

SUPPORT FROM IMMANUEL

FOR OUR FOSTERING AND ADOPTIVE FAMILIES

At Immanuel, we want to think of fostering and adopting as an opportunity for **all of us** to show hospitality in even more radical ways. As the body of Christ, we are here to help sustain, encourage, and bear burdens as you and your family change and grow into something new that helps make Jesus non-ignorable to our church, city, and far beyond. Below is a list of ways that we hope to rally around and support you through your foster and adoption journey.

1. Community Group

Using the framework already built into the church, Community Groups are one of the best ways to get connected and are a crucial avenue of support. They are a place where you can say, "I belong"; where people can come with honesty and not feel weird for sharing the real state of their heart; a place where you can make gospel friendship, grow as a disciple in Christ, and find real help for the day to day good works of being a Christian.

Practically, when a specific need for a family arises, a family's Family Partner (below) will first reach out to the Community group leader to see if the Community group can meet the need. However, more importantly, your Community group is a frequent, ongoing system of emotional and spiritual support who you share life with on a weekly or bi-weekly basis.

If you are not currently part of a group, you can go to: <https://immanuelnashville.com/groups> to learn more and sign up. For any questions, you can email: groups@immanuelnashville.com.

2. Family Partners

Family partners are a family's go-to support person. As your primary support person, we hope for EVERY family who is in the process or has already fostered or adopted to be matched with a Family Partner. We recognize that your needs as a fostering or adoptive family can change from minute to minute, day by day. Your focus partner will check-in with your family at least weekly, or more frequently if needed, to know how others can best care for you. They are responsible for distributing needs, setting up meal trains, sending out prayer requests, etc. so the burden is off you, and you can fully focus on your family.

We know it's hard to ask for help (we all struggle with this!), but you have a church family who deeply desires to care for you in this weighty, beautiful, and messy role. Don't be afraid to ask for help — clothing, furniture, meals, assistance with errands, housework, babysitting — whatever it may be!

If you don't already have a Family Partner and want to be matched with someone, please reach out to Madison Knowe at madisonhohman@gmail.com

3. Foster and Adoption Group

The Foster Care and Adoption Group at Immanuel is an affinity group of families and support people who care about foster care and adoption at Immanuel. We gather once monthly on the first Sunday of the month in the Immanuel Gym for a time of encouragement and fellowship, an

opportunity to get updates from families, and to pray. We also send out invites to gatherings, requests for needs from families that can't be met through Community Groups, or updates about fostering families through the Foster Care and Adoption Group email list.

Go to <https://immanuelnashville.com/groups> (scroll to the bottom of the page) and fill out the "Get More Info" form to be added to this email list.

4. Mentorships

Mentorships are a supplemental support system for families walking through the same process and can share in their experience. For example, families partnered may both be fostering through DCS, doing domestic infant adoption, transitional foster care, or have adopted internationally. It is important to note that this is **not** to replace a family's Family Partner. A Family Partner is **not** actively fostering or adopting and their primary role is support. The mentorship relationship is very flexible and is on your own terms. Email Madison Knowe at madisonhohman@gmail.com if you'd like to be connected with a mentor or are interested in being a mentor.

5. Financial Assistance

Please see the "FINANCES" section for information on how we would love to support you in this way.