

WEEK AT A GLANCE

Sunday, December 22

- 9:15 AM Sunday School
- 10:30 AM Worship Service—*Mary: Treasuring and Pondering* —Pastor Laura
- 2:00 PM Casa Betania Christmas Service—FH and Sanctuary
- 7:00 PM Longest Night Service—Sanctuary and online

Tuesday, December 24

- Church Office Closed
- 7:00 PM Christmas Eve Service—*The Christmas Miracle of Jonathan Toomey*
by Susan Wojciechowski

Wednesday, December 25

- Church Office Closed—Merry Christmas!

Sunday, December 29

- 9:15 AM Sunday School
- 10:30 AM Worship Service—Fifth Sunday of Advent—*Mary and Anna*—Pastor Luke
- 4:00 PM Casa Betania Service

Upcoming worship service:

- Sunday, January 5—Epiphany and Communion Sunday
Mary: Following the Light Through Fear—Pastor Laura

Expecting Emmanuel



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 22, 2024

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Gathering

Welcome

Dana Neff, worship leader

Meditation Music

We Come

Jyl Ewy

Call to Worship

Dana Neff, worship leader

Lighting the Fourth Advent Candle

Linda Shelly

Listening

Songs for Worship

Build My Life

Come As You Are

Children's Time

Sara Rickard

Prayer for the Offering

Local Mission

Dana Neff

Scripture Reading

Luke 1:26-45

Dana Neff

Sermon

Mary: Treasuring and Pondering

Pastor Laura Goerzen

Response Music

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

Prayer of the Church

Pastor Laura Goerzen

Sending

Sending Song

Angels We Have Heard On High

Announcements and Benediction

Dana Neff, worship leader

Postlude

Jyl Ewy

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

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, Sarah Koehn, Isaac Koehn, and Melody Enns are operating the necessary systems for our worship. Musician: Jyl Ewy, Joey Menninga, Joan Entz. Visuals: Cindy Unruh and Carol Goering. Property Committee: Kevin Hamm.

**Bulletin artwork by Lauren Wright Pittman licensed for the season of Advent/Christmastide*

Mennonite Mission Network invites you to join a Just Peace Pilgrimage this spring. Embark on one of these life-changing learning experiences:

United States Civil Rights Pilgrimage — Explore the history, significance, and ongoing implications of the civil rights movement in the United States. Unique opportunity – Young adults are invited to join Glen Guyton, MC USA executive director, for an enlightening journey. To foster dialog and understanding you are invited to join this pilgrimage with a partner of a different race.

Christ at the Borders (Calais, France) — Thousands of people migrate to Calais in hopes of crossing the English Channel and entering the United Kingdom to find a better life. Meet those walking alongside the vulnerable who search for a peaceful home and the travelers themselves.

Solidarity with Indigenous Peoples (Yakima, Washington)—Led by Sarah Augustine. Become better acquainted with Indigenous Peoples, their connection to the land upon which we live, and the consequences of settler colonial history.

For more information and to sign up, visit MennoniteMission.net/JustPeace or contact Stephanie Weaver at StephanieW@MennoniteMission.net.

Can a Book of Stories Bring Peace to Palestine and Israel? Western District Conference (MC USA) Israel-Palestine Task Force invites you to join us for a book discussion group on February 25, 2025 at 7:00 PM, held on Zoom. We will be reading *Apeirogon* by Colum McCann. An apeirogon is a polygon with an observably infinite number of sides. McCann is an award winning author who writes a book of tiny chapters, each one a breath, a feeling, a story. The book is based on the real life experiences of two friends, an Israeli who opposes the occupation and a Palestinian who studies the Holocaust. They meet in a parent grief support group, as both have tragically lost their daughters. Their raw stories and their ardent peace work buoy the heart as the book takes us on a journey through love, loss, reflection, and hope. As you read the book, note the artful connections between the stories and the theme of ending the occupation in Palestine. What stories of peace do you tell? We will take time in our discussion to reflect on the book's stories and our own. To register, email wdc@mennowdc.org, and a Zoom link will be sent out.

New Bluestem U lifelong learning courses for winter and spring 2025 are now open for registration. Courses are available for individuals age 55 and better. This semester's offerings include STEAM, theatre, astronomy, bird watching and a free author's series. See more information and registration at bluestemu.org. Bluestem U is a lifelong learning program of Bluestem Communities in partnership with Bethel College and Hesston College.

Announcements

The offering for December 29 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.

Local Missions Update: As of December 19 we need approximately \$54,000 to end the year in the black. Prayerfully consider what you can do to help us end the year in the black.

FMC worship attendance for December 15—148; Sunday School—130.

You are invited to FMC's Longest Night service, today, December 22, at 7:00 PM, in the Sanctuary and online. In this season when the focus is often on light and joy, Worship Commission would like to provide space for us to also practice the spiritual discipline of lament. The service will consist of scripture reading, prayer, simple music, and time for silence and reflection.

The Church Office will be closed on Tuesday and Wednesday this week because of the Christmas holiday.

Join us for FMC's Christmas Eve service on this Tuesday, December 24, at 7:00 PM. The candle light service will include *The Christmas Miracle of Jonathan Toomey* dramatized by an inter-generational cast and music performed by the children

The offering on Christmas Eve will go toward the Caring Fund. If you are not able to attend the service, please consider making a donation to the Caring Fund in December. This fund has helped many people from our congregation and the community with things like rent, utilities and other unexpected expenses. Give a gift that will help a family who is struggling.

Harvest of Love challenge. Thanks to our congregation's generosity, we have already gathered over 175# of food! Here's the challenge: Up through the end of December, let's try to make the total over 300#! (We will even add the weight your monetary donations!!!)

The Caregiving Commission is hosting an intergenerational Sunday School class starting in January. This will be a six-week book study, January 19 through February 23. [The Bible as Story](#) has been described as a “user-friendly introduction to biblical studies”. We are pleased that John Sharp, former pastor, retired Hesston College professor, and co-author of the book, has agreed to guide us through the book, discussing:

- The biblical story
- How we study the Bible
- How we interpret the Bible

This year we have heard a renewed interest in how we approach the Bible and interpret it for our lives. We hope this resource will help us meaningfully engage the text, and give us a common basis as we listen to each others’ diverse perspectives.

Caregiving Commission is purchasing books for this study. There will be book sign-up sheets in the gathering area, or you may contact Dan Regier or Laura Sharp. Deadline for book sign-up is January 5.

Cooperative games are now available for check out in the library! We just added 100+ new resources, including games (ages 2 - adult), board books, picture books, junior books, fiction, and non-fiction. Browse the library catalog under the Resources tab on the church website or here: www.librarycat.org/lib/FirstMennonite

The next quarter Sunday School materials are here. You can find the material on the table in the Gathering Area.

Community Announcements

All are invited to Night In The Barn: A Living Nativity presented by Tabor Mennonite Church Youth on December 21 and 22 from 5:00-7:00 PM, at Patchwork Farms. Experience the Christmas story with the characters, animals, lights and sounds. The walking tour lasts about 20 mins. Donations are accepted. Drinks and snack will be provided. Questions? Call 620-345-6867. Patchwork Farms is located at 372 E 70th, Newton, KS. 6 Miles North of Newton on K-15 then 3/4 mile East.

Acck! We had an error in the 2025 Summer Youth Camp Schedule sent out last week. A corrected version is attached and the website should be updated. Thank you for letting us know! There has been a change in age groups for the camps. There are two Junior Camps for those going into grades 6, 7 **and 8** in the fall of 2025. There is one Junior High Camp for grades 8 and 9. Other age groups remain the same. Registration will open in February 2025. The theme for the 2025 summer is Another Way, looking at how Jesus invites us to re-imagine who we are and to live in another way.

The WDC Office & Resource Library will be closed from Tuesday, December 24 through Friday, December 27 for Christmas. We will open again on Monday and Tuesday, December 30 and 31 and will be closed on Wednesday, January 1. Happy Holidays from WDC Staff!

Kauffman Museum seeks a Visitor Services & Education Coordinator to work with school groups, college students, senior volunteers and the general public. This is a half-time position. Kauffman Museum is a Bethel College affiliate in North Newton, KS. View the full job description, application and contact info at KauffmanMuseum.org/vsc

Mark your calendars for Anabaptism at Five Hundred: Hymn Festival on Sunday, January 19, 2025, 3:00 PM, at Hesston Mennonite Church. Hosted by the Hesston College Music Department, this event will also celebrate the release of the *Anabaptist Community Bible*. The Hymn Festival coincides with the 500th anniversary of the first Anabaptist adult baptisms that took place in Zurich, Switzerland in 1525. More information to follow in area bulletins and at hesston.edu/music.

Those planning to make quilts for the Kansas Mennonite Relief Sale note that quilts need to be turned in for the auction by February 14, 2025. This is three weeks earlier than previous years. Quilts can be brought to the North Newton MCC Resource Center. The KMRS Quilt Committee appreciates all the work that goes into your contributions!

Not-here-for-Christmas hoodies! Camp Mennoscah will be selling hoodies available early 2025 by order only. An online order form will be available soon.

WDC Staff position opening: Western District Conference seeks a half-time Program Director for WDC’s Kids Meet Christ (KMC) worship and faith formation initiative, beginning February 1, 2025. This program is made possible through Lilly Endowment Inc.’s Nurturing Children Through Worship and Prayer Initiative, designed to help congregations more fully and intentionally engage children in intergenerational corporate worship and prayer practices. The KMC Program Director will serve as a member of the WDC staff, collaborating with other staff and the Resource Commission to implement the KMC initiative over the 5-year grant period. For position description and application form, see <https://mennowdc.org/employment/>. Interested applicants please submit application form and letter of interest to the Conference Minister at heidirk@mennowdc.org.

Save the date—Roots of Justice, on behalf of Newton Community for Racial Justice, will take place on Thursday, February 13 from 6:00 to 9:00 PM, Friday, February 14 from 9:30 AM to 5:30 PM, and Saturday, February 15 from 9:30 AM to 5:30 PM. Early bird registration is until January 3—\$300 per participant. Regular registration (after January 3) will be \$350. Stay tuned for the registration link and more details.

The December edition of *On the Level* is now available. In this edition, Executive Director Kevin King shares thoughts and inspiration from a deer stand, and celebrate with family in West Virginia who will be home for Christmas, thanks to MDS volunteers, plus get all the details for the upcoming 75th Anniversary Celebration. Go to <http://conta.cc/49FzaWp> to read the edition.