

New Holland Mennonite Church

December 7, 2025 • Volume 70, No. 49

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



Gathering & Praising God

Santo, santo, santo (Holy, Holy, Holy) (VT 102) Jenn Esbenshade
Call to Worship Jenn Esbenshade
Candle Lighting
Prayer for Illumination
Hark! The Glad Sound! (VT 217)

Hearing God's Voice

Scripture: Matthew 11:1-11
Conversation with Children Ray Hurst
Sermon: "Are you the one...?" Pastor Dawn Ranck-Hower
"Show Up" Lyrics and music by Britt Kusserow
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Responding

Prayer of Confession & Words of Forgiveness
Looking Out a Prison Window (insert)
Prayer of the People Pastor Dawn Ranck-Hower
Announcements

Sending

O come, O Come, Immanuel (VT 210, v.1,2,7)
Benediction

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

Coffee: Ray Hurst; **Greeters:** Lisa, Joe, Grace Kehm;
Sound: Wade Esbenshade; **Nursery:** Bryan Hower
Close: Steven Lantz

Offering: Wanda Gonzalez Bortzel & Keith Miller

ATTENDANCE AND OFFERING: November 30
Attendance: 33 (3 on Zoom) • **Offering:** \$770.00

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

December 14: Bob Martin

NEXT SUNDAY: December 14 (Advent 3)

Coffee: Sue Martin; **Greeter:** Tim Martin
Worship Leader: Brenda Hurst; **Children:** Tammy Snader
Song Leader: Dawn Ranck Hower; **Sermon:** Kate Andre
Prayer: Ray Hurst; **Sound:** Bryan Hower
Nursery: Lois Zimmerman; **Close:** Tim Martin
Offering: Francy Bailey & Lois Zimmerman

UPCOMING EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

All events are at New Holland Mennonite Church unless otherwise indicated

2025 Financial Update: As of November 23, New Holland Mennonite Church has a **\$12,206 deficit** for the year.

CONGRATULATIONS to Mekdes Anshebo on passing the NCLEX, the standardized exam required for nursing licensure. **Mekdes is now officially an RN in the United States!** She will continue to work at Garden Spot Village.

BARBARA LONGENECKER died on Thursday, December 4, 2025. Please remember Barbara's children and grandchildren in your prayers as they mourn her loss and celebrate her life.

RHODA CLEMENS is currently in rehab at Maple Farms in Akron.

BRIDGE OF HOPE GRADUATION: Thank you to the neighboring group who helped a mom and her children graduate from the program recently! Group: Francy Bailey, Ray Hurst, Bryan Hower, Dawn Kaczor, Steven Lantz, and Dawn Ranck-Hower

THURSDAY: December 11: Gathering of Support POTLUCK: A safe place to connect in the midst of current chaos: 6 p.m., at the church. Bring a dish to share and join in conversation to find mu-

Banner on Left: “Hope Like A Dancer”

by Lauren Wright Pittman • Inspired by Matthew 11:1-11
Gouache, paint pens, colored pencils, and ink on paper

“John the Baptist was thrown in prison after publicly questioning the legality of Herod’s marriage (Matthew 14:3-5). He was not afraid to go toe-to-toe with the powerful, and perhaps he expected Jesus’ ministry to look more confrontational and politically strategic. In questioning Jesus, I wonder if John sought a particular answer to hang his hope on, that maybe the Messiah would be how he’d imagined him. Maybe Jesus would bust him out of jail and take things straight to Herod, but Jesus offers something else.

In this image, John sits in prison, letting the disciples’ testimony settle in. People with hearing, visual, and physical impairments experience new senses and mobility. Those with skin diseases are cleansed. Those with little material comfort are offered irrepressible hope, and the lungs of the dead are filled with the breath of life. I decided to image this good news through the dancing light of a lantern¹ in John’s prison cell. I chose dancing figures because dancing feels like a primal response to the radical healing taking place outside the prison walls. As these six dancers illuminate the cell, I imagine John, even if for a moment, breaking into a bit of laughter at the magnitude of Jesus’ ministry. Jesus was quite literally doing the unimaginable. He was removing barriers so that the marginalized were no longer reduced to begging and sitting on mats, shoved to the edges of society. He was not only healing physical ailments; perhaps more importantly, he was restoring people to community.

Out of all the miraculous actions mentioned, the news did not include “release of the captives” (Luke 4:18-19).² With this message, John would know that he was not going to be freed,³ and so, the number of dancers would remain one short of seven.⁴ As we know all too well, God’s work isn’t completed in Jesus’ time. We are still woefully short of realizing the fullness of God’s desire for all of creation, and the work is ours to see through. Until then, let us keep our eyes peeled for the glimmers of hope dancing all around us and work toward a day when all can join in that dance of wholeness.

—Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman

tual support and build friendships in local community. (Beverages and place settings provided). This gathering will continue on every second Thursday of the month. Invite friends!

SATURDAY, December 13: Singing Light: The Walking Roots Band Christmas Concert, 6:30 p.m. at Stumptown Mennonite Church. A wonderful evening of music, community, and supporting the Pennsylvania Relief Sale’s Annual Christmas Concert. Seating is available on a first-come basis. A free-will offering will be collected. Proceeds benefit Mennonite Central Committee.

WEDNESDAY, December 17: Book Club: *Midnight Library* by Matt Haig, 6:30 p.m. at Palermo’s. Discussion led by Jenn. (NOTE: New date, time, and place.)

What We Value

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

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
18 Western Ave., New Holland, PA 17557 • 717/354-0602
www.NewHollandMC.org • **Hearing Aids Available**

Looking Out a Prison Window

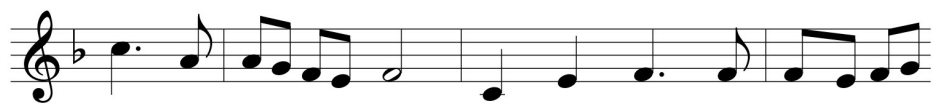
IRBY 8.7.8.7.7.7

Words by Anna Strickland, 2025

Music by Henry John Gauntlett, 1849



Look - ing out a pri - son win - dow, who can
All the things that keep us cap - tive shrink our
To our sib - lings still im - pris - oned be - hind
We are called to li - ber - a - tion, to be



see the flow - ers bloom? Hope dis - solves like dreams at
op - ti - mis - tic faith We must prac - tice hope on
bars of steel or fear Bring the mes - sage from our
freed and to set free Break - ing chains of world - ly



day-break leav - ing us an emp - ty room Still be-yond what
pur - pose e - ven when our spi - rits break 'Til at last our
Sav - ior: hope is real and dawn-ing near Tell the gos - pel
pow - ers who would claim our li - ber - ty Bo - dy, spi - rit,



we can see God is al - ways plant - ing seeds
free - dom comes And we fin - ally see the sun
all a - round New life springs up from the ground
mind and heart Li - ber - ate each cap - tive part