

God's Robe of Saving and Blessing

December 26, 2021

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Welcome

Pastor Susan Jantzen

Meditation music

How Brightly Shines the Morning Star arr. Larry Shackleton
Jyl Ewy, pianist

Call to worship

From Isaiah 11

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.

The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him,
the spirit of wisdom an understanding, the spirit of counsel and might
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord . . .
The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid,
the calf and the lion and the fatling together,
and a little child shall lead them.

Song

Lo, How a Rose VT 216
Joan Entz, leader

Words for the children

Ken Frey

Congregational Welcome to the Child of Bethlehem:

LEADER: Come, Child of Bethlehem,

PEOPLE: make your presence known to us.

Help us receive you as we worship.

LEADER: Come, Servant King,

PEOPLE: teach us the ways of your kingdom
and make our hearts your throne.

LEADER: Come, Brother of all, knock on our door.

PEOPLE: Guide us as a human community.

Help us dare to imagine that you will use us!

Help us bring the fullness of your kingdom!

Worship song

Angels We Have Heard on High VT 249
Joan Entz, leader

Congregational reading of John 1:1-5

Organ Side:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without
him not one thing came into being.

Piano Side:

What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The
light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

Song

Noel VT 256
Joan and Camryn Entz

Song

Away in a Manger VT 257

Prayer of Thanksgiving to God for Jesus/Blessing of the offering

John Good

Reflection

Jesus' Community: Saved and Blessed
Pastor Susan Jantzen

Prayers of the church

John Good

Congregational Reading John 1:10-13

Organ Side:

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him;
yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own,
and his own people did not accept him.

Piano Side:

But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become chil-
dren of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of
man, but of God.

Sending song

Joy to the World VT 240
Joan Entz, leader

Announcements and congregational benediction: John 1:14

ALL: And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory,
the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

Postlude

Joy to the World by G.F. Handel arr. by Jeanine Yeager
Jyl Ewy, pianist

Upcoming Worship Services

January 2—*Dare to Imagine God's Dance*—Pastor Laura; Communion

January 9—Pastor Laura Goerzen will be preaching

January 16—Sara Dick from the Newton Et Cetera Shop will be preaching



OUR VISION—Together in Christ: rooted deeply, reaching widely, loving well

OUR MISSION—With Jesus as our center, we are called to be:

- Faith-Focused
- Mission-Minded
- Community-Connected

FIRST MENNONITE CHURCH

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Pastoral Team

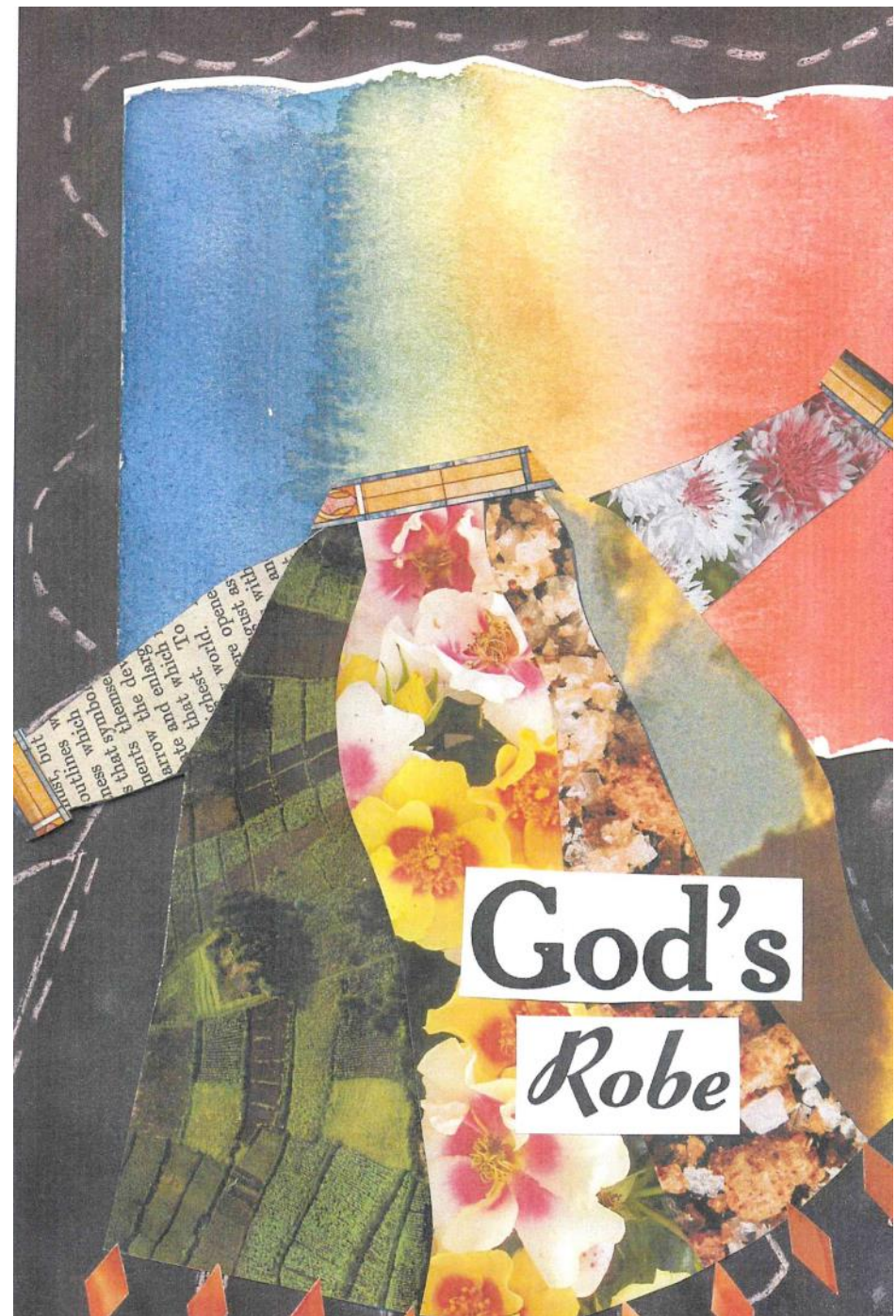
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**First Mennonite Church
Newton, KS**

Transitional Information: GREAT NEWS! Church Board and the Search Committee are very excited to share an exciting outcome to the two year search process. Pastor Luke Unruh was called by a congregational vote of 97% approval of the motion to hire him for a second pastoral position. He will be serving at a 75% time basis, 33-35 hours per week, with emphasis on junior high and senior high youth, and visitation beginning the first part of April 2022 for a three year term. We are excited to welcome him. With that hire, our pastoral team is in place with one additional part time pastor, emphasizing worship, to be hired mid-2022 to complete our staffing. This hire will be the responsibility of the Church Board through the Church and Staff Relations Committee. A big thank you is given to those who have served for two years on the Search Committee! Job well done by a group of dedicated, caring individuals who have a heart for FMC and our future. Prayers are requested for our new team as Pastor Laura continues with us, Pastor Susan serves through March, and for Pastor Luke as he prepares to join us in April. Thank you to the church for your support and prayers through this journey.

Communion will be served next week, January 2, Epiphany Sunday. Take time to examine your heart and your relationships. As a faith community, First Mennonite shares communion four times a year: Epiphany Sunday, Thursday evening of Holy Week, Pentecost Sunday, and World Communion Day in October.

As the classroom remodel comes to an end, the Property Committee is looking for an individual or group to help coordinate a final deep cleaning of the rooms—wiping off walls and cabinets, etc. and getting things set back in place and ready to use. Please contact me or one of the other Property members if you are interested. Thank you! Kevin Hamm 316-217-3593.

Healing & Hope: A confidential group of women supporting each other in seeking healing and hope after experiencing betrayal trauma (a spouse or partner's use of pornography, affair, or sexual addiction). The group is hosted by FMC and facilitated by Audrey Ratzlaff, M.Div, and Gail Unruh-Revel, LCSW, CST, CSAT. Please contact Audrey Ratzlaff at aaratzlaff@yahoo.com, Pastor Laura or Caregiving representative, Laura Sharp, if you have questions or would like to participate. Meetings will begin in the New Year.

Harvest of Love—This is the last week that we will be collecting food for the Salvation Army. Boxes are available in the Gathering Area and inside the west door by the elevator to collect nonperishable items. If you wish to make a monetary donation you may **write a check to Salvation Army** and place it in the box on the table in the Gathering Area. So far, we have collected 420 pounds of food and \$50 in donations. Thank you!

SR. HIGH YOUTH



- No Sunday School for December 26.
- No Youth Group for Wednesday, December 29.

The Regier family (the Ken and Amy edition) is happy to announce the release of their family band's first CD (Kilometer 81). This bluegrass/folk CD has some of our favorite songs, and includes six new original songs. CD's are on sale for \$15, and you can call (620) 837-3173 or email us at kenandamyregier@gmail.com to purchase one.

Homeless Shelter—Our next week to serve New Hope Homeless Shelter is January 19-25. If you are able to help, contact Lee Penner or Ruby Moore.

As we learn to live with the on-going reality of COVID-19, our COVID-19 advisory group has recommended the following changes to our COVID-19 safety protocols.

1. Starting December 19, we will invite masked congregational singing for two songs, instead of one, over the course of the service. Additionally, our services on Christmas Eve and on Dec. 26 will include numerous opportunities for masked congregational singing.
2. Starting December 19, we will invite people who wish to maintain maximum distancing during their exit to leave during the postlude. After the postlude, all others will be invited to exit or linger as they choose without ushers dismissing rows.
3. We will continue to observe seating in every-other row in the back (you will note clearer signage) with the front 10 rows having no seating restrictions except a buffer row around the pastor's family.
4. Please remember to wear a well-fitting mask over your nose and mouth when you enter the church and/or leave your Sunday school classroom. This courtesy protects our little ones who cannot yet get vaccinated as well as those who are immunocompromised or facing other health concerns that make them more vulnerable to COVID-19. Conversations are in the works for a modified Wednesday night format for spring of 2022, so stay tuned for further details.

Community Announcements

Are you concerned about people in other countries not receiving enough COVID-19 vaccine? You can help! COVAX, part of the World Health Organization, is the main supplier of vaccines to underserved countries. Each dose of vaccine costs about \$7.00 US. (<https://gogiveone.org/>) MCC is not currently distributing vaccines, but is engaged in other efforts such as providing PPE and other COVID-mitigation aids. You can donate at: mcc.org/covid-19-giving. ~Ib and June Thomsen

WDC Office Schedule—The WDC office and library will be closed from Friday, December 24 through Friday, December 31. The office will then open on Monday, January 3.

Circle of Hope is offering free training. Bridges Out of Poverty training addresses the root causes of poverty, addresses support for families as they build resources. It increases your understanding and reduces barriers. First training is offered on January 7, 2:00 PM-4:00 PM. To RSVP, call Peace Connections at 316-284-0000 or go to peaceconnections.otg/events.

Get a seminary education at a distance! Strengthen your leadership skills and deepen your faith — from wherever you are located — through Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary’s MA: Theology and Global Anabaptism (fully online); Master of Divinity Connect (with online and hybrid courses); or Graduate Certificate in Theological Studies (fully or partially online). We offer generous need-based financial aid, matching grants and scholarships! ambs.edu/academics.

New job opportunities are available at Mennonite Mission Network: North America Co-Administrator, Editor, and Training & Resources. See full job descriptions and apply at MennoniteMission.net/Employment or direct questions to: StaffRecruitment@mennonitemission.net.

Camp Mennoscah Merch! From CamelBaks to tee shirts and stickers, you can find your Camp Mennoscah merchandise at camp-mennoscah-store.square.site/s/shop. Share a bit of summer with friends and family this Christmas!

Western District Conference staff position opening: Western District Conference seeks an Administrative Assistant to work part-time (18 hours/week) with the WDC Associate Conference Minister (Texas-based), beginning February 1, 2022. Responsibilities include clerical and logistical support, communications, records management, and translation. Qualifications include strong organizational and computer skills, communication skills in Spanish and English, ability to collaborate as part of a team, intercultural competency, and willingness to promote WDC’s mission and priorities. For position description and application form, contact Sandra Montes-Martinez, Associate Conference Minister, at sandram@mennowdc.org or 214-907-6309; or contact the WDC office at wdc@mennowdc.org or 316-283-6300. Applications will be accepted until December 31 and will be processed in January 2022.

Camp Mennoscah has openings for a part-time custodial/housekeeping position (10 hours) and a part-time office/administrative position (30 hours with benefits). Some of the office/administrative tasks can be done from home. Contact Olivia at olivia.bartel@campmennoscah.org for more information.

The December edition of *On the Level* is now available from Mennonite Disaster Service. In our current issue: MDS responds to the deadly tornadoes in the Midwest and parts of the South, MDS Canada needs volunteers to help survivors recover from extensive flooding in British Columbia, and you can learn more about our Annual Celebration in Sarasota, Florida in January.

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We will be live-streaming our worship beginning at 10:30 AM. You may view it on our webpage (firstmennonitewton.org), on our Facebook page, YouTube, or at our Vimeo site. Recordings of the service will be available afterwards as well. Today, Sarah Koehn, Ryan Koehn, and Melody Enns are operating the necessary systems for our worship. Musicians: Joan and Cameron Entz, Jyl Ewy. Thank you to Carol Goering for the visual art. Property Committee: John Good.

Announcements

The offering for January 2 will be for Mennonite Mission Network. Offerings can be sent to the church at P.O. Box 291, 429 E. First Street, Newton, KS 67114. There is also an offering plate in the Gathering Area that will be checked daily if you want to drop your gifts off at church. Please mark the designation of your offering. If left unmarked, it will go to Local Mission. For electronic giving, contact the church office or go to the church website: firstmennonitewton.org.

First Mennonite Church worship attendance—December 19—120.

In sympathy—Harland Unruh (86) passed away on Monday, December 20. We extend our condolences to Oneta and the rest of Harland’s family and friends. Service details will come at a later date.

LOCAL MISSIONS UPDATE: As of December 22 we are \$7,400 short in Local Missions. We anticipate approximately another \$17,600 in expenses before year end. This means that we might need \$25,000 in order to meet expenses. Whatever you can do to help meet this need will be appreciated. The Financial Stewardship Committee wishes to thank you for all your gifts to the church this past year. God has truly been good to us. We wish you all a blessed Christmas.

The Church Office will be closed on Monday, December 27 in observance of the holiday.

Pastor Laura will be in the office Wednesday and Thursday of this week.

The tree in the Gathering Area is our 'FMC Mitten Tree". Bring mittens, gloves, hats, scarves or socks to decorate our tree. These can be for children and/or adults. Let's fill the tree and share a warm hug with our neighbors as the weather gets colder. These will go to the Salvation Army for sharing after the first of the year.

Yearbook update forms have been placed in your church mailbox. Please fill out the form and **return the form to the Church Office by today**. 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 Church Office.

SAVE THESE DATES FOR ALL COMMISSION AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS: January 19, 2022, all members of commissions and committees are invited to an evening in Fellowship Hall from 6:30-9:00 PM, to learn about the Intercultural Competency Assessment and how we could use this information in our mission at FMC. The following Saturday, January 22, 2022, from 9:00-11:40 AM, there will be a “kick-off” event for the year for all commissions and committees. This will be our first goal planning opportunity in two years so we are encouraging all members of those groups to attend. More information will be coming but please note these dates on your calendars!