

Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church

Volume LXXI

December 14, 2025

No. 47



Welcome to Alexanderwohl!

On this third Sunday of Advent, you are invited to lay down your cares; find rest, comfort, and joy in God's amazing provision, in the places where you least expect it.

GATHERING TO WORSHIP

Gathering Music *Prepare the Royal Highway* ~Behnke Marcia Brubaker
 Angels We Have Heard on High ~Cherwien
 Joy to the World ~Fedak

Welcome

Pastor Lois Harder

Opportunities for Celebration and Service

Call to Worship / Opening Prayer+

Based on Isaiah 55:1-13

Leader: Come, all who hunger and thirst for more – God calls us to the feast!

People: We are weary exiles, longing for home, caught in a world that drains our hope.

Leader: “Listen, so that you may live! My covenant is everlasting, my promise sure.”

People: Can joy reach us here, in this place of waiting?

Leader: The word of the Lord does not return empty – it brings forth life!

People: The mountains and the hills will burst into song, the trees of the field will clap their hands!

All: *You are the source of true joy, O God. You expand our vision, lifting our eyes beyond the moment, beyond despair, into amazement. We stand before you, ready to enter your story and be amazed.*

***Congregational Hymn** *Light Dawns on a Weary World*

VT 205

Lighting of the Advent Candle

Evan, Maryanne, Kennedy and Cameron Esau

Congregational Hymn *It Came upon a Midnight Clear* (vs. 1,3,5) VT 248

Morning Prayer

Pastor Lois

Worship with Our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming* ~Burkhardt Marcia Brubaker

***Prayer of Dedication**

Pastor Lois

HEARING GOD'S WORD

This service of Lessons and Carols is led by the Chancel Choir. All of the readings are from the *Anabaptist Community Bible* (CEB). Quotes following each lesson are comments in the side bar about that particular text.

FIRST LESSON

Genesis 1:1-2:4 (excerpts)

"In contrast to other creation stories, the culmination of the first creation story isn't kingship, it's family – a human couple in a caring relationship."

Congregational Hymn

Creator of the Stars of Night

VT 236

Vs. 1-3 Choir – Vs. 6 Congregation

SECOND LESSON

Psalms 42:1-5

"Whoever follows me, Christ says, will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life, for he leads his sheep to the true pasture and to the living fountain that will never grow dry. May God grant you a deep thirst for this fountain, just as a deer longs for flowing streams." Thomas von Imbroich

Congregational Hymn

We Come

VT 225

Children's Story

Chrystiana Miller

THIRD LESSON

Isaiah 40:1-5

"We welcome these words! Who does not yearn to hear a word of comfort?"

*Congregational Hymn

Comfort, Comfort, O My People

VT 212

FOURTH LESSON

Isaiah 61:1-3

"What more joyful message is there for a bound man than release and freedom? No more pleasant message could be brought; so also is the preaching of Christ, the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, which God had promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures and bestowed on us." Hutterite sermon

Anthem

"Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus"

from *Three American Hymn Tunes* ~ text by Charles Wesley

tune by Walker, arr. Kenneth T. Kosche

FIFTH LESSON

Luke 1:26-45 (excerpts)

"The Word must be conceived in a pure heart through the Holy Spirit and become flesh in us... This cannot happen without pain, poverty of spirit and distress both inwardly and outwardly. When the Word is born and has become flesh in us... we become Christ's mother, brother and sister." Hans Hut

Anthem

Over the Hills Young Mary Hastes

Johannes Eccard, arr. Susan Palo Cherwien

SIXTH LESSON

Luke 2:1-7

"This passage sets the stage for God's story of redemption to play out in Jesus. It's up to us to find our own place in that story, which God is still writing today."

Anthem *Wexford Carol* ~Traditional Irish tune, arr. Elaine Hagenberg

SEVENTH LESSON

Luke 2:8-14

"This angelic appearance reveals the true cosmic order... Amid Caesar's decrees, an angelic army declares peace and a different king... This lowly infant king, born in a manger, is Lord. Titles once applied to Caesar are now employed for Jesus."

***Congregational Hymn** *Solemn Stillness, Weary Streets* VT 276

EIGHTH LESSON

Luke 2:15-20

"God is infinitely creative and works in beautifully unexpected ways. God uses those of the lowliest stature to bring light to this world. The upside-down kingdom ethic that Jesus teaches is founded on humility and service."

Anthem *The Joyful News* ~Traditional French Tune, arr. Katherine Davis

SENT AS GOD'S PEOPLE

NINTH LESSON

John 1:1-5

"This is an incontrovertible witness of the eternal deity of Jesus Christ."
Dirk Phillips

*Benediction

***ALL: The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness
doesn't extinguish the light.***

***Benediction Hymn** *O Come, All Ye Faithful* VT 241
Vs. 1, 2 – parts; Vs. 3, 4 – unison

Postlude *Go Tell It on the Mountain* ~Behnke Marcia Brubaker

*All who are able are invited to stand.

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

Advent-Epiphany Worship Resources from *Leader* magazine.

Greeters: North – Bryant and Chrystiana Miller
South – DeLora Funk

Song Leader and Chancel Choir Director: Renae Schmidt Peters

Chancel Choir Accompanist: Marcia Brubaker

Guitar: Eric Schrag

Readers: John and Jenny Fast

Visual Arts: Janice Voth

Christmas Decorations: Seekers and Sojourners class

Nursery Staff: Kim Voth, Celia Peters

(nursery care available for children age 3 and under)

Worship Technology: Steve Unruh, Steve Goertzen, Delton Voth

December 7 Attendance: Sunday School – 104 ; Worship -- 124 in person;
11 Zoom Households

December 7 Offering: Sunday School -- \$38.54; First Fruits -- \$8,687.10

Next Sunday is the Fourth Sunday of Advent. Eric Schrag will preach from John 1:1-18. Be amazed: Love comes down. Greeters are Myron and Pat Schmidt and Arlin and Mareta Buller.

Praying for Our Congregation and Beyond

- ❖ We thank God for the happy arrival of Levi Dean to Lucas and Michelle Hiebert! Levi was born on Thursday, December 11 at 6:14 p.m. He weighed 8 lbs,12 ozs and was 22 1/4 inches long. Everyone is doing well; thanks be to God!
- ❖ We pray for students who are in the throes of final exams, semester papers and projects, concerts and other events that mark the end of the semester; give them and their teachers stamina and joy as they complete their endeavors for now.

THIS WEEK

Sunday, December 14 – Third Sunday of Advent

9:30 am – Sunday School

10:30 am – Worship – A Service of Lessons and Carols

7:00 pm – McPherson Brass and Elbiata Singers Concert

Monday, December 15

Church Offices Closed

Tuesday, December 16

9:30 am – Staff Meeting

Wednesday, December 17

No Regular Midweek Activities

6:30 pm – Christmas Eve Program Practice

Friday, December 19

10:00 am – Senior Coffee – *The Christmas Miracle of Jonathan Toomey*

Narrated by Brian Stucky (with illustrations),

Examples of wood carving by Lee Hertzler

Sunday, December 21 – Fourth Sunday of Advent

9:30 am – Sunday School

10:00 am – VBS Update Meeting in the Foundation Room

10:30 am – Worship - Gabriel's Trumpets

After Worship – ICD Photos in the Chapel

COMING EVENTS

Dec 15	Return Christmas Giving Tree gifts to the Citizens State Bank
Dec 17	Christmas Eve Program Practice, 6:30 pm
Dec 22	Christmas Eve Program Practice, 6:30 pm
Dec 24	Christmas Eve Service, 7:00 pm

2026

Jan 2	Welcome Pastor Chris Weaver!
Jan 9	Annual Reports due in the church office
Jan 25	2026 Spending Plan Q & A during Sunday School
Jan 25	Mennonite Heritage & Ag Museum's Annual Meeting, 2:00 pm
Feb 1	Annual Meeting

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Today, December 14, 7:00 pm -- Christmas Brass and Elbiata Community Concert. This is a fundraiser for the Goessel Ministerial Alliance.

Donations of socks (new or used) all sizes, underwear (new) all sizes, and light blankets will be accepted by the Board of Mission and Service for the Clothing Closet at New Life Church and Outreach Center in Wichita. The church serves a free meal each Wednesday evening for anyone who would like to come, and the Clothing Closet is open at that time for people to choose items they need, for free. Items can be placed in a donation box in the South Lobby under the coat rack.

Instant Church Directory (ICD) is now available for your use. We invite you to give this a try. If you wish to update your photo for the church directory, Mallory Schroeder will be available in church, Sunday, December 21, in the chapel to take your photo. Also, Ruth, Nancy and John will be available in the chapel after church on the 14th and 21st for anyone wanting assistance downloading the Instant Church Directory app.

Share gifts that share joy! This Christmas season, we have the opportunity to give to MCC and make a difference for families around the world. Through MCC Christmas giving, you can honor your loved ones. Shop for those who already have everything they need, or live at a distance, give as host/hostess gifts, teacher gifts, etc. At the same time, you'll be choosing gifts that share essential resources — like clean water, farm animals and funds to help keep girls in school — in communities where they're needed. Learn more through the posters and ornaments we've hung in the church. Or visit mcc.org/share-joy today! Just take an ornament and give a gift. Ask Tina Schrag if you have questions.

Thank you for generously supporting the youth group this month. We collected just over \$800 that we bought MCC relief kit supplies with! That was enough for about 14 relief kits. We discussed what goes into a relief kit, why the items are important and who receives the relief kit buckets.

The group shopped, delivered the goods to MCC and then set off to decorate Christmas sugar cookies! This is a very creative and fun group of kids! Youth that make up our group are: Elly Mai, Aida Hartvickson, Anthony Boden, Jayden Barnett, Levi Schrag, Jayley Schmidt, Eli Gaeddert, Delaney Duerksen, Bella O'Neil, Lilly Mai, Myra Peters, Rosie Gaeddert.

Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church,

I would like to invite you to attend the Goessel Jr/Sr High School Christmas Concert on Monday, December 15 at 7:00 pm, and join us in our annual tradition of singing the Hallelujah Chorus as a community to close the concert. At the end of the concert, I will invite any audience members that wish to join the High School Choir in singing the Hallelujah Chorus to join us on stage. This is a unique and long-standing tradition at Goessel, and I would like to see it continue for years to come. In order for that to come to fruition, we need community members to be brave and join us on stage! Choral perfection is certainly not the goal, but rather the opportunity for our students to participate in making music with adults in their community - something that happens less and less these days! We will provide music for the Hallelujah Chorus music to all singers. As an added bonus, our band director, Evan Koch, will be playing piccolo trumpet along with the piece!

If you choose to come, please be aware that the concert will start at 7:00pm in the HS gym with the bands, and then the concert will transition to the auditorium for the choirs. Thank you for considering joining us on Monday evening. ~Braden Unruh