

Faith Mennonite Church

Pastor: Joetta Schlabach

Deacons: Kami Blackwell Kinney, Cleta Roth Gingerich

Neil Okerlund, Beth Richardson, Hermann Weinlick

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FMC OFFICE HOURS: December 14-18

Pastor: Mon: 2-5 p.m., Wed 2-5 p.m., Thurs 10-4. Tuesday is a study day.
Joetta is open to receiving calls at home on Mon. and Wed. from 7-8:30 p.m.

Office Assistant: Wednesday & Friday 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Email all bulletin items before Wednesday evening to:

faithmc@faithmennonite.org

Dec 6: Attendance: 102 Offering: \$5,454

Christmas Program & Cookie Social, 4:45 p.m. Welcome back this afternoon to enjoy a candle-light service of carol singing, readings and children's participation. This is be followed by our annual cookie social; please bring a plate of cookies to share.

Prayer, meditation & discussion before worship, Sundays, 9-9:30 a.m. in the chapel. Beginning in Advent, Rich Deming has offered to host a time of prayer, silent meditation, and bible reading, followed with time for discussion. All are welcome. Meet in the education wing chapel. For more information contact Rich at 612-722-7625.

Church Meetings and Events

December 15– Lectionary Discussion Group (1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26; Luke 2:41-52) Trotter's, corner of Cleveland & Marshall, SP

December 14 – Church Council, 7 p.m., FMC

December 16 – Deacons, 9:30 a.m., Richardson's

December 16 – Christian Education, noon, FMC

December 24 – Christmas Eve Service of Lessons & Carols, 6:30 p.m.

Luke 3:7-18

John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, 'You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, "We have Abraham as our ancestor"; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the axe is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.'

And the crowds asked him, 'What then should we do?' In reply he said to them, 'Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise.' Even tax-collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, 'Teacher, what should we do?' He said to them, 'Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.' Soldiers also asked him, 'And we, what should we do?' He said to them, 'Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages.'

As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, 'I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing-floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.'

So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

Philippians 4:4-7

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

L: For the Word of God in Scripture,
For the Word of God within us,
For the Word of God among us,

All: Thanks be to God.

Litany of response and confession

(based on Zephaniah 3:14-20)

L: Lord, in this time of Advent, we celebrate your presence with us and long for your coming. We rejoice that you do not forget us, but break into the confusion of our lives. You keep coming in mercy to turn us around.

P: Lord, help us in our turning around. Help us repent and turn toward you.

Reader 1: We confess that we have tried many paths and that our wandering has made us weary.

P: Guide us with your grace.

Reader 2: Lord, in your loving kindness, help us fear no more.

P: Rejoice! Sing aloud! God forgives!

Readers 1 & 2: We rejoice because God is in our midst, turning us around and taking away our fear. God rejoices over us with gladness, God renews us with love.

L: God saves the lame, gather up the outcasts and changes their shame into praise.

All: We rejoice in your plan of salvation. You restore your people. Lord, come to save us! Amen.

Announcements from the wider church

From Mennonite Mission Network People in Sweden celebrate St. Lucia Day with candles on this date just before the winter solstice, a turning point in the darkness of winter. Pray for Disa and Tom Rutschman and their family as they share the light of Jesus through teaching and other youth ministries from their home on the Arctic Circle.

As you consider year-end giving, you may wish to make a contribution to **Central Plains Mennonite Conference** (www.centralplainsmennonite.net). They are reporting that at the mid point of their fiscal year (May through April) giving is approximately **9% under** the expected year-to-date income.

Announcements

It's snow shoveling time again! Our custodian Michelle Hutchins keeps the walks shoveled during the week, but we need weekend volunteers. Please sign up today!

Nursery volunteers needed for Dec. 20 and Dec 27th. If you know you will be in town and are willing to help out, please contact Brooke Derrickson or the church office.

Faith Church collected 112 lbs. of groceries for our latest contribution to Community Emergency Service. Remember to bring food gifts in to church.

TCMCC Board Members needed Lots of changes are planned for the 2010 MCC Relief Sale. Your help is needed to shape what will happen, specifically by serving on the board. More details and the structure for the next year's board and will be discussed at the January 25th board meeting. There are also non-board ways to get involved throughout the year. Please contact Thaine Dirks at 612-850-8419 or via email at lapha002@umn.edu to find out more.

Looking for books (from Pat Eliason) After Christmas I am planning to return to Jamaica to work at the Robin's Nest home for children again (I know, tough job, but someone has to do it!! -:) I am trying to build more of a library there for the kids and would like to take a box of books with me. I'm especially interested in books for the pre-teen/teenage group, as there are not many of those at this time. Do you have any books that would be appropriate for this age group, and in particular, with multicultural themes? If you do, please bring them to church in the next couple of weeks. I'll have a box in the back with my name on it. Thank you for considering this. Pat Eliason

Any room in the inn? Heather Wengerd's mother, Carol Helmuth, is wondering if anyone would need a house sitter, or have some extra space for her to stay over the Christmas holiday. She's looking for a place(s) between Dec. 17 or 18 and the 31st while she is here to spend time with Heather's and Isaac's families. You can contact Carol directly at chelmuth@ambs.edu

Ten Thousand Village at Kensington Park – If you live in the south metro, you might want to tell your neighbors about a TTV sale that is going on until Christmas in Kensington Park (77th and Lyndale, next to Potbelly's). The store is open Friday, Saturday and Sundays. On the 26th and 27th, any remaining product will be 50% off.

Thurs, Dec. 17, is the date of the Memorial Service for those who died and were homeless this year. If you are interested in the walk, memorial service, or community meal, check www.simpsonhousing.org