

# Empire Church of the Brethren

## Sunday Service Sermons

11 January 2026

God Can Use You.

Do you think of yourself as a partner of / with God?

Text: "And as you go, preach, saying, The Kingdom of heaven is at hand." *Matt. 10:7*

This statement was true when Jesus said it.

For the kingdom of God was Him.

And He was at hand.

Is it as true for us?

When two or three are gathered in his name he is there.

And when he is there the kingdom of God is there.

Are we as industrious as ants?

Allegheny ants, a common species in the Eastern United States, help enrich forest areas by carrying tons of soil from below ground to the surface.

A three-year study by the University of Wisconsin revealed that one colony of ants moved fifteen tons of subsoil, building clusters of large mounds and burrowing five and a half feet below the surface.

This deep plowing increases the nutrients, clay, and organic matter of the surface soil in the forest. No wonder the writer of Proverbs said, "Go to the ant . . . Consider her ways, and be wise."

*Proverbs 6:6*

If God can use Allegheny ants to move fifteen tons of subsoil to the surface, surely God can use you in 2026.

God can use you when you see others compassionately.

Jesus remained consistently compassionate.

From the time he sent his disciples on their first witnessing mission until his death, Jesus was "moved with compassion."

Because of the power of Christian love, God can use you in 2026.

This is a reason from within.

The compassion of *Matthew 9:36* and the love of *1 Corinthians 13* are inseparable.

The latter reminds us that love "bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things."

Christian love enables us to accept and love people who are different from us.

It reaches out in compassionate tenderness to people in need.

Because of the desperate condition of the lost, God can use you in 2026.

This is a reason from without.

Some are moved to fear, some to contempt, and others to outright rejection by the desperate needs of people, but Christians should be moved to compassion.

Billy Graham arrived at Sir Winston Churchill's residence in 1954 to find the great statesman looking pale and frightened.

As the evangelist entered, Churchill looked up and asked, "Young man, do you have any hope?"

This is the question asked by every person in the face of desperation.

The lost have no purpose in life.

Jesus saw them "scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd."

Nothing is as tragic as a soul who has no purpose in life.

God can use you when you respond to a challenge enthusiastically.

Christ faced squarely the challenge of evangelizing his people, the task was overwhelming, and few were willing to become involved.

Nevertheless, he responded to the challenge not with despair or defeatism but with enthusiasm. As long as your response to a challenge is that of doubt, fear, and despair, as long as you pose as an expert who knows all the reasons why the church must fail, the lost cannot be reached, and the cause of Christ must be content with mediocre accomplishment, you will never be anything but as obstacle to the progress of God's work.

Squarely face a challenge with enthusiasm.

Because of the tremendous job to be done, you must face the challenge enthusiastically. When Jesus said that the harvest was plentiful but the workers were few, he was saying that there was much to do and many to be won but who will do the work?

The challenge is a real challenge.

Helping people who are trying to escape the boredom of life turn to Christ is a tremendous job indeed.

Consider the ancient Roman society.

A society that pours out money on pleasures is a decadent society.

Suetonius tells us that Emperor Vitellius set on the table at one banquet two thousand fish and seven thousand birds.

There is no doubt about what the Roman world was trying to do it was trying to escape boredom. Extravagance is always a sign of the desire to escape.

We are living in an age of decadence and escapism, and as Christians, there lies our challenge.. Sir John Reith once said, "I do not like crises, but I like the opportunities they bring."

The church has the challenge today to lead people to life in Jesus Christ.

You must respond to this challenge enthusiastically.

Because so few are willing to become involved, you must face the challenge enthusiastically.

The church staff, the Sunday School workers, and a few dedicated deacons are not enough in the face of the tremendous harvest of souls for which God holds the church responsible.

The fact that so few are willing to get involved should move you to new heights of enthusiasm as you give this task your all.

If only a few are willing to respond, there is no time to waste.

God can use you when you come to him prayerfully.

In the face of an over whelming challenge, we are tempted to come to God mournfully, complaining about the heavy burden he has placed on us.

But Christ says we should come to God prayerfully.

Come to him prayerfully, acknowledging that this is his harvest.

Verse 38 reminds us that Jesus is the "Lord" of the harvest, that is, he is the one to whom the harvest belongs.

Therefore, God has more at stake and thus more interest in the success of this battle for souls than we do.

We are only his reapers, but we must enter the fields if the harvest is to be gathered.

Come prayerfully, believing that more people will get involved.

We must not wait until others get involved before we enter the fields, we must get involved, praying and believing that others will join us.

God can use you when you accept is power trustingly.

The twelve who responded to Christ's call and in simple trust accepted the power required for their task of witnessing.

Because of the source of that power, you can accept it trustingly.

"He gave them power."

Now that Christ is physically absent, the Holy

Spirit serves as the source of our power.

*Acts 1:8* assures us, "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses."

But we must accept this power trustingly.

Jesus did not save us until we recognized him as Savior and put our trust in him for salvation.

Just so, the Holy Spirit does not control us in the sense of permeating our will, reason, and

emotions until we recognize him as the one who was sent by the Father to sanctify our lives and trust him to perform his ministry in and through us.

Because of the purpose of that power, you can accept it trustingly.

God does not grant power without a purpose.

But once we are sincere in our desire to be used by God, we can trust him to impart the power to accomplish his purpose.

God can use you when you share the gospel joyfully.

Wherever the disciples went, there was joy and excitement, the long-awaited Messiah had come, the kingdom of heaven was at hand.

You can share the gospel joyfully because of the power of the gospel.

The people might be lost yet the gospel has the power to save them.

You can share the gospel with the same joy that Paul did when he said, "I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew them for the Gentile."

Remember that there is never a person whom the gospel cannot change.

You can share the gospel joyfully because of the availability of salvation.

You do not have to wait on the kingdom of heaven, it is at hand.

You can enter it now!

God can use each of us in 2026 when we see others compassionately, when we respond to a challenge enthusiastically, when we come to him prayerfully. When we accept his power trustingly and when we share the gospel joyfully.

The more us ourselves that we give to him the more he will use us to usher in the Kingdom of God here and now.

That will make the year 2026 the best year yet.