

New Holland Mennonite Church

December 3, 2023 • Volume 68, No. 49

Fellowship: 8:30 am • Sunday School: 9 am • Worship: 10:00 am

Second Sunday of Advent



How does a
weary world
rejoice? *We find joy in
connection*

About the Logo: “Two people—one radiating joy & the other wading into weariness—hold the world together.”

In community, our joy expands. When we can't rejoice, we can carry each other's joy. That is what Elizabeth and Mary do for each other. The good news begins to take shape in Elizabeth's womb, but scripture tells us that she stays secluded, hiding her pregnancy from others—that is, until Mary arrives at her door, also pregnant. Perhaps Mary's arrival is the inbreaking that changes everything for Elizabeth, for in that moment, her child leaps in her womb and she is filled with the Spirit. She can't help but to rejoice. Her joy is contagious and wraps around Mary like a hug.

Gathering & Praising God

How does a weary world rejoice?

Call to Worship

Candle Lighting

Prayer for Illumination

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming (VT 216)

Jenn Esbenshade

Video

Keith Miller

Keith Miller

Hearing God's Voice

Offering

Offertory: *Did You Feel the Mountains Tremble*

Kelsey Means

Scripture: Luke 1:24-45

Keith Miller

Conversation with Children

Michele Good

Sermon: “Joy in Connecting”

Pastor Dawn Ranck-Hower

Responding

Prayer of Confession

Pastor Dawn Ranck-Hower

Words of Forgiveness

Unexpected and Mysterious (VT 229)

Communion

Sharing and Announcements

Bryan Hower

Prayers of the People

“Adapted from a prayer by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed /
A Sanctified Art LLC / sanctifiedart.org”

Sending

I Can Celebrate You (bulletin insert)

Benediction

Keith Miller

Liturgy by Rev. Sarah Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

Coffee: Evelyn Bailey; **Greeters:** Jim Bailey; **Close:** Jim Bailey

Sound: Wade Esbenshade; **Offering:** Ruth Douglas Miller & Mike Good

What We Value

**With Jesus as our center, we commit to
including all people,
strengthening our relationships (and)
practicing peace and justice.**

(adopted February 2023)

Projected Artwork: "Two Mothers"

by Nicolette Peñaranda

Inspired by Luke 1:24-45

Acrylic, ink, and mixed media collage on canvas

A couple of months before I took on this project, I was forced into early labor and birthed our second child. Needless to say, I was still pretty raw with emotions and was processing the trauma. During that time, I found myself in isolation. Our days were spent driving back and forth to the NICU to check on our 3 lb. infant. It was terrifying and tiresome. But during that time, so many wonderful people sought us out. We were gifted food, baby clothes, childcare, and rest. But the greatest gift was the comfort I received from other people who had given birth. There was this sacred sharing of birth stories and postpartum depression. Parents passed on beautiful garments that they, too, received after birthing a preemie. Some of these pieces looked like they had been passed down many times before, like each thread held a memory from a different family. We were connected. It is because of this connection that parents share that I felt instantly connected to paying homage to Frida Kahlo's Two Fridas.² Rather than being connected from veins of the heart, Mary and Elizabeth would be connected through the uterus. Nearly a quarter of Black women between ages 18 and 30 have fibroids while also being the racial demographic with the highest maternal death rate in the United States. More than 100,000 women undergo some form of mastectomy each year. Globally, an estimated 14% of girls give birth before the age of 18. Where do these realities meet the heart of scripture? How do we see the struggles of infertility or empathize with the vulnerability that comes with not being a socially-accepted pregnant person? While Elizabeth is crowned with holy gray hair and a dress marked with the blood of previous miscarriages, Mary sits next to her holding a childhood doll, draped in the jewelry, flowers, and silks of a traditional Middle Eastern Jewish bride. Their stories and experiences are vastly different. But Mary sought out her kin. This reminds me that we do not need to do the hard things alone. There is power in connection. With you, there is joy.

—Rev. Nicolette Peñaranda

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

December 4: Eva May

NEXT SUNDAY: December 10

Coffee: Sue Martin; **Greeters:** Tim Martin; **Close:** Tim Martin

Worship Leader: Jenn Esbenshade; **Prayer:** Dawn Ranck-Hower

Song Leader: Kelsey Means; **Praise Team:** Wanda Gonzalez-Bortzel,
Bryan Hower, Jen Morales; **Sermon:** Hyacinth Stevens

Children: Seven Lantz; **Sound:** Kai Esbenshade

Offering: Wade Esbenshade & Brenda Martin Hurst

UPCOMING EVENTS

All events are at New Holland Mennonite Church unless otherwise indicated

December 9: Men's Prayer Breakfast, 7 a.m. Eli's Restaurant

December 21: Longest Night Service, 6:30 p.m.

December 24: Christmas Brunch, 9 a.m. / **Worship,** 10 a.m.

January 10: Men's Dinner, 5:30/6 p.m. Garden Spot Village

January 17: Women's Dinner, 5:30/6 p.m. GSV

February 11: Annual Congregational Meeting, 9 a.m.

November 26

Attendance: 41 (4 on zoom) • **Offering:** \$1,375.00

FINANCIAL UPDATE:

As of November 22, a \$7,320 deficit for the year.

Church News

December Food Drive: Fill the "stomach" so that stomachs can be filled. Bring food items for CrossNet Food Pantry during the month of December and put them in the large bin in the lobby. **Can we fill it to overflowing?**

Land Acknowledgment: We acknowledge, with humility, that the land where we sit and stand today is land that was home to the Susquehannock, Shawnee, and Lenape people. Let us be aware that we occupy their homeland, and that their presence is imbued in this land.

Pastor: Dawn Ranck-Hower; dawn.ranck@verizon.net; 1/215/237-1485

Leadership Team: Wade Esbenshade, Steven Lantz

18 Western Ave., New Holland, PA 17557 • 717/354-0602

www.NewHollandMC.org • Hearing Aids Available

2024 Directory: A reminder to view the directory online and either send corrections and an updated photo to Pastor Dawn OR let her know that there are no changes. Due December 13.

Community News

Repeat the Sounding Joy: An Mennonite Children's Choir of Lancaster (MCCL) 25th Christmas Concert featuring choir and brass (and our very own Seth!):

Sunday, December 3, 4 p.m. Neffsville Menonite Church

ELANCO Orchestra Concert: (with our very own Ava, Ellie, & Jordyn!), **Tuesday, December 12, 7 p.m.**, Garden Spot High School.

ELANCO Band Concert: (with our very own Maggie)!, **Thursday, December 14, 7 p.m.** Garden Spot High School.

The Walking Roots Band Christmas Benefit Concert: Join MCC for an evening of "Singing Light," an acoustic, folksy Christmas concert! Mark your calendars for an upcoming Walking Roots Band Christmas Benefit Concert in Lancaster, PA. **December 9, 6:30 p.m., Stumptown Mennonite Church**, (2813 Stumptown Road, Bird in Hand, PA 17505). (In partnership with Pennsylvania Relief Sale). This is a free event, but attendees are encouraged to consider making a donation in support of MCC's work around the world! Invite your friends to the concert.

Alive with 55 & Up: Ridgeview Mennonite Church, **Tuesday, December 12. TBD.** Lunch served after each meeting.

First Men's Dinner: 6 p.m. at Garden Spot Village, on **Wednesday, January 10** and every second Wednesday of the month through 2024. Room is reserved from 5:30-8:00, so feel free to come anytime after 5:30. Note: Food is available to purchase only until 6:30 p.m. The Concord Room is across the hall from Harvest Table. (Go in main entrance, turn right, go by Starbucks, keep going down the hallway until you see Harvest Table on the right. There are different stations with food and a salad bar. Buy food and join the group across the hall in the Concord Room.)

Save the Date: Stewardship University 2024: Rooted in Faith. Released for the Future. Friday, March 1, 6:30-9:30 p.m. at Lancaster Bible College. Everence Financial will host the final Stewardship University. Workshops will include beaking the cycle of homelessness, decluttering, making Medicare an easy step, your journey of wellness, retirement, and charitable stewardship. The cost has been reduced to \$10. Register by February 16 to bring a guest for free. Register at everence.com/StewU.

I Can Celebrate You

CRANHAM ("In the Bleak Midwinter")

Text: Anna Strickland (2023)

Music: Gustav Holst (1906)



I can cel - e - brate you, I can hold your joy
I can re - cog - nize good fruit that you will bear
We can hold each oth - er in our joy and fear



When the load is crush - ing and you've lost your voice
When your own self - doubt hides gifts you have to share
Know - ing that the Spir - it moves when we are near



I can cel - e - brate the pro - mise your life holds
I can re - cog - nize your Christ-light deep with - in
We can hold each oth - er, lift each oth - er up



When the wear - i - ness bears hea - vy on your soul
Ev - ery gift that God has sown wait - ing to be - gin
Fill - ing one a - noth - er from the Spir - it's cup