

WEEK AT A GLANCE

Sunday, December 28

9:15 AM Sunday School
10:30 AM Worship Service—Pastor Luke
4:00 PM Casa Betania Service

Tuesday, December 30

5:00-9:00 PM FH/Kitchen reserved

Thursday, December 25—Happy New Year

Church Office closed

Sunday, January 4—Epiphany/Communion

9:15 AM Sunday School
10:30 AM Worship Service—Pastor Laura
4:00 PM Casa Betania service

Upcoming worship service:

Sunday, January 11—Guest speaker Rev. Jeanne Koontz during adult Sunday school and morning 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*

God Among Us

December 28, 2025

Gathering

Welcome

Wendy Schrag, worship leader

Meditation Music

Carol of the Bells

Renee Entz

Call to Worship

Wendy Schrag, worship leader

Listening

Songs for worship

Oh, How Joyfully VT 254, v. 1-3 in English

Good Christian Friends, Rejoice VT 261

Angels We Have Heard on High VT 249, v. 1-3

Lighting the Advent Candle and Children's Time

Chris Weaver

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

On Mission With Christ

Sending for Chris Weaver

Prayer for Offering—Local Mission

Wendy Schrag

Scripture Reading

Matthew 2:1-12

Evelyn and Linda Gaertner

Sermon

God Among Us

Pastor Luke Unruh

Response Song

What Child Is This VT 267

Prayer of the Church

Pastor Luke Unruh

Sending

Sending Song

Go Tell It on the Mountain VT 252

Announcements and Benediction

Wendy Schrag, worship leader

Postlude

On This Day Earth Shall Ring

Nora Miller

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 Eric Murphy are operating the necessary systems for our worship. Musicians: Nora Miller, Renee Entz. Visuals: Cindy Unruh and Carol Goering. Property Committee: Phil Gaertner.

Community Announcements

Kauffman Museum at Bethel College invites you to visit during the holidays. There is currently a recently restored 17th-century Bible from the Jake T. Friesen family on display, only through the end of December. The museum is closed Mondays, Christmas Day and New Year's Day and open 9:00 AM–1:00 PM, Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve; Regular hours are 9:30 AM-4:30 PM, weekdays, 1:30-4:30 PM, weekends. The current special exhibit is "Voices of Conscience: Peace Witness in the Great War." Permanent exhibits are "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 <https://www.kauffmuseum.org/museum-store>).

Camp Mennoscah is looking for a volunteer to work with the camp website. This would include regularly updating information and potentially a complete overhaul of the website itself. The details of the work would depend on the skills of the volunteer and time they have available. Please contact office@campmennoscah.org or call 620-297-3290 to start the conversation.

Smaller Wish List needs for Camp Mennoscah include kitchen knives, "restaurant style" hot pads (example: https://www.webstaurantstore.com/choice_10-x-11-terry-cloth-pan-grabber-bakers-pad/160TPH1011WH.html), replacement ping pong table net with clamps, Rubbermaid storage containers for the kitchen (9 cup and larger), serving spatulas (for cake/brownies) and plastic cutting boards (no smaller than 12"X18", larger is fine). Office-related items include copier paper, postage stamps, and sticky notes. Toilet paper and kitchen/white paper towels are always welcome! Contact office@campmennoscah.org with questions.

Announcements

The offering for January 4 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: 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 "Children's Time" 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 21—159; Sunday school—126.

Local Mission Update: Last Sunday our offering was \$32,322.54! With additional online giving of \$4,081 since Sunday. It appears that we will meet our expenses for the year. Thank you for your generosity! **PRAISE BE TO GOD!**

~The Financial Stewardship Committee

Please have your offering for 2025 turned in to the church office by Wednesday, December 31, at 8:00 AM. This also includes the ones that are sent in by mail. Anything received after that will go to your contributions for 2026. Thank you!

Thank you from Eli Regier: I have received my care package!! Full of goodies and notes that I was so happy to read. The words of encouragement and the few little bits of home will make it just a bit easier to be away for the holidays. I'm super excited to share the snacks with people and have them try something new.

The Church Office will be closed on Thursday this week because of New Years Day. Please have all bulletin announcements for next week's bulletin turned in to the church office by this Wednesday early morning.

Epiphany Cookies! Instead of rolls to go with our communion celebration on Epiphany, January 4, we would like to provide Epiphany cookies in the Gathering Area after the service. If you would like to bake some simple sugar cookies for January 4, (stars, hearts, and other celebratory shapes welcome!), please contact Pastor Laura and let her know how many dozen you plan to bring.

For Your Prayers

Plastic recycling update—Thanks to all who have brought their recyclable soft plastic to the bins at church through the past year. With the help of friends in Hesston, we are currently only about 50 lbs short of our goal of 1000 lb., which will earn us a second bench! Due to changes in the Trex recycling program in 2026, it's to our advantage to complete our 1000 lb. this calendar year. If you have been saving plastic at home for recycling, this is a great time to bring it to church to get us over the finish line!

Volunteers Needed for Nursery and Childcare During Worship! Join our wonderful team of caregivers who support the youngest members of our congregation on Sunday mornings. Most volunteers serve just once a month, and scheduling is flexible. Safe Sanctuaries training is required. For more information, contact Amy

The junior high age group (grades 6-8) is in need of multiple helpers and/or teachers for the Sunday school hour starting in 2026. We are an energetic bunch and also a class that is interested in learning how to apply the Bible to our lives. Please contact Amanda Entz or Sara Rickard if interested. Thanks for considering!

Rev. Jeanne Koontz is the lead organizer for the Central Kansas Interfaith Justice Organization, an affiliate of the DART Center which acts with the understanding that people of faith are called to do justice, but often lack an effective vehicle to do so. We seek to stand in this gap. Jeanne is working to build a regional faith-based organization that works with faith communities to follow the biblical mandate to do justice by building power and taking direct action on local community problems. Pastor Laura has been serving on the clergy organizing committee and was elected as a member of the Executive Committee for the formation stage. Five members of our congregation attended a scriptural study on justice in November to learn more about the biblical call to do justice and the organization that is forming. Jeanne will join us on January 11th to share more about the justice ministry during the Sunday School hour and preach during our worship service.

You are invited to look up close at the beautiful weaving on the communion table during this Advent season. Carol Goering is a weaver who creates all types of woven items and is an expert in all kinds of textiles and weaving. The pattern name is "Star of Bethlehem" and uses an overshot technique in weaving of this piece. The blue and gold threads create a star in the "sky" of the weaving. Carol is generously letting us use her weaving as a setting for our Advent visuals. Thank You Carol for sharing your love of weaving and textiles with us!

Pictures wanted—Over the next few weeks, if you take any church pictures during the month of December and you would like to share them for the pictorial directory, please email them to the church office.

BOOKS...BOOKS...BOOKS! There is a cart with books from our church library and also from the Western District library sitting in the hallway blocking access to our library! It holds Christmas and Advent books that—wait for it: are available for checking out! No money or license required! The only requirement? You must return them, for a "refund".

Yearbook update forms have been placed in your church mailbox. Please fill out the form and return it to the Church Office **by January 5**. 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. **Also, if you don't have a church mailbox and would like one, please let the church office know you would.**

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 below the church mailboxes, 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. Thank you to each of you who have made donations already. **FMC has collected 471.1 pounds through December 14, already exceeding our goal of collecting more than last year! Can we double it and donate over 606 pounds? This is our last Sunday for this collection, so keep up the generous giving. Thanks again!**

~Caregiving and Membership Commission

Offering envelopes for 2026 are in your church mailboxes. If you give your offering online and don't need envelopes, and I don't have your name on my list, please let me know this week. **Also, some people may have new offering numbers starting in 2026. I am ordering less offering boxes and that means some changes to the numbers on the envelopes.**