

**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 any and all into fellowship without regard to race, ethnic background, gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, economic status, marital status, or age.

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.

**Mennonite Mission Network Prayer Request:** Mennonite Mission Network requests prayer for the Tanzania Mennonite Church, as they begin three days of Sister Care/Compassionate Care seminars on Wednesday. Church leaders Rev. Esther Muhagachi and Rev. John Wambura ask that we join them in praying for God’s spirit to move in powerful ways, to heal trauma and broken relationships.

**Western District Conference Prayer Request:** Pray for refugees, immigrants and asylum seekers who are part of WDC congregations and their communities, that they would experience the presence of Christ through the gifts of hospitality and sharing together.

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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  
Website: 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 Joanna Harader, Day off: Monday; 1887 Café Hours: Thursday 10 a.m. to 12 noon  
Cell phone: 407-201-0503; Email: Joanna@bethelcollegemennonitechurch.org
- Pastor Nathan Koontz, Day off: Wednesday  
Cell phone: 316-212-4593; Email: nathan@bethelcollegemennonitechurch.org
- Elizabeth Schmidt, Pastor of Congregational Care  
Email: elizabeth@bethelcollegemennonitechurch.org
- Office/Facilities Manager: Monica Lichti, Cell phone 316-249-9652  
Email: office@bethelcollegemennonitechurch.org
- Faith Formation Coordinator: Jill Robb—Email: jill@bethelcollegemennonitechurch.org
- Youth Coordinator: George Leary—Email: george@bethelcollegemennonitechurch.org
- Music Coordinators: Verlene Garber and Will Wiebe-Friesen
- Chancel Choir Director: Joel Garber • Chancel Bells Director: Verlene Garber

## Bethel College Mennonite Church December 15, 2024—Advent 3



RUTH'S BLESSING

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.

**BETHEL COLLEGE MENNONITE CHURCH**  
**December 15, 2024**  
**Third Sunday of Advent**

Prelude Music      *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* (Dobrinski)  
                                  *Carol of the Bells* (Morris)  
                                  *Mary Did You Know* (Wagner)  
                                  Chancel Bells, Verlene Garber, director

Advent Candle Lighting      Marlin & Monica Lichti, Faith & Lucy Burch  
 Scripture Reading      I John 4:7-9

Litany:  
 Beloved, we gather in love for God and love for each other.

**We gather to experience God’s love for us.**  
 God’s love is revealed in the stories we hear,  
**In the songs we sing, in the prayers we offer,**  
 In the Spirit we feel moving within and among us.

God’s love is revealed most deeply through Jesus,  
**Whose coming we anticipate and celebrate,**  
**Who was sent by God so that we might have life.**  
 Beloved, we gather together for worship.

Lighting the candle of Love

Welcome & Prayer      Nathan Koontz

\*Hymn      *Hark! The Glad Sound*      VT 217

Children’s Conversation      Esther Koontz

Worship Music      *Glad Tidings of Joy* (Larson)      Chancel Bells

Scripture Reading      Ruth 1:1-18  
 Esther Kreider Eash, Raylene Hinz Penner, Brad Kohlman, Kevin Neufeld

\*Hymn      *Bless the Arms that Comfort*      VT 527

Sermon      *Ruth: A Journey of Love*      Joanna Harader

\*Hymn      *Bless’d Be the God of Israel*      VT 223

Prayers of God’s People      Nathan Koontz

\*Hymn      *My Soul Cries Out*      VT 412  
 Grace Harader-Ellett, violin; Lucy Burch, piccolo

\*Benediction

Postlude      *Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying* (Paul Manz) Karen Schlabaugh

\* You are invited to stand  
 VT—*Voices Together*  
 Keyboard- Karen Schlabaugh  
 Audio visual—Ken Lamp

**RUTH’S BLESSING**

Dear friend,  
 we will face deep disappointment  
 and unbearable grief.  
 Emptiness will taunt us.  
 Hunger will gnaw.  
 It will seem impossible to travel to the  
 unknown land,  
 and more impossible  
 to go back to the fatally familiar.

But oh, dear friend,  
 we will also be startled by beauty  
 and catch glimpses of joy.  
 Contentment will sneak up on us.  
 Abundance will delight.  
 We will realize that  
 while the entire journey is  
 impossible,  
 the next step is not.  
 Nor is the next.

So for each step you take toward that  
 foreign land of home,  
 I offer this blessing to kiss and to  
 cling to:  
 May you have courage  
 to leave where you’ve been,  
 to travel to where you’re going,  
 and to do what needs to be done  
 when you get there.  
 May you have indifference  
 about how much credit you get,  
 how many times they say thank you,  
 and whether or not they call you  
 by name.  
 May you have wisdom  
 in the work you choose,  
 the roles you fill,  
 and the generosity you exhibit.  
 And through it all—  
 in and around and under and above  
 it all—  
 may you be guided by love.



[Artwork on the bulletin cover by Michelle Burkholder  
 Blessings by Joanna Harader originally appeared in  
*Expecting Emmanuel*, © 2022 by Joanna Harader,  
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**Music On Site presents *Amahl and the Night Visitors***, a classic Christmas opera, performed live with singers from around the country. This heartwarming story of a young boy who gives everything to the promised Child will be sure to inspire your holiday season. Free admission, ticket required. Performances:

**Thurs., Dec. 19, 7 p.m.** McPherson Opera House, 219 S. Main St.

**Fri., Dec. 20, 7 p.m.** Whitestone Mennonite Church, 629 Crescent Dr., Hesston

**Sat., Dec. 21, 2 p.m.** Kidron Bethel Village 3001 Ivy Dr., North Newton

**Sun., Dec. 22, 2 p.m.** Westwood Presbyterian Church, 8007 W Maple St., Wichita

See the church bulletin board for ticket information. Or go to: [https://](https://www.musiconsite.org/2024-season)

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(Music On Site, Inc. is a Kansas-based 501(c)(3) music production company that works to close opera's opportunity gap across socioeconomic divisions by cultivating opera education and appreciation in K-12 students in rural communities, and advancing and promoting the careers of those pursuing a career in opera.)

### **Newton Community for Racial Justice will hold its annual anti-racism training**

**Feb. 13-15, 2025.** This is a date change from previous years. Training will be held at the Newton Recreation Center from Thurs. evening, Feb. 13 through Sat. afternoon, Feb. 15. Early Bird registration (until Jan. 3): \$300 per participant. Regular registration (after Jan. 3): \$350 per participant. Some scholarships are available.

REGISTER HERE: <https://forms.gle/pXViB4fzH8y3u7WM7>

Payment can be made online: [https://www.convergepay.com/hosted-payments?ssl\\_txn\\_auth\\_token=%2Bd%2Fr1xrRRCaZybUyv2z%2FeAAAZON0fyjv](https://www.convergepay.com/hosted-payments?ssl_txn_auth_token=%2Bd%2Fr1xrRRCaZybUyv2z%2FeAAAZON0fyjv)

### **Hesston College Music Department will host a program called Anabaptism at**

**Five Hundred: Hymn Festival Sun., Jan. 19, 2025, 3 p.m.**, at Hesston Mennonite Church. The Hymn Festival coincides with the 500th anniversary of the first Anabaptist adult baptisms in Zurich, Switzerland in 1525. This event will also celebrate the release of the *Anabaptist Community Bible*. The public is invited to this community wide celebration that involves singers from surrounding churches, as well as audience participation in the singing of hymns, led by Russell Adrian and Karen Unruh. The core of the program will be historical narrative by Ken Rodgers tracing important hymns and texts throughout the past five centuries.

### **MC USA Climate Justice | Zoom book study**

Join MC USA in imagining a sustainable future for ourselves, our children and our planet by participating in an online book study of the compelling and timely book, "So We and Our Children May Live" by Sarah Augustine and Sheri Hostetler. In five sessions (Jan. 16 through Feb.13, 2025), we will engage in discussions in both large and small groups, interact with the authors, and explore how we – and our communities – are called to contribute to creating a more just and vibrant world. Register on-line today!

## **The Week at BCMC: December 15—22, 2024**

### **Sunday, December 15, 2024—Advent 3**

**9:15 a.m.** Prelude **9:30 a.m.** Worship: sermon by Joanna Harader

**10:30 a.m.** Faith Formation

YouTube Link for the worship service this Sunday:

<https://youtube.com/live/IH7yVSyDHq8?feature=share>

### **Tuesday, December 17, 2024**

7 p.m. Women's Fellowship Christmas Program in the Sanctuary followed by refreshments in the Gathering Place — All are invited!

### **Wednesday, December 18, 2024**

7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal in the Sanctuary

### **Thursday, December 19, 2024**

5:30 p.m. Faith Formation meeting in Fellowship Hall

6 p.m. Chancel Bells Rehearsal in Room B7

### **Sunday, December 22, 2024—Fourth Sunday of Advent**

9:15 a.m. Advent Prelude by Youth **9:30 a.m.** Christmas Program Worship

10:30 a.m. Faith Formation

**BCMC Offering for Dec. 8:** Gen. Fund \$10,026; Sr Hi Youth \$100; Gen Fund 2025 \$25; Caring Fund \$100; Jr Hi Fund \$100; Flower Fund \$10; Kitchen Fund \$9.68; Solar Fund \$530.

**Welcome visitors and friends! May you sense God's presence at BCMC.** The nursery at the back of the sanctuary is available during worship for families with infants and toddlers.



**We extend a special welcome to those who are visiting Bethel College Mennonite this morning.** Thank you for sharing in worship! If you would like us to keep in touch, please scan the QR code and fill out the visitor form.

**Activity bags are available for our littles during the church service!** The 10 bags are filled with a coloring book/page, crayons, and a library book. After using the activity bag, please make sure all the supplies are in the bag and hang on the hook at the back of the sanctuary. Library books will be switched out on a monthly basis. *Jill, Faith Formation Coordinator*

**The congregation is invited to send uplifting notes to be included in the gift bags distributed on Dec. 22. These notes need to be turned in by Dec. 15 in the church mailbox of either Brad Kohlman or Jill Robb.** They can also be emailed to Brad at [bradkohlman32@gmail.com](mailto:bradkohlman32@gmail.com) Thank you for supporting, encouraging, and loving the children of our congregation!

**Thank you to the Chancel Bells for bringing us the prelude and worship music this morning!** Members are: Suzy Burch, Ben Lichti, Carol Gerbrand, Marlene Ewert, Marlene Faul, Virginia Mininger, Brenda Turner, Janet Lubbers, Nathan Garber, Caleb Garber and director Verlene Garber.

**The following is a BCMC financial report of the general fund income and expenses on November 30, 2024 (91.7% of the year).**

Total income	\$427,969	80% of budget
Total expense	\$454,305	85% of budget
Net income	-\$26,336	From BCMC Finance Committee

**Join Fine Arts Class in the Chapel for Advent sessions following Pastor Joanna's book, *Expecting Emmanuel*.**

**Pastor Elizabeth Schmidt** will be on vacation December 16-22.

**We offer sympathy to the family of Dorothea Janzen.** Dorothea (Dotty) died December 12 at Kidron Bethel Village. Dotty was a pastor at BCMC from 1990 to 1997. A memorial for Dotty will likely be held in January at BCMC.

**Christmas Program for everyone, sponsored by Women's Fellowship, will be Tues., Dec. 17, at 7 p.m., in the sanctuary.** Will Wiebe-Friesen will provide both organ and piano music plus personal sharing. A reading by Judy Harder. Refreshments following the program in the Gathering Place.

**Thank you for all your support, food, flowers, cards/notes, hugs, and love.** This has been a heart wrenching experience we wouldn't wish on anyone. Knowing we are not alone helps us through our first Christmas without Kurt.  
*Gwen Neufeld and the Friesen Family*

**The Deacons Commission is working on a "Thinking of You" campaign for people who are isolated due to health concerns.** We will have a table under the dove banner in the Gathering Place with pages for your comments to members of our church whom we haven't been able to see for a while. 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 remain on the table during the week for anyone to write a note before we send them out. Thank you!

**Birthday calendars,** great gifts and work well for keeping track of birthdays of family and friends—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. Donations will be used for WF ministries.

**There will be a congregational meeting on Sun., Jan. 26, during the Sunday School hour in the sanctuary.** The meeting will be available through streaming options. An agenda will be available in the near future. The following items will be included on the agenda: The Church Board recommends the approval of Melanie Mueller to the Witness Commission and approval of the 2025 BCMC Budget.

**The Witness Commission has donated money from the excess funds we were given to use for projects beyond our walls to Max Ediger's School for Peace in Myanmar.** Max joined our church several years ago and was instrumental in the foundation of this school. There is an update on the progress of this school with photos in the BCMC emails.

**The current Library Theme is Advent/Christmas.** Come on in and find ideas for Christmas activities, devotions, even fiction books set around the holidays. And, if you're looking for a unique Christmas gift, our committee always has a Wish List. Why not consider giving a book in their honor/memory or purchase one of our puzzles for a suggested donation of \$5? As always, Happy Reading/Puzzling!

**Let Central Kansas Master Chorale be a part of your Christmas tradition!** Please join us for *Christmas with the Chorale*, a festive concert with CKMC under the direction of Dr. Joel Garber, and featuring the Prairie Bronze Handbell Ensemble. This free event will be held today, Dec. 15, 3 p.m., at Hesston Mennonite Church, 309 S Main St., Hesston. For more information, visit the chorale website at [www.centrankansasmasterchorale.org](http://www.centrankansasmasterchorale.org).

**Night in the Barn December 21 & 22:** All are welcome to come and experience the wonder of the Christmas story through its characters, animals, lights, and sounds in an interactive walking tour and live nativity. Come and go from 5-7 p.m. on Sat., Dec. 21 and Sun., Dec. 22 at PatchWork Farms (373 E. 70th, Newton). Hot drinks and Christmas goodies are provided. Donations are welcome. Call 620-345-6867 for more information.

**Kauffman Museum invites you to visit during the holidays.** The museum is closed Mondays, Christmas Day and New Year's Day; open 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve; open regular hours Thurs.-Sun. (9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. weekdays, 1:30-4:30 p.m. weekends). The current special exhibit is "Unlocking the Past: Immigrant Artifacts and the Stories They Tell." 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 (including from Ten Thousand Villages) for sale; see <https://www.kauffmanmuseum.org/museum-store>