

WEEK AT A GLANCE

Sunday, December 24—Fourth Sunday of Advent

- 9:15 AM Christmas Eve Brunch—FH
- 10:30 AM Worship service
- 4:00 PM Casa Betania worship service
- 7:00 PM Christmas Eve Service

Monday, December 25

Church Office closed

Tuesday, December 26

Church Office closed

Wednesday, December 27

10:00 AM Staff Meeting

Sunday, December 31—Pastor Luke preaching

- 9:15 AM Sunday School
- 10:30 AM Worship service
- 4:00 PM Casa Betania service
- 7:00 PM FH and kitchen reserved

Upcoming Worship Services

- January 7—Pastor Laura
- January 14—TBD

Jesus Brings Good News



FIRST MENNONITE CHURCH

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

Phone: 316-283-0273

E-mail: office@firstmennonitenewton.org

Website: www.firstmennonitenewton.org

Pastoral Team

Laura Goerzen, Pastor—620-386-0518; laurag@firstmennonitenewton.org

Luke Unruh, Pastor—620-386-4596; 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



First Mennonite Church
Newton, KS
December 24, 2023

Gathering

Welcome

John Goerzen, worship leader

Meditation music

Toccata-Prelude on "Hyfrydol"
Amanda Entz

Lighting the Advent Candle

Aaron, Melanie, Ella, Everett, and Kit Koop

Listening

Worship songs

Hark! The Glad Sound! VT 217
Good Christian Friends, Rejoice VT 261

Children's time

Nick Sharp

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

Prayer for the offering—Local Mission

John Goerzen

Scripture Reading

Luke 2:1-19
Linda Gaertner and Evelyn Gaertner

The Innkeeper and the Light

Ken Frey

Sermon

The Story. . . and Why the Details Matter
Pastor Laura Goerzen

Song of response

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly VT 243

Prayer of the church

Pastor Laura

Sending

Sending song

Nun ist Sie Erschienen

Announcements and benediction

John Goerzen

Postlude

Good Christian Men, Rejoice
Amanda Entz, organist; Melody Bontrager, pianist

We will be live-streaming our worship beginning at 10:30 AM. You may view it on our webpage (firstmennonitenewton.org), on our Facebook page, YouTube, or at our Vimeo site. Recordings of the service will be available afterwards as well. Today, Ryan Goertzen-Regier, Eric Murphy, and Melody Enns are operating the necessary systems for our worship. Musicians: Amanda Entz, Melody Bontrager. Visuals: Cindy Unruh and Carol Goering. Property Committee: Rod Wedel.

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. 30th St, North Newton, KS 67117). Questions are always welcome, please contact broci-amueller@mcc.org or 316.283.2720. A full list of MCC kit contents can be found at mcc.org/kits.

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.](#)

Register now for the MCC South Texas Learning Tour, February 4-9, 2024! This immigration-focused learning tour presents a unique opportunity to engage directly with organizations making a positive impact on our neighbors. You won't want to miss this opportunity. Details and online registration can be found at mcc.org/south-texas-lt. Deadline to sign up is January 20. Please contact Abraham Diaz Alonso with questions, abrahamdiazalonso@mcc.org.

Sun., Jan. 7 – Sunday-Afternoon-at-the-Museum, “The Western Meadowlark: The State Bird, but Not the Only Exceptional Bird in Kansas,” with local birding expert Gregg Friesen, 3 p.m., Kauffman Museum at Bethel College (corner of Main & 27th streets; 2801 N. Main St., North Newton 67117)



Announcements

The offering for December 31 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.

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.

FMC worship attendance for December 17—160; Sunday School—135.

Local Mission Update: We have received an additional \$16,000 for Local Missions. This means that we still need \$75,000 by December 31, in order to end the year in the black.
~Financial Stewardship Committee, Dewayne Pauls, Chair

Our Christmas Eve service will be at 7:00 PM tonight. Come and hear the program which will celebrate the story of Christ’s birth through readings and carols.

The Church Office will be closed on December 25 and 26.

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.

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.

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.

Yearbook update forms have been placed in your church mailbox. Please fill out the form and return it to the Church Office **by Sunday, December 31**. 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 and on the table in the Gathering Area.

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.

Offering envelopes for 2024 have been placed in your church mailbox. If you did not receive offering envelopes and would like them or have any questions, contact the Church Office. Also, if you use online giving and do not need the envelopes, please let Tracy know and she will make sure that you don’t receive the envelopes. If you have already told the Church Office that you don’t them, there is no need to call again this year.

Harvest of Love—Throughout 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! **We only have one more Sundays after today to bring food!**

Community Announcements

Kansas Mennonite Men’s Chorus—register today! Rehearsals begin on January 28. Rehearsals are at Hesston Mennonite Church at 2:30 PM on January 29, February 4, February 25, March 10, March 17, and March 24. The 2024 concerts are on April 7 and April 21. More information is on the table in the Gathering Area or contact Greg Bontrager.

The WDC Office and Resource Library will be closed for Christmas and New Years from December 23 through January 1. We will open again on Tuesday, January 2. Be sure to stop by the WDC Resource Library prior to this to pick up books for your kids, your grandkids or yourself to enjoy during the holiday break!

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 \$350/participant (limited scholarships available; newtoncrj@gmail.com) Pay online at: 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

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](http://mcc.org/get-involved/kits/comforters) (mcc.org/get-involved/kits/comforters). Please reach out to the Workroom Supervisor, Kate Mast (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/>

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 kauffmanmuseum.org/museum-store/).