

## WEEK AT A GLANCE

### Sunday, December 10—*Second Sunday of Advent*—Pastor Luke

- 9:15 AM Sunday School
- 10:30 AM Worship service
- 4:00 PM Casa Betania worship service

### Tuesday, December 12

- 7:00 PM Church Board

### Wednesday, December 13

- 10:00 AM Staff Meeting
- 6:45 PM Choir
- 6:15 PM Youth Group
- 7:30 PM Men's Bible Study—Warkentin Room

### Thursday, December 14

- 6:30 PM Caregiving and Membership Commission

### Sunday, December 17—*Third Sunday of Advent*

- 9:15 AM Sunday School
- 10:30 AM Worship service—special choir performance
- 4:00 PM Casa Betania service
- 7:00 PM Longest Night Service

### Upcoming Worship Services

- December 24—Christmas Eve Brunch—9:15-10:15 AM
- Fourth Sunday of Advent—10:30 AM—Pastor Laura
- Christmas Eve Service—7:00 PM
- December 31—Pastor Luke

### FIRST MENNONITE CHURCH

PO Box 291, 429 E. First Street, Newton, KS 67114-0291

Phone: 316-283-0273

E-mail: [office@firstmennonitenewton.org](mailto:office@firstmennonitenewton.org)

Website: [www.firstmennonitenewton.org](http://www.firstmennonitenewton.org)

### Pastoral Team

Laura Goerzen, Pastor—620-386-0518; [laurag@firstmennonitenewton.org](mailto:laurag@firstmennonitenewton.org)

Luke Unruh, Pastor—620-386-4596; [lukeu@firstmennonitenewton.org](mailto:lukeu@firstmennonitenewton.org)

\*Pastor Laura and Pastor Luke are in the church office Monday-Thursday.

### Administrative Assistant

Tracy Kerr—316-283-0273; [office@firstmennonitenewton.org](mailto:office@firstmennonitenewton.org)



Jesus Brings Good News



First Mennonite Church  
Newton, KS  
December 10, 2023

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**Gathering**

**Welcome**

Ken Regier, worship leader

**Meditation music**

*O come, O come, Emmanuel*  
Amanda Rempel, organist

**Lighting the Advent Candle**

**Listening**

**Worship song**

*Oh, How Shall I Receive Thee* VT 215  
*Hope Is a Candle* VT 211

**Children's time**

Shannon Bartel

*\*Children ages 2-5 may leave for supervised play time in Room #234.*

**Prayer for the offering—Local Mission**

Ken Regier

**Scripture reading**

Luke 1:5-25 and 57-66

**Sermon**

*Zechariah and Elizabeth*  
Pastor Luke Unruh

**Response song**

*Prepare the Way! The Prophet Called* VT 220

**Prayer of the church**

Pastor Laura Goerzen

**Sending**

**Sending song**

*He Came Down* VT 239

**Announcements and benediction**

Ken Regier, worship leader

**Postlude**

*Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates*  
Amanda Rempel, organist

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*We will be live-streaming our worship beginning at 10:30 AM. You may view it on our webpage ([firstmennonitenewton.org](http://firstmennonitenewton.org)), on our Facebook page, YouTube, or at our Vimeo site. Recordings of the service will be available afterwards as well. Today, Joey Menninga, Brian Kennell, and Eric Murphy are operating the necessary systems for our worship. Musicians: Amanda Rempel. Chorister: Wendy Schrag. Visuals: Cindy Unruh and Carol Goering. Property Committee: Alan Entz.*

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## Announcements

**MCC Material Resources Center in North Newton critically low on inventory:** An MCC kit cannot be distributed until each item for the kit is assembled, but some supplies in the Material Resources Center are so low that kits cannot be processed for shipping. You can help by filling the following needs: *new* infant onesies and sleepers (6-12 month sizes); *new* bath towels (dark colored, light to medium weight); *new* hand towels (dark colored). Locally, MCC distributes prisoner care and returning citizen care kits, for those kits we currently need: men's shirts (sizes XL, 2XL, 3XL -- any color) and men's underwear (sizes 2XL, 3XL -- any color). Buy online and ship it to MCC or bring items to MCC in North Newton (121 E. 30<sup>th</sup> St, North Newton, KS 67117). Questions are always welcome, please contact [brociamueller@mcc.org](mailto:brociamueller@mcc.org) or 316.283.2720. A full list of MCC kit contents can be found at [mcc.org/kits](http://mcc.org/kits).

**Mennonite Education Agency** is pleased to announce the 2023 Advent at Home worship guide, "How will we know?" is now available for free download in English and Spanish at <https://www.mennoniteeducation.org/resources/advent-at-home/>.

**Interviews for the 2024 Summer Staff** start over the Christmas/semester break! This allows more in-person interviews, which often are a benefit to the applicant. Complete your application for Summer Staff now, especially those who are usually out-of-town, to give Camp Mennoscah staff the best chance to talk with you while you're in the Newton-ish area. Summer staff must be 18 years old or older. The staff leadership positions receiving stipends are naturalist, crafts leader, lifeguard, grounds/maintenance, music leader, and office/media. Applications will be accepted until all positions are filled. The 2024 summer camp season begins with orientation for summer-long positions on June 2 and ends August 4. [The application for 2024 Summer Staff at Camp Mennoscah can be found online.](#)

**Kauffman Museum at Bethel College invites you to visit during the holidays.** Open hours are Tuesday-Friday 9:30 AM-4:30 PM, and weekends 1:30-4:30 PM. (closed Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve). The current special exhibit is "Climate and Energy Central," along with the permanent exhibits "Of Land and People," "Mirror of the Martyrs" and "Mennonite Immigrant Furniture." The museum store is also open during those hours, with books, games, art and other gift items for sale (see [kauffmannmuseum.org/museum-store/](http://kauffmannmuseum.org/museum-store/)).

**The offering for December 17** will be for Local Mission. 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: [firstmennonitenewton.org](http://firstmennonitenewton.org).

**Nursery care is available** for infants and toddlers every Sunday during Sunday school and worship.

**Childcare is available** for children ages 2-5 during the worship service. Children of this age will have the opportunity to leave after the "Words for the children" for supervised play time in the Beginner's classroom, Room 234. Parents, please pick your children up promptly following the conclusion of the worship service.

**First Mennonite Church** worship attendance for December 3—163; Sunday School—129.

**Join our FMC Advent art project!** Pick up instructions and a clear plastic triangle (1-2 per person) to take home. OR, enjoy decorating your triangles while you visit with church friends at the table in the Gathering Area. **All triangles MUST be returned to the church no later than Sunday, December 17**, in order to be incorporated into a display for the Christmas Eve service. Everyone is encouraged to participate!

**Love to bake? Want to offer your gift as an act of worship?** Contact Pastor Laura if you'd like to help with special baking projects for communion Sundays. [laurag@firstmennonitenewton.org](mailto:laurag@firstmennonitenewton.org).

**We are now receiving applications** for the Evelyn Smith Music Scholarship Fund for the spring semester 2024, both for new applicants and for those currently receiving scholarships. For the necessary forms which need to be submitted by December 15, pick up a flyer on the table in the gathering area or contact Barb Claassen by phone (620-242-4325) or email ([s.claassen@sbcglobal.net](mailto:s.claassen@sbcglobal.net)).

**The Nurture and Fellowship Commissions** are planning a Christmas Eve brunch from 9:15-10:15 AM, on Sunday, December 24. You're invited to bring a breakfast item to share: rolls, an egg dish, a cheese plate, or fruit. **(Please avoid peanut products, as we have a child in our congregation with a severe peanut allergy).** Please bring your own table service if you are able. We are also looking for "Table Hosts" to decorate a table or two with any festive items you'd bring from home. Finally, we could use a handful of volunteers to help with set-up or clean-up. If you would like to be a "Table Host" or help with set-up/clean-up, please sign up in the gathering area or contact the church office by Wednesday, December 20.

## SR. HIGH YOUTH



**Youth Group December 13**—starts with supper in the youth room at 6:15 PM, followed by an evening led by Worship Group. We plan to be done by 8:30 PM.

**PLANNING GROUP NOTES:** The Planning Group continues to meet before taking a break for the holiday season. We have met three times with our focus being planning for questions for the congregational opportunities for input. Our plans continue to be focused on a worship service concerning our Anabaptist and FMC roots followed by meetings open for anyone to attend that focus on first, "Who we are currently as a congregation" and a second meeting focused on, "Who is God calling us to be in relationship to LGBTQIA+ individuals". The dates for these meetings will be shared as soon as possible. If you have questions or comments please feel free to contact any member of the Planning Group. The members are Jerry Regier, Betty Pauls, Lilith Jackson, Dave Wiebe, Pastor Luke, Cindy Combs, Shannon Bartel, Tyler Johnson, Laura Sharp, Joan Entz, Stephanie Weaver, Sam Claassen, Barb Claassen, Addie Kauffman, Jeff Kauffman, Michelle Regier, Erin Graber, Ken Regier, Janice Good. Jon Friesen from Hesston Mennonite Church is our facilitator.

**Longest Night Service**—Sunday, December 17, 7:00 PM. As we approach the joy of Christmas we also approach the winter solstice and the longest night of the year. While celebratory for many people, Christmas is also a time of loneliness, sorrow, alienation, and sadness. This special evening service will include opportunities to acknowledge grief and heartbreak as well as taking an opportunity to focus on the promise of hope found in Christ. If you desire quiet reflection, community, and a space to bring your whole self, please join us. If you have questions about what to expect, please reach out to Pastor Laura or a Worship Commission member.

**Caring Fund Support**—The Caring Fund of FMC supports the church and wider community in so many ways. We are able to make monthly donations to local charities such as the New Hope Shelter, Safe Hope and Heart to Heart Child Advocacy. This Fund also assists members and others who are in need of help with things such as rent, utilities, lodging and other emergency situations. Payment for Mental health professionals leading support groups as well as private counselling has also been supported by this fund. Our only official offering is on Christmas Eve but your support through prayers and donations is welcome anytime. Please consider giving this Christmas Eve or in the next few Sundays.

**Special Offering:** Our brothers and sisters from Casa Betania are organizing a special offering for friends and family members who have been affected by hurricane Otis in Acapulco, Mexico. If you would like to contribute to this effort, you can make checks out to Casa Betania and place them in the offering baskets, Linda Shelly's mailbox, or mail them to the church office at PO Box 291, Newton, KS 67114.

**Harvest of Love**—Throughout November and December, the Salvation Army invites you to join in their annual food and fund drive to support people in need in our county. Items always needed are canned tuna, macaroni and cheese, spaghetti sauce, hamburger helper, tuna helper, cereal (of any kind), peanut butter, jelly, canned vegetables, and soups. Boxes are available in the Gathering Area and inside the west entrance 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. Every donation is a gift that makes a difference in our neighbors' lives!

**Check out the new Historical Committee** display case in the Gathering Area all about CHRISTMAS AT FMC in the early 20th Century. Enjoy the mini version of what our sanctuary used to look like in 1903, and some vintage candle clips and ornaments (on loan from Kauffman Museum). Thank you to those of you who have shared FMC Christmas memories so far! We could use MORE. We will be collecting memories all year for our Christmas display 2024. Just contact Andrea Regier (see directory).

## Community Announcements

**Brass Christmas with the McPherson Community Brass Choir**—today at 7:00 PM, Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church, 1304 K-15 Highway, Goessel. **Sam Claassen is a part of this group.**

**37th annual Lighting of the Green**, today at 8:00 PM, Bethel College campus .

**The Goessel High School Music Department Christmas Concert** is on Monday, December 11 at 7:00 PM. The evening will feature both familiar and unique sounds of the season such as We Three Kings, Joy to the World, Ukrainian Bell Carol, Bluegrass Choir & Fiddle An African Celebration, The Nutcracker, Silver Bells, and O Come, O Come, Emmanuel. The concert will culminate with the long-standing tradition of the community-sing of the Hallelujah Chorus (sheet music will be provided). Hope to see you there! **Janessa Garcia is a member of this choir.**

**Antiracism Analysis Training facilitated by Roots of Justice**—**January 12-14, 2024** Friday, January 12 (6:00—9:00 PM), Saturday, January 13 (9:00 AM—5:00 PM), & Sunday, January 14 (9:00 AM—5:00 PM) **Location:** Newton Recreation Commission, 415 N Poplar St., Newton **Register:** <https://forms.gle/a3nJLczvgyx625HQ8> The cost is \$300 participant if paid before December 1, 2023; \$350/participant if paid on or after December 1, 2023 (limited scholarships available; [newtoncrj@gmail.com](mailto:newtoncrj@gmail.com)) Pay online at: [https://www.convergepay.com/hosted-payments\\_ssl\\_txn\\_auth\\_token=MJAoe1eaTcmLwn7djou4%2BAAAAX9VkfSD](https://www.convergepay.com/hosted-payments_ssl_txn_auth_token=MJAoe1eaTcmLwn7djou4%2BAAAAX9VkfSD) The goal of the training is to: be exposed to an analysis of racism and build a common understanding of racism; work together as a team to develop team relationships; deepen the philosophical foundations for antiracism work. For more information contact: **Newton Community for Racial Justice** at [newtoncrj@gmail.com](mailto:newtoncrj@gmail.com)

**MCC Comforter update** – thank you to all the hardworking MCC comforter makers who make beautiful, high-quality gifts to share with our partners around the world! The MCC guidelines for comforters were recently updated after receiving feedback from partners around the world. For complete MCC comforter information, including the updated guidelines, check out the [Comforters page of our website](https://mcc.org/get-involved/kits/comforters) ([mcc.org/get-involved/kits/comforters](https://mcc.org/get-involved/kits/comforters)). Please reach out to the Workroom Supervisor, Kate Mast ([katemast@mcc.org](mailto:katemast@mcc.org)), with any comforter questions!

**Eastern Mennonite Seminary** is offering a three day leadership training through **Shalom Academy** with the theme: *Pursuing Community in a Divisive World*, Psalm 34:14 "Seek peace, and pursue it". This training offers a place to learn and reflect on the practices that move congregations past divisiveness and toward peace, both within their walls and in their larger communities. Keynote speakers are Melissa Florer-Bixler and Adam Russell Taylor. This will take place Monday, January 8 – Wednesday, January 10, 2024 at EMU. Limited virtual options are available. For more information and to register visit: <https://emu.edu/seminary/slt/>

**Tabor College will have a *Messiah* performance** on Sunday, December 3, 4:00 PM. This concert is a wonderful worshipful time focusing on Handel's wonderful oratorio, *Messiah*. It will include the orchestra with combined choirs and alumni. This is a wonderful way to welcome the Christmas season by proclaiming the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. The concert will be in the Richert Auditorium of the Shari Flaming Center for the Arts on the campus of Tabor College (311 East B Street, Hillsboro, KS 67063). The concert is free with free-will offerings taken to support the Tabor College Music Department.