



# Proposal For Ordination And Call Of Doug Fitzpatrick As Specific Ministry Pastor

## General Background

Before Immanuel Congregation is an exciting opportunity for growth! The role of Specific Ministry Pastor (SMP) has been in the LCA since its inception especially among indigenous and migrant population. It provides an alternate route to full ordination within the congregations of the LCA. There are three main requirements:

- Candidate is well respected in the community and a mature Christian
- Defined need for this ministry
- Difficulty in calling suitable ordained Pastor for this ministry

The LCA By-Laws V2 (3) specify that *“a candidate who is not a graduate of the Seminary of the Church but who has completed a course of instruction approved by the General Church Council may be accepted for special service.”*

The principal distinction of a regular called Pastor and SMP is that the role is specific to that community and that person is not available for call to the wider church community. We have a candidate who fits all these criteria and would be willing to serve in our local congregation.

## Immanuel Buderim Ministry

Immanuel Congregation sits on a combined campus which includes Immanuel Gardens Aged Care (92 independent living units, hostel and nursing home), Immanuel College (~1000 students P-12) and congregation.

Immanuel College is growing sustainably with two chaplains who are qualified teachers and do excellent work in team with our congregational pastor. This requires strong and regular communication with the congregational pastor (Matt) and is working well. However, there is significant call on the congregational pastor. Joint College-Congregational ministry is increasing.

Immanuel Gardens (LCC) has a full time chaplain, Pastor Adrian Muller. The congregational pastor and LCC chaplain meet regularly and work together where ministry intersects. Significantly, funerals of Lutherans from Immanuel Gardens are conducted by the congregational pastor as under LCC Qld policy, facility chaplains are not permitted to do funerals for residents. (If a chaplain did funerals for Lutheran residents then every resident would ask the chaplain rather than seeking their own denominational priest/pastor). It is not possible for the LCC Chaplain to provide significant support to Immanuel Congregation as the LCC role is demanding and full-time.

One minute from the Immanuel campus is being built the new *Sunshine Coast City Centre* which is the “only greenfield CBD in Australia at this time” and will be the new centre for the region. Declared a *Priority Development Area* by the Queensland Government, the Maroochydore City Centre is expected to service a wider

catchment of over two million people by 2030. So Immanuel Church will soon find itself at the 'centre' of the Sunshine Coast! (Source: Sunshine Coast Council: [www.sunshinecoast.gov.au](http://www.sunshinecoast.gov.au))

The Sunshine Coast is a region of varied townships and localities with a mixed urban and semi-rural population spread over a large area. Sunshine Coasters are used to travelling! Immanuel congregation has members from South at Glasshouse Mountains and Caloundra, North from Coolumb, and West from Woombye, Eudlo and around Nambour. Immanuel's pastor (Matt) convenes an informal regular meeting of Sunshine Coast Lutheran pastors and there is continuing talk about future cooperation among these parishes. At this stage the shape of this is a distant unknown but may come into our next round of planning in 2018.

Each year Immanuel's list of ministries grows, the number of small groups increases by a couple, and the list leaders on our AGM booklet grows. We have well over 100 formally recognised ministry leaders in our congregation. Immanuel has large pastoral demands and great opportunity for growth.

## Immanuel Ministry Growth

In the last decade significant outreach and mercy ministry have grown in our congregation:

*2010 Mustard Tree Welfare Ministry, First Communion Course, New Members process*

*2011 The Feast, New Vision Statement, Regular Taize Seasons of Worship*

*2012 Men's Camp, Groups Coordinator, United Worship, Strategic Plan, Pastoral Care Team*

*2013 Outreach Coordinator & Small Group Coordinator roles split*

*2014 Men of The Bacon, Shine, Significant Small Groups Growth, Worship Centre Refurb*

*2015 Youth Ministry Review, Change Youth Worker to 'Youth Coach'*

*2016 Soul Sisters, Luminare Youth Worker Trainee, Doxa, Strategic Planning, Weekly Drop-In Prayer.*

Worship attendance has grown. Capacity for growth is limited by a single pastor in a large congregation. Worship numbers here are only for weekends do not reflect our pastor's regular involvement in Junior and Senior College chapel and do not include once per term worship at youth. Average attendance...

*2016: 327*

*2015: 320*

*2014: 325*

*2013: 287*

*2012: 297*

*2011: 289*

Our contact list currently contains 1108 people who regard Immanuel as 'home'. Actual 'baptised membership' is approximately half this number and consists of those who actually worship regularly. Baptised members...

*2015: 591*

*2014: 571*

*2013: 521*

*2012: 519*

*2011: 501*

*Our goal is twofold: a) to increase pastoral support b) to increase lay empowerment so that we do not become more pastor centred in ministry. Therefore, both pastor's role include training, teaching and mentoring.*

## Single Pastor Growth Barriers

At certain sizes congregations seem to reach barriers. They stop growing and float at a certain size. If they do not grow they eventually decline. A key factor is *leadership*. The number of relationships a person can sustain is suggested to be at maximum 150 (this is known as 'The Dunbar number'). Some time ago Immanuel exceeded the capacity for a single pastor. We see many excited new attenders but struggle to teach them the faith adequately. Our pastor often spends more time doing 'triage' than leading us into a daring future of faith!

Since 2012 we have a *Pastoral Care Team* to cope with large demand for visiting those in need, but even with the pastor serving 'emergencies only' the demands are large. Ignoring the sheer numbers of people, the wide range of skills required of a single pastor at Immanuel is not normally viable for a single person. We may have hit a growth barrier simply because we aren't willing to take the risk and 'act the next size up'.

## What Can A Second Pastor Bring?

A second pastor opens up many possibilities, for instance:

- A level of dynamism not attainable with only one pastor
- Freeing up the lead pastor to focus more on developing teams and leaders
- More flexibility and options for worship (possibly more services)
- More options for our relationship with Immanuel College
- Better availability of pastors in crises and emergencies
- Higher quality time given to pastoral acts (esp. baptisms & funerals)
- The ability for pastors to attend and facilitate at congregational camps, youth camps, and prayer retreats without leaving those back at Buderim without a pastor
- Greater teaching opportunities for growing members in ministry and mission
- Less stretched/stressed and more productive pastoral leadership
- Pastors with time to listen deeply rather than constantly running.

## Two Real Pastors!

We do not want the second pastor to be lesser. We are seeking a pastor to be fully recognised within our ministry and denomination. Our congregation's strategic plan and budget foresee us paying the second pastor at the standard LCA rate, except that our candidate is not seeking to serve full time and so the role will be 3.5 days per week (0.7FTE). Note that this load will not decrease in future but may be reviewed to increase if mutually desirable. We propose well defined roles for the pastors with one as team leader with whom the 'buck stops!'

### PASTOR: TEAM LEADER (Matt Thiele)

Oversight of ministry, vision, planning

Staff coordination

Primary preacher (roughly three per month, but in seasons/series),

Oversee welcoming/integration process with Office Coordinator

Oversee teamwork with Immanuel College & Immanuel Gardens

Pastoral acts (baptisms, weddings, funerals, confirmation, communion)

Pastoral care to emergencies/crisis

Biblical teaching to equip members for ministry

Identifying, encouraging, and training worship leaders and preachers

### PASTOR: SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT (Proposed Doug Fitzpatrick)

Pastoral Care Coordination and training of pastoral carers

Fostering prayer (overseeing Prayer component of Strat Plan)

Fostering new reflective worship opportunities

Pastoral acts (baptisms, weddings, funerals)

Pastoral care to emergencies/crisis

Preach flexibly - average of once per month

Support to leaders of children's ministry

With so many parishes vacant in the LCA, sourcing a pastor from the wider LCA is unlikely. We have a well-qualified candidate who has heard a call to ordained ministry within the Lutheran Church.

## Who Is Doug Fitzpatrick?

With great joy our congregation's leadership unanimously endorse Doug as called to be a pastor among us.

Doug is currently a teacher at Pacific Lutheran College Caloundra and leader of Immanuel Congregation. At Pacific College he is highly respected as a pastoral carer and Christian leader. The former chaplain at Pacific College (Bishop Paul Smith) once affectionately described Doug as '*de facto college chaplain.*' The same respect for Doug is found all over the Sunshine Coast, especially within Immanuel congregation and Immanuel College.

- *Father, husband, teacher, elder, and child of God!*
- *Married to Victoria (artist, graphic designer and Small Groups Coordinator)*
- *Former Church Of Christ Pastor for 17 years*
- *Benedictine Oblate (follower of St. Benedict's order. For info see [www.osb.org/obl](http://www.osb.org/obl))*
- *Lutheran Educator*
- *Lutheran College Christian Studies Coordinator*
- *Worship leader at Pacific College*
- *Long serving Elder at Immanuel Church*
- *Lay Preacher at Immanuel Church*
- *Facilitator of Christian Meditation Seminars*
- *Deeply committed to Lutheran Theology*
- *A thorough understanding of 'Grace Alone' and the 'Theology Of The Cross'*
- *Approved by former Bishop Noel Noack to consecrate communion a number of times*
- *Small Group Facilitator & Trainer*
- *Pastoral Carer at Immanuel*
- *Worship Musician and leader at Immanuel*
- *Taize Leader at Immanuel*
- *Sustainable living proponent*
- *Lover of literature, books, and high fidelity sound*
- *Animal lover, gardener and alpaca keeper!*

Doug has been a member of Immanuel Church for almost a decade and along with his wife Victoria is well known in leadership. On our Spiritual Leadership Team (Elders) Doug's thoughtful wisdom is notable. Recently Doug has worked with Pastor Matt to perform an adult baptism, a wedding, huge amounts of pastoral care, Christmas services, Taize and much more. Doug and Pastor Matt worked as a team to provide pastoral care to Rick Zweck and his family. Rick was instrumental in pointing Doug back to pastoral ministry. Through the journey with Rick an 'inner call' to ministry crystalized for Doug and an 'outer call' was confirmed by all who worked with him.

Doug's life story and employment history show that he is well prepared to be our pastor...

2013 – 2016. Full Time Primary School Teacher, Pacific Lutheran College

2011 – 2012. Full Time Primary School Teacher, Immanuel Lutheran College

2008 – 2011. *Head of Christian Studies P-12, Pacific Lutheran College*

2004 – 2007. Primary Teacher & Coordinator of Christian Studies P-7, Pacific Lutheran College.

2002 – 2003. Full Time Primary School Teacher - Year 4.

2000 – 2001. Full time post graduate studies. Part-time Military Chaplain.

1992 – 1999. Associate Pastor, Sanctuary Park Church of Christ

- worship coordinator
- development of community education ministry.
- development of Registered Training Organisation called 'Solutions'.
- development of Early Childhood Environment Education Programme.
- development of MAP, a men's accommodation project.

1991 – 1992. Pastor, Northside Christian Church (Inner Sydney)

- Minister responsible for pastoral care and small groups.
- pastoral care of congregation of 450 members
- development of city-wide small groups programme

1985 – 1990. Youth Pastor, Monash City Church of Christ

- Minister responsible for oversight of youth and young adults.
- oversight of small group Christian Education programme
- chaplaincy at Glen Waverly High School
- development of a range of significant camping programmes

1983 – 1985. Youth Pastor, Maryborough Church of Christ.

## The Process For Calling A Specific Ministry Pastor (SMP)

Although this idea has been growing for some time we sense that now is the Holy Spirit's timing! Our team of Elders (17 people aged 22 to 83) unanimously endorsed the idea to ordain Doug and brought the first proposal to Church Council. The proposal has become a key part of our strategic plan. Immanuel congregation will be asked to approve this at our AGM on November 20.

We have had talks with our LCAQD Bishop Paul Smith who has offered support for the idea that Doug might seek ordination. We recognize that this process belongs to the wider Lutheran Church Of Australia, especially given that an SMP role can be ultimately modified into a regular call in the wider church.

We propose to issue Doug with a three-year call as an SMP to Immanuel Congregation.

The LCA By-Laws V2(3) specify that *"in the case of men already functioning in their sphere of ministry no colloquy is required"* (2.4.a). We believe that Doug is already functioning in his sphere of ministry:

- *Having served in a Lutheran College for 13 years*
- *Coordinator of Christian Studies P-7 in a Lutheran College*
- *Head Of Christian Studies in a Lutheran College*
- *Lay preacher, worship leader, and approved by LCAQD Bishop for sacrament*
- *Elder in the congregation*
- *Working in team with the local pastor on critical pastoral care*
- *Teaching within the congregation on cross-centred Christian prayer.*

The By-Laws specify that *"candidates with a long active involvement in the church may be deemed to have sufficient understanding and experience and so no further course of instruction is required, before ordination. All pastors with alternative training are required to undertake ongoing in-service training, as determined from time to time by the respective district bishop"* (2.5).

Doug's theological qualifications and previous service mean that we would suggest he be approved immediately as an SMP. In terms of his theological program of education we propose:

1. That Doug immediately slot into the LCA's existing SMP program at ALC.
2. That Doug select (in consultation with the LCAQD Bishop and local pastor) appropriate single subjects from the ALC Pastoral stream to fill any gaps as he works.

Steps towards approval:

1. *Immanuel AGM. Nov 20<sup>th</sup> 2016. Congregation consider and endorse.*
2. *LCAQD District Church Council. Nov 23<sup>rd</sup> 2016. DCC consider and recommend onwards.*
3. *LCA Council Of Bishops. Bishops consider proposal and study program.*
4. *LCA General Church Council. GCC consider.*
5. *Immanuel Congregation Call Meeting. Doug considers a three-year call as SMP. (Feb 2017).*
6. *LCA Council Of Bishops approve ordination. (Mar 2017).*
7. *Ordination around Easter 2017. (April 16<sup>th</sup> or 30<sup>th</sup> 2017)*

It is our hope that we might ordain and install Doug around Easter 2017. This will be dependent on the reception of this proposal by the LCA channels and on Doug's consideration of the call and his current teaching role. An ordination might be later 2017 depending on Doug, but we prefer to aim for Easter.

## Staff Team Changes

A full outline of all staff and their roles is in our strategic plan. Here is a summary:

### 2016 Staff

PASTOR (Matt Thiele)

CYFM COACH 0.8 (Ben Lyons)

OFFICE COORDINATOR 0.6 (Patti McInnes)

SMALL GROUPS COORD 0.2 (Victoria Fitz)

YOUTH ADMIN CASUAL 0.1 (delete) +  
OUTREACH COORDINATOR 0.2 (delete)

BOOK KEEPER 0.2 (Kathy Macnamara)

TOTAL: 3.1 Full time equivalent

### 2017 Staff

= PASTOR, TEAM LEADER 0.9 (Matt Thiele)

= PASTOR, SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT 0.7 (Doug Fitzpatrick)

= YOUTH & YOUNG ADULTS COACH 0.8 (Ben Lyons)

= OFFICE COORDINATOR 0.6 (Patti McInnes)

= GROUPS COORDINATOR 0.2 (Victoria Fitz)

= PASTORAL ACTS COORDINATOR 0.2 (To be filled)

= BOOK KEEPER 0.2 (Kathy Macnamara)

TOTAL: 3.6 Full time equivalent. (+16%)

## Property Implications

Church Council and Property Team will consider the provision of a second pastor's office. The current thinking is to simply move the 'groups room' into the current pastor's office and divide the old larger 'groups room' into two smaller pastor's offices. This is an easy and cheap modification. Beyond that there are vague ideas to redevelop the entire office spaces more fully in time, but that is not urgent.

## Financial Implications

A 0.7FTE second pastor will cost Immanuel a total of \$64,600 per year (this figure is significantly more than the wage and includes, employment costs, super, travel and housing). Staffing reconfiguration and economising saves \$15,520 providing a buffer to the full increase. Therefore, we are seeking a congregational annual offering increase of \$49,080 which is ~16%. With Immanuel in excellent financial shape and having reserves in case of shortfall this is both realistic and achievable.