

Special music..... Ken, Amy, Erin, Austin, Addie, and Eli Regier
It came upon a midnight clear
Beautiful Star of Bethlehem

Hearing God's Word

Old Testament reading: Isaiah 7:10-16 Miriam Regier

Meditation: *Emmanuel* Pastor Anita Kehr

Responding to God's Word

Song of faith: *O little town of Bethlehem* H 191

Pastoral prayer Pastor Joel Schroeder

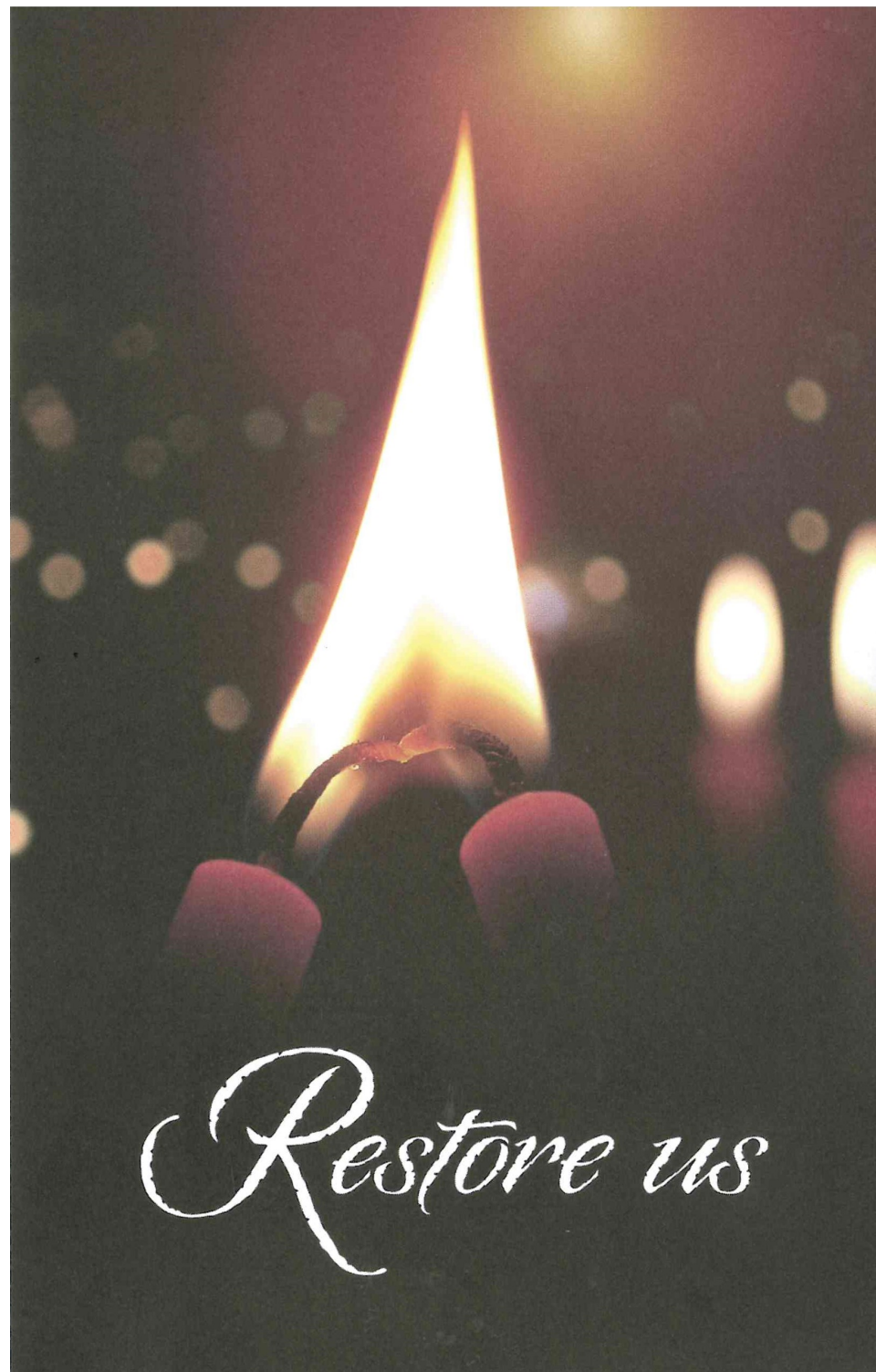
Sending

Sending song: *Hallelujah chorus* from Handel's Messiah

Sending blessing

Postlude: *Vom Himmel hoch* arranged by Michael Bedford

*H denotes Hymnal: A Worship Book **CS denotes Companion Songbook
Chorister: Daryl Unruh; HAT: Stephanie Weaver, Nora and Woody Miller, Kent Erb
Musicians: Alyssa Becker, Abby Schrag, Kaitlin Abrahams, violins; Erin Regier, viola;
Jordan Schroeder, Addie Regier, cellos; Amanda Rempel, organ
Ushers: Gus Dorado, Ray Franz, Mike Garcia, Allen Schmidt
Childcare: Greg or Laura Myers, Schyler Entz
Audio Tech: Ryan Koehn Video/Lighting Tech: Eugene Waltner
Visuals: Carol Hiebert, Janet Franz, Cindy Unruh



God's restoration is at hand. Come, walk in the way of God's heart

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4th Sunday of Advent: December 18, 2016

Gathering

Prelude Donna Stucky, organist/pianist
Lacey Luinstra and Kenna Graber, flutes

The work of the people (announcements)

Call to worship Nathan Murphy, worship leader

Leader: In the nighttime of our longing,
we find ourselves far from God's presence.

People: **Even though we yearn to see God's face,
our daily burdens and distractions
keep us from coming near.
We forget that the truest joy
comes from being in God's presence.**

All: **Come! Walk in God's presence.**

Opening prayer

Lighting the Advent candle Mattea McCord

Songs of faith: *Come, Light of the world*
The virgin Mary had a baby boy *H 202

Praising

Litany based on Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

Leader: Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel,
you who are enthroned upon the cherubim, shine forth!

People: **Restore us, O God;
let your face shine, that we may be saved.**

Leader: Let your hand be upon the one at your right hand,
the one whom you made strong for yourself.

People: **Restore us, O God;
let your face shine, that we may be saved.**

Leader: We will never turn back from you;
give us life, and we will call upon your name.

People: **Restore us, O God;
let your face shine, that we may be saved.**

Song of faith: *To us a Child of hope is born* H 189

Greet one another; children come forward

Children's focus Stefanie Knopp

Kingdom happening: Farewell to the Ducroquet family

Offering: Local Mission

Offertory: *O Holy Night* by Adolfe Adam Arr. Karen Smith and David Snyder
(Please pass the welcome pads)

Confessing/Reconciling

Prayer of confession

Leader: God of healing,

People: **we yearn to walk in your way
but often choose our own path of turmoil and pain.
Save us, Lord,
from the pride and foolishness
of choosing our own course,
that we may humbly and confidently
follow your lead,
through Jesus Christ, Amen.**

Words of assurance

Leader: Throughout the tumult of life,
God holds you close in love.
Rejoice, because God's wisdom is your guide,
God's compassion is your strength.
God's love is your redemption.

All: **Come, let us walk in the way of God's heart!**

Gospel reading: Matthew 1:18-25 Dewayne and Betty Pauls

Winter clothing items needed: The children's Christmas tree in the court area is the place to leave hats, scarves, mittens, gloves or socks to donate to the Salvation Army. Let's cover the tree!

Clarification: In the December issue of *Connections*, the caption under the front-cover picture said "church staff." We just want to clarify that church has contracted with Kevin and Carolyn Miller, owners of Clean Sweep, to assist with custodial duties, so they are not employed as staff.

Harvest of Love—Today is the last day we will be collecting items. The Salvation Army invites you to join in their annual food and fund drive to support people in need in our county. A box is available in the Court Area to collect nonperishable items. If you wish to make a monetary donation you may write a check to "Harvest of Love" and place it in the offering.

Please help make FMC a safe place for everyone. To keep everyone safe at First Mennonite, you are asked to make sure all doors are locked if you are the last one to leave the building; to lock the doors during your meeting; to provide door "hosts/monitors" during your events; and to call 911 if you encounter someone one in the church who makes you feel uncomfortable or is exhibiting strange behavior.

Yearbook update forms have been put in your mailbox. Please fill out the form if there are any changes and return the form to the box in the Court Area by Sunday, December 25. If you have family members listed in the Yearbook who do not regularly attend or live out of the area, please fill out a form for them if their information is different from what is in the Yearbook. If you are not currently in the Yearbook and would like to be, please make sure to fill out a form. Extra forms are also available in the Court Area.

Jennifer Kaufman, MCC SALT in Bolivia—The Outreach Commission encourages you to share blessings with Jennifer via letter, email, or Facebook. If you would like to write a note, simply bring it to the office and we'll mail it. Jennifer said it could take one week to two months for her to get mail. Jennifer's email is jenniferkaufman@mcc.org. Or

SR. HIGH YOUTH *Together in Christ: rooted deeply, reaching widely, loving well.*

THIS WEEK!
TODAY—Sunday, Dec. 18
▶▶ 9:15 am—Sunday School
▶▶ 10:30 am—Worship
▶▶ 7:00 pm—Handel's Messiah



Wednesday, December 21—NO YOUTH GROUP
Saturday, December 24 @ 6:00 pm—Christmas luminaries! Please join the luminaire crew that will assemble, distribute, and light the luminaries that will welcome everyone to the FMC Christmas Eve Program!
NEXT Sunday, Dec. 25—No Sunday School. Worship at 10:30 am.

look for her on Facebook and ask to join the Talita Cumi Facebook page. You can learn more through Jennifer's blog - jenniferkaufmanbolivia.wordpress.com. Thanks for your support and prayers of Jennifer!

The Property Committee needs your help to maintain our facility! There are several projects that need completing, and we want you to have the opportunity to help. We need help with raking leaves around the church building and in the flower beds, painting the walls and ceiling in the balcony classroom, and installing pipe insulation and replacing a few ceiling tiles in the Jr. High room. Contact Jordan Miller, Alan Entz, Clint Litsey, Ryan Nye, or Rod Schmidt for more information.

Offering envelopes for 2017 have been placed in your mailbox. If you did not receive offering envelopes and would like them or have any questions, contact the Church Office.

If you have pictures from church events during 2016 and would like to share them, please send them to the Church Office at office@firstmennonitenewton.org **by Wednesday, December 28.**

Prayer is one of God's gifts to us. If you would like to pray in a set-aside room for that purpose, the prayer room is available whenever the church is open in Room #113. The weekly prayer and praise notes can remind you of some of the situations needing intercession.

Community Announcements

Camp Mennoscah is seeking volunteers to come to camp for the day on Tuesday, December 20, to assist with a number of projects, including the salvage and demolition of "The Whale" playground and the old boys' bathhouse. Please contact camp at 620-297-3290 or office@campmennoscah.org if you can help.

Kansas Mennonite Men's Chorus enrollment is now underway. All men and boys who enjoy singing are encouraged to sign up by December 31, so that the music packets can be ordered. The concert schedule for 2017 is April 30, at Pressor Hall in Lindsborg; May 7, at Hesston High School in Hesston; and June 25, at Grace Cathedral in Topeka. For more information contact Vernon Frey at 283-4803.

Bethel College is offering many of its classes for community audit. You pay \$50 per credit hour (compared to the normal audit rate of \$85 per hour) OR, if you're age 62 and older, a flat rate of \$30. For more information, go to bethelks.edu/audit, where there are links for **interterm 2017 course schedule** (enrollment deadline is **January 4**) and **spring 2017 course schedule** (enrollment deadline **February 13**).

Kauffman Museum at Bethel College seeks artifacts, letters, photos and documents that tell the story of conscientious objectors during World War I. To learn more, or if you have an item for donation or long-term loan, please contact museum director Annette LeZotte at alezotte@bethelks.edu or 316-283-1612.

WEEK AT A GLANCE

Sunday, December 18—Fourth Sunday of Advent—God’s Restoration

9:15 AM Sunday School
 10:30 AM Worship Service
 7:00 PM Messiah Presentation

Monday, December 19

Jail Ministry: Jerry Regier
 5:00 PM Property Commission—FH

Tuesday, December 20

7:00 PM Caregiving and Membership Commission

Wednesday, December 21

6:30 PM Christmas Eve practice

Saturday, December 24

7:00 PM Christmas Eve service

Sunday, December 25—Christmas Day—Jesus is Born

(No Sunday School)
 10:30 AM Worship Service

Upcoming Worship Services

January 1—New Year’s —The Holy Way: Walking in the way
 of God’s heart—God’s Hope
 January 8—Epiphany—The Holy Way: Walking in the way
 of God’s heart—God’s Radiance

WELCOME TO EVERYONE who has come to worship and especially to those who are here for the first time. May you experience the loving embrace of God today. Nursery Care, infants to age 2, is provided during the worship service in the nursery located at the back of the Sanctuary. Childcare is available for children ages 2-4 during the worship service in Room 223. If you need help finding your way, ask an usher at the door. We would be glad to help you!

“**Meet the Congregation**” displays now feature Chris and Stephanie Weaver and family, Tim and Anne Wiens and family, and Arlen and Carol Wiens. Take a look at the display cases by the Library and Court Area and learn more about each family.

First Mennonite Church by the numbers

Attendance:

- Worship—263; Visitors—19
- Sunday School—188

Offering: Last week’s offering for Local Mission was \$12,400. The offering for December 25 is for Local Mission.

Receiving or has received care—Helen Bachman, St. Francis

In Sympathy—Arlo Flickner, Dennis Flickner’s father, passed away on December 7. We extend our condolences to Dennis and Diane.

In Sympathy—Wilmer Wedel, Jane Entz’s brother, passed away on December 8. We extend our condolences to Jane, Loren, Nancy and their families.

Thank you for your generosity last week of \$12,400. We now have an estimated need of \$45,600 for the year. There are two Sundays left in 2016. Any check received at the church office by December 31, 2016 will go toward the 2016 budget. We can do this. God will provide. ~Financial Stewardship Committee

Handel’s Messiah—The First Mennonite Church Choir and Newton area community members will present selections from Handel’s Messiah **today**, at 7:00 PM. Soloists are Soyoun Lim Chun, Bethany Amstutz Schrag, Matthew Schloneger, and Chris Kliever. Karen Schlabaugh is harpsichordist; Amanda Rempel, organist; Nancy Johnson, concertmaster; Kay Schroeder, conductor. An offering will be taken for the Harvey County Homeless Shelter and to cover expenses. **All are invited** to come celebrate the Christ Child, the Savior of the world and the Redeemer, through this worshipful presentation!

Christmas Eve FINAL rehearsal: ALL Children (Kindergarten through 5th grade), adults, Sunday School teachers, please come to the FINAL rehearsal for the Christmas Eve program on Wednesday, December 21, 6:30-8:30 PM in the sanctuary. Parents, please note the later ending time. Thank you!



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Tracy Kerr.....	316-283-0273
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Gordon Flickner	316-217-1346