

WORSHIP

Join us on Sundays at 9:30 AM in Person, or [on Zoom](#)

<p>December 17 9:30AM Worship Sunday School</p> <p>Worship Leader: Anna Yoder Schlabach Sermon: Karl Shelly Scripture: Ezra 1:1-4; 3:1-4, 10-13</p>	<p>December 24 9:30AM Worship No Sunday School</p> <p>Worship Leader: Kimberly Glick Sermon: Regina Shands Stoltzfus Scripture: Luke 1:5-13 [14- 25], 57-80</p>
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SUNDAY DECEMBER 17

9:30am Worship. [The Order of Worship can be read here.](#) This is the third Sunday of Advent. Our narrative lectionary texts for this season are all related to God’s promises, promises that God makes to people during times of uncertainty. Can God’s promises be trusted? Are new beginnings coming? The prophets remind us that especially in uncertain and disorienting times, God promises to rebuild, restore, and redeem. [Read the introduction and calendar here.](#) **This morning we will be sending & blessing Lora and her family,** although technically her last Sunday here is December 31.

2nd hour. During Fellowship time, there will be cookies along with hot drinks in the MP space. Return to the worship space 2nd hour for a Christmas and Advent hymn sing.

Sharing Prayer Requests. Prayer requests are sent out to the congregation via the Assembly listserv on Wednesdays. If you have something to share with the congregation and are not able to share it on Sunday morning during sharing time, [please fill out this Google Form.](#) If you wish a pastor to follow up with you, please contact a pastor directly via email or phone.

CHILDREN’S BIRTHDAYS



Magdalena Gollner (4th, BCS) turned 10 on Dec 11th! Magdalena enjoys watching sports, reading books (especially about animals) playing piano and doing research. She likes chocolate, pizza and soup! She would like to learn to rap and wants to save the Siberian tiger! She enjoys playing with her sister and playing board games with her family.

<p>Assembly Mennonite Church Pastoral Team Karl Shelly karlss@assemblymennonite.org 574-621-1037 Anna Yoder Schlabach annays@assemblymennonite.org 574-312-5319 Scott Coulter scottc@assemblymennonite.org 419-535-2918 Lora Nafziger loracn@assemblymennonite.org 574-312-0732 Pastoral Intern: Isaiah Friesen ifriesen@ambs.edu Pastor Emeritae: Lois Johns Kaufmann, Mary Lehman Yoder</p>	<p>Elders: Sara Morris (chair), Randy Roth, Leon Bauman, Cheryl Shreiner, Trevor Daugherty, Ben Sywulka, Alex Graber Neufeld Youth Coordinators: Marlette Gomez Wengerd, Ryan Gomez Wengerd, Stephen Lowe, Gretchen Krause</p>
<p>Administrative Assistant: Becky Overholt (Tues, Thurs, Fri 9am-3pm) office@assemblymennonite.org; 574-534-4190 Church Administrator: Naomi Roots (out of office through Jan 16) naomikr@assemblymennonite.org</p>	
<p>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 https://tinyurl.com/Aline-subscribe.</p>	

COMING UP

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

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
Dec 17 <i>3rd Sunday of Advent</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 9:30am Worship & Sunday school ● 1pm MYF activity ● 7:30pm Holden evening prayer 	Dec 18 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 6pm Winter yoga retreat ● 6:30pm Dance group 	Dec 19 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 6pm Labyrinth walk 		Dec 21 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 7pm Longest night service 	Dec 22 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 10am Creative Movement class 	
Dec 24 <i>4th Sunday of Advent</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 9:30am Worship. No Sunday school ● 5:15pm Candle dance rehearsal ● 6pm Christmas Eve supper & service. RSVP required.	<i>Office closed</i>					
Dec 31 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 9:30am Christmas breakfast ● 10:30am Lessons & Carols 	<i>Office closed</i>		Jan 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 11:30am Women's lunch bunch ● 5:30-8pm Small group childcare 		Jan 5 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 9:30am Greencroft meetup 	Jan 6 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 10am-3pm Women's Christmas

PASTOR SCHEDULES

Many of the pastors are traveling at some point during the holidays. Below is a summary through the end of the year.

Karl Shelly will be gone Dec 21-31

Lora Nafziger will be gone Dec 23-29

Scott Coulter is unavailable Dec 23

Anna Yoder Schlabach will be gone Dec 25-31

COMMUNITY LIFE

Cookies to share! Please bring cookies to share for our coffee break **this Sunday** as we mark Pastor Lora's sending Sunday. You can put them on the table in the MP space when you arrive.

Kid's creative movement class: Kids ages 4-8 are invited to explore the world of dance in a free youth class on 12/22 (Friday), from 10:00-11:00am. Participants will enjoy stories, songs, and activities designed to engage with imaginative play, rhythm exploration, and creative movement. This month's theme is Holiday Hop! Please [register](#) before 12/18 to reserve a spot. Contact Sara Morris with any questions.

November Leadership group minutes: The approved minutes from the November LG meeting can be found [here](#).

January Women's lunch bunch will be Jan 3 at 11:30am. Anna Yoder Schlabach will be speaking about her sabbatical. Bring your lunch; drinks provided.

Small group childcare: The next small group childcare will take place on Jan 3 from 5:30-8pm. [Please sign up your children here.](#)

Artist's Statement: We've been enjoying Lois Kaufmann's banners this season. Here is an excerpt from her artist's statement about them.

"With earthy, touchable, ordinary materials I wanted to portray the truth and mystery of Advent--of God coming to us. In the darkness there is beauty, texture, and things to be noticed and pondered. Yet the darkness whispers of more. The Holy comes to us, over time, bringing light into our dark and difficult days. Flickering with glimmers of hope, the Light comes. We are not alone." You can [read the entire statement here.](#)

ADVENT THROUGH EPIPHANY AT ASSEMBLY AT-A-GLANCE

Holden Evening Prayer (joint Assembly & Faith): Sunday, Dec 17, 7:30 p.m.

Join us for this simple 20-minute vespers service of spoken and sung [prayers from Holden Village](#).

Longest Night Service: Thursday, December 21, 7 p.m.

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.

Christmas Eve Service, December 24, 6 p.m.

Multipurpose space and worship space

5:15 p.m.: Candle Dance rehearsal

6 p.m.: Join us for a simple soup and bread supper, followed by a play and candle dance. [Sign up here](#) to indicate interest in attending/participating or bringing food.

Breakfast Potluck, December 31, 9:30 a.m.

Bring a festive finger food dish to share and your own place settings

Followed by a service of Lessons and Carols at 10:30 a.m.

Women's Christmas, Saturday, January 6, 10a-3p

Women's Christmas offers an opportunity at the end of the holiday season to celebrate with friends and to gather ourselves before diving into the year ahead. Suggested \$10 donation. Please [RSVP here](#) by Dec 31.

Epiphany/ Assembly's 50th Birthday kick off Sunday, January 7, 9:30 a.m.

FINANCIAL LIFE AT ASSEMBLY

End of year offerings: John Nafziger will be out of town from Dec 23 past the end of the year. You can still email him any offering questions during that time at offering@assemblymennonite.org. Please do not put checks in his mailbox, instead, put them in the offering, in the box outside the church office or in the slot for the checks box in the North door.

End of Year Giving. Thank you for your generosity! **As of Friday, Dec 15, we anticipate needing \$37,000** in giving before Dec 31. **Sunday, Dec 31** 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 dropping it in the check drop box in the north door, or you can donate through the church website [here](#).

Two Percent Committee met December 10. We suggest these disbursements.

- **LOCAL:** [Church Community Services](#), \$400; [Cora Dale House](#) (formerly Clubhouse), \$500; [First Light Mission](#), \$500; [Goshen Ministerial Association](#), \$1000; [Walnut Hill Early Childhood Center](#) \$500; [The Window](#), \$1,200.
- **NATIONAL AND WORLD:** [Association for a More Just Society](#), \$500; [Coalition to Dismantle the Doctrine of Discovery](#), \$600; [Mennonite Central Committee](#), \$1000; [Mennonite Men for trees](#), \$500.

If you have any questions about these disbursements, please talk to a member of the Two Percent Committee: Susan Mark Landis, chair; Glenn Gilbert, Barb Hassan, Marshall King or Barb Swartley ASAP, by Dec 24.

DOING JUSTICE & SERVING OUR COMMUNITY

Recycling at Assembly: Just a reminder that Faith's JYF/MYF is collecting Kroger-brand flexible plastic packaging to recycle through Terracycle. This will help to care for the earth and also raise money for Faith youth activities. **Through this month Terracycle is offering double points for Kroger-brand items**, so if you've been collecting some at home for recycling, **please bring things next Sunday, the 17th**. All Kroger-branded flexible plastic packaging is eligible to be recycled through this program; see this [PDF flier](#) for details, as well as this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fK2LeFQyzPQ>. There is a large box at the Meetinghouse (under the mentor/mentee bulletin board) for you to place your recycling items into. **Please read the flyer carefully for details on what is recyclable through this program.** This summer, we found about a third of the plastic that wasn't Kroger-branded and had to be put into the trash and another third of the items that were grocery shopping bags that had to be taken to

the collection containers inside the grocery store. Email Wanda Reinford Martin with any questions about this program. wandalynette@msn.com

Calling all pie bakers - Please consider donating some pies for the Goshen Presbyterian Church Christmas day meal. Contact Julie Mark with questions or to donate at 574-220-2592

Bushelcraft Farm has opportunities for folks to directly support its work in the community. Bushelcraft Farm will offer food baskets to families at Boys & Girls Club of Goshen and to The United Village from Dec 15th through early April. Baskets will include a few vegetable items, as well as specific grocery items named in recipes. We'd love donations of gift cards to Kroger and Martin's Supermarket and/or directly purchasing and donating items needed (items vary per delivery). If you would like to contribute financially, materially, or by giving volunteer labor, contact Jon Zirkle (574-612-5063 or bushelcraftfarm@gmail.com).

Our neighbors are hungry. This is the last month to add a donation to the grey bin under the mailboxes. Barb Hassan will be taking your contributions to Center for Healing & Hope. Their Tiny Pantry is a no-barrier access to food at any time for anyone. They especially need rice, canned beans, tortillas (flour or corn), applesauce, peanut butter, toilet paper, feminine products and soap. Want to take something special for the holidays? Winter hat/glove sets, socks, Abuelita Mexican hot chocolate and oranges are welcome. Assembly is not solely responsible for filling the pantry this month, but we will be again sometime next year. Comments? Susan Mark Landis

MENNONITE ACTION

There are a number of ways you can take action (in order from least to highest commitment):

- Sign a petition with hundreds of other US Mennonites calling on our federal representatives to support a permanent ceasefire. [Click here for the petition](#)
- Join the **Slack Channel** where folks can meet each other and keep up to date for the most recent movement/plans from Menno Action. [Click here to join the Slack channel](#)
- **Action Hours:** On Tuesdays and Thursdays Mennonite Action will hold action hours where they will call our representatives together, as a Mennonite community. We encourage you to join as many of these action hours as you're able, as our representatives need to continue to hear from us.
- **Join Northern Indiana Mennonites and interfaith allies for the Day of Mennonite Action for a Ceasefire on December 19th.** On Tuesday, December 19th, hundreds of Mennonites across the US and Canada will hold peaceful demonstrations at their representatives' offices calling for a ceasefire and an ending to the bombardment of Gaza. The demonstrations are part of an international Day of Mennonite Action for a Ceasefire, organized by Mennonite Action. We will show our political leaders, our fellow community members, and our Palestinian, Jewish, Arab and Muslim loved ones that there are Christians and Mennonites who stand with them in their call for peace and a ceasefire now. **Here in Northern Indiana, we will gather at Representative Yakym's office, located at 2410 Grape Rd., Mishawaka at 3:00pm on December 19th** for a short action. We will sing songs, share our stories, pray for peace, and call on him to support a permanent ceasefire in Gaza immediately. Please wear black. If you can join, please [sign up online \[https://actionnetwork.org/events/northern-indiana-mennonite-day-of-action-for-a-ceasefire?source=direct link\]](https://actionnetwork.org/events/northern-indiana-mennonite-day-of-action-for-a-ceasefire?source=direct_link), contact Julia Gautsche to carpool, or simply show up at the above location on December 19th. For more information about Mennonite Action visit mennoniteaction.org
- On **January 16th**, hundreds of Mennonites will gather in **Washington DC to peacefully demonstrate for a permanent ceasefire.** Together, we will show our political leaders, our fellow community members, and our Palestinian, Jewish, Arab and Muslim loved ones that there are Christians and Mennonites who stand with them in their call for peace and a ceasefire now. We will bring this petition with us, to demonstrate that thousands of Mennonites from across the United States stand together for a permanent ceasefire and an end to occupation. As soon as details are worked out, they'll be posted on [MennoAction's website](#).

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

Labyrinth walk: Join Meribeth Shank, certified labyrinth facilitator, on Tuesday, Dec 19 at 6pm in Assembly's multipurpose space. After a brief introduction to the labyrinth as a meditation tool, we'll walk together using a smaller canvas labyrinth, concluding with a chance to reflect together. Contact Meribeth Shank with any questions.

Women's Christmas, Sat., Jan. 6 at the meetinghouse, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. The title for this year's retreat is "In the Light of a New Constellation" by Jan Richardson. This five-hour gathering will offer time for conversation, quiet reflection, and artistic expression. A \$10 registration fee covers the cost of materials. Note paper will be included, but feel free to bring your journal. You may want a sweater or jacket. Hot drinks will be available. A variety of soups will be provided for lunch. Please bring finger foods or desserts to share (remember: some eat gluten-free, others are vegetarians). Bring your own table service: bowls, spoons, mugs, napkins. RSVP by Dec. 31. To sign up, [click here](#).

WIDER CHURCH

Mennonite Mission Network requests prayer. SADRA (Southern African Development and Reconstruction Agency) Conflict Transformation is a Mennonite Mission Network partner that offers a Christian response to injustice in South Africa. Pray for the conflict mediators, who train members of their communities to de-escalate situations that could lead to violence.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Goshen Community Chorale will be presenting *Light of Love: Songs for Advent and Winter Solstice* on December 17, 4:00 p.m. at the Faith Lutheran Church, 202 S. Greene Road, Goshen, IN. Along with selections written by John Rutter, Sergei Rachmaninoff, Robert Shaw, and Donald Fraser among others, the concert is a special collaboration with Nayo Ulloa, Peruvian born composer and flutist singing Ulloa's original compositions for the Christmas and other Latin American carols arranged for chorus by Bradley Kauffman, the Chorale's Artistic Director and conductor. The concert is free to all. Donations will be welcomed at the close of the concert to help defray expenses. Join Ruth Kaufmann and Katie Schramm of Assembly as they join with fifty other singers to make this concert an important part of your preparations for the Christmas season.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Take a seminary course this spring! AMBS's distance-friendly options include Church and Race; Dynamics and Theology of Reconciliation; Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations; The New Testament and Its Contexts; Numbers; Practicing and Embodying Nonviolence; Spiritual Practices: Play and Rest; and more. In-person courses are also available. Nonadmitted students get 50% off their first three credit hours. Courses run Jan. 9 – April 26; sign up by Jan. 2. [ams.edu/upcoming-courses](https://www.ams.edu/upcoming-courses)

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Hively Avenue Preschool is seeking a teacher to work with children ages 3 and 4. The position involves approximately 20 hours per week. A degree or certification in early childhood or elementary education is highly preferred. Interested candidates should email their resume to Amy Redar, preschool director preschool@hivelymennonite.org

Hively Avenue Mennonite Church is seeking a half-time Administrative Secretary by March 1, 2024. We seek an office manager who will maintain records, supplies and equipment, and be responsible for communication within the congregation and online. This position involves regular office hours M–F with flexibility for personal needs. Requirements assume familiarity with office software and equipment and the ability to work independently and interact easily with adults and children. For information, see the job description: www.hivelymennonite.org/About/staff. To apply, send a letter and resume to Moderator@hivelymennonite.org

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 Mennonite Education** job postings can be found [here](#). **Mennonite Church USA's** job postings are [here](#).

Current COVID-19 Information (Dec 15, 2023)

In Elkhart County, Indiana, the [COVID-19 Community Risk Level](#) is **Low**.
(Several surrounding counties have moved to a **Medium** risk level).

Masks are optional. Please join on Zoom if you are feeling sick.

We encourage everyone to stay up to date on vaccinations and boosters.

For current vaccination recommendations see: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/stay-up-to-date.html>

For more information visit <https://assemblymennonite.org/covid-19-information/>