

## THE Christmas PLEDGE

1. To remember those people who truly need my gifts. |
2. To express my love for family and friends in more direct ways than presents. |
3. To rededicate myself to the spiritual growth of my family. |
4. To examine my holiday activities in light of the true spirit of Christmas. |
5. To initiate one act of peacemaking within my family and friends.

# BAPTISM SUNDAY

DECEMBER 16



A GRAPPLE CHRISTMAS

## WHITE ELEPHANT

Christmas Gift Exchange **Sunday, December 16**  
*(following the service)*



SUNDAY 12.23 @ 10:00 AM

## CHRISTMAS STOCKING

This year instead of an Angel Tree, we have chosen a Christmas Stocking as our way of blessing a family in need. We ask that you would purchase gift cards to enclose in the stocking: Target, Meier's, Walmart, or Kohl's. It will be helpful if the cards are small denomination to divide three stockings. Please have cards by December 23.



Dec 02 » Wonderful  
Counselor

Dec 09 » Mighty God

Dec 16 » Everlasting Father

Dec 23 » Prince of Peace

Dec 30 » Opportunities:  
Skinny in the Middle

## PRAYER REQUESTS ▶ THINKING-OF-YOU PRAYER

Elizabeth S. ▶ Health Issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	Benjamin G. ▶ Salvation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Suzie S. ▶ Health Issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ray H. ▶ Salvation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Noe F. ▶ Health Issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	Karen W. ▶ Salvation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kenny D. ▶ Neurological	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cheyenne W. ▶ Salvation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Phyllis L. ▶ Health Issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	Carmela C. ▶ Kidney Health	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jason G. ▶ Salvation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Janet S. ▶ God's Guidance	<input type="checkbox"/>
Michelle G. ▶ Spiritual growth	<input type="checkbox"/>	Angela A. ▶ Dizzy Spells	<input type="checkbox"/>
Brian H. ▶ Salvation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Betty F. ▶ Mobility Issues	<input type="checkbox"/>

## ▶ URGENT PRAYER

Toni R. ▶ Health Issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	Brianna V. ▶ Bell's Palsy	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sam H. ▶ Cardiac Issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	Gearen Family ▶ Salvation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gearen Family ▶ Drawn closer to God	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rick L. ▶ Salvation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stein Family ▶ Salvation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mike F. ▶ Salvation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Danny R. ▶ ALS	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bill S. ▶ Salvation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ruth H. ▶ Health Issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lisa G. ▶ Headaches	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jean G. ▶ Health Issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nate T. ▶ Dementia	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maria C. ▶ Hypertension	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lance B. ▶ Health Issues	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don H. ▶ Cardiac Issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	Megan G. ▶ Cancer	<input type="checkbox"/>
Barb G. ▶ Health Issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	Kathy ▶ Lung Cancer	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Chris ▶ Health Issues	<input type="checkbox"/>

## QUOTE OF THE WEEK

*"In the manger God loves you. Through the cross  
God saves you." —Max Lucado*

## METRICS THAT MATTER (12/09/18)

ATTENDANCE ▶ 37    GIVING ▶ \$1,288    GUESTS ▶ 3

VOLUNTEERS ▶ 15    DECISIONS FOR CHRIST ▶ 2



*For unto us a Child is born,  
Unto us a Son is given;  
And the government will be upon His shoulder.  
And His name will be called*

*Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. **Isaiah 9:6***

## God as a Father IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

**God is, by nature, a Father. He has a Father's heart.  
It's the very nature of who God is; He is a Father.**

*<sup>22</sup> Then say to Pharaoh, 'This is what the Lord says: Israel is my firstborn son, <sup>23</sup> and I told you, "Let my son go, so he may worship me. But you refused to let him go; so I will kill your firstborn son. **Exodus 4:22-23***

*and in the wilderness. There you saw how the Lord your God carried you, as a father carries his son, all the way you went until you reached this place. **Deuteronomy 1:31***

*Have you not just called to me: 'My Father,  
my friend from my youth, **Jeremiah 3:4***

*<sup>1</sup> When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son. <sup>2</sup> But the more they were called, the more they went away from me. They sacrificed to the Baals and they burned incense to images. <sup>3</sup> It was I who taught Ephraim to walk, taking them by the arms; but they did not realize it was I who healed them.*

*<sup>4</sup> I led them with cords of human kindness, with ties of love. To them I was like one who lifts a little child to the cheek, and I bent down to feed them. **Hosea 11:1-4***

# God as a Father

## IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Jesus referred to God as the Father in the Gospels over 150 times. He also used the Aramaic term “daddy”—which had never been used before. The clearest image for this is in the parable of the Prodigal Son.



- The prodigal son demands his inheritance while his father is still alive, then wastes it on partying and loose living.



- When the money runs out, he has to work and takes the lowest possible job for any Jew—feeding a Gentile’s pigs.

- Hungry and desperate, the son decides to come home. He knows he’s sinned and doesn’t expect to be restored to his family, but is content to live as one of his father’s servants.

*But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. Luke 15:20*

- The father was watching for him! He ran (which was disgraceful for a man of stature) and kissed him—not worrying if he still smelled like the pigpen!



- What happens next is stunning. Not only does the father—who symbolizes God—not hear the son’s desire to be a servant, he immediately restores his son’s privileged place in the family (symbolized by clothing and a ring) and throws a lavish party, killing the fatted calf, which was reserved for special occasions.



- The father—and our Father—rejoices in His children. No matter what we’ve done, He wants us to come to Him. He’s merciful, kind, and quick to forgive all who repent.

