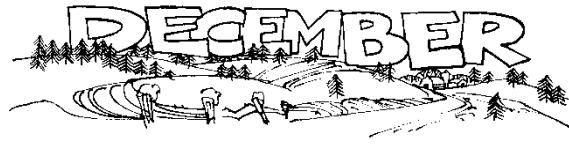


ANNOUNCING



Women's Fellowship: The next meeting is Tuesday, December 19th at 1:00pm

EVERY MONTH SCHEDULE

Sunday School	Sunday	9:45 a.m.
Informal Worship	Sunday	10:45 a.m.
Worship Hour	Sunday	11:00 a.m.
Commissions	3rd Thursday	6:00 p.m.
General Board	3rd Thursday	7:00 p.m.
Fellowship Singers	Thursday	4:15 p.m.
Friday's Fellowship	1 st and 3 rd Fridays	1:00 p.m.
Women's Fellowship	3rd Tuesday	1:00 p.m.
Emergency Food Bank	Tuesday	9:00 a.m.

The Mirror – December 2023

The Mirror is published once a Month. Information deadline is the 3rd Tuesday of the month.



Empire Church
of the Brethren

P.O. Box 215

Empire, CA 95319

Phone: 209-522-4302

Pastor John Price: (209) 480-2778

He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High, who abides in the shadow of the Almighty, will say to the Lord, "My refuge and my fortress; my God, in whom I trust."

For he will deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the deadly pestilence; he will cover you with his pinions, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness is a shield and buckler.



You will not fear the terror of the night, nor the arrow that flies by day, nor the pestilence that stalks in darkness, nor the destruction that wastes at noonday. *Psalm 91:1-6*

IN CHRIST ALONE

In Christ alone my hope is found, He is my light, my strength, my song;
this Cornerstone, this solid Ground, firm through the fiercest drought and storm.

What heights of love, what depths of peace, when fears are stilled, when strivings cease!

My Comforter, my All in All, here in the love of Christ I stand.

PRAYER CONCERNS

Kenny Fox – Health & Life Issues

Pam Franklin – Vertigo

Evelyn Hurlbut – Strength

David Leib – Strength

Dennis Peterson – In Rehab

Glenn Stanford – Strength

COVID – Among Us



TODAY IS YOUR BEST DAY BECAUSE OF GRACE (PART 1)

But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved) . . . that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God. Ephesians 2:4-8 NKJV

Grace makes it possible for today to be your best day. Grace demands nothing and gives everything God desires you to have. Through grace, God has pulled out all the stops, and poured His abundant favor upon you in Jesus Christ. Grace points you to Jesus and says, "All that is His is freely yours. All mercy, all blessings, all strength, all righteousness, all kindness is yours today in Jesus Christ."

When someone has a job, he expects to get paid because he has earned his wages. Pay is given to him based strictly upon his performance. The longer a person stays on a job the more he expects to get paid. If he remains a good and loyal employee, he will usually get promoted and take on more benefits. This merit of pay and benefits has nothing to do with grace, but rather with works.

God does not want you to try to earn His favor. He's not looking at the number of years you have been a Christian to decide how much He should bless you. You are not blessed today based upon your tenure in Christ.

Grace means that you do not need to earn something that you have already been given. Even when you need more grace, God supplies it freely. How did you receive grace in the first place? God did not extend His grace to you because you were a nice sinner, a sincere sinner, or a disciplined sinner. He extended His grace to you while you were a sinner, no matter what kind of sinner you were. He did not extend His grace to you because you were religious or full of good works. God's grace came to you through the cross. He extended His grace to you, not based upon what you did for Him, but based upon what His Son did for you.

God extends grace to you today, as His child, as He did when you were a sinner. Nothing that you have done as a believer in Christ has earned you more grace. Bible reading, prayer, giving, and Christian service don't mean that you have earned the right to have more grace poured out upon you. If it did, grace would not be grace. Whenever the word "grace" appears in the scriptures, there is another word that often appears nearby. That word is *given*. You will never find the word *deserved* associated with grace.

Every joy that fills your heart and every delight that satisfies your soul are yours today because of the benefits of grace. God has showered you with these favors without any expectation of return. Grace does not hang something over your head and say, "You owe Me and I expect you to pay Me back." Grace is the absolute free expression of God's loving heart. The motivation of grace is to bountifully bless you. *Roy Lessin*



PRAYER OF THE MONTH



Meetings with Jesus

As we go through our days this month, throughout the tasks that need our attention, let's be sure to provide ample time to have multiple meetings with Jesus. I love this thought, that our prayers are meetings with Jesus. A time set aside to give Him our undivided attention, adoration, thanksgiving, concerns, and praises.

Here are some thoughts from the Jesus Calling devotional that invite us to meet with Jesus. It reads, "Meet me in the morning stillness, while the earth is fresh with the dew of My Presence. *Worship Me in the beauty of holiness.* Sing love songs to My Holy Name. As you give yourself to Me, My Spirit swells within you till you are flooded with Divine Presence.

The world's way of pursuing riches is grasping and hoarding. You attain My riches by letting go and giving. The more you give yourself to Me and My ways, the more I fill you with *inexpressible, heavenly joy.*"

The devotional also provides some scriptural references for us. Psalm 29:2 says, "Give unto the Lord the glory due unto His name; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness." 1 Peter 1:8 says, "Though you have not seen Him, you love Him; and even though you do not see Him now, you believe in Him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy."

As we pray this month, let's truly Meet With Jesus! Let's give of ourselves to Him. Proclaiming who He is to us, ask Him to guide our steps, give Him our praises and concerns, give Him our love, and thank Him profusely for being in our lives! Happy "Meeting" My Dear Friends!!!

WORDS TO LIVE BY

(Positive Thoughts for positive living . . . wit and wisdom from rural America)

Always reach for the stars. Even though you may trip and fall on the moon, you're still on higher ground than when you started.

Work as though everything depended on you and pray as though everything depended on God.

Our duty is not to see through one another, but to see one another through.

WORDS OF WISDOM

We are encouraged to say prayers in all circumstances. I confess that I can forget to give thanks and praise to God when all is going well in my life. Fortunately God is patient with me. He may nudge me with a reminder so I will bow my head and say "Thank you, God." When I face struggles I find I turn to God quickly. Again, God is kind, patient and faithful to remind me that He is in control and listens to my prayers in happy times as well as in difficult times. I wish to share some suggestions given by Rev. David Jeremiah. May they be helpful suggestions to aid you with your prayer life.

6 Prayers to Help You Take a Step Forward Every Day

1. **Pray for Direction:** God, prepare my heart for Your purpose! *Psalm 25:4*
2. **Pray for Order:** Father, I commit my plans to You today! *James 5:16*
3. **Pray for Connections:** Lord, I will pray without ceasing – seeking You in every situation. *Nehemiah 2:2-5*
4. **Pray for Surrender:** God, Thy will be done in all of today's circumstances.
Proverbs 16:3
5. **Pray for Strength:** Father, give me Your overcoming strength for the overwhelming moments ahead. *Nehemiah 6:9*
6. **Pray for Praise:** God I praise You for what you have done and are about to do.
Nehemiah 12:43

May I encourage you to be generous in your praises to God. He is the Almighty God, the Creator, the God above all others, He is our Rock, He is the One who sent His Son, Jesus, to us who went to the cross, shed His blood, died and rose again for our salvation. He is our Father in Heaven.

Give thanks to the Lord God of Heaven. His love endures forever. *Psalm 136:26*

David Jeremiah

A side note. It is easy for me to encourage you to pray and give thanks. I live in a comfortable home. Have enough income to always have food on the table. Sleep in a comfortable bed with clean sheets. I am able to see a doctor when I need help. I feel guilty when I see the homeless in our area. I wonder where they will sleep, if they will be warm, have they had enough to eat – do they have a Savior? If they do, can they praise God in their circumstances? Should I do more than pray for them? Do I donate enough to the organizations that help provide for the unfortunate?

Evelyn Hurlbut



CHRISTMAS HUMOR

Back to the Christmas Frontpage



TRUE STORY

The nativity play was going as planned and Joseph and Mary were going from house to house knocking on the doors and asking if there was any room for them. As they continued to get “no room” answers a little voice called from the back “YOU SHOULD HAVE BOOKED!” bringing the house down.

DIDN'T YOU GET MY E-MAIL?

As a little girl climbed onto Santa's lap, Santa asked the usual, “And what would you like for Christmas?”

The child stared at him open mouthed and horrified for a minute, then gasped: “Didn't you get my E-mail?”

WHO KISSED SANTA?

At my daughter's elementary school Christmas concert, a first-grade girl introduced their song, “I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus” with clear, articulate, well-rehearsed speech, and not in the least aware of the mix-up, saying: “Oh, what Mommy would have thought if she saw Daddy kissing Santa Claus!”

SAVE GOD THE TROUBLE

There was a young boy who was saying a prayer out loud one night and his brother was listening to him. This boy asked God for a fresh milkshake in the morning. His brother said: “Just shake a cow and milk it. It will save God the trouble.”

WHAT ARE THE THREE GIFTS?

While participating in a church Christmas pageant many years past, I had the good fortune to be chosen as the narrator. Each rehearsal went off well and then on the night of the show, I, in a loud and penetrating voice announced the gifts of the Magi as “gold, Frankenstein and myrrh.”

NO ROOM IN THE INN?

A boy wanted to be Joseph in the Sunday School pageant. He was cast as the landlord and objected loudly, but to no avail. When the pageant was presented, Mary and Joseph knocked on the door and asked him if he had a room for them. The boy smiled and said, “Yes, sure. Lots of room. Come on in!”

THE WRONG GIFT

The parents began to assemble the special Christmas gift they had for their children. They had ordered a kit for a tree house and received the plans for it. However, the materials they received were for a sailboat. They wrote the company to complain. The company's reply: “While we regret the inconvenience this mistake must have caused you, it is nothing compared to that of the man who is out on a lake somewhere trying to sail your tree house.”



A BIBLICAL JOURNEY TO BETHLEHEM



On Thursday, December 14th, Grace Community Christian Church, in Ceres, is having a walking tour, "A Biblical Journey To Bethlehem". We will meet at Empire Church of the Brethren at 6:00pm to carpool. If you are interested, contact Cheryl Leib at (209) 522-1773.

OCTOBER 2023 STATISTICS

Average Attendance: 21

Giving:

Local:	\$4,369.00
Sunday School:	0
Youth:	0
Messenger:	0
Mariners:	0
Other:	58.15
Total:	\$4,427.15



DATES TO REMEMBER DECEMBER



ANNIVERSARIES

17th –Travis & Candice Sheldon
30th –David & Cheryl Leib

08th –Kylie Welch
10th –Donny Wyatt
22nd –Skip Powell
25th –Jesus
27th –Derek Wyatt
30th –Richard Ward

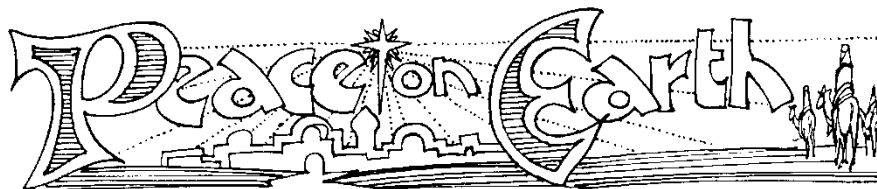
BIRTHDAYS

02nd –Gideon Winchester
06th –Marilyn Snider

*If we have missed wishing you a happy birthday or a happy anniversary, we may not have your dates.
Please turn in your name and dates to the church secretary.
You are important to us!*

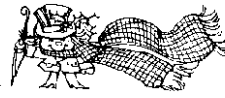
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Twitter:https://twitter.com/empire_cob; and
Instagram:<https://www.instagram.com/empirechurchofthebrethren/>





DECEMBER 2023 PRAYER CALENDAR



















S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1 Mark 8:31-33 Sarah Adams Gerald Allinson Alex & Cathy Arellano	2 Genesis 2:7-9 Candice Arellano Molly Arellano Donna Ayres Elaine Azevedo
3 Isaiah 53:1-12 Pastor & Teachers Ben & Jen Baker Ken Barklow Don & Pat Benton Wanda Bollinger	4 Luke 10:38-42 Pauline Bert Michael Best Earleen Cadruvi & Fam. Ron Cadruvi & Fam.	5 Genesis 15:1-6 Phyllis Caudle Linda Carter & Ivy Ashley Cooksey & Fam.	6 Isaiah 40:1-11 Arlene Cupp Charlotte DeHart Chuck & Wendla Dyer & Family	7 Ephesians 3:14-21 Jim & Sue Eikenberry Zac Fear Pam Franklin & Cherith Franklin	8 Psalm 40:1-5 Kenny Fox Kerby & Heather Frantz Lyndall & Lois Frantz Lloyd Fuller	9 Genesis 1:1-13 Jerry Goodman Thomas & Patricia Guthrie Clark Hartman Jack & Rosetta Hartsfield
10 Luke 2:1-7 Pastor & Teachers Ryan & Kelly Heiny & Fam. David & Evelyn Hurlbut Kevin & Deborah Hurlbut & Family	11 2 Corinthians 1:3-7 Jay Irizarry Randy & Teri Johnson & Family Sheryle Knott & Fam.	12 John 2:1-11 Mary Lou Lee David & Cheryl Leib Norma Lutes Seth Lutes	13 Luke 1:26-38 Gerri Masellis Ric Mason Stacy Nelson Suzanne Neptune	14 Psalm 130:1-8 Kelly Olsson Clifford Parker Brad Parrish & Family	15 Jeremiah 16:10-21 Tommie Parrish Daymon & Sarah Peterson & Family	16 Matthew 5:43-48 Dennis Peterson Oscar Phan Jason & Kirsten Piazza & Family
17 2 Corinthians 8:1-13 Pastor & Teachers Skip & Kathleen Powell Jeff Price	18 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24 Jeremy & Erica Price & Fam. Joel & Susan Price & Family John Price	19 2 Chronicles 20:13-22 Jonah & Morgan Price Nathan & Kim Price & Family Kay Qualls	20 Romans 12:3-8 Mike & Laura Radcliffe & Family Mary Rariden Charlotte Rice & Fam. Lana Royer	21 Psalm 73:21-28 Keith Shafer Vance & Maria Shafer Vern & Patty Shafer Troy & Joy Slaybaugh & Fam.	22 Romans 12:9-14 Marilyn Snider Tony & Laura Snyder & Family	23 Matthew 5:14-16 Gayle Stanfill Glenn Stanford J.J. & Soleena Storne & Family
24/31 Luke 2:15-20 Luke 12:27-34 Pastor & Teachers Veronica Suderman & Family Arthur Syverson	25 Matthew 23:1-12 Mark & Amber Syverson & Family Mike Syverson Natasha Towe Carolyn Trent	26 2 Corinthians 9:10-15 John & Sue Vacca & Sons Tim & Catherine Vaughn & Family	27 Luke 10:25-37 Linda Ward & Fam. Roger & Cynthia Welch & Family Josh & Heather Winchester & Fam.	28 Psalm 67:1-7 Derek Wyatt Don & Susan Wyatt Donny & Errica Wyatt	29 John 3:16-21	30 1 Corinthians 3:5-9



PRAYER
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DECEMBER 2023
ACTIVITIES CALENDAR


	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1 ALL CHURCH FRIDAY FELLOWSHIP 11:30am-2:30pm at the Church	2 HEAVEN'S BOUNTY THRIFT SHOP 9:00am-2:00pm
3  Coffee Hour With Pizza	4	5  EMERGENCY FOOD PANTRY 9:00am-Noon	6  8:00 am Government Commodities Distribution	7  4:15pmFellowship Singers	8	9
10	11	12  EMERGENCY FOOD PANTRY 9:00am-Noon	13	14  4:15pmFellowship Singers	15  ALL CHURCH CHRISTMAS PARTY 12:00pm	16
17  All Church Christmas Coffee Hour	18	19  EMERGENCY FOOD PANTRY 9:00am-Noon 1:00pmWomen's Fellowship Mtg.	20	21  4:15pmFellowship Singers	22	23
24  7:00pm	25  <i>Christmas Day</i>	26  EMERGENCY FOOD PANTRY 9:00am-Noon	27	28  4:15pmFellowship Singers	29  Shed Work Day 9:00am-12:00pm	30
31  Watch Party at the Frantz's 3:00pm - ???						

EVERY SUNDAY

9:45am Sunday School
 10:45am Informal Worship
 11:00am Worship Hour