Is 2022 the year you resolve to grow in your faith. Sisters in Spirit Bible study fellowship just might be the place for you with our study of *Experiencing the Heart of Jesus*. We meet just once a month in the choir room, the 3rd Tuesday at 7PM. For more information and to RSVP contact Deacon Cheryl Gundersdorff 221-8939.

MUSIC MINISTRIES

Contemporary Worship Team

Sundays @ 8 am • Sanctuary
Contact Brittany Lustig
brittanylustig@ilcpalmcity.org

Bell Choir

Saturdays at 4:30 pm • Sanctuary

Chancel Choir

Sundays at 10 am • Choir Room
Suspended until further notice

Cornerstone Singers

Saturdays @ 5:15 pm • Sanctuary
pdcjimmy@hotmail.com

Children's Choir/JAM

Wednesdays at 12:30 pm • FDC
Contact Brittany Lustig
brittanylustig@ilcpalmcity.org



COMPASSION HOUSE

Thank you for your generosity!
We raised \$700 & distributed
800 pairs of socks and
underwear to homeless women
& children at the shelter.



Altar Guild Meeting

Please consider joining us as we begin a New Year serving our Lord. Many opportunities are available in helping serve communion or taking care of the altar.

We meet on **Wednesday, January 12, 2022, at 10 am in Room 202** of the FDC. We welcome ALL interested volunteers.

For more information, call Marj Smith at 772-286-8974 or Alice Windle at 772-220-1590

Altar Guild Christmas Party



BRIDGE GROUP

If you're fully vaccinated, join us Wednesdays in room 201 at 1:00 pm to play bridge. Anyone who would like to play is welcome.





LUTHERAN CHURCH
& EARLY LEARNING CENTER

2655 SW Immanuel Drive
Palm City, FL 34990
772.287.8188
immanuelpalmcity.org

Regular Worship Schedule

Saturdays:

6:00 pm

Relaxed Traditional

Sundays:

9:30 am Contemporary

11:15 am Traditional

All services available via
livestream on our website or
through our app.

OR CURRENT RESIDENT

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

January 28th & 29th

Christian Rock Festival for Youth

**ROCK the
UNIVERSE**
UNIVERSAL ORLANDO RESORT

Sign up sheet will be in the Narthex
starting January 8/9.

For more information contact
Brittany Lustig