

New Holland Mennonite Church

December 22, 2024 • Volume 69, No. 51

Fellowship: 8:30 a.m. • Sunday School: 9:00 a.m. • Worship: 10:00 a.m.



Gathering & Praising God

Love Came Down at Christmas (VT 255) Jenn Esbenshade
Call to Worship / Candle Lighting Keith Miller
Prayer for Illumination
Oh, How Shall I Receive Thee (VT 215)

Hearing God's Voice

Conversation with Children Jen Morales
"Joseph's Dream" written by Rev. Anna Strickland
based on Matthew 1:18-25
Scripture: Luke 1:46-55
Sermon: "Hope Is Worth the Risk" Pastor Dawn Ranck-Hower

Responding

Prayer of Confession / Words of Forgiveness
Hark! the Glad Sound! (VT 217)
Prayer of the People Pastor Dawn Ranck-Hower
Lord's Prayer
Announcements

Sending

O Come, O Come, Immanuel (VT 210) (Vs. 1, 4, 6, 7)
Benediction

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

Coffee: Evelyn Bailey; **Greeter/Close:** Jim Bailey
Sound: Bryan Hower; **Nursery:** Ray Hurst
Offering: Ruth Douglas Miller & Lois Zimmerman

December 15

Attendance: 40 • **Offering:** \$4,215.00

NEXT SUNDAY: December 29

Coffee: Sue Martin; **Greeter/Close:** Tim Martin
Table Church: Brenda & Ray Hurst
Offering: Francy Bailey & Keith Miller

UPCOMING EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

All events are at New Holland Mennonite Church unless otherwise indicated

Vacation: Pastor Dawn and Bryan will be visiting friends in Singapore and Cambodia from December 25 through January 11. Ruth Douglas Miller and Dawn Kaczor are available for pastoral care while Pastor Dawn is away. Please pray for traveling mercies for Bryan and Dawn.

Prayer Concern: Jon Sommer died on Monday, December 16. Please hold Lyn and the rest of Jon's family in your prayers. A Celebration of Life service will be held on Sunday, May 18, 2025, at Garden Spot Village Chapel at 2:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 29: Christmas Brunch & Worship:
9-9:45 a.m. Brunch: 9-9:45 a.m. (note updated time!)
10:00 a.m. Worship service around tables led by Brenda and Ray Hurst. Please sign up by Thursday, December 26. (Sign up in weekly email). There is No Zoom or Sunday School.

Thursday, January 2: Men's Dinner at Garden Spot Village Concord Room. Room is reserved from 5:30-8:00. Food is available to purchase until 6:30 p.m.

Sunday, January 5, NO Communion or Fellowship Meal

Friday, January 24, Book Club: 7 p.m. At Pat Thomas house. Led by Dawn Ranck-Hower Book: *All That She Carried*

Saturday, February 1: Church Fondue Game Night! 5 p.m. Sign up link provided in weekly email.

Sunday, February 9: Congregational Meeting: 9 a.m.

Projected Artwork: “Joseph’s Dream”

by Lauren Wright Pittman

Inspired by Matthew 1:18-25

Hand-carved block printed with oil-based ink on patterned paper

The angel holds Joseph as his dream unfolds in quilted vignettes. At the top, Mary gazes ahead, pondering her role in welcoming the Son of God into the world. Below, a squishy baby Jesus peacefully rests as his glory shines on a longing world eager to soak up the light of Emmanuel. Just as a dream holds layers of meaning, this image reflects more than the sum of its parts.

I’m fascinated by symbology. Stars have come to represent both Mary and Jesus in liturgical art, so I decided to research stars in quilting. It turns out that quilting holds its own wealth of symbology through choices in color, shapes, patterns, etc. A star quilt holds significance in a number of different cultures, including the Lakota. Star quilts are given at important moments throughout one’s life, including birth, and the eight-pointed morning star “represents fulfillment, the release from darkness, [and] ushering in a new day.”

This brings me to another fascination of mine, Biblical numerology. One of my most well-worn resources is a glossary of common liturgical symbols in European Christian art called, Symbolism in Liturgical Art. In it, the writers describe that the eight-pointed star is often used in imagery of Christ as an allusion to the eighth day of creation when Christ rose from the dead, “a beginning of days outside of time.” It delights me that this eight-pointed star is made up of triangles with three sides. The number three references the Trinity, and therefore, the communal fullness of the Divine.

In researching imagery for Mary, I realized that both stars and lilies are often used in European art to celebrate Mary’s purity. My glossary reads: “Her bearing of Christ without loss of her virginity is seen as similar to stars sending out their light without loss of brightness.” Of all the things we can lift up about Mary, such as her courage, strength, or steadfast love, why emphasize her virginity? This feels incredibly limiting and dismissive and misses how incredible and multifaceted Mary is. In my image, I

want to reclaim the imagery of stars and lilies to represent how Mary is a brilliant, shining example of radical faithfulness in the face of every possible earthly fear. Lilies are resourceful, hearty plants which represent rebirth across cultures. I would argue that Mary is resilient in the face of an impossible task, and in many ways, the entire story of the people of God is reborn through Mary’s bravery.

— Lauren Wright Pittman

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

Leadership Team: Wade Esbenshade, Dawn Kaczor, Ruth Douglas Miller
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