



**Women's Fellowship: The next meeting is Tuesday, January 17<sup>th</sup> 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 <sup>st</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> Fridays	1:00 p.m.
Women's Fellowship	3rd Tuesday	1:00 p.m.
Food Bank	1st Sunday	9:30 a.m.

**The Mirror – December 2023**

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



Empire Church  
of the Brethren

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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**

**Ron Cadruvi** – Health Issues  
**Norma Lutes** – Knee Issues  
**Butch Peterson** – Strength  
**COVID** – Among Us



### **THE BIG QUESTION**

Jesus asked his disciples, "Who do people say that I am?" Then he followed that question with another, more personal one: "Who do you say that I am?" (The incident is recounted in Mark 8:27-33 and Matthew 16:13-20.) This second question is a central one we all confront on the road to faith.

Peter's response to Jesus was direct: "Thou art the Christ." The word Peter used (that is translated "Christ") was messiah, which means "anointed one." Peter was identifying Jesus as the long-awaited deliverer and leader God would send to make Israel great among nations. That was at least part of what Peter was saying. But after Jesus' death and resurrection, those who called Jesus "the Christ" meant the one whose work was salvation in a personal, individual, and eternal sense. Jesus the Galilean became Jesus Christ, the Savior.

"Who do you say that I am?" With this question Jesus invited the disciples to move from what others said about him to deeper reflection, to examining their own minds and hearts. Jesus did not ask this question of passersby, of casual listeners, but of those who were his daily companions. All serious disciples face the same question. Christ challenges us to examine, in continually deepening ways, our response. And it is important to remember that we are not limited to our human insights and abilities as we explore it. When Peter affirmed that Jesus was the Anointed One, Jesus said to him, "Flesh and blood has not revealed this to you." God's Spirit works within us to help us see Jesus the Christ and know how we are to express our faith in him.

Who is Christ to you? How do you see him? As each of us answers, we move beyond intellectual inquiry to faith.

*Author Unknown*

*As we begin 2023, may we truly ponder these words and seek to know Jesus in an even deeper way within our everyday lives. May Jesus Bless You Richly in 2023!*



## PRAYER OF THE MONTH



### Five Finger Prayer

1. Your **thumb** is nearest you. So begin your prayers by praying for those closest to you. They are the easiest to remember. To pray for our loved ones is, as C.S. Lewis once said, a “sweet duty.”
2. The next finger is the **pointing finger**. Pray for those who teach, instruct, and heal. This includes teachers, doctors, and ministers. They need support and wisdom in pointing others in the right direction. Keep them in your prayers.
3. The next finger is the **tallest finger**. It reminds us of our leaders. Pray for the president, leaders in business and industry, and administrators. These people shape our nation and guide public opinion. They need God’s guidance. Also include our servicemen and women here and abroad who always stand tall in the duty of defending and protecting our nation. They need God’s strength and comfort.
4. The fourth finger is our **ring finger**. Surprising to many is the fact that this is our weakest finger; as any piano teacher will testify. It should remind us to pray for those who are weak, in trouble or in pain. They need our prayers day and night. You cannot pray too much for them.
5. And lastly comes our **little finger**; the smallest finger of all. Which is where we should place ourselves in relation to God and others. As the Bible says, “The least shall be the greatest among you.” Your pinkie should remind you to pray for yourself. By the time you have prayed for the other four groups, your own needs will be put in proper perspective and you will be able to pray for yourself more effectively.

**“Bear in mind that the measure of a man is the worth of the things that he cares about.” – Marcus Aurelius (121-80)**



## GOD LIVES UNDER THE BED

Author Unknown



My brother Kevin thinks God lives under his bed. At least that’s what I heard him say one night. He was praying out loud in his dark bedroom, and I stopped outside his closed door to listen. “Are you there, God?” he said. “Where are you? Oh, I see. Under the bed.”

I giggled softly and tiptoed of to my own room. Kevin’s unique perspectives are often a source of amusement. But that night something else lingered long after the humor. I realized for the first time the very different world Kevin lives in.

He was born 30 years ago, mentally disabled as a result of difficulties during labor. Apart from his size (he’s 6-foot-2), there are few ways in which he is an adult. He reasons and communicates with the capabilities of a 7-year-old, and he always will. He will probably always believe that God lives under his bed and that airplanes stay up in the sky because angels carry them. I remember wondering if Kevin realizes he is different.

Is he ever dissatisfied with his monotonous life? Up before dawn each day, off to work at a workshop for the disabled, home to walk our cocker spaniel, return to eat his favorite macaroni-and-cheese for dinner, and later to bed.

The only variation in the entire scheme are laundry, when he hovers excitedly over the washing machine like a mother with her newborn child. He does not seem dissatisfied. He lopes out to the bus every morning at 7:05, eager for a day of simple work. He wrings his hands excitedly while the water boils on the stove before dinner, and he stays up late twice a week to gather our dirty laundry for his next day's laundry chores.

And Saturdays – oh, the bliss of Saturdays! That's the day my Dad takes Kevin to the airport to have a soft drink, watch the planes land, and speculate loudly on the destination of each passenger inside. "That one's goin' to Chi-car-go!" Kevin shouts as he claps his hands. His anticipation is so great he can hardly sleep on Friday nights.

And so goes his world of daily rituals and weekend field trips. He doesn't know what it means to be discontent. His life is simple. He will never know the entanglements of wealth or power, and he does not care what brand of clothing he wears or what kind of food he eats. His needs have always been met, and he never worries that one day they may not be. His hands are diligent. Kevin is never so happy as when he is working. When he unloads the dishwasher or vacuums the carpet, his heart is completely in it.

He does not shrink from a job when it is begun, and he does not leave a job until it is finished. But when his tasks are done, Kevin knows how to relax.

He is not obsessed with his work or the work of others. His heart is pure.

He still believes everyone tells the truth, promises must be kept, and when you are wrong, you apologize instead of argue. Free from pride and unconcerned with appearances, Kevin is not afraid to cry when he is hurt, angry or sorry. He is always transparent, always sincere. And he trusts God.

Not confined by intellectual reasoning, when he comes to religion, he comes as a child. Kevin seems to know God – to really be friends with Him in a way that is difficult for an "educated" person to grasp. God seems like his closest companion. In my moments of doubt and frustrations, I envy the security Kevin has in his simple faith. It is then that I am most willing to admit that he has some divine knowledge that rises above my mortal questions. It is then I realize that perhaps he is not the one with the handicap – I am. My obligations, my fear, my pride, my circumstances – they all become disabilities when I do not trust them to God's care.

Who knows if Kevin comprehends things I can never learn?

After all, he has spent his whole life in that kind of innocence, praying after dark and soaking up the goodness and love of God. And one day, when the mysteries of heaven are opened, and we are all amazed at how close God really is to our hearts, I'll realize that God heard the simple prayers of a boy who believed that God lived under his bed. Kevin won't be surprised at all!

## **WORDS TO LIVE BY**

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

**A smile is a curved line that sets things straight.**

**The important thing about your lot in life is whether you use it for parking or building.**

## **BRETHREN BITS**

**(This article is from the Global Response Update section on Haiti from the Brethren Disaster Ministries Bridges Fall 2022 Issue, pgs. 9-10)**

Through a partnership with the Church of the Brethren in Haiti, ten new cement block homes have been completed in the 2021 earthquake response in the southwestern community of Saut Matherine. The goal of building at least 25 homes is part of a comprehensive response program that earlier provided emergency food, temporary shelter, water, and trauma relief training for children and adults. These accomplishments are amazing and only possible through God's grace, considering the challenges presented by ongoing gang warfare, lack of security, increased civil unrest, failed government at all levels, and skyrocketing inflammation. These people of Haiti, the church, and the church leaders need our ongoing prayers and support during this very difficult period in the country's history.

Haiti Earthquake Response coordinator, Ilexene Alphonse, traveled to Haiti in October to check on the progress and provide encouragement. He reported hearing "heart-felt appreciation for the project." Because the Brethren serve people, without regard to their church affiliation (or lack thereof) they are "respected in the community and beyond" and the church is growing.

## **DOES GOD ANSWER PRAYER?**

**Read 1 John 5:14-15**

*The Lord will hear when I call to him. Psalm 4:3 (NIV)*

The answering machine picked up the call. "If you would like to leave a message after the tone, we will get back to you as soon as possible." The voice was brisk and business like.

Feeling rather foolish, as I always do with answering machines, I made my request into the silence. There was no replay, no indication that anyone had heard my words. Would I really get an answer? There was nothing to do but hope for the best and trust that the machine was reliable. Sure enough, someone heard my message and responded; on Sunday, my request appeared in the church bulletin.

Recording a message on an answering machine reminds me in some ways of praying. At times, we feel as if we are speaking into silence. Has anyone heard my thanks or petition? Will anyone reply? We have no way of knowing for certain that God has heard our prayers. We can only trust and wait.

Eventually the answer comes, sometimes sooner than we expect, sometimes after a long wait. When God answers, I feel ashamed and humbled that I doubted.

***Thought for the Day***

God hears and answers prayers

*Sheila Kilpatrick (St. Andrews, Scotland)*

# NOVEMBER 2022 STATISTICS

Average Attendance: 22

## Giving:

Local:	\$4,743.00
Sunday School:	0
Youth:	0
Messenger:	0
Mariners:	0
Other:	716.77
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$5,459.77</b>



## DATES TO REMEMBER IN JANUARY



### BIRTHDAYS

08<sup>th</sup> –Michael Best  
09<sup>th</sup> –Don Benton  
14<sup>th</sup> –Nicole Knott

19<sup>th</sup> –Abigail Winchester  
20<sup>th</sup> –Ron Cadruvi  
22<sup>nd</sup> – Kelly Olsson

*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!*

### OUR WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA ADDRESSES:

**Website:**[www.empirecob.org](http://www.empirecob.org); **Facebook:**[www.facebook.com/EmpireCOB](http://www.facebook.com/EmpireCOB);

**Twitter:**[https://twitter.com/empire\\_cob](https://twitter.com/empire_cob); and

**Instagram:**<https://www.instagram.com/empirechurchofthebrethren/>





# JANUARY 2023 PRAYER CALENDAR



S	M	T	W	T	F	S
<b>1</b> Ecclesiastes 3:1-11  Pastor & Teachers Sarah Adams Gerald Allinson Alex & Cathy Arellano	<b>2</b> Psalm 34:1-7  Candice Arellano Molly Arellano Donna Ayres Elaine Azevedo	<b>3</b> 1 John 3:11-16  Ben & Jen Baker Ken Barklow Don & Pat Benton Wanda Bollinger	<b>4</b> James 2:14-26  Pauline Bert Michael Best Earleen Cadruvi & Fam. Ron Cadruvi & Fam.	<b>5</b> Exodus 34:28-32  Phyllis Caudle Linda Carter & Ivy Ashley Cooksey & Fam.	<b>6</b> 1 Kings 19:11-18  Arlene Cupp Charlotte DeHart Chuck & Wendla Dyer & Family	<b>7</b> 1 Corinthians 12:12-26  Jim & Sue Eikenberry Zac Fear Pam Franklin & Cherith Franklin
<b>8</b> Romans 5:1-5  Pastor & Teachers Kenny Fox Kerby & Heather Frantz Lyndall & Lois Frantz Lloyd Fullmer	<b>9</b> Joshua 1:3-9  Jerry Goodman Thomas & Patricia Guthrie Harold Harger Clark Hartman Jack & Rosetta Hartsfield	<b>10</b> Leviticus 19:1-15  Ryan & Kelly Heiny & Fam. David & Evelyn Hurlbut Kevin & Deborah Hurlbut & Family	<b>11</b> 1 Corinthians 10:31-33  Jay Irizarry Randy & Teri Johnson & Family Sheryle Knott & Fam.	<b>12</b> Luke 1:26-45  Mary Lou Lee David & Cheryl Leib Norma Lutes	<b>13</b> John 11:17-27  Gerri Masellis Ric Mason Stacy Nelson Suzanne Neptune	<b>14</b> Psalm 13:1-6  Kelly Olsson Clifford Parker Brad Parrish & Family
<b>15</b> Ephesians 5:1-2  Pastor & Teachers Tommie Parrish Daymon & Sarah Peterson & Family	<b>16</b> Matthew 7:7-12  Dennis Peterson Oscar Phan Jason & Kirsten Piazza & Family	<b>17</b> Luke 24:13-35  Skip & Kathleen Powell Jeff Price Jeremy & Erica Price & Fam.	<b>18</b> Psalm 145:9-20  Joel & Susan Price & Family John Price Jonah & Morgan Price	<b>19</b> Matthew 23:1-12  Nathan & Kim Price & Family Kay Qualls Mike & Laura Radcliffe & Family	<b>20</b> Luke 18:15-17  Mary Rariden Charlotte Rice & Fam. Lana Royer Keith Shafer Vance & Maria Shafer	<b>21</b> Psalm 18:25-36  Vern & Patty Shafer Troy & Joy Slaybaugh & Fam. Marilyn Snider
<b>22</b> Mark 2:1-5  Pastor & Teachers Tony & Laura Snyder & Family Gayle Stanfill Glenn Stanford	<b>23</b> 1 John 5:1-5  J.J. & Soleena Storne & Family Veronica Suderman & Family	<b>24</b> Deuteronomy 17:14-20  Arthur Syverson Mark & Amber Syverson & Family Mike Syverson	<b>25</b> 2 Corinthians 5:1-7  Natasha Towe Carolyn Trent John & Sue Vacca	<b>26</b> Matthew 28:16-20  Tim & Catherine Vaughn & Family Linda Ward & Fam.	<b>27</b> Psalm 96:1-3  Roger & Cynthia Welch & Family Josh & Heather Winchester & Fam.	<b>28</b> Philippians 4:4-9  Derek Wyatt Don & Susan Wyatt Donny & Erica Wyatt
<b>29</b> Matthew 19:23-30  Pastor & Teachers	<b>30</b> John 8:31-32	<b>31</b> Matthew 4:18-22				















**PRAYER**  
The world's greatest wireless connection





# JANUARY 2023 ACTIVITIES CALENDAR



	M	T	W	T	F	S
1		3  <b>EMERGENCY FOOD PANTRY</b> 9:00am-Noon	4 8:00 am <b>Government Commodities Distribution</b>	5  4:15pmFellowship Singers	6 <b>ALL CHURCH FRIDAY FELLOWSHIP</b> 11:30am-2:30pm at the Church	7 <b>HEAVEN'S BOUNTY THRIFT SHOP</b> 9:00am-2:00pm
8  Coffee Hour		10  <b>EMERGENCY FOOD PANTRY</b> 9:00am-Noon		12  4:15pmFellowship Singers		
15		17  <b>EMERGENCY FOOD PANTRY</b> 9:00am-Noon 1:00pmWomen's Fellowship Mtg.		19  4:15pmFellowship Singers 6:00pmBoard Meeting	20 Friday's Fellowship 11:30am Round Table Pizza Century Center	
22  Sunday Luncheon		24  <b>EMERGENCY FOOD PANTRY</b> 9:00am-Noon\		26  4:15pmFellowship Singers	27  Shed Work Day 9:00am-12:00pm	
29		31  <b>EMERGENCY FOOD PANTRY</b> 9:00am-Noon				

## EVERY SUNDAY

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