



Christmas at Tabor

Adult Choir Program: On Sunday morning, **Dec. 23 at 9:30 a.m.** we will have a special service featuring the Adult Choir as they lead us in song and script. The theme is "Carried on the Flood of Reversal - Bethlehem Bound".

Christmas Eve: The program on **Dec. 24 at 7:00 p.m.** will feature the story of the Christmas Donkey and her perspective on what happened in Bethlehem on that special night. An offering will be received for MCC to help with shipping cost for the school kits collected throughout Advent.

Christmas Day: Jesus is born! Celebrate the birth of our Savior on Christmas Day. **Worship begins at 10:00 a.m.** Offering will be received to support the MCC Water Project.

Sunday after Christmas: We will have our annual social hour following the worship service on **Dec. 30.** Bring Christmas goodies to share as we continue to celebrate the Christmas season together. No Sunday school.

Water is Life!

In many places, women and children begin their day by fetching water from community faucets, wells, or springs. They carry the water back to their homes in buckets carried on their heads or in containers strapped to donkeys' sides. The chore can take hours and sometimes prevents children from attending school.

"And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones . . . he will certainly not lose his reward." -Matthew 10:42



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Refined by Fire

Tabor Mennonite Church

December 9, 2012



**As God's children and the body of Christ,
we are called by God to offer hospitality,
healing and hope in the name of Christ.**

Volume LVII

December 9, 2012

No. 50



2ND SUNDAY OF Advent

Gathering

PRELUDE

Jerry Toews

WELCOME

Worship Leader, Luke Unruh

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Shannon, Carrie and Reed Friesen

"Nun Ist Sie Erschienen" -v. 1 German v. 1 English No. 52CS

CALL TO WORSHIP

from Malachi 3:1-4

Leader: Here is what God says:

"I am sending my messenger to prepare the way before me."

People: Who can endure the day of God's coming?

Who can stand when God appears?

Leader: Let us not be afraid.

**People: The smelter's fire purifies but does not destroy,
the launderer's soap washes but does not wreck.**

All: We want to be made clean, to stand before God with pure hearts.

*GATHERING HYMN

"Come, thou long-expected Jesus"

No. 178

*PRAYER

Praising

*ZECHARIAH'S SONG

Luke 1:68-79

***Blessed are you, Lord, the God of Israel,
you have come to your people and set them free.***

***You have raised up for us a mighty Savior,
born of the house of your servant David.***

***Through your holy prophets, you promised of old
to save us from our enemies, from the hands of all who hate us,
to show mercy to our forebears, and to remember your holy covenant.***

This was the oath you swore to our father Abraham:

***to set us free from the hands of our enemies,
free to worship you without fear, holy and righteous before you,
all the days of our life.***

Sermon Notes

Preparing the Way

(Malachi 3:1-4; Luke 3:1-6)

"[John] went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet: 'A voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him. Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill made low. The crooked roads shall become straight, the rough ways smooth. And all people will see God's salvation.'"

(Luke 3:3-6, Isaiah 40:3-5)

Chipped Paint

John the Baptist (Luke 1:5-25, 39-45, 57-80; 3:1-20)

I. Approach: Provoking Crisis

II. Method: Preaching & Baptism

III. Message: Repentance for Forgiveness

Preparing the Way: Biblical Images

I. Refiner's Fire & Launderer's Soap (Malachi 3:2-3)

II. Leveling the Landscape (Luke 3:5; Isaiah 40:4; Luke 1:52-53)

Being Prepared

I. Many Images

II. Uncomfortable

III. Purposeful

Ready for God's Coming

OFFERINGS & ATTENDANCE December 2, 2012

Offering	=	\$ 2,864.35	Attendance	=	178
Adult S.S.	=	\$ 89.00	Attendance	=	66
Jr. S.S.	=	\$ 12.55	Attendance	=	20

Announcements

Dear Tabor Church - **Thank you** for the many ways you have offered your support to us during Kathy's illness, and following her death. The prayers, cards, hugs, food, and each memory shared with us were truly appreciated. We say a special "thank you" to Pastors Phil, Karen, and Doug for your visits to Kathy, for the songs and prayers you shared with her, and for the many ways you have offered support to us. We give thanks for each act of kindness shown Kathy and to us. --The Family of Kathy Schmidt

Christmas Giving Tree: There are still some tags available on the Giving Tree at the Citizens State Bank in Goessel. Pick one or two up and help make Christmas a little brighter for a child in our community. Please wrap your gift(s) and return to the bank by Monday, December 17.

Give Water: The children will be collecting coins during the Christmas season. The money will go toward MCC Water Projects. Adults have the opportunity to give as well. There is a display set up in the foyer and the sheep will collect your donations.

MDS Adventure: We are beginning to plan a possible MDS trip for late winter or early spring, most likely to Joplin, MO or Bastrop, Texas. These projects are currently rebuilding new homes after tornado's and wildfires. If you are at all interested in being part of a trip, please let Steve Janzen or Dale Alderfer know soon so we can get started with plans. We are looking into possible dates and will keep you updated as we know more.

Children's Education: The Education Commission currently has two positions which need to be filled so that our children can be nurtured in faith. A teacher for the Preschool class is needed from January - March on Wednesday evenings. An Assistant Bible School coordinator is needed. Please talk to Doris Unruh or an Education Committee member if you want to volunteer or if you have questions.

The Mennonite: Our group subscription plan to *The Mennonite* is renewing. If you are interested in joining our group plan, please return the form found in your mailboxes, along with a check for \$37.00 payable to Tabor Mennonite Church, to the box in the foyer by December 19.

Kansas Mennonite Men's Chorus: Now is the time to register to sing with the chorus. Forms and details are posted on the bulletin board. See Donavon Schmidt if you have questions.

*And you, child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High,
for you will go before the Lord to prepare the way,
to give God's people knowledge of salvation
by the forgiveness of their sins.
In the tender compassion of our God
the dawn from on high shall break upon us,
to shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death,
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.*

*HYMN OF PRAISE "Bless'd be the God of Israel" No. 174

*GREETING EACH OTHER and ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRAYER OF DEDICATION FOR THE OFFERING

OFFERING OUR GIFTS *Please pass MCC kit items to center aisle.*

Receiving

CHILDREN'S STORY Sheri Schmidt

WORSHIP MUSIC "Rejoice, Rejoice, the Lord Comes" Adult Choir

SCRIPTURE *Malachi 2:17-3:5; Luke 3:1-6* Krista Graber

SERMON "Preparing the Way" Phil Schmidt

Responding

SILENT REFLECTION

HYMN OF RESONSE "Comfort, comfort, O my people" No 176

POURING CONFESSION

*For our chips, our impurities, our dirt, our obstacles, and our sins;
for the things that keep us from seeing salvation;
We confess these to God.*

SHARING AND CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER

Sending

*SENDING HYMN "O healing river" No. 372

*BENEDICTION

*May our love overflow more and more
with full knowledge and insight to help us determine what is best.
We are confident of this: The one who began a good work among us
will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ.*

*POSTLUDE



*Come Holy Spirit.
Fill the hearts of thy faithful people
and kindle in us the fire of thy love.*

Today

Today is the second Sunday of Advent. During these weeks leading up to Christmas, we are focusing on our inner longing for God's mercy to flood through us. As God pours mercy into our lives, we become people who can reflect Christ's light in our everyday living.

John, son of Zechariah was the one who came directly before Jesus, son of God. Jesus was the long-expected Messiah; John was the one who prepared the way. His method: baptism; His message: repentance and forgiveness. After John's ministry, Jesus burst onto the scene and preached that God's Kingdom was near. In light of this, how can we prepare for God's Kingdom today?

We are so glad you are here with us to worship God and experience God's love. This morning you were greeted by Kristin and Archie Schmidt and Kevin, Yvette, Corynn and Stephan Nickel. *A special welcome is extended to all visitors.*

Childcare is provided by Sharleen Francis in the nursery during the worship service.

10:45 a.m.— Sunday School for everyone.

On the table in the foyer are **Prayer Request Cards**. You are invited to fill one out if you have a request and return it to a pastor's box.

This Week

Monday, December 10

7:00 p.m.—Youth Ministry Team meeting.

Wednesday, December 12

6:00 p.m.—Worship Fellowship meeting.

6:15 p.m.—Supper for those involved with Christmas Eve practice.

6:30-7:15 p.m.—Christmas Eve program practice.

7:30 p.m.—Adult Choir practice.

Thursday, December 13

7:00 p.m.—Deacon's meeting.

Saturday, December 15

6:00-8:00 p.m.—**Night in the Barn**, the annual living nativity event by TMYF, is this evening from 6-8p.m. on the farm of Maynard Knepp and Carol Duerksen. The program will include unique perspectives on the Christmas story and Christmas carols. The menagerie of animals will be hanging out in the barn, and hot drinks will be available to enjoy around the bonfire. This event is by donation and a fundraiser for the youth group.

Next Sunday, December 16

9:30 a.m.— Next Week we continue to long for Jesus' coming, for Jesus' light to warm us and for Jesus' mercy to flood us. Repentance opens us to the flood of mercy that turns our fears into joy and replaces what is fruitless with abundance. God's aim is not to destroy but to clean up what is dirty and renew what is worn out. Scriptures next week are Zephaniah 3:14-20; Isaiah 12:2-6; Philippians 4:4-7; Luke 3:7-18. Pastor Phil will be preaching.

10:45 a.m.— Sunday School for everyone.

Advent Offering: This year we are collecting items for school kits for MCC during the weeks of Advent. Next Sunday: 12 colored pencils in packaging.

6:00-8:00 p.m.—Night in the Barn.

Prayer Requests

The following items were shared last Sunday, December 2.

- ★ Jude Krehbiel praised God for the commitment of Tabor youth. She noted that Mark Schmidt and Luke Unruh were willing to participate in music at Tabor even though they also had commitments with Elbiata at Goessel Mennonite that same morning.
- ★ Bob Unruh shared his joy for the Christmas season. He has already been enjoying Christmas music for a couple of weeks during his time volunteering at Et. Cetera in Newton. Praise God for Christmas music that focuses our attention on Jesus.

Happenings:

- ★ Duane Unruh graduated from Kansas State University in Manhattan yesterday with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business.

Remember to pray for:

- ★ Western District Conference: Pray for Brad Penner who is being installed as pastor of Goessel Mennonite Church today.
- ★ Mennonite Mission Network: Korean Anabaptist Center, a MMN partner, is searching for a teacher of Anabaptist ecclesiology. Korean Christians dissatisfied with the church structure are looking for new ways of doing church. Pray for a complete staff to model a ministry of reconciliation and peace as Korea goes through many transitions.
- ★ Mennonite Education Agency: Today, Bluffton University will present Handel's *Messiah*. Pray that the performers embody Christ's message and that the audience is encouraged by God's message of hope and peace.