



# GIVE THANKS WITH A GRATEFUL HEART

First Church of the Brethren  
730 Church Street, Eden, NC 27288

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Don't rush things, Pastor Doug! I know that is what a lot of you are thinking as I delivered my first Christmas themed sermon of the season this week. And I get that. This is a whirlwind time of year for holidays and special occasions. But I don't think that it is too early to begin thinking about our celebration of our Savior's birth.

Probably my favorite service of the year over the years has been the Christmas Eve Service. I believe that it has the most potential to bring people into the church who would not come at any other time. It is our chance to give people the opportunity to hear not only the Christmas Story, but the Gospel story. It is my goal to put together a Christmas Eve Service that is meaningful and special. And that is where I need your help. Do you have something special that you can contribute to this service – a solo or other musical performance, a reading, etc. I would like to have at least half a dozen or so of these types of elements.

The theme of the Christmas Eve Service will be “God With Us.” I encourage you to start now talking up the service and inviting people. We will have invitations available soon for you to be able to hand to people. In addition to the music and message, we will have candle lighting along with bread and cup communion. I hope that this will be a Christmas that you will remember!

*“The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” (which means “God with us”).*

*Matthew 1:23*

Pray With Thanksgiving  
(Right From the Heart Ministries)

*“Pray without ceasing. In all circumstances give thanks,  
for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus.”*

1 Thessalonians 5:17-18

God tells us that prayer should be a balance of a four-fold focus. These areas are praise; confession, thanksgiving; and then supplication, which is another word for our personal requests. Now, wouldn't it be fascinating if God gave us the statistics showing how much prayer time we spend on requests versus how much time is spent thanking God, praising Him, or confessing our sins? That would be an interesting stat! I know that if He did it for my own prayer life I would see those supplications way up there on that list!

God's Word tells us that when we pray, we are to have an attitude of thanksgiving. We want to be thankful to the Lord for the many blessings in our life, for the greatest blessing of all – which is the salvation we have in Jesus Christ and the eternal abundant life that He gives us. We ought to have an attitude of thanksgiving. Because, you see, with an attitude of thanksgiving, you will be more joyful and more content with life.

Praise your Lord for these many blessings and discuss your sins with the One who offers forgiveness. Strive for this four-fold balance in your prayer life and see how it draws you closer to the Creator of the Universe.

# FIRST CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

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## **Pray Without Ceasing**

Eugene Barton, Lucy Bradford, Katherine Bridges, Carolyn Combs, Melissa Dalton, JT Hale, Barbara Janney, Tania Martin, Salem Nelson, Marie Priddy, Aaron Roach, Jutta Shelton, Roger Shockley, Patsy Underwood, Leon & Gail Walker, Danny Whitley, Frankie Wilson

## **Thinking of You**

Shirleen Pratt

## **District Prayer Request**

Pray for Tara M. Riddle, a member of the Antioch Church of the Brethren, who will coordinate travel arrangements to National Youth Conference in July 2022 for the Virginia District. Let us pray that the age group ministries that we share together will be enhanced and multiplied for the glory of God.



If you can't attend Sunday services you can watch a live stream of Sunday Worship service on YouTube. Find us on YouTube as Eden NC Church of the Brethren and catch up on the weekly sermons.

We hope you plan to join us next Sunday as we adorn the church for the Advent season during our Hanging of the Greens service. During the service we will have special music and will share the Christmas story and history behind some of our favorite Christmas traditions. We hope to see you on November 28<sup>th</sup> for this service!

### A Blessing Or A Curse?

Holocaust survivor and devout Christian Corrie ten Boom recounts how her sister Betsie thanked God for the fleas infesting their packed barracks. When Corrie resisted the idea, Betsie pointed out that 1 Thessalonians 5:18 says to “give thanks in all circumstances.”

Still, Corrie wasn’t convinced — until the sisters realized the infestation kept the guards away, giving prisoners in those quarters freedom to worship and pray. The biting pests, which seemed like added misery, became a blessing.

Anger and bitterness sometimes cloud our vision, causing us to forget to thank God *in* all situations, though not necessarily *for* them. Other times we don’t wait long enough for blessings to be revealed.

But faith is like waiting through a storm, knowing a rainbow is coming eventually. Meanwhile, the Lord holds an umbrella for us, and the closer with him we walk, the less wet we’ll get.

-Julie Lee



### Upcoming Birthdays

November 21: Galen Shockley

November 22: Lily Ruth Chatham

November 27: Jennifer Bridges

November 28: Acela Diamond

### Upcoming Anniversaries

November 24: George & Diane Page

November 29: John & Judy Shumate

