

**"The Magi (Wise Men) left for their own country by another way"**

Matthew 2:20 (NASB).

Next, they were going to go home, most likely the same way they came, but their next shaped up very differently and put them on a very different and nervous route. What is your "next"? Are you finding yourself on a very unfamiliar stretch on the road of life? Do you just want to go home?

There was no time to do a lot of thinking or even praying, life can be like that, a warning from God in a dream (I wonder if all the Magi had the same dream?) and then the next morning with a decision to make, "Do we stick with the plan, or do we reroute, tick off King Herod and put ourselves in danger? Strange how God's will, God's directions are not always safe. I wonder how often we find ourselves taking the wrong route because we are obsessed with safety more than obedience?

**"Get up! Take the Child and His mother and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is going to search for the Child to destroy Him"** Matthew 2:13 (NASB).

I can guarantee that's not what a first-time Dad wants to hear or do, go on the run for your life with your wife and newborn, and be refugees. I imagine when it came to their "next," the plan and dream were to go back to Nazareth, make a home, expand the business, and live a full and quiet life. Have you ever thought that for God to protect you, work out his will in your life, you might have to put your dreams on hold, be far home, have moments of sheer panic, and live an entirely different life? Think about all the things Joseph could have thought of that would've kept him from getting up, packing up, and call an Uber in the middle of the night to take them as quickly and as far Bethlehem as possible.

Strange, isn't it, first God has the entire Roman world on the move so pregnant Mary and Joseph inconveniently would end up in Bethlehem at just the right time, only to have them on a dead run out of Bethlehem under cover of darkness just a little later. How often do you think they wished they could just be back home, prayed that their next

"next" would be calmer, more settled? How often do think Joseph thought back, was glad and rejoiced that he had enough sense to let God direct his "next"?

**The shepherds went back, glorifying and praising God for all that they had heard and seen, just as had been told them"** Luke 2:20 (NASB).

I love coming home; the life God has called me to. I am not sure if that was true of those shepherds, but they did go back. Back to their sheep out in the fields, back to their lives in and around Bethlehem, back to all that was familiar to them. The only detour they had to take was through the dark streets of the little town of Bethlehem, whooping and hollering the praises to God. I always wondered how many times they had stumbled through those streets in the wee hours of the morning before, whooping and hollering different things after they hung out at the local bar/inn?

What we do know is that they sounded very much like the Heavenly Host they had heard praising God earlier in the night. Their "next", their walking home looked and sounded very differently from before they had encountered God, before they saw Jesus. Is that true of you? What kind of impact did that night, that Jesus encounter, have over all of the "nexts" of the rest of the lives of those shepherds? Did it make a difference in their lives, in their homes, in their shepherding/business the next day, and day after that, and the day ..., what do you think?

Here we are at the eve of 2025, 2026 is next, 365 days of "nexts". Maybe you will be able to spend it at home, in your Bethlehem, where things are familiar. Maybe you will wake up in the middle of the night, and everything is changing more quickly than you'd thought is possible. Maybe you will find yourself in situations and places that were not part of your plans. Maybe you will be left breathless and wondering how in the world this could be of God. Maybe you see and hear God as plain as the shepherds did. Whatever may come, I pray you and I will be found ready to adjust our route, quickly adjusting ourselves to every prompt and revelation God gives us, continually growing in our faith and obedience no matter what the next "next" looks like, and always praising and glorifying God with all of hearts, voice, and being.

To God be all glory. Happy New Year, Paxtor Hans



# Lord Hear Our Prayers

## PRAYER REQUEST

Cari Wendel (Surgery), Linda Bettencourt (Health),  
Tori (Brain Tumor), Jerry Miller (Stroke), Joyce Prinz (Health),  
Alan Clement (Heart Attack), Payton & Grace (Missions),  
Churches in need of Pastors, Marriages,  
our Country's Leadership, and those dealing with addiction.

## SALVATION

Nick, Greg, David, Luke, Skip, Demetrius McCray,  
Farney, Peter, Jimmy, Dan, Josiah, Amanda, Jim, Mike C.

## Military And Those Serving

Michael Berger, Austin Downing, Noah Martin,  
John Michael Chavez, Chris Kelly, Austin Kroeker,  
Brian Sula, Thomas Hoffman, Joel Thelen,  
Clayton Brown, Jonathan Grinols, Joshua Grabowski,  
Christopher Sula, Dylan Briggs, Jacob Bowden

## **Church Board Members:**

Wynter Sturtevant III - Pastor ,  
Richard Mayes - Head Deacon, Jerry Lyman,  
Sarah Storey, April Wilcox, Tony Souza, LaRae Bozik

## CARD & FLOWER MINISTRY

If you know of anyone who is ill or hospitalized, please let us  
know by calling: **Lynnette Barrera** – (559) 400-1862 and/or  
e-mail **Judy Mahar** at [ldpbcprayer@gmail.com](mailto:ldpbcprayer@gmail.com) with your  
prayer requests.

# January

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Upcoming Events

- Food Ministry - Jan. 7th & 20th
- Church Board Meeting: January 19th at 630 P.M.



Fellowship Refreshments  
were provided by:

***"Pastor Wynter's Class"***

and we **thank you.**



***Next week:***

***"Beverly's Class & Youth are up!"***

The Kids Care team is in **NEED** of **MORE** caregivers for Sunday morning during worship service. If **YOU** are an **ADULT** church member (for at least 6 months), **LOVE** children, and **WILLING** to get a livescan, please see Susie Frei for more information. You will be on a **ROTATING** schedule, have fun with kids aged 2 to 7 years, and provide a valuable service to our church.



**Susie Frei**



### Giving

*December 21, 2025*

Offering:  
\$2,465.00

Camp:  
\$887.00

Food:  
\$.00

Facilities Fund:  
\$5.00

Lottie Moon:  
\$181.00

Books:  
\$.00

Attendance:  
79

### Weekly Events

#### Sunday School/Small Groups:

9:00 AM

#### Sunday Morning Worship Service:

10:30 AM

#### Sunday Evening Worship Service:

6:00 PM

Tuesday: Men's Gathering: 6:00 PM

#### 1st Wednesday & 3rd Tuesday Food Ministry:

9:00 AM - 11:00 AM

#### Wednesday:

Women's Bible Study - 10:00 AM  
Bible Study/Small Group - 7:00 PM  
GriefShare - (Feb. 25th)

Thursday: Chicken Foot - 1:00 PM

Saturday: Youth Hang-Out (Hiatus)

### **Lake Don Pedro Baptist Church**

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La Grange California 95329

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209-703-1441

## **Theme for 2026**

# **“Stand Firm”**

“Only let your manner of life be worthy<sup>[a]</sup> of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, “

**Philippians 1:27 (ESV)**



### **Yearly Bible Reading Plan - 2025** **December 29th - January 4th**

DAY 1 - Mark 14 (Proverbs 29)	DAY 4 - Luke 1 (Proverbs 1)
DAY 2—Mark 15 (Proverbs 30)	DAY 5 - Luke 2 (Proverbs 2)
DAY 3 - Mark 16 (Proverbs 31)	DAY 6 - (Proverbs 3)
	DAY 7 - (Proverbs 4)

**Welcome all of you who are guests with us today. Our desire is for you to relax and be blessed by worship, God's Word, and fellowship. We, the members, have committed ourselves to underwrite the church financially. We do not expect you to contribute to the offering, but you are free to participate. We would like to get to know you and for you to know us better.**