Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

I want to take just a moment to encourage you in this time of change. Over the past eight years, you have been served very faithfully by Pastor Squire. His departure has, no doubt, caused some sorrow and perhaps questions as to how the congregation will move forward. Remember that even as Christ provided Pastor Squire to serve His Church in this place, so will the Lord raise up and provide another pastor to shepherd this congregation in the future. I urge you to keep Pastor Squire in your prayers as he takes up his new responsibility at Concordia teaching the future church workers of our beloved Synod. Give thanks for his years of ministry in your midst and praise God for the joy that his family brought to Immanuel.

Pray, also, for Pastor Jesse Kruesmark, who has now received the divine call to serve Immanuel as her next pastor. Remember him and his family as they consider what this might mean for them. Such decisions are difficult ones for pastors. There is much to think and pray about, including how such a move would impact the family, what the congregation he currently serves needs, and how he might minister to the calling congregation. Implore the Lord to grant Pastor Kruesmark wisdom, clarity, and peace as he comes to his decision.

Likewise, remember your congregational leadership in your prayers. I have come to realize that you have a group of faithful, hardworking, pious people serving your congregation. This time of vacancy will require extra work of them and, to be sure, added stress to their lives as they seek to serve. Ask the Lord to strengthen them and endow them with integrity and joy in their service.

Finally, I ask that you would pray for Pastor Leckband and myself, as we serve you.

Remember that Christ is the Lord of His Church. You belong to Him. He has purchased and won you, not with gold and silver, but with His precious and holy blood and with His innocent suffering and death, that you would be His own and live under Him in His kingdom. The gates of hell cannot stand against His Church. He will be faithful to you. Trust Him, His provision, and His good timing.

During the vacancy, if you would like to speak with me, please, don't hesitate to contact me. I can be reached at 712-260-1070 or pastorburns10@protonmail.com.

The peace of Christ be with you all,
Rev. Jesse A. Burns, vacancy pastor