

**Welcome!**

Welcome to the Alexanderwohl! The book of Revelation seems very cryptic, even though it is meant to uncover and reveal God's faithfulness. Today we look at one of seven letters addressed to an ancient church, and ask ourselves what the Spirit has to say to our church today.



**GATHERING TO WORSHIP**

**Gathering Music**

Renae Peters, mountain dulcimer

**Welcome**

Pastor Caleb Yoder

**Call to Worship and Invocation** (lighting of the peace torch)

Lord, as we gather today, in our ordinary way in your presence, and in the presence of one another, we are all too aware that much is amiss in the world. We are all too aware, that even in this quiet moment, some of your beloved people and parts of your beloved earth are being visited by death and destruction.

For the sake of the world you love, we pray that our simple commitment to the routines of worship will not be an escape from life but a sacrament of hope that turns us back to the needs of the world, more grounded in your love.

May our attention to ordinary things be a way of saying that we trust you as the one who cradles the world and its people in your all-embracing arms. In Jesus' name, Amen.

**Rosebud Blessing** for Myles Unruh, son of Kyle and Justine Unruh

**Gathering Songs**

*For the beauty of the earth*

HWB 89

For the beauty of the earth,  
for the glory of the skies,  
for the love which from our birth  
Over and around us lies:  
*Lord of all, to thee we raise  
this our hymn of grateful praise.*

For the joy of human love,  
brother, sister, parent, child,  
friends on earth and friends above,  
for all gentle thoughts and mild:  
*Lord of all, to thee we raise  
this our hymn of grateful praise.*

For the beauty of each hour  
of the day and of the night,  
hill and vale and tree and flow'r,  
sun and moon and stars of light:  
*Lord of all, to thee we raise  
this our hymn of grateful praise.*

For thy church that evermore  
lifteth holy hands above,  
off'ring up on ev'ry shore  
her pure sacrifice of love:  
*Lord of all, to thee we raise  
this our hymn of grateful praise.*

*Jesus, stand among us*

HWB 25

Jesus, stand among us in your risen pow'r.  
Let this time of worship be a hallowed hour.

Breathe the Holy Spirit into every heart.  
Bid the fears and sorrows from each soul depart.

**Morning Prayer**

Marilyn Unruh Flaming

**Song of Praise**

*Praise, I will praise you, Lord*

HWB 76

Praise, I will praise you, Lord, with all my heart.  
O God, I will tell the wonders of your ways,  
and glorify your name.  
Praise, I will praise you, Lord, with all my heart.

In you I will find the source of all my joy.  
Alleluia!  
Love, I will love you, Lord...  
Serve, I will serve you, Lord...

Worship Music

Renae Peters

**HEARING GOD’S WORD**

Scripture Reading

Revelation 2:1-7

Tammy Flaming

Sermon

Remembering your first love

Pastor Caleb

**SENT AS GOD’S PEOPLE**

Worship With Our Tithes and Offerings

First Fruits Giving

Hymn of Response

*We would extol thee*

HWB 74

1 - We would extol thee, ever-blessed Lord.  
Thy holy name forever be adored.  
Each day we live to thee our psalm we raise.  
Thou, God and Sov’reign, worthy of our praise,  
great and unsearchable art all thy ways.

Laud we thy glory while on thee we wait,  
glad in the knowledge of thy love so great.

2 - Age shall to age pass on the endless song,  
telling the wonders which to thee belong,  
thy mighty acts with joy and fear relate.

3 - Thou, Lord, art gracious, merciful to all,  
nigh to thy children when on thee they call.  
Slow unto anger, pitiful and kind,  
thou to compassion ever art inclined.  
We love thee with our heart and strength and mind.

**Benediction**

Pastor Caleb

+ The peace lamp serves as a visual reminder for us that we follow Jesus the Prince of Peace and believe in uncertain times that God’s shalom will prevail.

Special thanks to the Unruh Family, Tammy Flaming, Laura Unrau, Marilyn Unruh Flaming, Steve Unruh, Delton Voth, Dwight M. Flaming, Brendon Nafziger, Marlin Janzen, and David Esau for their help with making this outdoor worship service possible.

Flowers this morning were shared by Shari Wiens.

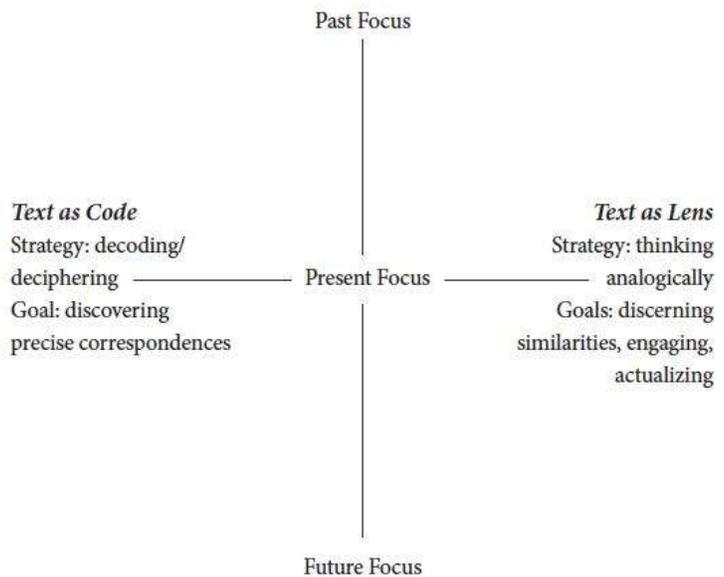
**Questions for Reflection** (Revelation 2:1-7)

1. What does it mean to return to our “first love” as the Spirit says to the church in Ephesus?
2. What are your feelings toward the book of Revelation? How does recognizing the symbolic images in the book help us understand its message?

**5 approaches to reading Revelation**

(Michael Gorman, *Reading Revelation Responsibly*)

1. **Predictive** – code for future events
2. **Preterist** – code for events that happened back then
3. **Poetic** – poetic language expressing ultimate truths about God, evil, and history
4. **Theopolitical** – political protest and dissent against the Roman empire (and by extension to domination systems today)
5. **Pastoral-Prophetic** – Revelation is meant to encourage Christians of every generation to faithfulness in times of crisis.



**Next Sunday** we will meet for worship at Camp Mennoscah at 10:30. We will celebrate the parent/child dedications of Logan Unrau, Savannah Hein, and Josiah Yoder. We also celebrate with Lizzie Schmucker as she will publicly profess her faith in Christ as she is baptized in the Ninnescah River. See announcements for more details.

## *Praying for our congregation and beyond*

- ❖ We celebrate with and pray for Matthew and Laura Voth as they become a forever family for their daughter Lillian. Lilly was adopted on September 10.
- ❖ The rosebud this morning is for Myles Unruh, son of Kyle and Justine Unruh and grandson of Duane and Karen Unruh and Scott and Cindy Erb. We ask for continued blessing for Myle's family as he grows and develops.
- ❖ We pray for Jeremy Schroeders's mom, Debbie Schroeder, who has now discovered her melanoma from last year has spread to her lungs and liver. We pray for successful treatment through immunotherapy and medication.
- ❖ We pray for the family of Myron Schmidt who lost his younger sister Starlet last Saturday. Starlet Richardson lived in Glenoma, Washington, and was a sister-in-law to Pat and aunt of Megan Duerksen.
- ❖ We continue to pray for Darla Banman as she recovers from her recent procedure.
- ❖ We pray for farmers during this fall harvest season.
- ❖ We pray for those impacted by losses and destruction of Hurricane Sally, as well as for those in the west still dealing with wildfires and toxic air from smoke.

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**Deacons:**  
**Sandy Banman**  
**Marilyn Unruh Flaming**  
**Ruth Goertzen**  
**Cindy Hastings**  
**Bryant Miller**  
**Jim Schmidt**

If you would appreciate a porch visit or phone call from one of the pastors or deacons, please feel free to contact us!

### **Coming Events**

Today, September 20	10:00 am	Outdoor Worship Service
Monday, September 21	4:30 pm	Covid Taskforce meets
	7:45 pm	Board of Worship on Zoom
Tuesday, September 22	9:30 am	Staff Meeting
Wednesday, September 23	7:00 pm	Board of Christian Education
Thursday, September 24	7:30 pm	Board of Deacons on Zoom
Sunday, September 27	10:30 am	Church retreat at Camp Mennoscah
Monday, September 28	2:00 pm	Prayer Team
Sunday, October 4	10:00 am	World Communion
	3:00 pm	Bluegrass Grand Porch Visit
Wednesday, October 7	6:45 pm	Faith Formation for ages 3 through grade 12
Sunday, October 25	1:30 pm	Goessel Area Harvest Giving Walk
Sunday, November 1	2:00 am	Daylight SavingTime Ends (set clocks back 1 hour)

### **CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Next Sunday, September 27:** We will meet at Camp Mennoscah for an outdoor worship service beginning at 10:30. Arrival time at camp can be as early as 9:00 am. The service will include the baptism of Elizabeth Schmucker in the river as well as the dedication of three babies. The service will be recorded for those who are unable to attend. Please bring your own chairs, wear face coverings, and distance yourselves from other

households. A limited number of cars may pull up along the long side of the shelter, drive-in style. You are invited to bring your own picnic lunch, as we will not be using the dining hall or the kitchen. You may want to bring a tablecloth if you choose to eat at a picnic table. Sanitized restroom facilities will be available in the south bathhouse located in the boys' cabin area. The camp grounds are reserved until 4:00pm for those who want to enjoy the river, walk the trails, or play frisbee golf (bring your own gear). The camp has asked that we not use the playground equipment. Come to camp to experience a special opportunity for worship and renewal!

**Pastor Lois is away** from Thursday through Monday, September 17-21. She'll return to the office on Tuesday.

**New Address:** Dennis and Norma Duerksen, 405 E. Marion, PO Box 37, Goessel, KS 67053.

**From the Faith Formation Task Force** – After several meetings, Wednesday evening plans have developed as follows: Planned activities are ONLY for children and youth at this point (age 3 through High School) and will begin on Wednesday, October 7 and go through Wednesday, November 18. There will be no supper, no Bible study, no Chancel choir rehearsal, no bell choir (and no Sunday morning Sunday school). Children and youth activities will run from 6:45-7:30 p.m. (7:45 for the Youth group). Direct communication regarding logistics, and health and safety guidelines will happen between midweek leaders and parents. The Task Force remains committed to the safety of our church family and is hopeful that additional activities can be reinstated in due time. Re-assessment of this current plan will be made at the end of the fall midweek season. Thanks for your input, Pastor Lois and Susan

**Mark your calendars now for the Bluegrass Grand Porch Visit on October 4 in the church yard from 3 - 4:30 p.m.** Everyone is invited to come and enjoy socially-distanced fellowship and bluegrass music from several local groups. The FM radio station will be going, so staying in your car is also an option. Please bring a chair, snacks and drinks, wear a mask and enjoy some live music and fellowship! An offering will be taken to support MCC and New Hope Shelter. Rain cancels.

**Save the Date:** This year's Goessel Area Harvest Giving Walk will be held on **Sunday, October 25** at 1:30pm beginning at the Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church shelter house. This annual walk - of 1-6 miles - benefits MCC and the Tabor Food Pantry. Donation envelopes will be available from your church recruiter in the coming weeks and this year we are offering an online fundraising option as well. Just go to <https://runsignup.com/Race/Donate/99515/BecomeFundraiser> to set up your personal fundraising page. Mark your calendars, start fundraising, and plan to attend this year's event!

**Calling all moms!** *Risen Motherhood* is a book written by Emily Jensen and Laura Wifler who host a podcast by the same name. Their goal is to help moms apply the gospel to everyday problems "so you can connect your Sunday morning faith to the Monday morning tantrum". If you would be interested in reading this book and doing a book study, or have any questions, contact Laura Unrau ([lauraelaine25@gmail.com](mailto:lauraelaine25@gmail.com)) by September 27. Meeting time and location will be dependent on the number of people interested. Thanks!

**Current and upcoming devotionals** (*Upper Room & Rejoice!*) are available in the NE entryway for purchase.

## CONFERENCE PRAYER REQUESTS

### Western District Conference

Pray for the WDC Executive Board, Commissions, Gifts Discernment Committee and staff as they meet online next Saturday for Reference Council, a time for orientation and reflection together on common mission and priorities for the coming year.

### Mennonite Mission Network

Diana Cruz and Felipe Preciado of Mennonite Mission Network request prayer for the increasing number of COVID-19 cases in Benin since quarantine ended in June. Pray especially for the protection of the children and staff at *La Casa Grande* and that the children will not fall behind in their education.

## COMMUNITY & CONFERENCE ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Camp Mennoscah

**A few openings for Scrapbook and Crafts Retreats!** Camp Mennoscah's retreats with limited numbers are October 30-Nov. 1 and Nov. 6-8. Participants will stay in the Retreat Center with their own bathroom and scrapbook/crafts tables will be set up in the dining hall to provide more space and better ventilation. Register at [campmennoscah.org](http://campmennoscah.org)! Call 620-297-3290 for more information.

**Camp Mennoscah's annual meeting is September 27.** An online link will be shared soon! Get ready to hear about Camp Mennoscah's year!

**The weather is great!** Where are you? Camp Mennoscah's facilities are open to guests/groups for overnight stays and day visits. Spend time on the trails, go canoeing, have a campfire cookout, and enjoy the open spaces of the tallgrass prairie and the Ninnescah River! Contact Camp Mennoscah at 620-297-3290 to make a reservation and to inquire about use of facilities. We can't wait to see you!

### Western District Conference

**SAVE THE DATE—IBA BENEFIT DINNER:** The annual Instituto Bíblico Anabautista (IBA) benefit fundraiser will take place **Friday, October 16** at First Mennonite Church in Newton, Kansas. A burrito order to go will take place instead of the usual dinner. Burritos will be cooked by chef Carlos Lujano. **(You can order Pork, Chicken or Meatless burritos. Sold by ½ dozen-6 burrito and a dozen-12 burritos)** Pick up between 4:30-6:30 pm, instructions will be sent later. **Sale by donation.** If you are not able to order you are invited to give a donation. Your generous gift will help ensure the future of this vital ministry. IBA is a program of Mennonite Education Agency's Hispanic Ministries for Leadership Development and Pastoral Education. For any inquiries or to ORDER contact Violeta Ajuquejy Suastegui at: [VioletaA@MennoniteEducation.org](mailto:VioletaA@MennoniteEducation.org) or call 316-281-4342. **DEADLINE to order:** Thursday Oct. 9.

**Due to the pandemic, Mission Network's Donor Relations team** is not traveling to visit with our wonderful donors, but we are on the phone and writing notes! Please know you are appreciated, valued, and prayed for. Thank you for your continued generosity.

Mennonite Church USA staff invites you to join them in supporting the **Mennonite World Conference Global Sharing Fund to provide COVID-19 relief** to congregations with less access to aid and resources, especially in parts of Africa, Latin America and Asia. For more information:

<https://www.mennoniteusa.org/word-conference-relief-fund>

Mennonite Church USA is offering **Justice Fund grants** to congregations that are actively addressing racial justice, poverty, police brutality/reimagining policing and immigration or are seeking start-up money to engage in these areas. For more information on how to apply or donate: <https://www.mennoniteusa.org/news/applications-for-justice-fund/>

**"FORGOTTEN."** This is the word that Ana Alicia Hinojosa, an MCC immigration education coordinator, said has been on her mind since South Texas/Rio Grande Valley was hit with Hurricane Hanna in late July. Read her powerful call to action in her blog, **"Do something bold for immigration justice."** <https://www.mennoniteusa.org/do-something-bold>

In his blog, **"Building stamina for anti-racism,"** Goshen student Cade Fisher talks about the need for young people to prepare for the long, hard work of anti-racism. Read it here: <https://www.mennoniteusa.org/menno-snapshots/building-stamina-for-anti-racism/>

### Mennonite Church USA

#### Mennonite Central Committee WDC/SCC Women's Retreat 2020:

**Celebrate with us!** Mennonite Central Committee invites you join **Celebration 2020: MCC at 100**, a livestreamed event commemorating a century of MCC's ministry on Saturday, Oct. 17, starting at 6:50 p.m. (EDT). The event will feature photos, videos and storytelling that highlight MCC's work over the years. Former MCC leader and pastor Leonard Dow of Philadelphia will inspire participants to walk boldly into the next century of MCC's ministry while talented musicians will lead in prayer and thanksgiving. You can find more information about MCC's centennial and log in for the livestreamed event at [mcc.org/celebration-2020](http://mcc.org/celebration-2020).

**Register NOW for the MCC Flatlander Bicycle Ride!** Due to COVID-19, the ride is a "virtual" event this year and open to EVERYONE. Riders may register any time until September 29. Register online at [Bikereg.com](http://Bikereg.com). Join us in raising money for MCC to fund the construction of new wells and repair existing water and sanitary systems at schools in Nicaragua. With these improvements, students will have safe water to drink and wash their hands. In this global pandemic, access to clean water is more essential than ever. Donations from non-riders are welcome! Checks to MCC Flatlander Bike Ride may be sent to MCC Central States, PO Box 235, North Newton, KS 67117.

## **Bethel College**

KIPCOR, the Kansas Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution at Bethel College, is co-sponsoring, with Bethel's Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and Peace Connections of Newton, local activities for the **2020 National Campaign Nonviolence Week of Action, Sept. 19-25. Friday, Sept. 25, 11 a.m., Rev. Dr. Stephany Rose Spaulding** of Colorado Springs will present a virtual TED-style talk with Q&A to follow. Dr. Spaulding is an activist, pastor, professor and member of the RAWtools board of directors. To hear Dr. Spaulding's talk and participate in the Q&A, **you must register by Thursday, Sept. 24, at noon.** Go to <http://kipcor.org/> and click on the event "I See You: Dismantling the Perceived Myths of Racism," then click the green "Register Here" button.

**Last week to see work by three seniors from the Class of 2020, Georgia Anderson, Blayne Stump and Anna Wiens**, in the Regier Gallery in Luyken Fine Arts Center at Bethel College. The exhibit closes Friday, Sept. 25. Hours are Mon.-Fri., 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Receptions will be individual and by invitation only. *Face masks must be worn on the Bethel College campus.*

**Fall Festival at Bethel College is not canceled but will look different this year.** While there won't be a "Fall Festival fair" on campus Oct. 3, there will be a homecoming football game, an art exhibit by David Long, and a virtual play written by Karen Robu, among other events. The Bethel College Women's Association is taking orders for baked goods at [www.bcwamarketonline.com/shop/preorderforfallfest/9](http://www.bcwamarketonline.com/shop/preorderforfallfest/9) (ordering deadline: Sept. 30). See [www.bethelks.edu/alumni/events/fall-festival](http://www.bethelks.edu/alumni/events/fall-festival) for a detailed schedule.

**Bethel College Women's Association has worked to raise money for Bethel for many years.** This August we are opening our first online store, [www.bca\\_marketonline.com](http://www.bca_marketonline.com). We invite you to help us support Bethel by checking this online market for crafts, jewelry, Bethel-themed items and much more. Our inventory will change over time so please check in to find that special gift or item for your home. If circumstances allow, on September 1 we will begin accepting orders for baked goods to be picked up on Fall Fest weekend, October 1-3. Please check the website for updated information.

**Bethel College Women's Association is inviting area churches and former BCWA members to help with Fall Fest Baking.** Check out items needed and sign up here: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70a0e4ca8a72fa3f58-fall/>. Thank you for your continued support of Bethel College!

**Save the date:** KIPCOR will kick off its **2020-21 Peace Lecture series** with journalist and best-selling author Sarah Smarsh, **Thursday, Nov. 5, 7 p.m.**, in an online format. This is a fundraiser for KIPCOR. More details to follow!

## **Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary**

**AMBS course: Somatic Spiritual Practices in the Time of COVID.** Explore the link between spirituality and our material bodies while considering how Christian spirituality is practiced in and through embodiment. Leah Thomas, Ph.D., teaches this one-credit AMBS videoconference course on Thursdays, Sept. 10 – Oct. 22, 6:30–8:30 p.m. ET. Nonadmitted students get 50% off their first course for credit! Sign up at: [ambs.edu/onecourse](http://ambs.edu/onecourse)

**Join AMBS's Virtual Bible Reading Colloquium!** No matter how strong or dusty your Biblical Hebrew is, you are invited to join us in reading the Hebrew Bible together in Hebrew on Wednesdays, 12-1 p.m. ET via videoconference (Sept. 9 – Dec. 9; no meeting Oct. 28). The Bible Reading Colloquium is a judgment-free zone and a great way to keep your knowledge of the Bible languages alive. Contact Safwat Marzouk, Ph.D.: [ambs.edu/academics/people/749240/safwat-marzouk](http://ambs.edu/academics/people/749240/safwat-marzouk)

## **Mennonite Heritage & Agricultural Museum**

These are the final days to view the Marie and Martha Voth wheat marquetry art show at the Museum. Exhibit ends Wednesday, September 30.

Change of hours at the Museum: October 1, 2020 – Noon – 4:00 pm Tuesday through Saturday.