



WORSHIP

Join us on Sundays in Person, or [on Zoom](#)

<p>Dec 18</p> <p>9:30 AM Worship & Sunday school 4th Sunday of Advent 2nd hour Congregational meeting</p> <p>Worship Leader: Jon Zirkle Sermon: Anna Yoder Schlabach Scripture: Isaiah 7:10-16, Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19, Romans 1:1-7, Matthew 1:18-25</p>	<p>Dec 25</p> <p>Christmas Day – No Morning Worship 5:00 PM Worship with Faith Mennonite No Sunday school</p> <p>Worship Leader: Kay Bontrager-Singer Scripture: Isaiah 9:2-7, Psalm 96, Titus 2:11-14, Luke 2:1-14, (15-20)</p>
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SUNDAY DECEMBER 18

9:30am Worship This is the fourth Sunday of Advent! Our theme is *Restoration is Near*. This theme reminds us that God’s restorative work is ongoing. Restoration is near! Jesus has come and brought about restoration! And...we live in a world deeply in need of restoration. Restoration has seasons of intense work and of maintenance mode. It’s active. It requires something of us. It’s transformative. And it is inspired and guided by God’s creative and persistent love. [Read more about our theme.](#) [The order of worship can be found online here.](#)

2nd hour Congregational meeting Please come back to the Worship Space during second hour for a first reading of [this proposal](#) to sponsor the Montessori Preschool that meets in our building. All Assembly participants are welcome to participate in congregational meetings (not just covenanted members). A Zoom option is available with the understanding that those on Zoom will be able to observe, but will not be able to give input into discussion.

The Advent Spiral is set up in the Multipurpose space for a contemplative experience during 2nd hour. For instructions and guided questions, there is a purple sheet on the table with the candles. Please remove your shoes prior to walking the spiral.

7:30pm Holden evening prayer Every Sunday during Advent we will join with Faith at 7:30pm for Holden evening prayer. An example of this simple 20-minute vespers service of spoken and sung prayers from Holden Village can be viewed [here](#).

THIS WEEK

Wed, Dec 21, 7pm. Longest night service. In the midst of this season of expectation and joy, we pause on the Longest Night of the year to also acknowledge our sorrows and longings. This service is geared for quiet reflection and will include singing, scripture, words of lament and assurance, and candles.

Sat, Dec 24, 6pm. Christmas Eve meal & service. Join us for a simple soup and bread supper, followed by a play and candle dance. [Sign up here](#) by Mon, Dec 19 to indicate interest in attending/participating. Candle dance rehearsal is at 5:15pm.

COMING UP

<https://assemblymennonite.org/about/calendar/>

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WED	TH	FRI	SAT
Dec 18 <i>4th Sunday of Advent</i> • 9:30am Worship & Sunday school • 11am Congregational meeting • 2pm MYF Christmas party • 7:30pm Holden evening prayer			Dec 21 • 7pm Longest night service			Dec 24 • 5:15pm Candle dance rehearsal • 6pm Christmas Eve service (sign up here by Dec 19)
Dec 25 <i>Christmas Day</i> • 5pm Worship with Faith No Sunday school						
Jan 1 <i>2nd offering</i> • 9:30am Breakfast potluck • 10:30am Worship No Sunday school		Jan 3 • 7pm Leadership group	Jan 4 • 1pm: Women's lunch bunch • 5:30pm Small group child care		Jan 6 • 9am Play group • 9:30am Greencroft meet up	

CHRISTMASTIDE ACTIVITIES

Here are some opportunities to enter into the season:

- **New Year's Day breakfast potluck: Sun, Jan 1, 9:30am.** Followed by worship at 10:30am.
- **New Year's Day Harmonia Sacra Singing: Sun, Jan 1, 1-5pm.** Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Waltner Hall Chapel of the Word. A light potluck supper follows. We ask that you be vaccinated, although we won't require documentation. We ask that you wear a mask at all times except when eating or drinking. If you have symptoms that could be Covid, even if you've tested negative, please stay home and take care of yourself. Joseph Funk's *The Harmonia Sacra* is a four-part, seven-shape songbook which is extremely significant in Mennonite hymnody. For more information, contact Samuel Sommers at scmws@yahoo.com
- **A Path Called Solace: Assembly Women's Christmas – Sat, Jan 14, 3-7pm.** Join us for an evening of restoration, food and fellowship with other women. Women's Christmas is typically celebrated on Epiphany. Originating in Ireland, where it is known as *Nollaig na mBan*, Women's Christmas began as a day when the women set aside time to enjoy a break and celebrate together at the end of the holidays.

Masks are optional during worship & Sunday school, unless Elkhart County's Community Risk Level becomes "High" (according to covidactnow.org) – in which case masks will be required indoors for everyone over age 2. We encourage everyone to stay up to date on vaccinations and boosters, and encourage anyone who is not feeling well to join us on Zoom.

While many in our faith family are thankful masks are no longer required, a fair number of us feel the need to be even more careful when at church, and some are deciding to return to joining worship by Zoom. **Parents should contact Sunday school teachers directly if they are sending kids to Sunday school during days 6 through 10 after a positive COVID test. During this time children are asked to wear a mask during Sunday school and sit apart from the group during snack.**

CHILDREN'S BIRTHDAYS



Elliot Sherk-Koontz (CCYC) turned 5 on Dec. 9th! Elliot likes to play peekaboo in the curtains with his brother, build blocks and read stories. He likes to play in the basement at school, and outside. He is good at telling stories, riding a bike, writing letters, and drawing. He wants to learn how to ride a unicycle!



Nora Miller-Good turns 2 on Dec 21! Nora is a delight! She loves to eat all the time. She has been walking around the house like she's on a mission the last few weeks, often swinging her arms widely with any random object in hand. She loves to get into whatever her brother, Theo, is doing (this sometimes ends in tears). Despite early stress over medical diagnoses, Nora is thriving! We're so grateful.

COMMUNITY LIFE AT ASSEMBLY

Out of office: Lora Nafziger will be out of town Dec 17-23. Karl Shelly will be out of town Dec 19-20. Scott Coulter will be out of the office Friday Dec 23. Please contact Anna Yoder Schlabach or Scott Coulter for any pastoral needs.

Candle dance: Interested in dancing the candle dance on Christmas Eve? Join with others to practice this simple dance at 5 p.m. on the 24th. [You can see it here.](#)

Scent sensitivities: One way we care for each other is to avoid wearing heavy scents to church. Some people are sensitive to strong perfume and hair products. Read more about [Multiple Chemical Sensitivity here.](#)

Assembly is down to only one coffee carafe. There used to be several white carafes. If you have accidentally taken one home please return it to the meetinghouse at your earliest convenience.

Personal retreat day at Pathways Retreat: There is still money left from Lora's sabbatical grant for 2 half-day retreats or 1 full-day retreat at Pathways Retreat at no cost. [Contact Pathways Retreat](#) to make arrangements, and let them know you are from Assembly.

Hospitality Tasks: Becky Overholt is working on a calendar of hospitality task assignments for 2023. We still need more volunteers for Child Care, Kitchen Clean Up, and help with Fellowship Meals. The sign-up sheets will be left up in the Gathering space for several more weeks. You can also sign up [online here.](#)

Pronoun stickers: In a continuing effort to be a supportive and welcoming congregation, we now have pronoun stickers to add to nametags. Please update your nametag with a pronoun sticker. [Here's a quick video](#) about why sharing pronouns matters.

The November 20 congregational meeting included discussion of ways to be more inclusive of those of us in the congregation who are not comfortable attending worship in person since the change to a mask-optional policy for first hour. We are making an effort to make joining worship via Zoom a more participatory experience, for the sake of those who are staying home because they are sick as well as those who consider themselves high-risk. We plan to continue the current mask policy for now. One suggestion was to designate a section of the worship space where masks would be required, while keeping the rest of the worship space mask-optional. You are invited to give feedback on this suggestion, and you may also provide other comments, using this Google Form: <https://forms.gle/DfRitTSWXhfd8fgj7>. (Please respond by Dec 25).

Prayer Requests. Please share prayer requests by contacting one of the pastors via email or phone. Prayer requests are sent out to the congregation via the Assembly listserv on Wednesdays.

2 PERCENT FUND

The 2 percent committee proposes giving to the following agencies: ([What is the Two Percent Fund?](#))

Local: \$1,400 to [Walnut Hill Early Childhood Center](#); \$500 to [Center for Healing and Hope](#); \$500 to [Jail Ministry of Elkhart Co.](#); \$500 to [Mosaic Health and Healing Arts](#); \$500 to [Ryan's Place](#); \$1,000 to [The Window](#); \$1,000 to [Safety Networks LLC](#)

International: \$2,100 for [Association for a More Just Society](#); \$1,600 for [Community Peacemaker Teams](#); \$1,000 to [MCC for Afghanistan](#); \$700 to [Great Lakes MCC for relief kits](#)

Please discuss any requests or concerns with a member of the committee:

Susan Mark Landis, Chair; Joel Zwier, Barb Hassan, Barb Swartley, Glenn Gilbert, Marshall King

To read thank you letters received from organizations we support, [click here](#). There are also some posted on the bulletin board by the mailboxes. Other Christmas Greetings: [MC USA](#), [First Light Mission](#), [MCC Great Lakes](#).

FINANCIAL GIVING AT ASSEMBLY

End of Year Giving. In order for offerings to meet our anticipated expenses for 2022, we still need \$53,000 in giving before Dec 31. **Sunday evening, Dec 25** is the last opportunity to put money in the offering basket during worship this year, but you can also give by sending a check to the church office, or you can donate through the church website [here](#). Our giving is up significantly this year, though our budget is bigger too. Our December giving is often strong, so we are hopeful about meeting our budget. Thank you for your ongoing generosity.

Thank you! For your generous pledges supporting the 2023 Spending Plan! We asked for a 12% increase in pledges from last year, and the congregation rose to meet that challenge! Over \$400,000 in pledges have been received, slightly in excess of what finance committee needed to support our "aspirational spending plan". The spending plan will be presented at a congregational meeting early next year.

DOING JUSTICE AND SERVING THE COMMUNITY

Donate period products: An ad hoc group of Assembly folks donates period supplies to local public schools. If you'd like to enable students having periods to attend classes rather than stay home, place supplies in the bin under the mailboxes. Currently schools appreciate thinner, regular absorbency pads, individually wrapped. They also appreciate new underwear in youth sizes and wipes. Questions to Susan Mark Landis.

The Window needs your help! The Window is in desperate need of [children's winter clothing](#) and [winter coats of all sizes](#). There has been a high demand for winter coats and they are completely out. If you have winter coats or children's winter clothing to donate please consider taking them to The Window at 223 S Main St, Goshen.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Creating Communities of Belonging: Appreciating EveryBODY – Jan 9-12, online or in person. Presented by the School for Leadership Training at Eastern Mennonite Seminary. Their objective is to raise awareness about the presence of people with disabilities, to inspire conversations about accessibility and inclusion, and to encourage participants to seek affirming ways to engage everyBody in full participation in the mission and ministry of the church. Featuring a concert by Ken Medema and speakers Amy Julia Becker and JJ Flag. Register [here](#) for early-bird rate by **December 16**.

Seminary Preview Webinar. Thinking about seminary? Or do you know someone who might be? Join us online on **Wednesday, Jan. 18, 8–8:45 p.m. EST**, and get a glimpse of what Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary has to offer — whether you want to study at a distance or on our campus in Elkhart, Indiana. Areas of study at AMBS include pastoral ministry, chaplaincy, Christian formation, peacebuilding, Anabaptist theology, environmental sustainability leadership and more. Register online: ambs.edu/preview

WIDER CHURCH

Camp Friedenswald Winter Getaway – Feb 3-5. Come on your own for a solitary retreat, or get away with family and friends. There's no pressure to do anything – just soak in the peace of the woods and lake. We'll provide the tasty meals in the Dining Hall, a comfy cabin, and trails for exploring. This is a program-free weekend. Meals are the one coordinated corporate activity. The Getaway runs Friday (dinner served at 6:30 pm) through Sunday noon (last meal is breakfast on Sunday). All ages welcome. [Register here.](#)

The Mennonite Church USA (MC USA) Executive Board has nominated Marty Lehman of Goshen, Indiana, as moderator-elect for the Delegate Assembly cycle beginning July 2023. Lehman is a former associate executive director for Churchwide Operations for MC USA and has a deep affiliation with and affection for the denomination. Read more about her here: mennoniteusa.org/marty-lehman-moderator-elect

Representatives of Mennonite Church USA's Constituency Leaders Council spoke about the joys they are experiencing, the challenges they are facing and their hopes for the future at their recent meeting on Oct. 21-22, 2022, via Zoom. Read more here: mennoniteusa.org/news/clc-meets-22

Mennonite Mission Network requests prayer. Matthew and Toni Krabill, who are serving with Mennonite Mission Network, engage in ministries of relationship building and teaching in French-speaking countries around the world, through in-person and online classes, conferences, and seminars, from their base at the Paris (France) Mennonite Center. Pray for them as they encourage communication and understanding between Christians and Muslims.

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Bethany Christian School job openings can be found [here](#). **Goshen College** job openings can be found [here](#). **AMBS** job openings can be found [here](#). **Other jobs in Mennonite education** can be found [here](#). **Mennonite Church USA's** job postings are [here](#).

Assembly Mennonite Church

Pastoral Team

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Pastor Emeritae: Lois Johns Kaufmann, Mary Lehman Yoder

Elders: Randy Roth (chair), Sandy Fribley, Eric Yordy, Leon Bauman, Sara Morris, Cheryl Shreiner, Ben Good-Elliott

Youth Coordinators: Erich Miller, Marlette Gomez Wengerd, Ryan Gomez Wengerd, Gretchen Krause

Administrative Assistant: Becky Overholt (Tues, Thurs, Fri 9am-3pm) office@assemblymennonite.org; 574-534-4190

Church Administrator: Naomi Roots (Mon, Wed, Fri 9am-12pm) naomikr@assemblymennonite.org

Please email announcements to assemblyline@assemblymennonite.org by 11PM local time Thursday for inclusion in the following Sunday's AssemblyLine. To receive the AssemblyLine via email visit <http://eepurl.com/bsXsDr>.