

WEEK AT A GLANCE

Sunday, December 31

9:15 AM Sunday School
10:30 AM Worship service

Monday, January 1

Church Office closed

Tuesday, January 2

7:00 PM Nurture Commission by Zoom

Wednesday, January 3

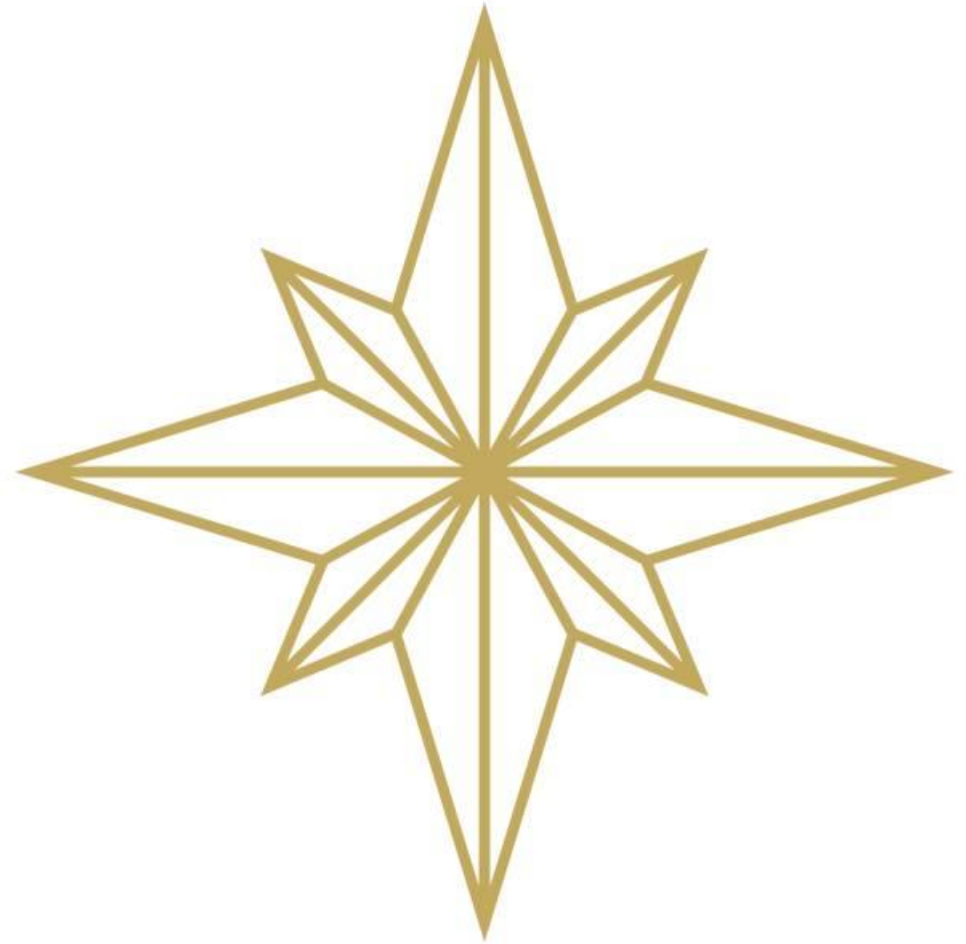
11:30 AM Staff Meeting

Sunday, January 7—Pastor Laura preaching

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

Upcoming Worship Services

January 14—TBD



Come to Worship

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 31, 2023

Gathering

Welcome

Chris Weaver, worship leader

Meditation Music

Noel for the flute stops
Amanda Rempel

Call to Worship

Chris Weaver

Listening

Worship Songs

O Come, All Ye Faithful VT 241
O Beautiful Star of Bethlehem VT 275

Children's Time

Sheralyn Goering

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

Prayer for the Offering—Local Mission

Chris Weaver

Scripture Reading

Matthew 2:1-12
Kinnick Frey and Ken Frey

Sermon

The Magi Come to Worship
Pastor Luke Unruh

Song of Response

What Child Is This VT 267

Prayer of the Church

Pastor Luke

Sending

Sending Song

As with Gladness VT 277

Announcements and Benediction

Chris Weaver, worship leader

Postlude

Joy to the World
Amanda Rempel

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 Koehn, Sarah Koehn, and Eric Murphy are operating the necessary systems for our worship. Musicians: Amanda Rempel. Visuals: Cindy Unruh and Carol Goering. Property Committee: Mason Unruh.

Announcements

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 brociamueller@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 Newtonish 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-It. Deadline to sign up is January 20. Please contact Abraham Diaz Alonso with questions, abrahamdiazalonso@mcc.org.



The offering for January 7 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 24—123; Christmas Eve service—239.

Local Mission Update: WE NEED HELP! Thank you for our many generous gifts throughout the year. However, we are still \$40,000 short of meeting our expenses for the year. We have met our goal for eight years in a row. Please help us make this number nine. We will be accepting contributions through January 2, if they are post-marked by December 31. ~Dewayne Pauls, Chair; Financial Stewardship Committee

The Church Office will be closed on January 1. Happy New Year!

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.

Yearbook update forms have been placed in your church mailbox. Please fill out the form and return it 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 and on the table in the Gathering Area.

PLANNING GROUP NOTES: THE PLANNING GROUP dealing with planning a process for congregational input into the inclusion question of LGBTQIA+ individuals has decided on the following opportunities. **First step:** There will be a two Sunday sermon series dealing with two aspects of our history. The first Sunday's sermon will review our Anabaptist history of different perspectives and change. The second Sunday's sermon will deal with FMC's history of different perspectives and change. **Second step:** Opportunity for table discussions with guided questions on who we currently are as a church. **Third step:** Opportunity for table discussions with guided questions on who we want to be as a church.

Everyone is invited to attend these table discussion opportunities. We would like to state again that the Church Board is not intending or planning on asking for a congregational vote on the inclusion question. We are asking for input through these talking and listening questions and responses. There may be other ways we gather information as we move through these planned steps and they will be announced so anyone who wants to can be involved. All this information will be summarized when all the steps are completed and shared with the Church Board and reported back to the congregation. If you have questions about any steps in this process feel free to contact any Planning Group member. 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. Please continue to be in prayer for God's leading in the Planning Group's work and the congregation as we move through these discussions.

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@firstmennonitewton.org.

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—Today is our last day we are collecting food. 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!

Community Announcements

Today is 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, 3:00 PM, Kauffman Museum at Bethel College (corner of Main & 27th streets; 2801 N. Main St., North Newton 67117)

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.

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

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/>

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