



Baptism of the Lord (& Epiphany) January 7, 2024

“This image offers a snapshot of Jesus right before he steps into his calling, on the threshold of spectacular affirmation. He is completely suspended, embraced, and upheld by the waters of baptism. The water’s surface is choppy. The future is unknown and precarious. His path is a lonely and formidable one, eventually leading to his suffering and death. Despite what is to come, Jesus reaches toward the surface. Two fish are drawn to the light of his halo, foreshadowing his companionship with fishers and his miraculous feeding of the five thousand. All of creation is leaning into his call.

This is what trusting your belovedness feels like – muscle and bones relieved of gravity’s burden, serenity, weightlessness, oneness with creation, and the warmth of God’s love permeating every call of your body and every corner of your soul.” (Lauren Wright Pittman, artist)

How does a weary world rejoice? We trust our belovedness

EMMANUEL ... GOD IS WITH US!

Prelude

Grounding Moment: *The Bravest Thing We Can Do**

Call to Worship*

There are some days
when I need the reminder
that I belong to God.
Do you ever feel that way?

YES. WE DO.

**THE WORLD CAN BE A HARSH PLACE;
WE OFTEN NEED THAT REMINDER.**

Well then, let us care for one another.
Let us speak the truth we each need to hear.
Church, you belong to God.
You are God’s beloved.

FRIEND, YOU BELONG TO GOD.

YOU ARE GOD’S BELOVED.

Let us worship the God who knows our names.

LET US WORSHIP THE GOD WHO CALLS US BELOVED. AMEN.

HYMN *Love Came Down at Christmas* VT 255

Fellowship Greeting & Sharing the Peace of Christ

WE TELL GOD'S STORY

Call to Confession*

Prayer of Confession*

Loving God,

From the very beginning, you breathed life into us and called us good. However, somewhere along the way we replaced "good" with "not enough." Somewhere along the way we turned the volume up on that phrase and began to doubt our own self-worth. Forgive us, for this is not what you have taught us. For when the world tells us we are not enough, you call us beloved. Show us how to return to that truth. Show us how to let go of our weariness and rest in that good news. Amen.

Words of Forgiveness*

Family of faith, God's grace and understanding is deeper and wider than we could possibly imagine. So say these words of grace with me:

Our story begins with belovedness.

Even when we lose our way,
even if we stumble and fall,

God never stops breaking through the clouds to claim us.

We are known. We are forgiven. We are beloved.

Thanks be to God! Amen.

Children's Time

Prayer for Illumination*

Scripture Reading: *Luke 3:21-22*

Sermon

HYMN *Longing for Light* (verses 1,2, 5) VT 715

WE SHARE OUR STORIES

Star Words, Prayers of the People & Lord's Prayer

Music for Meditation



Generosity Moment – Kansas Mennonite Relief Sale
Announcements

WE GO REJOICING!

HYMN *O Beautiful Star of Bethlehem* VT 275

Benediction: *How does a weary world rejoice?**

Postlude ... *receive the postlude as a musical blessing for the week ahead*

**Prayers by Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org*

Sound: Earl Ediger
Livestream: Jonathan Wenger
Ushers: Susan Combs & Joretta Martens
Organist: Pauline Buller
Song Leader: Pastor Tonya
Worship Leader: Joel Iwashige
Children's Time: Hilda Iwashige
Scripture Reader: Sadie Pritchett
Sermon: Pastor Tonya Ramer Wenger
Generosity Moment: Delon Martens

Nursery: Please feel free us use the nursery, and make sure your children are cared for as we do not have a nursery attendant today.

Artwork on front of bulletin: *Beloved* by Lauren Wright Pittman // A Sanctified Art

TODAY:

- **Fellowship time in Common Grounds** following worship, with ice cream cake to celebrate Deanna Mace's birthday
- **Sunday School resumes** for all ages (11am-Noon)

MARK YOUR CALENDAR:

- Jan 8 – **Craft Night** 6:30-8:00pm
- Jan 21 – **Anabaptist World Fellowship Sunday** with ***One Lunch Offering*** for Mennonite World Conference (donate what it would cost you to buy one lunch). *We will also celebrate communion together during worship.*
- Jan 24 – **Joint CMT and CT (Coordination Teams) Gathering** 6:30pm
- Jan 27 – **FMC serves at the Soup Kitchen**

INVITING CONTRIBUTIONS for FMC improvements:

The congregation has voted to install solar panels, to update our fire alarm system, and to install magnetic door openers on the internal fire doors. Criteria for accessing the Wedel Fund is that 10% of the cost must be raised in advance. We need to raise approximately \$4,000, and invite contributions online or by check with a designation for “Solar Panels & Fire Alarms.”



First Mennonite Church - Hutchinson KS

Arms Wide Open: To Serve & Be Served

Phone: 620-662-9385

Office Hours: Tues & Thurs 9-2pm; Wed 10-1pm

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Pastor Jim Unruh: jhunruh.ju@gmail.com
