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.

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.

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 released 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.

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.

Mennonite Mission Network Prayer Request: Mennonite Mission Network requests prayer for Jonah and Memee Yang, as they offer trainings in Southeast Asia that focus on discipleship, equipping youth and families, and holistic community building. Pray for Jonah, as he teaches Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary's Journey Missional Leadership Development program, and for Memee, as she works with women, using the Sister Care curriculum.

Western District Conference Prayer Request: Give thanks for the pastors, leaders, and congregations in WDC who share Christ's love through new church plants and mission initiatives. Pray that God continues to guide them with vision, courage, and joy. -WDC Church Planting Commission

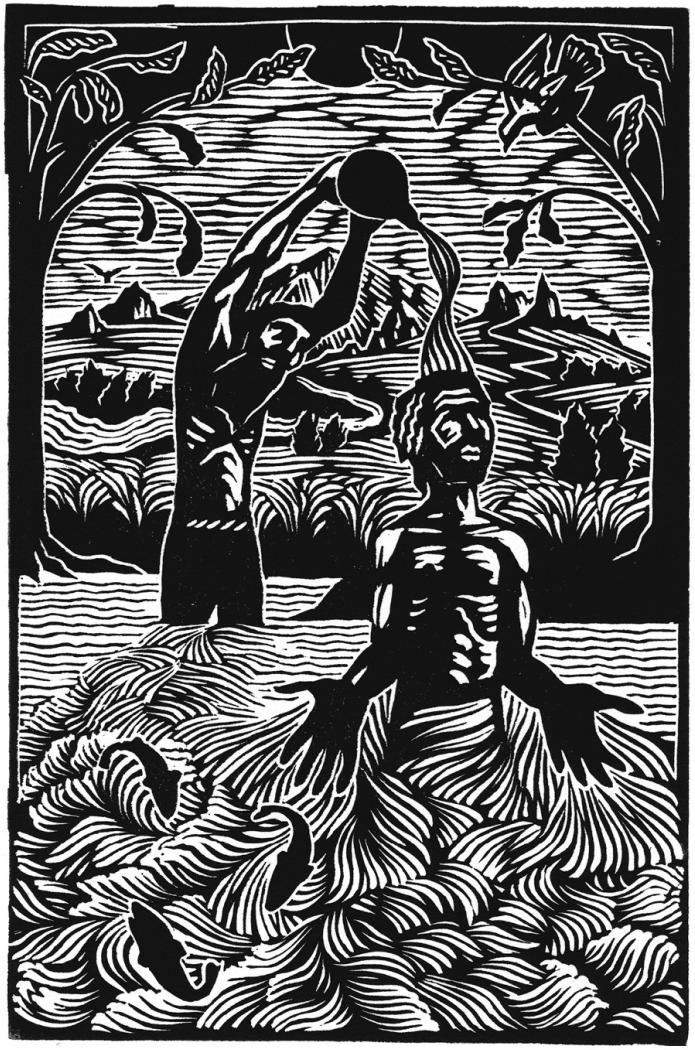
Bethel College Mennonite Church, 2600 College Ave., Box 364, North Newton, KS 67117
Phone: 316-283-3667—Fax: 316-283-2079 Email: office@bethelcollegemennonitechurch.org
Website: bethelcollegemennonitechurch.org

- Pastor Joanna Harader, Day off: Monday; **1887 Café Hours Wednesday, 8-10 a.m.**
  Cell phone: 407-201-0503; Email: joanna@bethelcollegemennonitechurch.org
- Pastor Nathan Koontz, Days off: Mondays and Wednesdays
  Cell phone: 316-212-4593; Email: nathan@bethelcollegemennonitechurch.org
- Office/Facilities Manager: Monica Lichti, 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

First Sunday of Advent—November 30, 2025

Advent 2025: Spacious Faith



Baptism of Jesus (Matthew 3) MATTHEW REGIER

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
Advent 2025: Spacious Faith
First Sunday of Advent: November 30, 2025

Prelude Music — Will Wiebe-Friesen

Welcome — Jim Robb

Advent Candle-Lighting

Call to Worship (by Mark Rupp) — Robb family

Leader: In this season of waiting, we come with hearts open wide
to wonder, to longing, to paying attention.
People: We come to make space for God,
and to find that God has already made space for us.
Leader: As we light the candles of Advent,
we remember the witnesses who told the story of Christ,
each with a unique voice and vision of the good news.
People: Their faith invites us to live with spacious faith,
trusting that God meets us in many ways,
and that the story of Jesus is still unfolding among us.
Leader: Mark's gospel begins not with a cradle, but with a call;
a voice crying out, "Prepare the way!"
In the wilderness, Mark finds good news stirring,
reminding us that God's story breaks in wherever we are.
People: We light this first candle for Mark's faith,
a faith that runs toward hope,
and finds God on the move.
Leader: Come, Christ of spacious faith.
Widen our hearts, deepen our hope,
and make us ready to receive you again.
People: Come, Light of the World.

Prayer — Jim Robb

*Hymn — *Come Away From Rush and Hurry* — VT 9

Children and Youth Conversation — Esther Koontz

Worship Music — *Ave Maria* (Bach/Gounod)
Doyle Preheim, vocalist; Mary Jo Preheim, accompanist

First Scripture Reading — Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11 — Heather Zerger

*Hymn — *Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord* (Sing 4 times) — VT 219

Second Scripture Reading — Mark 1:1-8 — Heather Zerger

Silence

Sermon — *Strange Beginnings* — Joanna Harader

Silence

*Hymn — *Comfort, Comfort, O My People* — VT 212

Communion — Nathan Koontz, Joanna Harader

Offering Invitation and Prayers of God's People — Jim Robb

*Hymn — *Bless'd Be the God of Israel* — VT 223
[Those with November birthdays are welcome to come forward during this hymn to receive a birthday blessing.]

*Benediction

Postlude — *Andante* (Schubert) — Mary Jo Preheim

* You are invited to stand
VT—*Voices Together*
Piano—Mary Jo Preheim
Organ—Will Wiebe-Friesen
Audio visual—Ben Lichti
Hymn Leader—Payne Claassen

Messy Church on December 10 will include sharing a meal, singing a few carols, enjoying Christmas scenes and stories by our youngest BCMC "characters," and assembling MCC infant kits. **We hope you can join us!**

Birthday calendars - with photos of art at 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. Birthday calendars stay current in subsequent years.

Bulletin cover art is from *Drawing Near*, p. 149. Used by permission.

In this season of Advent, we are reminded of Mary, Joseph and Jesus moving from place to place in search of safety and a home. Immigrants in our own community are also seeking these things for themselves and their families. Casa Betania Mennonite Church in Newton is ministering to many of these people and has established a fund to help with legal and documentation expenses. Our BCMC Immigration Task Force invites you to support local immigrants by sending a check to Casa Betania at Iglesia Mennonite Casa Betania, Box 102, Newton, KS 67114, and designate immigration/documentation fund on the memo line. (If you would like to be added to the email list for the Immigration Task Force, contact Ron Flickinger or Wes Schmidt-Tieszen.)

The Newton Treble Clef Annual Vespers is today, Dec. 7, 3 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church, 900 Columbus, Newton. Prelude begins at 2:45 featuring The Schrag Siblings. Program includes: Treble Clef Chorus, Prairie Bronze Handbell Ensemble, and Hearts 4 Him. A freewill offering will be taken for the scholarship fund that will be awarded to high school seniors who are pursuing a music major. We invite you to be our guest and begin your Christmas Season.

Kidron Bethel Village will host its annual Holiday Market from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Sat., Dec. 6, at Kidron Hall, 3001 Ivy Dr., which features local vendors selling their items and goods, and is a chance to shop for holiday gifts. The market is a fundraiser for the Health Care Benevolent Fund, a ministry of Kidron Bethel Village that assists residents who, due to unforeseen circumstances, are no longer able to cover the full cost of their care.

Give back on Giving Tuesday at Mennonite Central Committee, 121 E. 30th St., North Newton, Dec. 2 from 6:30-8 p.m. Join us at this casual, come-and-go, all-ages event. Kick off your holiday shopping by picking gifts for your friends and family from the MCC Christmas Giving Guide, pack hygiene kits, tie comforters, make a cardboard comforter block craft, and enjoy snacks. Find out more at mcc.org/giving-Tuesday.

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is responding to the impact of Hurricane Melissa. Please pray for the people who have been affected by this disaster. MCC is working with local partners to provide food, hygiene items and other emergency supplies. We welcome your donations at mcc.org/hurricane-melissa.

Eden Mennonite Church, 401 18th Ave., Moundridge, invites you to their production of "The Best Christmas Pageant Ever" by Barbara Robinson, Sat. Dec. 13, 7 p.m., doors open 6:30 p.m., and Sun., Dec. 14, 2 p.m., doors open 1:30 p.m. In this hilarious Christmas play, a couple struggling to put on a Christmas pageant is faced with casting the Herdman kids, probably the most inventively awful kids in history. Come see this funny and heartwarming telling of the Christmas story. Admission is free.

The Week at BCMC: November 30—December 7, 2025

Sunday, November 30, 2025

9:30 a.m. Worship service live-stream link:

https://youtube.com/live/Uk0S6MYNtnA?feature=share

Tuesday, December 2, 2025

12 p.m. Bethel College Concert Choir Rehearsal—Sanctuary
7 p.m. Pastor Search Committee—Room 14

Wednesday, December 3, 2025

11 a.m. Messiah Sing—Sanctuary

Thursday, December 4, 2025

6 p.m. Chancel Bell Rehearsal—Room B7
7 p.m. Church Board—Room 14

Sunday, December 7, 2025—Second Sunday of Advent

9:15 a.m. Prelude by the Bethel College a cappella men's group, Open Road
9:30 a.m. Worship with sermon by Nathan Koontz; music by Chancel Choir
11 a.m. **College students and other young adults are invited to a pizza lunch in the fellowship hall.** Pizza-making will happen during the Sunday School hour, to be followed by pizza-eating!

Our Bethel College Mennonite Worship Commission has worked with worship leaders at Columbus Mennonite Church to develop material for this year's Advent theme: *Spacious Faith.* We invite you to make room for the holy in your hearts and in your life during this sacred season.

- **Advent Worship:** Worship will begin with special prelude music at 9:15 a.m.
- **Advent Sunday School:** Pastors Nathan and Joanna will lead an elective Sunday School class for the four weeks of Advent using the book *With God in Every Breath* by Whitney R. Simpson. Join us in the chapel after worship!
- **Special Events:** Be sure to check out the Advent & Christmas schedules that you received via email and that are available near the front and south entrances. And be sure to mark your calendars for our special Christmas Messy Church on Dec. 10 and our contemplative Longest Night service on Dec. 21.
- **Advent Grounding:** Our *Spacious Faith* web page offers prayers and practices to help you stay grounded in God's peace and love in the midst of a hectic holiday season. You can access the page by scanning the QR code.

You are welcome to pick up a copy of our *Spacious Faith* Advent Calendar at the back of the sanctuary this morning.

The text of *Ave Maria* is the Annunciation informing Mary that she will bear a son, Jesus.

BCMC Offering for November 23: General Fund $11,856; MCC Infant Kits $190; Gen. Fund 2026 $400; Salvation Army $300; Kitchen Fund $26; Women's Fellowship $300.

Will Wiebe-Friesen and Rebecca Schloneger will be playing in the orchestra for Tabor College's annual performance of portions of Handel's *Messiah*. The free concert is Sun., Dec. 7 at 4 p.m., Richert Auditorium in Tabor's fine arts center.

The Harvest of Love food bank in Newton is experiencing higher need than in the past. More people are signing up for food boxes. They appreciate any shelf-stable gifts of food as well as monetary gifts. If you bring shelf-stable food to the church, you can place it in the south entryway and we can deliver it to the Salvation Army/Harvest of Love food bank. Their shelves are pretty empty by the time their monthly order comes in. Make checks payable to "Harvest of Love." You can place your check in the jars (marked Harvest of Love) at the back of the sanctuary or mail it directly to: Harvest of Love, 208 W. 6th, Newton, KS 67114. They appreciate any help we can give them! Thank you for your generosity!
- *Deacon Commission*

As part of our Messy Church worship on December 10, we will assemble infant care kits. As we prepare for this session, we are asking for monetary or physical donations for the supplies of the kits. If you would like to donate monetarily, please place checks or cash in the marked fishbowls that will located in the back of the sanctuary beginning Nov. 30. Physical items (listed below) can be placed in the pack-and-play in the Gathering Place.
Contents of Infant Kits (NEW items only, sizes 6-12 months)

- 3 gowns/sleepers (flannel or similar warm, soft material)
- 3 undershirts/onesies (short or long sleeves)
- 1 receiving blanket [lightweight fleece or flannel, minimum 75 cm x 75 cm (30 in x 30 in), larger sizes preferred]
- 4 large, heavy-duty safety pins
- 1 large bar mild soap (leave in wrapper)
- 1 pair of socks
- 1 cap

The majority of our Advent books are now displayed in the library! Those of you that have family members coming for the holidays may want to check out our holiday books for visiting relatives. We have quite the selection for all ages. Also, we have very generous congregational members that donate books to our library. Sometimes these books don't quite fit our library needs or we may already have that book. We are now using these books as a fundraiser, just like our donated puzzles. If you find a book/puzzle you would like to purchase, just put your donation in the little envelope. Come check us out!

Bethel College Announcements

- **Calling all bakers and craft makers! You are invited to make items for 5 Places of Christmas for Sat., Dec. 6, from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.** at Goerz House on the BC campus. Bethel College Women's Association will be selling baked goods, candy, craft items and poinsettias. Your homemade cookies, zweibach, cinnamon rolls, peppernuts and poppyseed rolls are great sellers. This year we are especially asking for homemade candies like fudge, peanut clusters, peanut butter balls and peanut brittle, as well as other non-chocolate candies. We would also like Christmas craft items to sell. Please bring your items to Goerz House, 2512 College Ave., North Newton Fri., Dec. 5, between 2- 5 p.m. or Sat., Dec. 6, from 9:30 - 10 a.m. Thank you for your support of Bethel College.
- **Sun., Nov. 30: Celebrate the beginning of Advent at Kauffman Museum**, 3 p.m. in the museum auditorium, with a Deutsche Weihnachtslieder (German hymn sing) led by BC emeritus faculty William Eash, Merle Schlabaugh and Karen Schlabaugh (playing the historic Teschemacher parlor organ). Even if you don't sing, or don't sing German, you are welcome to come and listen!
- **Tues., Dec. 2: The Bethel College Student Alumni Association invites alumni and friends to join faculty, staff and students any time between 10 a.m.-4 p.m.** to help decorate the campus by putting up lights. Come to the Fine Arts Center lobby for instructions. **Lights will be turned on at 6:30 p.m.**, with popcorn and hot chocolate to follow, before the Wind Ensemble concert at 7.
- **Tues., Dec. 2: BC Wind Ensemble concert,** Chris Miertschin, director, 7 p.m., Krehbiel Auditorium in Luyken Fine Arts Center
- **Weds., Dec. 3: Singalong to Christmas portions of Handel's Messiah,** 11 a.m., with chamber orchestra and soloists, BCMC. Scores provided.
- **Weds., Dec. 3: Senior Art Exhibit I opens**, featuring ceramics by Bethel College student Abby Chappell Deckert. Exhibit is open through Dec. 12 (reception TBA) in the Regier Gallery in Luyken Fine Arts Center at Bethel College. Gallery hours are Mon.-Fri., 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Sun. 2-4 p.m.
- **Thurs., Dec. 4: Jazz Holiday Gala,** directed by Chris Miertschin, 7 p.m., Krehbiel Auditorium in Luyken Fine Arts Center at Bethel College
- **Sat., Dec. 6: Five Places of Christmas,** featuring Kauffman Museum and the Bethel College Women's Association at Goerz House, both on the Bethel campus, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Other locations are Carriage Factory Gallery, Harvey County Historical Museum and Warkentin House, all in Newton.
- **Sun., Dec. 7: 40th annual Lighting of the Green,** 8 p.m. on the BC campus.

The Education and Service Scholarship Committee (ESSC) has updated its application for young adult service grants. For a copy of the application please send a request to essc@bethelcollegemennonitechurch.org, preferably at least 4 weeks before the event. Thank you, ESSC (Karen Ediger, Brad Kohlman and Margaret Toews)