

**Welcome!**

**Welcome** as we join in worshiping God in a variety of ways. On the home stretch of Advent, we learn from the example of Mary, the mother of Jesus. As lifelong learners of what it looks like to practice love, we find transformation in the way God uses and lifts up people the world doesn't give importance to. Mary teaches us to humbly receive Christ's gift and purpose in our lives.

**GATHERING TO WORSHIP****Prelude**

*Festival Sanctus* ~John Leavitt  
*A Cuban Carol* ~Craig Curry

Elbiata Singers

**Welcome**

Pastor Lois Harder

**Opportunities for Celebration and Service****Call to Worship and Invocation***Adapted from Psalm 89:1-2, 26*

Leader: We will sing of your steadfast love, O Lord, forever;

**People: we will proclaim your faithfulness to all generations.**

Leader: We declare that your steadfast love is established forever;

**People: your faithfulness is as firm as the heavens.**

**All: You are our Father, our God, and the Rock of our salvation!**

**Lighting of the Advent Candle**

Craig and Jody Schmidt Family

**Instrumental Song***Hope is a Candle*

STS 15

*Love is a candle whose light makes a circle / Where every face is the face of a friend  
Widen the circle by sharing and giving / God's holy dare love everywhere*

1: We light a candle for *love: love* in our hearts, *love* in our homes, *love* in our world.

2: **May the light of love shine through our lives.**

**Advent Hymn** (instrumental)*To us a child of hope is born*

HWB 189

To us a Child of hope is born,  
to us a Son is giv'n.

Him shall the tribes  
of earth obey,  
him all the hosts of heav'n,  
(repeat)

His name shall be  
the Prince of peace,  
forevermore adored,  
the Wonderful, the Counselor,  
the great and mighty Lord,  
(repeat)

His pow'r, increasing,  
still shall spread,  
his reign no end shall know.  
Justice shall guard his throne above,  
and peace abound below,  
(repeat)

**Children's Story**

Suzanne Meier

**Christmas Hymn** (bells/piano)*Infant Holy, Infant Lowly* ~arr. Lamb

HWB 206

Infant holy, infant lowly,  
for his bed a cattle stall;  
oxen lowing, little knowing  
Christ the babe is Lord of all.  
Swiftly winging angels singing,  
bells are ringing, tidings bringing:  
Christ the babe is Lord of all! (2x)

Flocks were sleeping, shepherds keeping  
vigil till the morning new,  
saw the glory, heard the story  
tidings of a gospel true.  
Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow,  
praises voicing, greet the morrow:  
Christ the babe was born for you! (2x)

Morning Prayer

Pastor Lois

Worship With Our Tithes and Offerings

First Fruits Giving

Worship Music

*Silent Night* ~arr. Kaplan, Olusola, Bram

Elbiata Singers

Prayer of Dedication

Pastor Caleb Yoder

### HEARING GOD'S WORD

Mary's Monologue

DJ Freeman

Scripture Reading

Luke 1:26-38

Message

"May it be with me as you have said"

Pastor Caleb

### SENT AS GOD'S PEOPLE

Prayer of Confession and Assurance

Leader: God, you come to us with the words "Do not be afraid."

**People: Yet we cower and live in anxiety and fear.**

Leader: We lack faith and trust in your ways.

**People: We want to respond like Mary, "I am your servant."**

**All: Give us humble, willing hearts to follow your call.**

Song of Response

*The angel Gabriel*

HWB 180

The angel Gabriel  
from heaven came,

"For known as blessed mother  
thou shalt be,

Then gentle Mary meekly bowed  
her head,

his wings as drifted snow,  
his eyes as flame.

all generations laud  
and honor thee.

"To me be as it pleaseth God,"  
she said.

"All hail," said he,

Thy son shall be Immanuel

"My soul shall laud and magnify  
his holy name."

"thou lowly maiden Mary,

by seers foretold,

his holy name."

most highly favored lady," Gloria!

most highly favored lady," Gloria!

most highly favored lady, Gloria!

Benediction

Pastor Lois

Postlude

*O Come, All Ye Faithful* ~Cherwien

Marcia Brubaker

+ 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.

This service made use of resources and ideas from *Leader* (MennoMedia), Fall 2020

Special thanks to Braden Unruh and the Elbiata Singers, Suzanne Meier, Marcia Brubaker, Mary Schmidt, Karen Unruh, LaNae Unruh (visual arts), Steve Goertzen, Steve Unruh, Delton Voth, and the AMC Covid Task Force.

#### Questions for Reflection – Luke 1:26-38

1. How would it feel to be in Mary's shoes when receiving the incredible news from the angel Gabriel?
2. What would it look like in your life to say to God, "Here I am, your servant. May it be with me according to your word"?

**Next Sunday** is the first Sunday following Christmas. Unless the weather is terribly cold and windy, we plan to meet outdoors for a Lessons and Carols service at **11:00**. The service will be 30-45 minutes. You may bundle to sit and sing together (with masks) in front of the hayrack or sing from your vehicle tuning in to the FM station. Thermoses of hot drinks welcome.

## *Praying for our Congregation and Beyond*

- ❖ We give thanks for the Christmas caroling done by the Goessel Elementary students for the residents at Bethesda.
- ❖ We pray for families feeling the loss of normal holiday plans or determining how to connect over the holidays while cases remain high.
- ❖ We pray for hospitals and hospital staff feeling the strain of caring for sick people.

- ❖ We pray for good health and preservation of life for members of our community with both Covid and flu season.
- ❖ We pray for families experiencing financial need going into the holiday season.
- ❖ We pray for family members of Archie Wiebe who passed away December 11. Archie lived in Olathe and was a member of this congregation. A private burial service took place December 17 in the church cemetery.

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**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, Sunday, December 20              | 10:00 am        | Worship service via Zoom                            |
| Monday, December 21                     | 7:30 pm         | Board of Worship                                    |
| Thursday, December 24                   | 4:00 pm-12:00am | Christmas Eve service available to watch on YouTube |
| Sunday, December 27                     | 11:00 am        | Outdoor Lessons and Carols Service                  |
| Monday, December 28 – Friday, January 1 |                 | Church office closed                                |
| Sunday, January 3                       | 10:00 am        | Worship Service via Zoom                            |

**The COVID-19 task force met this past week and decided that worship will continue online through January.** However, there are plans for an outdoor service on December 27 or January 3 (weather will determine which one) for a simple Lessons in Carols time of singing (with masks) outside together. The FM radio transmitter will be set up for folks to stay in their cars.

The pandemic is giving us an opportunity to try something different for the **Alexanderwohl Christmas Eve program** this year! A program has been prerecorded that includes many traditional elements of our typical Christmas Eve programs. A link to a Youtube video will be sent from the church before December 24. Only people who receive the link will be able to view the video, and the video will only be viewable between 4:00pm-Midnight on December 24 in order to protect the privacy of the children. You may forward the link to family and friends who are not on the Alexanderwohl email list. DVDs will also be available after December 21 in the entryway on the east side of the church.

**As you have changes for the 2021 Yearbook** (addresses/cell or land line phone numbers/email addresses, etc.) turn them in to the church office. All changes are due **January 29, 2021**. This includes new board positions for the coming year.

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

## CONFERENCE PRAYER REQUESTS

### Western District Conference

As we celebrate Christmas, give thanks for the gift of multicultural diversity within WDC, and the many different ways congregations embody the presence of Christ.

### Mennonite Mission Network

Join Mennonite Mission Network in praying for the peace witness of the *Meserete Kristos* Church in Ethiopia amid the conflict between the government of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and the Northern Tigray region.

## COMMUNITY & CONFERENCE ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Camp Mennoscah

**A Christmas full of light and love to all of you!** The Camp Mennoscah staff and Board of Directors prays for you to find Christ's love and joy during this not-as-usual Christmas season. May you find hope, joy, and peace in your celebrations!

**Camp Mennoscah is a wonderful space for families and groups needing space to spread out!** Facilities for differently sized groups are available with a variety of gathering areas. Trails and fields are waiting to be hiked and used for fun activities, too! Contact Camp Mennoscah at 620-297-3290 or [office@campmennoscah.org](mailto:office@campmennoscah.org) to reserve! You are invited to enjoy this sacred space!

**A few extra Camp Mennoscah hoodies are available!** (Adult sizes only.) Contact Camp Mennoscah at 620-297-3290 or [olivia.bartel@campmennoscah.org](mailto:olivia.bartel@campmennoscah.org). Grab yours before they're gone!

### Western District Conference

**The WDC office and Resource Library remains closed due to Covid-19 precautions, and staff members are working from their homes.** Note that staff will take holiday and vacation time December 24 through January 3, 2021, and will be available beginning January 4.

**Save the date:** WDC Annual Assembly will be July 30-Aug 1, 2021, in a hybrid model with the possibility of both virtual and in-person activities. More information to come!

**The WDC Garden December 2020/January/February 2021 issue** is now available for viewing at: <https://mennowdc.org/wdc-garden-december-2020-january-february-2021/>. Learn about how WDC is engaging with racial justice and cultural diversity, the impact of Covid-19 on Hispanic churches, an announcement about Sandra Montes-Martinez as the new WDC Associate Conference Minister (Texas-Based), and more!

### Bethel College

**Kauffman Museum at Bethel College is partnering with Humanities Kansas to host the Smithsonian traveling exhibit "Crossroads: Change in Rural America" through Jan. 17.** Accompanying it is a local companion exhibit, "Of Land and People: Our Community at the Crossroads," created from the museum's permanent exhibit "Of Land and People." **The museum is open 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Tues.-Fri (early close at 1 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 24, and Thursday, Dec. 31); 1:30-4:30 p.m., Sat.-Sunday; and closed Mondays and major holidays (Friday, Dec. 25, Friday, Jan. 1).** Admission to the "Crossroads" exhibit is free on Saturdays.

**Sat., Dec. 26, 4 p.m. – Family Fitness Yoga with Erin Urich, Lawrence, 4 p.m., open to all ages.** This is in connection with the special exhibit "Crossroads: Change in Rural America" at Kauffman Museum. **Go to the museum website ([kauffmanmuseum.org](http://kauffmanmuseum.org)); look for the "Visit" tab and click "Events" or Facebook page to participate.**

### Mennonite Church USA

**Looking for a non-traditional pastoral role?** Become a unit leader for Service Adventure, a gap-year program for ages 17-20 from Mennonite Mission Network. Unit leaders, who are at least 24 years of age, serve as mentors to the young adults in the Service Adventure household. Learn more by contacting [SusanN@MennoniteMission.net](mailto:SusanN@MennoniteMission.net).

**Mennonite Voluntary Service is accepting applications for the 2021-2022 service term.** Serve, learn and grow in faith with a community of your peers! Visit [MennoniteMission.net/MVS](http://MennoniteMission.net/MVS) to learn more!

### Mennonite Central Committee

**MCC Comforter Blitz update:** Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2021 Kansas Friends of MCC Comforter Blitz in Yoder, KS has been canceled. However, the Blitz committee still has a goal of collecting at least 300 comforters between February and April. We need your help to meet this goal! Fabric kits and comforter sets to tie (top, back, and batting) are available to check out from MCC in North Newton. For contactless drop-off of completed comforters the 24-hour donation room is always available. To arrange drop-off or checkout materials, contact Kate at [katemast@mcc.org](mailto:katemast@mcc.org), or 316.804.8432.