

Follow Jesus; Mature in Faith; Carry the Good News
At First Mennonite Church

Serving Today:

Pastor: Josh Janzen
Hosts: Don & Judy Jantzen
Audio: Jim Ensz
Ushers: Bill Thimm, Daryl Riesen
Candle lighters: Brandon & Care Esau family

Organist: Karen Wiebe
Live Stream: John Thimm
Power Point: Debbie Goossen
Readers: Worship Council

Offering tonight: Deacon's Fund; **Next Sunday,** Dec. 31: FMC

Happening this week:

Sunday, December 31 9:30 a.m. Adult Sunday School
New Year's Eve 10:30 a.m. Worship with **Communion**

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- **Need a hearing device?** Ask an usher for assistance.
 - Our **service is available** on youtube.com, search for fmcbeatrice. We're also on FM 107.5 in our parking lot. You'll find the bulletin at fmcbeatrice.org; click the More tab to select Documents, Church docs, bulletins.

First Mennonite Church; 6714 W. State Hwy. 4, Beatrice, NE 68310

Pastor: Josh Janzen; 402-228-2052; pastorjosh@fmcbeatrice.org

Church office: 402-251-7180

Website: fmcbeatrice.org **Church email:** office@fmcbeatrice.org

Deacons: Don Esau (402-223-9210), Vicki Hinz-Ensz (402-239-4174),
Sue Gerber (402-239-8857)

Church Chair: Jerry Reimer (402-239-2716)



Welcome to First Mennonite Church
December 24, 2023,
Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Prelude: "Noel" (recording by Lauren Daigle) Rikki Hohensee

Welcome Pastor Josh

Opening Hymn: "O Come, All Ye Faithful" VT 241

Call To Worship

L: Come, faithful watchers, and behold, your salvation is here!

P: We greet the Wondrous Light, our Messiah, Christ the Lord.

L: We have waited and watched, longing for God to show up and save us from the suffering and pain in our world.

P: We greet the Wondrous Light, the fulfillment of our shocking hope.

L: We have waited and watched, longing for peace to reign among us, a peace that removes unjust barriers, frees us from sin, and binds us together as neighbors, family, and friends.

P: We greet the Wondrous Light, the bringer of our just peace.

L: We have waited and watched, longing for joy that is persistent in the face of the grief, lament, chaos, and oppression that weigh on us day in and day out.

P: We greet the Wondrous Light, the source of our fierce joy.

L: We have waited and watched, longing to encounter the love that transforms us, the Love that is now here among us, first as a babe in a manger, then as a teacher, a friend, and our Savior.

P: We greet the Wondrous Light, Love Incarnate who has come to save us and transform us.

ALL: Amen.

Prayer

Hymn: *"It Came upon a Midnight Clear"* VT 248

Hymn: *"O Holy Night"* on screen

Prayer of Confession

L: God of light, we confess that we have gone astray and have left Your light.

P: We follow the dim lights of the world of success and fortune. We follow the dim lights that call us to be more religious by following rules. We follow the facing light of only personal salvation.

L: Forgive us for not seeking the true Light

P: of Your love for all the world.

L: Forgive us for not following the ways of Jesus,

P: who commanded us to love one another.

L: O God, call us to be light-bearers of love, compassion, and justice, in which the Mystery of Your Love is revealed.

P: In the name of Jesus the Messiah, we pray. Amen.

Hymn: *"Angels We Have Heard on High"* VT 249

Scripture: John 1:1-14; Luke 1:26-38, 46-56; Matthew 1:18-25;
Luke 2:1-20; Matthew 2:1-12

Hymn: *"O Little Town of Bethlehem"* VT 245

Prayer

Hymn: *"Joy to the World"* VT 240

Advent Candle Lighting

Reader 1: To a people longing for hope and yearning for deliverance, the prophet Isaiah declared,

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness, on them light has shined....For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Reader 2: Tonight, we come seeking hope, peace, joy, and love, and we find these things in a child. God made flesh as a baby in a manger. A baby who is both the beginning and the end of our salvation, who dwells with us even now, our Emmanuel, *God with us.*

Congregation: We live as people in the in-between who celebrate the arrival of the Light that shines in lost and broken places as we wait for the day when we will live in the fullness of God's kingdom.

Reader 1: We light these candles as signs of our shocking hope, our just peace, our fierce joy, the love that transforms us, and Jesus Christ, our wondrous Light. May the Light burning in our hearts guide us, comfort us, protect us, and tend us in all seasons and circumstances, reminding us that day and night, in the light and in the darkness, God is with us. Our salvation has come! Amen.

Benediction

Sending Song: *"Silent Night"* VT 244

Vs. 1 in German; Vs. 1-4 in English

Offering to the Deacon's Fund

Welcome! We are glad you are here! **Join us December 31 at 10:30 for worship with Communion.** No Children's Sunday School. Please note there is not an evening service.

Wishing You a Blessed Christmas!