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December 2023



# Bethel church

For more information check out our website [www.bethelnazarene.org](http://www.bethelnazarene.org)

## FROM THE HEART OF THE PASTOR

One of my favorite devotional mentors was Neil Anderson. He always inspired me with his wisdom. Here are some of the thoughts he helped me with over the years and maybe will help you as well.

### THE GREAT ETERNAL CONSTANT

*See how great a love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of God (1 John 3:1 NASB).*

Have you ever felt that God is ready to give up on you because, instead of walking confidently in faith, you sometimes stumble and fall? Do you ever fear that there is a limit to God's tolerance of your failure and that you are walking dangerously near that outer barrier or have already crossed it? I have met a lot of Christians like that. They think that God is upset with them, that He is ready to dump them, or that He has already given up on them because their daily performance is less than perfect.

It's true that the walk of faith can sometimes be interrupted by moments of personal unbelief or rebellion, or even satanic deception, especially in today's society and turmoil. It's during those moments when we think that God has surely lost His patience with us and is ready to give up on us. Often the temptation is to give up, maybe stop walking by faith altogether, or slump dejectedly by the side of the road, and wonder, "What's the use?" It seems God has forgotten us. We feel defeated, God's work for us is suspended, and Satan is elated.

The primary truth you need to know about God in order for your faith to remain strong is that **His love and acceptance is unconditional**. When your walk of faith is strong, God loves you. When your walk of faith is weak, God still loves you. When you're strong one moment and weak the next, strong one day and weak the next, God loves you. God's love for you is the great eternal constant in the midst of all the inconsistencies of your daily walk.

God wants us to do good, of course. The apostle John wrote: "I write this to you so that you will not sin" (1 John 2:1 NIV). But John continued by reminding us that God has already made provision for our failure, so His love continues constant in spite of what we do: "But if anybody does sin, we have One who speaks to the Father in our defense--Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world" (verses 1, 2 NIV).

**Prayer:** Lord, help me in my moments of weakness of faith and give me grace to correct my character defects and to help meet the needs of others.

Blessings,

Pastor Weldon

## Church Events

- Dec. 3 - Advent Fair
- Dec. 5 - Ladies' Freezer Meals
- Dec. 6 - Lunch Bunch
- Dec. 8 - Ladies' Bunco
- Dec. 10 - House of Prayer
- Dec. 11 - Secret Sister Reveal Party
- Dec. 12 - 50-UP
- Dec. 15 - Babysitting Night
- Dec. 17 - Choir Cantata; Family Christmas Service
- Dec. 20 - Board Meeting
- Dec. 24 - Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
- Dec. 25 - Merry Christmas!

# Look what's happening...

## Single Again Lunch Bunch - Wed, Dec. 6 @ noon.

Christmas luncheon in the Fellowship Hall! RSVP with Bertie Stout if you would like to attend.

**50-UP Fellowship Night** - Tue., Dec. 12 @ 5:45pm in the Teen Center. Join us for our Christmas Party! Entertainment will be Ring Praise Ministry (Christmas bells). Sign up to bring a favorite sweet or savory Christmas treat. Let us know if you need a ride.

**Ladies' Bunco Night** - Friday, Dec. 8th @ 7pm All ladies are invited for this night of fellowship! Bring a treat to share and be ready to have some fun. The Bunco rules will be explained so you should come even if you have never played Bunco before. Sign-up in the foyer if you can attend. No childcare available.

**Secret Sister Reveal Party** - Monday, Dec. 11th @ 7pm in the Teen Center. It was decided to finish up the year a little early. We will reveal current Secret Sisters and fill out forms for 2024! We'll draw new names in January and begin a new year of this prayer ministry.

**Angel Tree** - We are still collecting cash donations to get each family a food basket. Mark your gifts "Angel Tree". Please have your **wrapped** gifts back to the office by Dec. 10 and please attach the tag to the gift.

## Family Christmas Evening Service - Dec. 17 @ 6pm

**ALL AGES** are invited to join us for a fun service of a variety of Christmas songs, specials, and dramatic readings. Hot Cocoa Bar fellowship time to follow! Bring a favorite holiday treat to share.

\*Consider giving non-perishable food items to the charities we support: Naz Care House & LOVE, Inc. Collection boxes are located outside the Fellowship Hall.

### 2023 Contribution Reminder:

Only those contributions actually received in the office by **December 31** or postmarked by that date may be recorded as given during the 2023 tax year. Please keep in mind that the office will be closed December 25-29. Checks received in the offering January 7 but back-dated into December are **not** considered 2023 contributions. Donors having given more than \$500 during the 2023 tax year should delay filing their tax returns until after they receive their contribution statement from the church. IRS regulations require that the contribution statement be in hand prior to filing the return. Bethel Church contribution statements will be emailed or made available by January 30, 2024. If you need a printed copy of your statement, please contact Amy in the church office.

**Teen Christmas Parties** - Dec. 13 @ 6:30pm - watch for details from Pastor Des and Pastor Josh.

## Free Babysitting Night! - Dec. 15 @ 6-9pm

We want to offer parents/grandparents a free night off to enjoy holiday shopping or a date night! This is for kids age zero to 5th grade. We have some sponsors, now we need the kids!! We are still taking donations for the teens to work at the event.

**Family Game Night** - We are taking a break for December because of the busy holiday season. We will bring this event back in January 2024!

**Christmas Cards** - feel free to bring your Christmas cards for church members and use our indoor "mailbox" in the foyer. Check the box for ones you receive!



## *Christmas Services:*

*Dec. 10th ~ 9:00am & 10:45am -*

*PromiseLand Kids' Choir & Bethel Kids' Choir*

*Dec. 17th ~ Choir Christmas Cantata (both services)*

*Dec. 17th ~ 6:00pm - Family Christmas Service*

*Dec. 24th ~ 9:00 am & 10:45am -*

*Family Christmas Eve Sunday*

*(No Sunday School or Childcare)*

*Dec. 24th ~ 5:00pm (new time) - Candlelight Service*



## *Liberty Quartet in Concert*

*January 7, 2024 @ 6:00pm*

Liberty is a Gospel group based in the West with a full-time concert schedule. Whether or not you are a fan of Southern Gospel music, you will certainly enjoy the enthusiasm these men exhibit while serving and singing to the Lord. We will be taking a Love Offering to support their ministry.



## **Holiday Hours...**

**The office will be closed for regular business the last week of December (25-29). Most of the staff will be on vacation. Contact the pastors individually if you have an emergency.**