

**Those to Serve**

(B) Calvin Burks  
(FV) Judd Wall  
(O) Mike Mallett  
(A) Jorge Garza  
1st prayer Keith Stifflemire  
2nd prayer Doug Pruett  
Announcements: Jack Wall  
Singing: Kevin Grant

**Prayer List:**

Dora Martinez  
Lynn Parker  
Tammy Parker  
Kadence Payne  
Anita Adams  
Virginia Lovell  
Letha Sheldon  
Pray for our Nation  
Our Troops  
Law Enforcement  
Rescue Personnel

**December 25th**

*Christmas Day*

**January 1st**

*New Year's Day*

**January 7th**

*Mission Fund*

**January 14th**

Guest Speaker Lynn Parker  
&  
Men's Business Meeting  
&  
Fellowship Sunday

*Happy Birthday*

**Kevin Grant Dec. 24th**  
**Letha Sheldon Dec. 25th**  
**Will Vann Dec. 26th**

*Happy Anniversary*

**January 1st**  
**Judd & Denise Wall**  
**January 26th**  
**Doug & Theresa Pruett**



**Lynette Vann's home**  
**December 31, 2023**

**5:30 PM**

**Please bring your favorite finger food and games and come enjoy the fellowship together.**

# Edifier

**Evant church of Christ**

310 W Brooks Drive

Evant, TX 76525

254-471-5705

**December 24, 2023**



*Attending church services regularly is like making a path through the forest: the more often you use it, the less obstruction you find in the way."*

Sunday Worship:

**Will Vann, Preacher**

9:30 am Bible Study

**863-899-0987**

10:20 am Worship

**Email: wvann@yahoo.com**

12:30 pm Afternoon

**www.evantchurchofchrist.org**

Wednesday Night

6:00 pm

## ***Merry Christmas?***

By Steve Higginbotham

For many people, Christmas is the "most wonderful time of the year," but for others, it can be the most painful time of the year. While many will be together laughing, and sharing expressions of love during this holiday season, others will be sitting alone, broken, and forlorn.

It's difficult for those who have not suffered loss to appreciate the pain others feel during the holidays. However, if God allows us to live long enough, we all will experience a Christmas without a loved one for the very first time. Instead of being surrounded by family and gifts, our companions will be loneliness and grief. Even in a room filled with family, one may find himself alone in his thoughts, memories, and grief.

### **So what can be done? Here are some suggestions**

**1. To the Joyful ...** Surprise someone who is grieving with gifts, cards, letters, and visits. Get the whole family involved in the project, children included. Make it thoughtful, sacrificial, and memorable. Allow it to be a teaching moment of God's love for the recipient, our children, and ourselves.

**2. To the Joyful ...** Help someone create new memories. Be sensitive to the fact that for some people, Christmas never was a time of joy due to a dysfunctional upbringing. For some people, the mere thought of Christmas drudges up painful memories. While we can't change the past, we can change the present and create pleasant memories to be recalled in the future.

**3. To the Joyful ...** Don't forget to thank God for what you have. Cherish every joyful moment as His gift to you. We live in a fallen world that sooner or later will affect our lives. God won't exempt us from heartache and pain in this life, but He did promise eternal peace and joy in the life to come. Don't take your present joy for granted.

**4. To the Hurting ...** Don't give up. Don't wallow in your grief. Fight it. Choose what you want to think about. Work at finding joy. Count your blessings, name them one-by-one, and it will surprise you what the Lord has done.

**5. To the Hurting ...** Serve others. Get outside yourself. It's a paradox, but if you want to lighten your load, you need to pick up the load of another. It is more blessed to give than to receive (Acts 20:35). Busy yourself in doing good for others and you'll create your own joy and be distracted from your pain. Remember, we were made for good works (Ephesians 2:10). Functioning according to the "Owner's Manual" will always provide the best results.

### **6. To the Hurting ...**

Don't forget to thank God for what you have. I don't mean to downplay your hurt and heartache, but if you are the Lord's, your blessings far exceed your problems. Look beyond your pain and you will see countless reasons to give God thanks

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God" (2 Corinthians 1:3-4).

## ***Paid in Full!***

Years ago when the final payment was made on an installment loan, the bank would stamp in large letters on the original application "Paid in Full!" In this electronic age I don't know if financial institutions still do that, but even if we don't get a piece of paper with the "Paid in Full!" stamp on it, when a loan is finally paid off, it sure feels good. Making that final payment and having a debt "Paid in Full!" is just plain exciting.

Jesus told a story about a man who owed such a huge debt that he could never have paid it off (Matthew 18). I mean he owed a man millions of dollars, and that was in the 1st century! When the debt came due, all the man could do was fall on his knees and beg for mercy. Try that at your bank. It doesn't work. But that time the unheard of happened. The man felt sorry for the one who owed him so much and stamped the parchment (or whatever) "Paid in Full!" He cancelled the entire debt! The balance was now \$0.00. If that had been you, how grateful would you have felt?

And that's just about money. We owe a debt that we can never pay. Even if we have millions of dollars, billions of dollars, we could never pay the debt we owe. It simply is not within our power to pay off our debt because our debt is not about something as frivolous as money. Our debt involves sin, which by nature makes us objects of God's wrath (Ephesians 2:3). And yet, because of the love and mercy of God, our enormous debt can be stamped "Paid in Full!"

I said "can be" because not everyone's sin debt will be cancelled. The other day I heard someone say that, although everyone will die with their debt of sin entirely paid, how sad it is that most will die without having their personal debt cancelled by Jesus (Matthew 7:13-14). The cross has the potential power to cancel every sin committed by every person who has or will live on this earth. Unfortunately, only a relatively few will accept the offer of forgiveness and obey the gospel to access this grace. While the cross "Paid in Full!" the sins of everyone, only those "in Christ" (see Galatians 3:26-27) receive the actual cancellation of the debt of sin: "in him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that he lavished on us ..." (Ephesians 1:7-8). I dare say that no one would refuse to have their mortgage paid off by doing something as equally simple as God offers us to have our sin debt "Paid in Full!" by obeying the gospel. It is shocking what we will do for a few dollars and won't do for forgiveness of sins!

But for those of us who choose to see the bigger picture, for those of us who do know that saving our souls by the blood of Jesus is the most important thing we can accomplish in this life, how very grateful we should be that Jesus was willing and able to cancel our debt and mark it "Paid in Full!" We cannot thank him enough. But we can keep him the focus of our present life and the hope of our future life. And we can do whatever we can to help as many other people come to know the awesome blessing of the cross.

**By Joe Chesser**