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, immigration status, 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.

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.

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.

BCMC Offering for Mar. 8: General $10,506; Wed. Supper $132; Kitchen Fund $29; Women's Fellowship $50; Al Penner Mem. $130.

Mennonite Mission Network Prayer Request: Laura Schlabach served in Mongolia with JCS International for 32 years. She concluded that ministry at the end of 2025 and this month will mark the end of her work with Mission Network. Pray for her as she moves into retirement and re-establishes her life outside of Mongolia.
Western District Conference Prayer Request: Give thanks for WDC ministers who serve as chaplains or campus pastors in educational settings, retirement communities, businesses, hospitals and hospice programs, and pray for God's strength and wisdom to sustain them daily.

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; Café 1887 Hours: Thursdays 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Cell phone: 407-201-0503; Email: joanna@bethelcollegemennonitechurch.org
- Pastor Nathan Koontz is on vacation March 16-22.
  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
March 15, 2026
4th Sunday of Lent: Accountable Leadership

John 10:1-18 • illustratedministry.com

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
March 15, 2026
4th Sunday of Lent: Accountable Leadership

Christ Candle Lighting

Centering Music *There is a Balm in Gilead* (Dobrinski)
Chancel Bells; Verlene Garber, director

Welcome and Call to Worship Kevin Neufeld

One: Come into God's presence, you who imagine and you who seek, you who disrupt and you who repair.
All: By the Spirit, we gather in hope.
One: Come into God's embrace, you who seek a good shepherd, you who long to be known and protected, you who are far off and you who are near.
All: In Christ, we gather as one flock.
One: Come into God's presence, singing for joy and for justice; bringing prayer and worship, your most faithful acts of resistance.
All: To God be the glory! We gather to praise!

Opening Prayer

*Hymn *Here in This Place* VT 10

Children and Youth Conversation Esther Koontz

Worship Music *Just a Closer Walk with Thee* (Greer) Chancel Bells
Westen Gehring, Clarinet

Scripture Reading Ezekiel 34:1–10 Zona Galle

*Hymn *O Thou, in Whose Presence* VT 600

Scripture Reading John 10:1–18

Sermon *Opening the Gate* Nathan Koontz

Breath Prayer *Christ knows his own/and Christ knows me*

*Hymn *I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say* VT 536

Receiving the Offering and Prayers of God's People

*Hymn *Go, My Friends, in Grace* VT 810

*Charge and Benediction

Postlude *Dona Nobis Pacem* (setting by John Behnke)
Karen Unruh

* You are invited to stand
VT—*Voices Together*
Keyboard—Karen Unruh Audio visual—William Eash

All children from 8th grade and younger are invited to be part of a singing group that will do worship music on Palm Sunday, March 29. We will meet for a 15 minute practice before Sunday School on March 15 and March 22 in the Fellowship Hall. Contact Verlene Garber if you have any questions.

Community Playschool, Inc is happy to announce a celebration for it's 60th anniversary! EVERYONE, including members of sponsoring churches, former teachers, volunteers, families, students and anyone else, is invited and welcome to join us on Thurs., Apr. 16 from 5:30-7 p.m. for a look back at the history of the preschool. We will have slides and photos, a timeline of the major events and changes, a place for memories and stories and, of course, cake! The classrooms will be open for tours while the main activities will take place in the fellowship hall (lower level) of BCMC. Please plan to come and help us celebrate this monumental occasion!

Rooting our Stories: Reveling in 50 years of Queer and Trans Anabaptist Resilience
Join the Brethren Mennonite Council (BMC) for LGBT Interests for a gathering rooted in sacred story and joyful revelry, as they mark their 50th Anniversary May 29-31 in Minneapolis! This festive weekend will include storytelling, singing, ritual/worship, workshops, artmaking, games, shared meals, and honoring this incredible 50-year legacy of LGBTQIA+ Anabaptist resistance and resilience. Event details, safety/accessibility info, and registration on the 50th webpage, www.bmclgbt.org/50th.

"Mennonites in Poland" is currently being highlighted in the church library along with the Mennonite Polish Studies Association Newsletter. This newsletter summarizes the 2025 Poland trip led by Mark Jantzen and John Thiesen which many in the congregation have taken or will take this summer. We also have many new books that were donated and are now ready for checkout. Please stop by and enjoy!

You are invited to share an Easter lily for the sanctuary on Easter Sunday, Apr. 5. BCMC will purchase the lilies. The cost will be $10 per lily. Make checks to BCMC designated "Flower Fund." Contributors may pick up lilies to take home after the Easter worship service. You will be able to designate in honor of someone or in memory of someone with your Easter lily. There will be a table in the Gathering Place this Sun., Mar. 15 for you to sign up for a lily, or email the church office.

Bethel College Announcements: Bethel College is on spring break Mar. 16-20. Most offices and services are open but some may be on reduced hours. The Regier Art Gallery in the Fine Arts Center is closed. There is no Life Enrichment this week.

- **Sun., Mar. 22: Sunday-Afternoon-at-the-Museum program** with Carolyn Zeisset, "Caught in the Middle Between Voices of Conscience and Voices of Patriotism," 3 p.m., Kauffman Museum. Zeisset will look at parallels in her young adult historical novel *Caught in the Middle* with stories of conscientious objectors told in the current special exhibit at the museum, "Voices of Conscience: Peace Witness in the Great War."
- **Sun., Mar. 29: Bethel College Concert Choir and Wind Ensemble** spring concert, 4 p.m., Memorial Hall

Hesston College will host the annual Melva Kauffman Lecture Series Mar. 25 and 26, welcoming peace studies scholar and Hesston College alumna Dr. Angela Lederach for a series titled "Slow Peace: Lessons from Grassroots Peacebuilders in Colombia." Dr. Lederach will speak Wed., Mar. 25 at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. and Thurs., Mar. 26 at 7 p.m. All events are free, open to the public, and held at Hesston Mennonite Church with a reception following evening lectures. More info: hesston.edu/melva.

Join guest conductor Anya Pogorelova for the Newton Mid Kansas Symphony Orchestra spring concert Sat., Mar. 21, 3 p.m. in the Newton High School Auditorium. A concert designed for the whole family with a special family ticket price of $20 to families of all sizes. Advance tickets for sale online, and at Faith and Life Bookstore. Tickets also available the day of the concert at the door. https://nmkso.org/tickets/

Women & Girls come join the annual Mennonite Women in Mission's potluck salad supper Mon., Apr. 20, 6 p.m. at Tabor Mennonite Church, rural Newton. Guest speaker, Kate Mast presents "Our Time, Our Stories, Our Stuff." This presentation encourages us to think kindly about our stuff in relationship to our time and the stories we tell about our lives. Please bring a potluck salad and one small item that is a treasure of yours to share with your table group. RSVP not required. More info: mennonitewomeninmission.org or their Facebook page.

Men and Boys Retreat, sponsored by Mennonite Men of the Plains, is Apr. 17-19. Registration is online at https://campmennoscah.campbrainregistration.com or in person at the shed by the basketball court. Please check in at the shed, even if you register online. Lodging is available in the bunkhouses, cabins, or your own tent. There are two 20 amp RV hookups and two 30 amp RV hookups available in the south (boys) cabin area on a pole of the gazebo. The hookups/outlets are not spread out. Camp Mennoscah only has electrical hookups. Meals are available for Sat. evening and Sun. breakfast and lunch. Contact Kevin N. at 316-322-5515.

If you would like to fill one of the following positions at BCMC—moderator-elect, Church Board, Hospitality Commission, Faith Formation Commission, or Deacon Commission, please contact a Gifts Discernment Committee member: Francis Toews, Jerry Buller, Dorothy Nickel Friesen, Barb Koontz, or Jeanette Stucky.

The Week at BCMC: March 15-22, 2026

Sunday, March 15, 2026—*4th Sunday of Lent:*
9:30 a.m. Worship 10:30 a.m. Coffee/water/tea in the Gathering Place

YouTube Link for the worship service this Sunday:
https://youtube.com/live/tLYiiGOCLhk?feature=share

Tuesday, March 17, 2026
11 a.m. Poems and Prayers Group for Lent—Chapel
4 p.m. Worship Commission—Room 14
7 p.m. Women's Fellowship—MCC Center, 121 E. 30th St., North Newton

Wednesday, March 18, 2026
6 p.m. Wednesday supper in Fellowship Hall—Please bring your own tableware to facilitate the clean-up—Menu: Stacked enchiladas (beef), salad, ice cream
6:30 p.m. Gifts Discernment Committee—Room 14
7:30 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal—Sanctuary Chancel

Thursday, March 19, 2026
3 p.m. Cancer Support Group—Nursery
4 p.m. Witness Commission—Room 14
6 p.m. Chancel Bells Rehearsal—Room B7

Sunday, March 22, 2026—*Fifth Sunday of Lent*
9:30 a.m. Worship with sermon by Joanna Harader; music by Chancel Choir

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The family of Al Penner wishes to thank BCMC for all the love, support, and caring during this difficult time of health issues, death, and loss. We have been so blessed by this community and are so grateful. *Sue Penner and Family*

Women's Fellowship General Meeting will be Tues., March 17, 7 p.m. at the MCC Center, 121 East 30th Street. This is a worknight so come and enjoy working with others on some of the MCC projects. Refreshments provided.

You are invited to an ecumenical Good Friday worship service on April 3, 7 p.m., at St. Matthew's Episcopal Church (2001 Windsor Drive, Newton). This service will be planned and led by Bethel College Mennonite, Shalom Mennonite, Faith Mennonite, Salem United Methodist, Trinity Heights United Methodist, and St. Matthew's Episcopal. We are excited to connect with others in our community during this sacred season.

Pastor Nathan Koontz will be on vacation March 16 through 22.

Readers needed for a staged reading of a new play *Nothing to be Done,* a 30 minute one-act, **by Lauren Friesen.** Rehearsal will be April 1, 7 p.m. for one hour in the BCMC Chapel. The staged reading, with an audience, will be Thurs., April 9, 7 p.m. with 2 female and 2 male roles. This is an absurdist, anti-war play. Contact Lauren Friesen at lfriesen@umich.edu if you are interested.

This Lent, we will explore *The Work of Imagination*, led by material from Illustrated Ministry. "This is the work of imagination: to envision a world remade by mercy, to trust that healing is possible even in the shadow of empire, and to practice love that outlasts despair." Please plan to join us for Sunday morning worship, and consider participating in these special Lenten opportunities:

- Sundays, Mar. 15—29 during Sunday School hour: elective Sunday school class using *The Work of Imagination* devotionals, in the Chapel
- Wednesdays, Mar. 18 & 25, 6 p.m.: Church Community Suppers in Fellowship Hall
- Thurs., Apr. 2, 5:30 p.m.: All-Age Maundy Thursday Worship in the Chapel
- Thurs., Apr. 2, 7 p.m.: Maundy Thursday Worship with communion in the Sanctuary
- Fri., Apr. 3, 7 p.m.: Ecumenical Good Friday worship service at St. Matthew's Episcopal Church (2001 Windsor Drive, Newton).
- Easter Sunday, Apr. 5: NO Sunday School
  - ∗ Easter Sunrise Worship @ 7 a.m.
  - ∗ Worship Service @ 10 a.m. to include welcoming new members!

Poems and Prayers Group for Lent You are invited to poems and prayers in the BCMC chapel on Tuesdays at 11 during Lent, an informal time to bring a poem or prayer that speaks to you and share it with the group. Readings will be followed by silence and discussion. Your selection could be something that you have written, or something that someone else has written. You do not need to consider yourself a poet to attend, simply bring an open heart and joy for the truth revealed when words and phrases rub in illumined ways.

The BCMC Immigration Task Group wants to thank those from the church who helped organize or participated in the Justice Symposium on Immigration Feb. 25-27. Also, a huge thank you to those who made soup or cookies, or set-up, served, and cleaned up after the meal the church provided for symposium participants and wider Newton community members. The symposium was a great success, as participants heard from author and immigration advocate Karen Gonzalez about "Grace and Compassion in the Immigration Conversation", along with other immigration related issues. A variety of other presenters or activities during the 3 days, included a Know Your Rights Training, and 3 presenters from the Kansas Immigration Coalition in a panel discussion. The meal at BCMC occurred before the panel presentation, and it allowed participants to dialogue and build important community relations with each other. Clearly, this was an important cog in advancing the cause of immigration rights, and support for the immigrant community in the Newton area.

Shalom Mennonite Church, 800 E. 1st St., Newton, will host the next in-person meeting of the Kansas Repair Communities, Mon., March 23, at 5:30 p.m. This is a good chance to find out about a group of Newton and Wichita area folks who have been working for the past year to build relationships with the indigenous nations in Kansas and to move toward legislation regarding Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women/People (MMIP) in Kansas. Snacks will be provided.

Kansas Mennonite Relief Sale (KMRS) is April 12 & 13, 2024 at the Kansas State Fair Grounds in Hutchinson, KS. Your participation supports MCC's relief, development, and peace-building work around the world.

- **Calling all bakers! Bags and pie tins are ready to pick up** at the back of the sanctuary today after worship. Sign up to make zwieback, pie, and other baked goods.
- **The My Coins Count drive** to collect coins, bills, and checks to help fund education projects around the world continues in the Gathering Place. Place your coins, bills, and checks in the jug each Sunday until the sale!
- **THANK YOU to the BCMC Sunday School classes** who help underwrite KMRS costs. Thanks to generous donors, all expenses are covered before the sale so all sale proceeds go directly to Mennonite Central Committee programs.
- **Donations needed!** Do you have an item to donate to the silent auction, children's auction, or general auction? Check the KMRS website for more information or speak with a BCMC liaison.
- **Do you have a green thumb?** Now is the time to divide your bulbs to share with Plants & Things. They can sell just about any fruit, tree, vegetable or house plant… and items used for gardening such as shovels, trowels, new gardening gloves.
- **Volunteer opportunities:** Check out the sale website for volunteer needs during the sale. Sign up on the website to help make VERENIKA (on March 21) or BOHNE BEROGGI (April 4) for the sale.
- **We are gathering new, in-the-package items for this year's Kansas Mennonite Relief Sale Children's Auction**, and your donations are a huge part of making the event a success! Consider talking with the youth in your church about what items they'd be excited to bid on—but you can never go wrong with favorites like Hot Wheels, Barbies, board games, LEGO sets, art kits, and sports equipment. Additional popular item categories include: building sets, craft and activity kits, puzzles, plush animals, outdoor toys. To donate: Items may be given to your MCC Liaison for delivery to the Sale, or brought directly to the Pride of Kansas building on Fri. or Sat. morning (Apr. 10-11) before 8:30 a.m. **We're also looking for volunteers** to help clerk the Children's Auction at this year's Relief Sale. This is an important role that helps the auction run smoothly. Because the sale can be loud, this job requires good hearing and the ability to follow bids clearly. If you're attentive, comfortable in a busy and exciting environment, and willing to serve, we would be grateful for your help! If interested in clerking, contact Brad Kohlman at bkohlman@conradeinsurance.com Thank you for helping support the Children's Auction and the work of MCC!

For more Information:

***KMRS posterboard & table** in the Gathering Place for information and forms for Run for Relief, as well as the My Coins Count jug.

* **KMRS website**: https://kansas.mccsale.org/
* **BCMC liaisons:** Steve & Elaine Schurr, William & Esther Kreider Eash, and Brad & Diane Born.

A handout with "Prayers & Practices for Peace in a Time of War" is available in the Gathering Place.