



*The Light of Advent!*

## Sunday Worship Themes

### **Dec. 2 - The Lord is our righteousness:**

*Watching and Waiting* (Advent 1)  
Jeremiah 33:14-16; Psalm 25:1-10;  
1 Thessalonians 3:9-13;  
Luke 21:25-36  
Pastor Phil preaching

### **Dec. 9 - The Lord is our righteousness:**

*Proclaiming* (Advent 2)  
Malachi 3:1-4; Luke 1:68-79;  
Philippians 1:3-11; Luke 3:1-6  
Pastor Rosie preaching

### **Dec. 16- The Lord is our righteousness:**

*Rejoice in God's Justice* (Advent 3)  
Zephaniah 3:14-20; Isaiah 12:2-6;  
Philippians 4:4-7; Luke 3:7-18  
Pastor Katherine preaching

### **Dec. 23 - The Candle of Christmas**

Selected Scriptures  
Adult Choir

### **Dec. 24 - Christmas Eve Celebration**

**Service:** *Love Revealed*  
John 1; Luke 2

### **Dec. 30 - Sunday after Christmas:**

*Sing the Good News*  
Selected Scriptures  
Lessons in Carols

# Tabor Church News

December, 2018

## Phil's Ponderings: "Bringing in the Light"

One Advent ritual that I enjoy is the lighting of the Advent candles the four Sundays before Christmas. It is always a joy to see the light brought in by different people, the light that symbolizes God's hope, peace, joy, and love. Here at Tabor, I have enjoyed seeing the candles lit while the congregation sings the hymn, *Nun Ist Sie Erschienen*, which speaks to the coming of God's light in Jesus:

"Now appeareth the Heavenly Sun in its glory, it streams thu' the darkness of earth; So then dry tears of sadness and sing the glad story of a Savior now come by the heavenly birth. To Jesus be glory and peace on the earth. In Christ is salvation, Proclaim we His birth."

As we anticipate another Advent season and the coming of God's light into the world, I'm excited to share a new idea that the Worship Planning Team dreamed up. This year, we will be bringing in the light slightly differently than in the past. It won't be just one candle that enters the sanctuary, but many. We will be inviting children's Junior Faith Formation classes to bring in the light each week (Dec. 2: 3rd-5th Grade, Dec. 9: 2nd Grade, Dec. 16: Kindergarten/1st Grade, Dec. 23: Preschool, Dec. 24: Wee Wonder). While the congregation sings *Nun Ist Sie Erschienen*, the designated children (with help from teachers/parents as needed) will each bring in a lit candle down the sanctuary aisles. At the front of the sanctuary, they will join their candles together to light the candle that the worship leader is holding. The worship leader for that Sunday will then light the appropriate candle on the communion table. I'm excited for this new way of bringing in the light that involves many children and is a powerful proclamation of the Good News!

May God's light of hope, peace, joy, and love shine brightly upon each of us this Advent season!

Peace, Pastor Phil



## Introducing...



Anthony grew up in Shickley, Nebraska, and Kara grew up in Berne, Indiana, and Topeka, Kansas. After living in Topeka and then Wichita, they have lived in Hesston for seven years. Anthony is the county administrator for Harvey County. His hobbies include gardening, working in the yard, and spending time with family and friends. Kara taught second graders for nine years before staying home with the boys. She substitutes in elementary grades. Her favorite activities include being with family and friends, reading, traveling, listening to music, and playing games. Isaac (age 10) is in 5<sup>th</sup> grade and enjoys playing the piano and percussion, reading, experimenting with a video camera, and learning about robots. Zachary (age 7) is in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and likes sports trivia, playing and watching sports, and reading. We look forward to getting to know you better!

~Anthony and Kara Swartzendruber

## Graduating in December



**Pittsburg State College**

**December 14, 2018  
5:00 p.m.**

**Carson Voth**

## Katherine's Candor

As we enter into Advent this year, we will be engaging in a worship series entitled "The Lord is Our Righteousness." This theme is taken from Jeremiah 33:14-16, a passage included in the first Sunday of Advent.

"When Jeremiah speaks to the people, he is offering a message of hope at a time of great turmoil, a time when people fear for what the future will bring. When he shares the prophecy that 'God will make a righteous Branch sprout from David's line' (Jer. 33:15), he is assuring the people that a Messiah will come, and that through this Messiah they will know the righteousness of the Lord." (*Leader*, Fall 2018, p. 39).

Today many of us still find ourselves in times of turmoil and fear for the future. Even when the darkness seems to be prevailing and we cry with the psalmists and the prophets: "How long, O Lord?" we continue to trust that God is still present with us, that the True Light is still coming among us, and that the darkness will never overcome it. Indeed, we know who holds the final victory when God's Reign comes in full!

But, even while we find ourselves still waiting for creation to be restored, God continues to come among us with messages of hope in the midst of turmoil and expressions of peace in the midst of fear. So as we enter into this Advent season, let us look for the ways that Jesus continues to enter into the world and into our own lives in unexpected ways, even as we look toward a promised future of hope.

May we be given eyes to see, ears to hear, and hearts to ponder the ways that Jesus continues to break into our midst. "O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel!"

~Grace and Peace, Pastor Katherine

## Rosie's Reflections:

*I will come to you in the silence,  
I will lift you from all your fear.  
You will hear my voice,  
I claim you as my choice,  
be still and know I am here.*

*Do not be afraid, I am with you.  
I have called you each by name.  
Come and follow me,  
I will bring you home;  
I love you and you are mine.<sup>1</sup>*

How are you with silence? Since my sabbatical a year ago, I am more aware of my need for silence. However, I'm an extrovert on the *Myers Briggs Personality Type Indicator*, which means I draw most of my energy from being around people, so spending more time in silence takes concerted effort.

Being silent is more than just being still; silence also implies space for listening. What do you hear in the silence? When I walk outside with our dog at night, the first thing she does is stop, perk her ears and listen. She listens with great intensity, ignoring my urging to do her business because I'm cold. Sometimes I stop and listen with her; no movement, no sound except for the occasional hoot of an owl, yip of a coyote or moo of a cow. When I think of being still and spending more time in silence, I also have to be ready to listen.

Psalms 46:10 says, "*Be still and know that I am God.*" Unless I'm still, I can forget who's in charge, especially as the busyness of preparing for the holidays ramps up. My challenge is to find time for silence so I can clear my mind and listen. What is God saying to me? During my practice of centering prayer I chose a sacred word to center my mind, and then I listen. When my mind starts to wander, I return gently to my sacred word and listen for God. It takes a lot of practice, and I'm not very good at it because my mind keeps wandering. However, I've been told not to worry about the number of times I wander, because I've returned to God that many times. So my challenge for all of us, especially during the busyness of this season, is to create space for silence. Listen for God even if it takes returning to God 100 times.

~Grace and peace, Pastor Rosie

<sup>1</sup>*Sing the Story* p. 49

## What a difference a year makes!

Just one short year ago, our Tabor congregation was anticipating a decision-making meeting regarding our building program. Were we ready to put our shovel where our mouths had been? Were we ready to actually invest the money that was sitting in our bank account? Were we ready to pick up the phone, call Fuqua Construction, and say “Let’s Go”?

Today we can see the answer. We can touch it, walk in it, smell it, dream and imagine in it. Some of us have spent many long hours in it already, working hard, giving our talents and skills to create a beautiful fellowship space.

In addition to the beginning of construction, another development this year that brings a huge smile to our faces is the generous flexibility from Citizens State Bank, our deposit, savings and lending partner. They agreed to allow us to cash out our Certificates of Deposit on an “as needed” basis to meet our cash flow needs.

A second way that Citizens State Bank has been helpful is through the thoughtful leadership of Richard Drake. During the activation of the construction loan, he suggested structuring the start date for the mortgage portion of the project for the end of 2019. When our banker is helping us to avoid borrowing money, we need to get on the bandwagon!

Another source of ear-to-ear smiles is the Conditional Challenge Grant. In early May, the Task Force received an anonymous offer to pay off the last \$100,000 dollars of this project if we had all of the other bills paid. That is to say, if we were within \$100,000 of paying for the project, this party would pay off the balance. The grant requires that we not place any borrowed money in a mortgage installment loan. That is, we can make the construction phase loan but not the 10 year note. This is why having the next 12 months to complete our fundraising is important! It’s worth \$100,000, plus the interest that we would be paying on a 10 year loan, which could be close to another \$100,000!

Essentially, the generosity of the Conditional Challenge Grant party, combined with the planning of Richard Drake at CSB, is enabling us to have one more year to end up with a debt-free building! If we give at the same rate that we have so far, we will be done. It’s a big job, with a huge big reward.

Last year we gave over \$200,000 and we ended the year with \$93,000 in pledges to pay. This year we are off to a good start with less than \$70,000 in pledges outstanding. If the project costs the full \$1,300,000 then we will need to raise \$175,000 in new money this fiscal year to trigger the Conditional Challenge Grant and complete the project debt free.

Can we do it? Can we raise \$173,530 in the next 12 months and still pay down all of our pledges? Well, it is \$14,500 in new money every month. The first consideration is: how is our donor base growing? The short answer is “not much.” It’s about the same as last year, although we did add a few. We have had 109 givers total and 11 other fundraisers. Eleven givers have contributed over \$25,000 each. Fifteen families were in the \$10,000 to \$25,000 category. Another 22 giving units gave between \$5,000 and \$10,000; and 28 families have given between \$1,000 and \$5,000.

What does this mean? Of course we hope for new givers and for new, maybe even surprising sources of funding. But it won’t work to count on “somebody else” to do this. It needs to be us, the ones who have done a lot already. Can we do it?

Where do we want to be a year from now? Celebrating and using our new space-- YES! With or without a mortgage? It’s up to us.

What a difference a year makes!

~Finance Task Force



## Tabor Mennonite Women

Twenty Tabor Mennonite Women met on November 5 for our annual Sister Care program. Erica Stolzhus shared stories of women who had served as mentors to her throughout her life and why they were so important to her. Mixing the evening with some humorous experiences, she also shared some stories of the years that she lived with her grandma and how influential she was in her life. We also spent some time reviewing good listening skills which are necessary in relating to our Christian Sisters.

Look for sign-up sheets and plan to attend the TMW Christmas Breakfast on Saturday, December 8.

~Denise Nickel, Reporting.

TABOR  
TRADING POST

The Tabor Trading Post will be back on December 9 and 16 following Sunday morning Worship and Faith Formation. Bring your projects to sell and come purchase items to benefit the Tabor Building Fund. If you have questions, please ask Carol Duerksen.



## Christmas Giving Opportunities

### Christmas Giving Tree

The Goessel Ministerial Alliance Christmas Giving Tree project: This year the tree is at the Citizens State Bank. If you took a tag to purchase gifts for a child, please have them at the bank by Friday, December 14. The Goessel Ministerial Alliance will deliver gifts on December 22. Here is an opportunity to help everyone have a blessed and happy Christmas!

### Tabor Church Food Pantry

Gift boxes will again be assembled for families that we have assisted throughout the year and for families with children receiving gifts from the Christmas Giving Tree. Your gifts of food and money will go to help fill the boxes and purchase hams, fruit, and gift cards to Keith's Foods to be used for perishable items. If you would like to assist with packing boxes, call the church office for details.



### Advent Giving: MCC Infant Care Kits

Help mothers give their infants a good start. Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) kits are given to families displaced by war or disaster and are used in a number of other settings to help support mothers who lack the supplies they need for a new baby. 10,396 infant care kits shipped last year to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ukraine, Jordan, Iraq, Burkina Faso, Canada, the U.S.

### Christmas Eve

The offering on Christmas Eve will be received to help with shipping costs for MCC Infant Care Kits. *Please make checks payable to Tabor Mennonite Church with MCC Kits on the memo line.*



## Celebrate Christmas

### —Night in the Barn . . .

In a new setting!

December 1 & 2, 8 & 9, 5-8 p.m. at Papa's Pumpkin Patch

Come and share in the wonder of the Christmas Story! Enjoy this walking tour of the Nativity as you interact with the characters, animals, sights, and sounds of the timeless tale.

### —1st Sunday in Advent

December 2, 9:00 a.m., Christmas prelude by Jerry Toews

Advent Theme: "The Lord is our Righteousness"

### —Parsonage Open House

December 2, 3:30-5:30 p.m.

Snacks, drinks and good fellowship for all!

### —Tabor Mennonite Women Christmas Breakfast

December 8, 9:00 a.m.

All women, girls and guests are invited. Program by JoAnn Nickel.

### —Community Christmas Brass

December 9, 7:00 p.m. at Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church

Enjoy an evening filled with Christmas music!

### —Tabor Adult Choir Program

December 23, 9:30 a.m.

The Adult Choir will present "The Candle of Christmas," with music and readings about Jesus, the true Light.

### —Christmas Eve Celebration Service

December 24, 6:30 p.m. *Come early for the prelude.*

"Love Revealed"

### —Sunday after Christmas

December 30, 10:00 a.m.

"Sing the Good News"

Faith Formation Hour: Fellowship Time

*Please bring Christmas goodies to share.*



*For details on all of the above events, please see the weekly announcement page.*