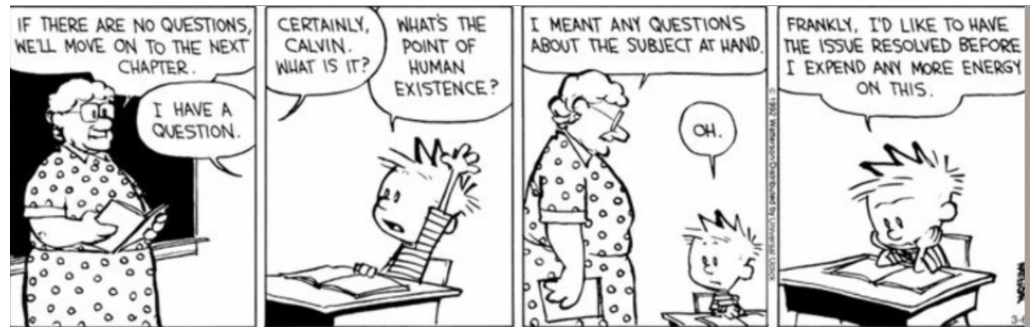


Ecclesiastes Bible Study
 August 14 - September 25, 2022



Date	Theme/Text	Worship Leader	Preacher	Specials	Second Hour
August 7	Blessing for the new year	Anna Yoder Schlabach	No Preacher	Communion Backpack blessing	No Second Hour or Sunday School
August 14	Ecclesiastes in its entirety (almost)	Stephen Lowe	No preacher	Ecclesiastes Kick off	Discussion of Assembly Practices in age based groups
August 21	Intro 1:1-18; 12:9-14	Becky Snider	Paul Keim		Discussion of Small group experiences in age based groups
August 28	Wisdom and Foolishness 6:7-12; 7:15-8:1	Becky Smuts	Jim Stump		Small group Shuffle. How does it work?
September 4	Old age and Youth 11:6-12:8	Susan Nelson	Stephen Lowe	Fellowship Meal	Hymn sing
September 11	Wealth and Poverty 5:8-6:6	Tom Kauffman	Karl Shelly		TBD
September 18	Work and Pleasure 2:1-3:15	Barb Swartley	Anna Yoder Schlabach		Congregational Meeting
September 25	Life and Death 3:16-4:3; 8:14-9:12	Leon Bauman	Renee Kanagy		Central District Conference: Sacred Listening

Ecclesiastes: Dust in the Wind or An Invitation to the Religiously Disaffected

Each fall we dive into a book of the Bible for a closer look at our sacred text. This year the worship committee was drawn to the book of Ecclesiastes. This short little book, while something of a downer (everything is meaningless, everything is dust in the wind, etc.), contains questions and ideas that still feel relevant today: What is the point? What gives life meaning? How do we live in a time of unjust economic systems and wealth inequality? There is indeed nothing new under the sun.

Biblical scholar Amy Plantinga Pauw offers this introduction: *“Ecclesiastes made it into the canon by the skin of its teeth. Precisely the features of Ecclesiastes that imperiled its existence into the canon - its ambiguities and contradictions, its voicing of radical doubts - have endeared it to many subsequent biblical readers. Qohelet, the renegade wisdom teacher of Ecclesiastes, is not afraid to say out loud that life experience and theological convictions sometimes clash.”*

We hope that this book delights and surprises you, as it has us. On August 14, we'll kick off the Bible study by hearing most of the book read aloud and performed. In the subsequent weeks we'll divide the book up by topics. We encourage you to read the book ahead of time (it's only 12 chapters), watch this short overview video [Overview: Ecclesiastes](#), or listen to this hour-long podcast by Pete Enns: <https://peteenns.com/ecclesiastes-with-pete-enns/>

The visuals we're using for this season were created by Allison Troyer, a member of Grand Rapids Mennonite Fellowship. She created them for the Central District Conference Annual Assembly, inspired by the theme “Tending Transformation.” You can read about her four pieces, Snake, Bee, Squirrel, and Beaver, [here](#). These earthy woven pieces relate particularly well to the seasonal wisdom of Ecclesiastes 3: “There is a time for everything...a season to plant and season to harvest, to scatter stones and to gather them, to tear and to mend.”

