



Tabor Church News

December, 2021

Joy for the Season

I love this time of year. As the fall is turning into winter, the trees look evermore bare as they prepare for a stretch of freezing temperatures. The painted-sky sunsets happen around five o'clock every evening, producing a wonderful array of colors and pictures. Plus, football teams are in their final stretches before the playoffs, making for some excellent action! What I enjoy the most, however, is the anticipation of the holiday season. We just finished Thanksgiving, a time for family and friends, many of whom have not gathered in a while. We celebrate gratitude, a very biblical principle that Jesus practiced often. Once the goodbyes are said, the turkey is packed up in tupperware containers, and the dishes are finished, it is finally time to begin the season in anticipation for Christmas.

Advent is a time filled with anticipation. As a kid, December was always the longest month because I knew Christmas was going to come at the end, meaning I had to stare at the wrapped presents under the tree for three weeks before I would be able to tear them open with joy. This season has more meaning for me now. I now have less anticipation for the gifts and more anticipation for the carols, the fellowship with family, the aroma of coffee and holiday candles as I sit and listen to Christmas music by a fire. Yet this anticipation for the season comes from a deeper wait: as we prepare for the birth of a child, an influential man that not only died for us but showed us how to live a life worthy to God.

Isaiah is filled with imagery of the coming of a Messiah. One of my favorite verses comes from chapter nine, "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace" (v.6). Every time I read this verse, I sing Handel's *Messiah* in my head. There are other predictions of Jesus' coming, one being Mark 1:2-3, "I will send a messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way"—"a voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.'" These are the words of John the Baptist, who is quoting Malachi 3:1 and Isaiah 40:3.

As we continue on in this time of Advent, I want us to sit in the joy of anticipation and the hope for the beauty of Christmas. We wait for the Lord, who showed us how to live. Let us rejoice in the gladness of the season!

~Peace, Pastor Luke



Sunday Worship Themes

Dec. 5 - Dare to Imagine

God's Embrace: *Advent 2*

Luke 1:68-79; Luke 3:1-6

Pastor Katherine Preaching

Dec. 12 - Dare to Imagine

God's Song: *Advent 3*

Zephaniah 3:14-20; Luke 3:7-18

Pastor Katherine Preaching

Dec. 19 - Dare to Imagine

God's Face: *Advent 4*

Micah 5:2-5a; Luke 1:39-55

Pastor Katherine Preaching

Dec. 24 - Christmas Eve

Celebration Service

Matthew; Luke

Dec. 26 - Lessons and Carols

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7; Isaiah 11:1-9;

Luke 1:26-38; Luke 2:1-20;

Matthew 2:1-12; John 1:1-18

Jan. 2 - Epiphany

John 1:1-18

Pastor Katherine Preaching



Faith Formation Offering Projects

You can support someone in need.
You can offer hope.
You can change a life.
It doesn't matter if you are 2 or 99, you
can do all of these!

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) offers numerous projects and ways to support the work that they do around the world. This year, Tabor Church Christian Education Committee has chosen to support two of MCC's projects.

Children's Faith Formation Offering:

Choose a brood.
Chickens provide a ready source of eggs and meat and can boost earnings for families around the world. MCC projects provide chickens and training in how to care for them.
\$10 provides a brood of chicks.

Adult Faith Formation Offering:

Invest in the future of women.
In South Sudan, women who complete a nine-month course in sewing and embroidery receive sewing machines they can use to start their own businesses.
\$150 provides a sewing machine.

Christmas Eve Offering:

The offering received this year during our Christmas Eve Celebration Service will support both of these projects. Support those in need, offer hope, and change lives!



Glory to God
in the highest.
and on earth peace,
good will toward men.

This Advent and Christmas Season

Last Advent and Christmas season we received the gift of creativity from people in our congregation willing to give more of themselves to make it a meaningful holiday season in a year full of upheavals, from brass players and pianists willing to play instruments in freezing weather, to gifted artists painting the windows and filling the courtyard with Christmas trees, luminaries, and a handmade nativity large enough for everyone to enjoy from their cars. I am grateful for these and other creative possibilities offered to connect and worship with one another, even as we mourned the loss of meaningful holiday traditions from years past.

As we wrap up the Thanksgiving holiday and move into the Advent season this year, it has been good to experience things returning to a greater sense of normalcy than they were last year at this time. Here are some of the things planned for this season (with additional information in the bulletin and newsletter for many of these), some of which are new, some of which happened last year, and some of which we're grateful can happen again:



Advent Worship Services:

Our theme for Advent is "Dare to Imagine." Our Sunday morning services will include Advent candle lighting, Advent and Christmas songs from the new hymnal, Scripture passages read by children and parents, and a sanctuary beautifully decorated by our gifted Visual Arts Team. Please note that there is a corresponding worship guide for families of all ages to do together at home.



Christmas Coffee:

Come for coffee, fellowship, and a chance to see nativities from a number of people in our congregation on Thursday, December 9.



Tabor Mennonite Women's Christmas Breakfast: Girls and Women can once again gather together for this wonderful Tabor tradition on Saturday, November 18.



Night in the Barn: This meaningful Tabor tradition is happening again this year at Patchwork Farms on December 18 and 19. Thank you to the Unruh Family and the Youth Group for your leadership in this meaningful retelling of the Christmas Story!



Christmas Eve Service: This worship service will feature a piano prelude from Tabor's children, the Christmas story from Matthew and Luke read by children and parents, faith formation classes leading Christmas carols, candle lighting, and Christmas sacks.



The Sunday after Christmas: This Sunday morning worship service will be a "Lessons and Carols" service which will focus on Scripture readings from Isaiah and the Gospels read by children and parents, alongside Christmas music from *Voices Together*.

We look forward to these meaningful opportunities to worship and fellowship together, as we remember and proclaim that the Light continues to shine in the midst of the shadows of this world, and that our Lord Emmanuel is with us. Thanks be to God!

~Grace and peace, Pastor Katherine

REPORTING PROGRESS TO THE CONGREGATION CONCERNING OUR SEARCH FOR A NEW PASTOR

- ☒ 1. We have appointed a search committee. They are: Eunice Nickel, Reece Hiebert (Co-chairs); Nancy Funk (Secretary), Larry Goerzen, Sheri Schmidt, Lewis Unruh, Pastor Katherine Goerzen.
- ☒ 2. The search committee has met with our area conference minister/representative.
- ☒ 3. We are gathering information and developing a description of our congregation.
- ☐ 4. The search committee is considering potential candidates.
- ☐ 5. The search committee has identified possible candidates and will conduct interviews.
- ☐ 6. One candidate is being selected to recommend to the congregation for our pastoral opening.
- ☐ 7. This candidate, _____, will visit the congregation and community on _____.
- ☐ 8. The congregation will vote on the recommended candidate on _____.
- ☐ 9. We will celebrate with the installation of our new pastor on _____.

This checklist shows the process that the Search Committee is following in our task of finding a new pastor. We are currently gathering information and developing a description of our congregation. Your input is welcome! What are the priorities that shape our church? What is your view of the pastor's role in the church? What changes or trends do you envision in the next years? We want to hear your thoughts and concerns. Feel free to talk to or email any committee member, or leave your comments in the box in the foyer or on the online form. Please be in prayer for this important process of finding a new pastor for Tabor Mennonite Church!

~Nancy Funk, on behalf of the Pastor Search Committee

We Dared to Imagine . . .

*In the middle of a Canadian prairie winter,
sitting each in our own space, separated.
Bound together by our threads of hope and longing,
we placed ourselves in the ancient texts and waited.
Would the incarnate God come and sing over us?
Could we sing . . . Joy to the World?
Slowing, but surely, the Spirit showed herself;
comforting, wooing, assuring, revealing.
The Word came to life, living among us.
Steadfast love began to hold us, strong winds of righteousness
and glory began to blow over us.
The Lord, our God, was in our midst,
a glimmer had arrived.
Only now could we free our lament and speak of our struggle.
Seeing the salvation of God, our despair could enter the light of day.
Cracked open by tender mercy, the eyes of our hearts and minds
caught a glimpse of what might be, what will be.
We dared to imagine.
The faces of John, Mary, and the boy Samuel urging us on,
we opened ourselves to holy possibilities.
Images, words, prayers, and even songs rose over us, among us.
We received them. We recorded them. We slept with them.
We shared them. We invited others to speak into them.
We gave thanks to God.
We now offer them to you, our siblings in faith.
May the Spirit of the living God free you to imagine.*

~Kathy Giesbrecht

Night in the Barn

You are Invited!

December 18 & 19

5:00-8:00PM

At Patchwork Farms

*Volunteer to be a character.
Volunteers to make Christmas goodies.*

Call or Text Kristi Unruh

620-345-6867

email kdunruh97@gmail.com



Graduating in December

Karina Brandt

Wichita State University

December 12

Karina will receive a bachelor degree in communication sciences and disorders, with a minor in Spanish. Karina will continue her current job in the speech department at Little Elementary this spring and is applying to grad schools for next fall.

NEW HOPE


As the end of 2021 approaches, we want to say THANK YOU for your partnership throughout the year. As of 9/30, New Hope Shelter had already served more than 200 men, women and children this year. The loving support of our church volunteers and supporters enables us to serve those in crisis for short windows of time as they find stability and start anew. A recent quote from a former resident who is employed full-time in a steady job since New Hope:

"Through the small group opportunities that were offered, the many one on one encounters with staff and volunteers, I experienced the love of God in new and powerful ways. The holidays could have been very sad and depressing. Instead, they were some of the most meaningful times I have experienced in recent years."

We invite your continued prayers and support as we continue to serve, love and equip in the months ahead. ~New Hope Shelter



TABOR CHURCH CALENDAR

| | | | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|---|---|--|
| | | | 1 5:45pm Wednesday Evening Supper and Programs | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5 9:30am Worship 10:45am FF | 6 5:30pm Faithful Fitness 7pm Men's Bible Study | 7 8 - 11 am Staff Christmas Breakfast <i>offices closed</i> | 8 | 9 10am Christmas Coffee and Chat | 10 | 11 |
| 12 9:30am Worship 10:45am FF 7:30pm Christmas Brass | 13 5:30pm Faithful Fitness 7pm Men's Bible Study | 14 9am Staff Mtg | 15 | 16 <i>Newsletter Items Due</i> | 17 | 18 9am Tabor Mennonite Women Christmas Breakfast 5-8pm Night in the Barn |
| 19 9:30am Worship 10:45am FF 5-8pm Night in the Barn | 20 5:30pm Faithful Fitness 7pm Men's Bible Study | 21 9am Staff Mtg | 22 | 23 | 24 <i>Christmas Eve Church Office Closed 7pm Christmas Eve Service</i> | 25  <i>Christmas Day</i> |
| 26 9:30am Worship 10:45am FF | 27 5:30pm Faithful Fitness 7pm Men's Bible Study | 28 9am Staff Mtg | 29 | 30 | 31 <i>New Year's Eve Church Office Closed</i> | |

Bulletin announcements are due 8am Thursday mornings.



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| 1 - Lavonne Hermstein Mandy Funk | 19 - Kent Jantz Logan Wulf |
| 2 - Susan Goerzen | 21 - Stan Goertzen |
| 3 - Mary Alderfer | 23 - Sophia Abrahams |
| 4 - Darrel Schroeder | 24 - Grace Regier |
| 5 - LeNora Duerksen | Vickie Schmidt |
| 8 - Ron Goerzen | Sherry Unruh, |
| Abigail Johnson | Denise Nickel |
| JJ Cashon | Alex Drake |
| 11 - Frank Ashley | 26 - Brenda (Rollin) Schmidt |
| Venita Schroeder | Duane Adrian |
| 13 - Rollin Schmidt | Lina Unruh |
| 15 - Devin Schroeder | 28 - Ruth Peters |
| Corynn Nickel | Daniel Graber |
| 16 - DeLome Schmidt | 29 - Carolyn Schmidt |
| Dale Alderfer | 30 - Phyllis Regier |
| Sheldon Goerzen | 31 - Ben Schmidt |



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| Rusten Schroeder & Susan Merrifield | Dec. 10, | 21 yrs. |
| Warren & Sheri Schmidt | Dec. 16, | 32 yrs. |
| Larry & Dora Goerzen | Dec. 26, | 49 yrs. |
| Bill & Sherry Unruh | Dec. 27, | 35 yrs. |
| Brent & Pamela Abrahams | Dec. 27, | 21 yrs. |
| Cleo & Faye Koop | Dec. 28, | 47 yrs. |
| John & Laura Goerzen | Dec. 28, | 8 yrs. |