

**Mennonite Mission Network Prayer Request:** Pray for the participants in Mennonite Mission Network's Tucson, Arizona, Mennonite Voluntary Service unit — Nely Cotuc, Hannah Nuest, Ally Weaver, Magdalena Wenger and Deborah Yoder — as they help extend the ministries of their host congregation, Shalom Mennonite Fellowship, through welcoming immigrants, promoting literacy and working to protect the environment.

**Western District Conference Prayer Request:** Give thanks for the WDC Resource Library's creative resources and ideas for Advent and Christmas, and pray for congregational leaders who plan worship and special activities during this season.

To request prayer or a visit, or if a family member is hospitalized, please contact the church office or a pastor so that visits and prayer support can be offered. Names of people receiving medical care are printed in the BCMC bulletin only by permission of the patient or a guardian/family-member. This is part of the caring network at BCMC, which includes support among members of Sunday school classes and small groups, as well as the Prayer Network and Caring Fund sponsored by the Deacon Commission.

**Bethel College Mennonite Church welcomes into fellowship and membership all persons who confess faith in Jesus Christ, without regard to their race, ethnic background, gender, age, sexual orientation, education, ability, and other factors which give rise to discrimination and marginalization.**

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Bethel College Mennonite Church, 2600 College Ave., Box 364, North Newton, KS 67117  
Phone: 316-283-3667—Fax: 316-283-2079 Email: [office@bethelcollegemennonitechurch.org](mailto:office@bethelcollegemennonitechurch.org)  
Website: [bethelcollegemennonitechurch.org](http://bethelcollegemennonitechurch.org) Notary public service is available in the church office  
Church office hours: 9 a.m.—12 p.m. Mon—Fri; 1 p.m.—5 p.m. Mon—Thur

**Church office is closed Friday afternoons**

Building is locked weekdays at 5 p.m. unless evening activities are scheduled

**Saturdays—building is locked**

Sundays—building is locked at 2 p.m. unless afternoon/evening activities are scheduled

- Pastor Nathan Koontz, Day off: Wednesday  
Cell phone: 316-212-4593; Email: [nathan@bethelcollegemennonitechurch.org](mailto:nathan@bethelcollegemennonitechurch.org)
- Pastor Roger Neufeld Smith  
Cell phone: 785-220-1968; Email: [roger@bethelcollegemennonitechurch.org](mailto:roger@bethelcollegemennonitechurch.org)
- Elizabeth Schmidt, Pastor of Congregational Care  
Email: [elizabeth@bethelcollegemennonitechurch.org](mailto:elizabeth@bethelcollegemennonitechurch.org)
- Jill Robb, Faith Formation Coordinator—Email: [jill@bethelcollegemennonitechurch.org](mailto:jill@bethelcollegemennonitechurch.org)
- George Leary, Youth Coordinator—Email: [george@bethelcollegemennonitechurch.org](mailto:george@bethelcollegemennonitechurch.org)
- Office/Facilities Manager: Monica Lichti, Cell phone 316-249-9652  
Email: [office@bethelcollegemennonitechurch.org](mailto:office@bethelcollegemennonitechurch.org)
- Music Coordinators: Barbara Thiesen and Verlene Garber
- Chancel Choir Director: Riley King
- Chancel Bells Director: Verlene Garber
- Menno Ringers Director: Suzanne Burch

## Bethel College Mennonite Church

December 3, 2023



HOPE

Our faith in a God of love leads us, by the power of the Spirit,  
to follow Jesus in doing justice, loving mercy,  
and walking humbly with God.

## First Sunday of Advent: Hope

\*Hymn                      *Hark! the Glad Sound!*                      VT 217  
People with November birthdays come forward for a blessing,  
please bring a hymnal

\*You are invited to stand ■ VT—*Voices Together* ■ Audio visual— Ken Lamp  
■ Keyboard—Will Wiebe-Friesen

**Caring Fund Contribution Opportunity today, December 3.** The Caring Fund is an above budget benevolent fund administered by the Deacon Commission for the purpose of assisting our congregation's members and community persons in need. The fund is generated by above budget offerings made payable to Bethel College Mennonite Church and designated "caring fund." Everence also provides some matching funds each year. Besides the financial help that can and has been provided to our own members, in the past year contributions from the Caring Fund have been made to our local Salvation Army, New Hope Shelter, Safe Hope, Harvest of Love, the Community Playschool, Peace Connections Circle of Hope, Newton Community Foundation Slate Creek Elementary inclusive playground, USD 373 student meals for low income, and several individuals to help with housing rent and utilities. Thank you for your continued support and contributions during this holiday season.

*We ask the Spirit to heal our histories and find new paths of right relationships with them and all of creation.*

**BCMC Offering for November 26, 2023:** General Fund \$3,150; Plant Fund \$50; Sr Hi Youth \$100; Gen Fund 2024 \$1,300; Caring Fund \$300; Flower Fund \$110; Women's Fellowship \$286.

**Save the date, January 28, 2024 for Congregational Meeting and Soup Luncheon** prior to the congregational meeting and the next fun-filled congregation and youth activity!

**You are invited to the Annual Christmas Brass Choir Concert at Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church, Sunday, Dec. 10 at 7 p.m.,** 1304 K-15 Hwy, Goessel for some Good Old Fashioned Christmas Festive Music and Cheer!

**Mennonite Central Committee Material Resources Center in North Newton is 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). Questions: 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).

**The Deacons Commission is working on a "Thinking of You" campaign for people who are isolated due to health concerns.** For the next few Sundays, we will have a table at the back of the sanctuary with pages for your comments to members of our church whom we haven't been able to see for a while. Please stop by and write a short greeting or sign your name to let them know we are thinking about them. For those of you who are unable to attend worship but can stop by the church during the week, these letters will be in the library during the week for anyone to write a note before we send them out. Thank you!  
— *Deacon Commission*

**Creation Care: While you are active in your Christmas shopping please remember to save plastic bags for recycling.** We have collected 345 pounds with a goal of 1,000 pounds. — *Vern Goering*

**This Week at BCMC: December 3—10, 2023**

**Sun., Dec. 3, 2023—First Sunday of Advent**

9:30 a.m. Worship 10:45 a.m. Faith Formation

Worship YouTube Link for this Sunday:

<https://youtube.com/live/nDLhlx3OMHc?feature=share>

**The church nursery** is staffed during worship and Sunday School

10:45 a.m. Faith Formation—Intergenerational class (fellowship hall); High School (Room 24) Adult Classes: Agape (nursery); Bible Study (Rm 14); Catcombs (Rm B5); Fellowship (B7); Fine Arts (Rm 22); Issues and Christianity (Rm 23); Open Circle (Room 21) Seekers (Rm 28)

**Mon., Dec. 4, 2023**

6:30 p.m. Gifts Discernment Committee meeting in the chapel

7:30-9 p.m. "Messiah" Sing Through Rehearsal in the sanctuary

**Wed., Dec. 6, 2023**

11 a.m. Singalong to Christmas portions of Handel's Messiah with chamber orchestra and soloists, in the sanctuary. Scores will be provided.

6 p.m. Anointing Service for Elizabeth Raid in the sanctuary

7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir rehearsal in the sanctuary

**Thurs., Dec. 7, 2023**

6:30 p.m. Chancel Bell rehearsal in Room B7

7 p.m. Church Board meeting in Room 14

7:30 p.m. Hospitality Commission meeting in fellowship hall

**Sun., Dec. 10, 2023—Second Sunday of Advent**

9:30 a.m. Worship with sermon by Nathan Koontz; music by Chancel Bells;

Brief congregational meeting after worship

10:45 a.m. Faith Formation

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**Preparing for Worship**

As we gather for worship each Sunday in the sanctuary, the Worship Commission invites and encourages us to become quiet as the prelude centers us for worship. Conversation is welcome and encouraged in the Gathering Place outside of the sanctuary during the prelude. We invite all who are present in the sanctuary to find their seats and quietly participate in preparing for worship.

**Birthday calendars - with photos of BCMC by Weldon Schloneger** - are available in the back of the sanctuary for a suggested donation of \$10. Checks may be written to BCMC with Women's Fellowship written in the memo line. These birthday calendars are perfect stocking stuffers and work well for keeping track of birthdays of family and friends.

**The church board is calling a brief special congregational meeting following worship in the sanctuary December 10, 2023 to act on the following board recommendation:**

Does BCMC approve the initiation of a pledge drive for the purpose of soliciting funds and support for the solar project? The details of a pledge drive will be worked out if an initial vote indicates significant support. The purpose of this vote is to determine the level of support from the congregation for a roof-top solar installation on our church. A review of the solar project as presented at the September congregational meeting and in two subsequent Sunday School hour meetings was distributed to mailboxes the week of November 27.

**Anointing Service for Elizabeth Raid**

You are welcome to join in an anointing service for Elizabeth Raid and her husband, Gary Franz, in the Bethel College Mennonite Church sanctuary on Wednesday, December 6 at 6 p.m. Elizabeth has been living with pancreatic cancer for a number of years and seeks God's healing through word, touch, prayer, and the presence of loved ones. As God's beloved community, may we find support and healing together. If there are others that are connected to Elizabeth and Gary who may not receive this announcement, please pass the invitation on to them. Everyone is welcome.

**Welcoming Statement Draft**

The Inclusion Task Group along with the Church Board has been working on an updated welcoming statement for BCMC that includes more open and affirming language. If you have questions or comments regarding the updated welcoming statement, please contact Nathan Koontz by December 8. We hope to vote on an updated statement at our congregational meeting on January 28, 2024. Below is the updated version. "Bethel College Mennonite Church is an open and affirming congregation centered in the life and teachings of Jesus. Embracing the divine within each person, we warmly welcome without regard to race, ethnic background, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, economic status, marital status, and age, any and all who enter into fellowship with us."

**Bethel College Announcements**

- **Weds., Dec. 6 – Singalong to Christmas portions of Handel's Messiah, 11 a.m.**, with chamber orchestra and soloists, Bethel College Mennonite Church. Scores provided.
- **Thurs., Dec. 7 – Visit Senior Art Exhibit 1, 5:30-7:30 p.m.** in the Regier Art Gallery and the Drama Lab in the Fine Arts Center at Bethel College. Artists will be present: "Crowded Table," pottery by Edel Miller (gallery), and "Solace in the Story," book art and theater art by Rachel Geyer (lab). Hours of Regier Gallery and Drama Lab are Mon.-Fri., 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Sun. 2-4 p.m.
- **Thurs., Dec. 7 – Gala Jazz, directed by Joel Boettger, 7:30 p.m., Krehbiel Auditorium** in Luyken Fine Arts Center
- **Sun., Dec. 10 – 38th annual Lighting of the Green , 8 p.m.** on the Bethel College campus

**Hesston College Announcements**

- **December 1 to 3 - Prairie Lights at Dyck Arboretum**  
Experience the quiet beauty of Kansas in winter: dormant native grasses shifting in the wind, lights reflecting in the pond and leafless trees lit from below like living sculptures. Observing tens of thousands of twinkle lights adorning the arboretum path and illuminating our grounds is a great way to kick off the holiday season and find renewed appreciation for the prairie landscape around us. Learn more at [dyckarboretum.org/events](https://dyckarboretum.org/events).
- **Melva Kauffman Lecture Series: Dismantling the Doctrine of Discovery**  
This year the Melva Kauffman Lecture Series is pleased to host Mark Charles who will present on the topic of Dismantling the Doctrine of Discovery. Charles is the son of an American woman (of Dutch heritage) and a Navajo man. He teaches with insight into the complexities of American history regarding race, culture and faith in order to help forge a path of healing and conciliation for the nation. The public is invited to hear his presentation at Hesston Mennonite Church Sunday, January 21, 2024, at 7 p.m.
- **Take a Bible Class at Hesston College**  
Interested in auditing a Bible course beginning in January? This spring semester Hesston College has opportunities to audit Biblical Literature, Jesus and the Gospels, and Peacemaking and Justice courses. Acceptance is based upon availability of open seating. If you are interested in enrolling in or auditing a Bible course, please contact [amber.hett@hesston.edu](mailto:amber.hett@hesston.edu) before Jan. 9 to register. Spring courses are in session Jan. 10 to May 9. Be sure and ask about discounted rates for senior citizens.