

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.

Land Acknowledgement from words by Mark Charles and VT #878

As we do on the first Sunday of each month, we acknowledge that we worship on the land of the Kanza, Osage, and Wichita.

We thank them for their care and respect for this land and acknowledge the injustice of their forced removal.

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

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: Joseph and Rachel Givens and their two sons, who are serving with MMN, are on the front lines of ministry to people fleeing persecution and death. Pray that the Givens will receive the spiritual and financial resources they need to continue sharing Christ's love through food and shelter at the Maria Skobtsova House, in Calais, France.

Western District Conference Prayer Request: Give thanks for musicians, artists, poets, prophets, pastors and preachers whose gifts enrich WDC congregations' worship and witness during the Advent season.

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

Second Sunday of Advent—December 7, 2025

Advent 2025: Spacious Faith



A Shoot Will Grow Up from the Stump of Jesse (Isaiah 11:1-2, 6-9)

RANDY HORST

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
Second Sunday of Advent: December 7, 2025

Prelude Music	Open Road
Land Acknowledgement & Welcome	Jill Robb
Advent Candle-Lighting	Lexi Nickel, Faith Peterson
Call to Worship (by Mark Rupp)	
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: We light this first candle for Mark's faith, a faith that runs toward hope, and finds God on the move. Matthew's gospel reminds us that the story of Christ is grounded, rooted in the hopes of those who came before. God's promise stretches across generations, making space for all who hunger for righteousness.	
People: We light this second candle for Matthew's faith, a faith that trusts the story is big enough to hold us all, and honors those who carried the flames of peace.	
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	Jill Robb
*Hymn	<i>Come Away From Rush and Hurry</i> VT 9
Children and Youth Conversation	Adam Robb
Worship Music	<i>What Sweeter Music</i> (Herrick/Stopford) Chancel Choir; Joel Garber, director; Will Wiebe-Friesen, accompanist
First Scripture Reading	Isaiah 7:10-14 Hugo Boschmann

*Hymn	<i>O Come, O Come, Immanuel</i>	VT 210
Second Scripture Reading	Matthew 1:18-25	Hugo Boschmann
Silence		
Sermon	<i>Storytelling</i>	Nathan Koontz
Silence		
*Hymn	<i>Oh, How Shall I Receive Thee</i>	VT 215
Offering Invitation and Prayers of God's People		Jill Robb
*Hymn	<i>Hark! the Glad Sound!</i>	VT 217
*Benediction		
Postlude	<i>How Shall I Receive Thee</i> (arr. J. Payne)	Will Wiebe-Friesen
* You are invited to stand		
VT— <i>Voices Together</i>	Keyboard—Will Wiebe-Friesen	
Audio visual—Ben Lichti	Hymn Leader—Payne Claassen	

Welcome and thank you to Bethel College's Open Road for bringing us the prelude this morning!

We have an Advent puzzle! Stop by the round tables in the gathering place and help put together our new Advent puzzle. We hope to finish it before Christmas Eve.

You are invited to a Holiday Open House at the Bethel College Mennonite Church office from 1-4 p.m. on Thurs., Dec. 18. Stop by for some festive treats, good conversation, and general Christmas cheer. Monica, Nathan, and Joanna would love to see you!

Do you need some space for quiet, for contemplation, even for grief in this Advent season? Plan to join us for a **Longest Night Service on Sunday, December 21, at 6 p.m. in the chapel room.** Let us ground ourselves in God's peace and goodness as we navigate this complicated season.

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.

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 today, Dec. 7, 4 p.m., Richert Auditorium in Tabor's fine arts center.

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.

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.

Bluestem U, the lifelong learning program of Bluestem Communities for individuals age 55 and better, is kicking off the new year with three new classes. Courses include: "Life Upon the Wicked Stage: Classics of Western Theatre" taught by Lauren Friesen, "Health, the Human Face of Climate Change" taught by Dwight Krehbiel, and "Biblical Literature (Bib Lit) Crash Course" taught by Kevin Wilder. Courses are \$50 a piece. See bluestemu.org for more information, including dates, times and locations.

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The Week at BCMC: December 7—14, 2025

Sunday, December 7, 2025—9:15 a.m. Prelude by Bethel College's Open Road 9:30 a.m. Worship service live-stream link: https://youtube.com/live/2Fu8XDh_Gug?feature=share

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!

Monday, December 8, 2025

3 p.m. Memorial service for Florine Eitzen—Kidron Bethel, Kidron Hall Please remember in your prayers the family of Florine. Florine died Sept. 8 at Kidron Bethel Village.

Tuesday, December 9, 2025

9 a.m. Women's Fellowship Executive Board at Lois Goertzen's home
4 p.m. Staff Congregation Relations Committee—Room 14
7:30 p.m. Finance Committee—Room 14

Wednesday, December 10, 2025—Messy Church

6 p.m. Messy Church 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!**
7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal—Sanctuary

Thursday, December 11, 2025

6 p.m. Chancel Bell Rehearsal—Room B7

Sunday, December 14, 2025—Third Sunday of Advent

9:15 a.m. Prelude by Lindsay & Marshall Anderson, Abby Koontz, and Lawrence Kohlman
9:30 a.m. Worship with sermon by Joanna Harader; music by Chancel Bells

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:** Check out the Advent & Christmas schedules that you received via email and are available near the front and south entrances. Mark your calendars for 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.



For the next few Sundays, the Deacon Commission has 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. The letters will remain on the table during the week for anyone to write a note before we send them out. Thank you! —Deacon Commission

Women's Fellowship Christmas Program in the sanctuary for everyone Tues., Dec. 16, 7 p.m. Program: "History of Bethel College Mennonite Church Bell Choir" which began in 1969, inspired by Associate Pastor Esko Loewen, with first choir director, J. Randall Zercher for the youth. Comments by some former directors and players. Music by Chancel Bells, Verlene Garber, director. Refreshments in the Gathering Place. Everyone invited.

The poinsettias in the church have been donated by congregants. Aldine Sprunger's donation of a poinsettia in memory of Keith Sprunger was inadvertently left out of the poinsettia list. (Lists of the donors can be found at the back of the church.) **Thank you to Susie Swartley** for spending many hours decorating the church for Christmas!

Mennonite Women is providing an online Advent devotional calendar called "The Gathering." The daily reflections are provided by women in leadership across Mennonite Church USA and seek to respond to the pain of family separation, especially separation caused by ICE raids and deportations. A link for the devotional calendar is in the Saturday email from BCMC.

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 are in the back of the sanctuary. 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

Mon., Dec. 8: Reception for Senior Art Exhibit I, "Forms of Nature," and Abby Chappell Deckert, 6-8 p.m., Regier Art Gallery in Luyken Fine Arts Center at Bethel College. The exhibit of ceramics and ceramic sculpture closes Fri., Dec. 12. Gallery hours are Mon.-Fri., 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Sun. 2-4 p.m.

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!

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

The 40th Annual Lighting of the Green on the Bethel College campus will be today, Dec. 7 at 8 p.m.

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)

Are you new(ish) to Bethel College Mennonite Church? Interested in learning more about the congregation? Curious about membership at BCMC? Pastors Nathan and Joanna will lead two elective Sunday School sessions early next year in the chapel. Anyone is welcome to attend either or both of these classes. **—January 18:** Introduction to Bethel College Mennonite--This session will provide a brief history of the congregation and an orientation to the church mission and structure.

—February 1: Membership at BCMC--In this session we will discuss the membership process and answer questions that people bring.

*Contact a pastor for more information.

Holiday office schedule: The BCMC office will be closed Dec. 24-Jan. 2. While pastors and staff will be working some of these days, they will not hold regular office hours. Please be in touch by phone or email if you need to contact the office during this time. Note that Joanna will be on vacation Dec. 26-Jan. 1.

Current status on the search for an associate pastor: All our paperwork has been sent to Western District Conference and the job description is posted. The search committee will continue to work with conference minister Kathy Neufeld Dunn, who will share information with us about potential candidates. If you have names of people who may be interested in the position, you can send them to search committee chair Megan Leary at megleary28@gmail.com