



Moundridge, Kansas
www.edenmennonite.org

EDEN ECHOES

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Advent – Christmas – Epiphany 2017 *Yes! Let it be!*



Advent is the four weeks prior to Christmas in which the church “forgets” in order to remember, corporately and meaningfully, the joy of that first coming of Jesus to Bethlehem. It is a time of waiting, preparing, and hoping. It is a time within the life of the church where we are invited to give voice to our longings, to our broken places. We find these voices of longing in the ancient prophetic texts of God’s people who knew devastation in their life in exile. They longed for God’s intervention into the darkness and cried out to God to “tear open the heavens and come down” (Isaiah 64:1). Our voices echo this longing for God to come once again to break into our messed-up world of darkness.

The scripture readings for Advent also contain voices of hope. We are drawn to Mary’s story and her encounter with the angel. Mary hears from the angel this amazing plan that she is to carry and give birth to the Son of God! She responds, “Here am I, the servant of the Lord: **let it be** with me according to your word.” (Luke 1:38) From these words, “let it be,” Mary is often characterized as a meek and passive, obedient servant. Meekness and obedience do have value, but a close look at the language Luke uses suggests a more active engagement on Mary’s part. In the Greek, the verb mood for “let it be with me” expresses a wish or a prayer. This means that Mary is giving voice to an active commitment. Mary is expressing a strong desire to be an active part of God’s plan! She not only accepts God’s plan and path for her, but actively embraces it.

This Advent season we are invited, along with Mary, to make this our prayer to God: “Yes! Let it be!” Each week we will be drawn into ways of expressing this sense of prayerful desire to participate in God’s activity. Ways that we can accept our role to be co-participants in God’s work in our world. Ways we can join God’s dream “to bind up the brokenhearted, proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners.”

Through the four weeks of Advent we will start by awakening to God’s purpose even in darkness and uncertainty. We will move to calling on God to make things ready – the mountains leveled, the paths made straight, our hearts prepared. We will choose to catch God’s vision of shalom in the movement of the Spirit that is already at work restoring creation. And infused with God’s vision, we will proclaim with confidence, “Let it be with us according to your word!”

Advent leads us to Christmas and the celebration of the outpouring of God’s love in the birth of Jesus. As the apostle Paul writes in Galatians, “But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children.” (Galatians 4:4-5) We marvel at the vastness of God’s plan. We celebrate in exuberant praise what God has done and will continue to do.

We will celebrate as we gather on Christmas Eve to hear the story once again and we will express our joy with a hymn-sing service the following Sunday. Then on Epiphany Sunday we will celebrate the light and be empowered to be God’s illuminating presence in the world. May it be so!

Pastor Dianne

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Eden Leadership Team Minutes

Vision/Mission Statement

Mission: To be a community that follows Jesus in all we say and do.

Vision: A people transformed by the Holy Spirit in worship and service, so that through us God's love and peace are made known to the world.

The Eden Leadership Team met Monday, November 27, at the church office at 7:00 p.m.

Present were: Becky Koller, JoLene Kaufman, Carina Knight, Pat Stucky, Brenda Dalke, Pastor Dianne Schmidt, Kyle Neufeld, Gary Regier, Jean Regier, Austin Goering, Jerry Schrag, and Pastor Derek King

Absent was: Tim Regehr.

Carina Knight led in devotions. She read *The Secret to Hospitality* and led in prayer.

Kyle called the meeting to order and lit the candle to represent the presence of the Holy Spirit and read the Vision/Mission Statement.

The minutes were approved as printed.

Budget Report - Austin Goering:

Office renovation income:	\$50,000.00
Office renovation expenses:	\$93,000.00
Checking account transfer:	\$25,000.00
Difference:	(\$19,000.00)

Revenue: \$386,000.00 (includes office renovation)

Expenses: \$470,000.00

Difference: (83,000.00)

\$43,000.00 is for office renovation so the actual difference is (\$40,000.00)

Budgeted \$410,000.00

Yesterday's offering was approximately \$14,000.00

Stewardship Commission - Carina Knight:

Carina Knight handed out the proposed budget that will be presented to the congregation on December 3 and voted on December 10. It was discussed whether we should increase the mission giving by the cost of living. It would be around \$3,000.00. The Stewardship Commission will consider it for next year. The maintenance budget was increased by \$19,500.00 because of the need for a new AC unit.

Stewardship Commission brought a motion to approve the 2018 budget as amended. Associated Churches was changed to Associated Ministries. Becky Koller seconded. Motion carried.

Worship Commission - Jerry Schrag shared they discussed the possibility of having recycling at the church at least for paper and bulletins. Kyle will look into it.

Peace/Witness Commission - Jean Regier:

They had a shower for a Congolese refugee family, Dianne and her husband and child. They talked with Kendra Allison about how they can help other refugee families in the future.

Marge Goering approached the Peace/Witness Commission and asked if all the food and money donations could just go the Moundridge Food Pantry instead of being split between the Moundridge Food Pantry and the McPherson County Food Bank. The commission approved that suggestion and it will begin with the December donations.

Tim and Susan Goering have been working with some people from Wichita who are starting a church. The Commission granted them some money.

Trustees Commission - Gary Regier:

The Church office open house was well attended.

They will start putting up scaffolding for the siding project on Thursday.

The trees were all removed from the lagoon and they will do a little dirt work.

2 graves were added: Eugene Stucky and Leroy Schrag.

Christian Education/Discipleship Commission - Pat Stucky:

The winter quarter and Christmas Eve offerings will go to MDS.

The Wednesday night meals will start again on January 10 for 10 weeks.

Pastor Dianne:

She and the Deacons will coordinate visitation to see how the Deacons will be a part of visitation.

Pastor Derek:

The Foundations class went well.

He has been made aware of 2 separations or divorces in church. Hoping to plan a marriage enrichment course after Lent for 4-6 weeks. They will be looking for child care. The longest night service will be at church December 21 at 7:00 p.m. They want to recognize all the darkness among the glitz and glamour. There will be candlelight, music and words of comfort.

Holy Week Services will be March 25 and 26, 2018 at the United Methodist Church. Derek King will be the speaker. The Leadership Retreat will be January 27, 2018. ELT, Commissions, SCRT and Gifts Discernment are to attend. The 2 positions for Gifts Discernment have been filled. Business Meeting will be December 10 between church and S.S.

There's more →→→→

Eden Leadership Team (ELT) Report Continued

Pastor Review Process:

Kyle explained that the review committee decided to delay this process until after the holidays. The timeline will most likely be in late January or February. They need to communicate the purpose of review and people's involvement.

Constitution Review (Membership):

Kyle handed out the Article VI Membership and read it aloud. Wider fellowship member would replace the wording of Associate Member.

Kyle moved to approve the Constitution by ELT as previously reviewed and Article VI as presented today. Gary Regier seconded. Motion carried.

The timeline to present the constitution to the congregation will take place at the next meeting.

The Year End Celebration will be February 11, 2018 with a potluck meal.

NEXT MEETING: January 22, 2018 at the church office at 7:00 p.m. Kyle will have devotions.

Meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.
JoLene Kaufman, Secretary.



Plan to attend the Christmas Eve Service and invite your family and friends to join you. "The Way to Bethlehem" is the theme for this year's service, planned for 7 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 24 in the sanctuary. Children and youth will present readings and songs which speak about the first visitors to the Child. During the service featuring a shadow play, the congregation will sing hymns and light candles while sitting in the pews. An offering will be collected for Mennonite Disaster Service. Refreshments will follow the service.

Christmas Eve Committee: June and Perry Krehbiel, DaWayne and Britney Stos, Ian and Shayna Smith.



The Food Pantry has been the recipient of our gifts of food the first Sunday of each month. These gifts have been divided between the Moundridge Food Pantry and the McPherson County Food Bank. The Moundridge Food Pantry has seen an increased need in families needing this assistance. Due to this increased need the Peace/Witness Commission has authorized that the gifts from Eden be all given to the Moundridge Food Pantry.

If you have any questions please contact members of the Peace/Witness Commission. Pat Rupp, Jeri Kaufman, Kirby Goering, Mark Stucky, Jean Regier



The Longest Night Service Thursday, December 21, 7 pm

For those of us who dwell in the Northern Hemisphere the seasons of Advent and Christmas are celebrated when the days are short and the nights are long. It is a poignant time of year to proclaim the coming of the Light that will not be overcome by any darkness. As we gather for the Longest Night Service, we will acknowledge the darkness of grief and loss in our lives that longs for this Light. We will also honor the presence of those for whom there may be sadness rather than celebration as Christmas approaches. In this service, we will light candles to remember those loved ones we have lost and other losses that we have experienced.

The Perfect Gift

Do you stress about finding just the right gift for everyone on your Christmas list? Does it make the season more a hassle than a joy? Pastor Mike Slaughter reminds us that Christmas isn't about perfect presents for people, as if it were their birthday — or ours. Christmas is about the perfect presence of Immanuel, God with us, through the birth of Jesus; it's his birthday, after all!



In *Christmas Is Not Your Birthday* (Abingdon), Slaughter writes, "How funny that it can be so hard to find gifts that will please certain family members or friends — the people who seem to have everything — and yet it is so clear what the Lord of lords and King of kings wants for his birthday. God wants you — your time, your talent and your treasure — used in service to others."



Mary Martha Circle says Thank You for buying and donating school supplies and your help in packing the school kits. We were able to take 368 kits to Mennonite Central Committee in N. Newton. Thank You Very Much.

Thank you for your gift to the Bethel College Fund and the support it provides our students! We have 503 students this semester and thank you for sending those from your community.

Robb Shunn
Annual Fund Director

Thank you for your contribution to Mennonite Disaster Service.

Never in my 15-year MDS history have we had three category 4 hurricanes back-to-back-to-back, but the generosity from donors like you strengthens me and gives hope to those suffering in the wake of hurricanes Maria, Irma and Harvey that their homes can be cleaned up, repaired or rebuilt if necessary.

Thanks to your support, hardworking MDS volunteers are cleaning up flood and wind-damaged homes in Texas and Florida, reminding disaster survivors that someone cares.

We are in Puerto Rico to assist those suffering from the impacts of Hurricane Maria. While preparations are being made to send volunteers to clean up and repair, we are partnering with Mennonite Central Committee to ship canned meat and with Mennonite Health Services to attend to medical needs.

Before hurricane season, MDS had commitments to respond to other disasters in West Virginia, Louisiana, California, and South Dakota. Your gift enables MDS to remain in these communities and respond to the areas affected by the hurricanes.

With gratitude,
Kevin King
Executive Director

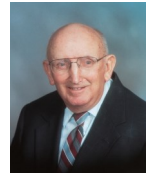
I teach Anabaptist Studies at AMBS, and direct the Institute of Mennonite Studies here. As such I have the great responsibility of teaching the next generation of leaders about the gospel of Jesus Christ, as this gospel has been understood and renewed in 500 years of Anabaptist Christian witness.

I'm grateful for your gift to the seminary. Without it we wouldn't be able to train leaders who will encourage and form Anabaptist witness today. May God bless you.

Jamie Pitts
AMBS staff



Eugene Stucky (85) passed away on Wednesday, Nov 8 at Mercy Hospital. Funeral and graveside services were held on Monday, Nov 13 at Eden. We extend our sympathy to his brother Elwood and all of his extended family.



Vernon R. Goering ((86) passed away on Monday, November 27 at Newton Medical Center. Funeral and graveside services were held at Eden on Friday, Dec 1. We extend our sympathy to his wife Marina, his children Keven (Sheryl), Jo Stucky (Darrel), Jan Nattier (Gregg), and his sisters Lorita Zook (Herb), and Joy Thiessen (Leslie).



September 9, 2017

Michael Stucky and Autumn Blaylock



Invitation to Share

The Invitation to share for the month of December is comforters and blankets (60" x 80" or 82" by 90"). Comforters specifications: New or nearly new material. Single/twin preferred. Winter weight preferred. Please use quilt batting. Knotting with crochet cotton (4" - 8" apart).

If you would like to support this project you may write a check to Eden with "invitation to share" in the memo line and mail it to Eden at P.O. Box 406, Moundridge, KS 67107.



The great date debate

In *Lessons of Christmas* (Xulon Press), Daniel Armah notes that ancient scholars expressed more than 130 opinions about Jesus' actual birthday, covering every month of the year. "Even with the debatable date," he concludes, "the blessing of Christmas is obvious."

Likewise, our Christmas celebrations aren't diminished by the possible timing of Jesus' birthday with secular festivals. "If December 25th was chosen to rival other pagan worship activities ... for want of a real date," Armah writes, "then that decision has been successful. Indeed those ancient pagan festivals have all been swallowed up, and Christianity has been growing since."



A holiness invasion

"Advent" means "coming," of course, and the promise of Advent is that what is coming is an unimaginable invasion. The mythology of our age has to do with flying saucers and invasions from outer space, and that is unimaginable enough. But what is upon us now is even more so — a close encounter not of the third kind but of a different kind altogether. An invasion of holiness. That is what Advent is about.

—Frederick Buechner, *The Clown in the Belfry*

Everlasting joy

In a *Chicken Soup for the Soul* sampler, Karen Asire tells of a particularly difficult Christmas after her husband left and began divorce proceedings. As Karen and her three young children set up their tree, she fought tears and secretly tucked aside certain ornaments, such as one announcing "Our First Christmas Together."



Several days later, a neighbor stopped by with a gold decoration proclaiming JOY. "We've hung this ornament on our tree for several years," she explained, "but this year we wanted you to have it." When Asire hung it on the tree and stepped back, "all the other ornaments seemed to fade into the background, and all [she] saw was the shimmering gold of the JOY ornament." She allowed herself to cry then, grateful for the reminder that amid grief and heartache, God's love shines.

Pain fades in time, while God's Christmas gift - Jesus - brings joy that lasts forever.



After Mary learned she was pregnant with God's Son, what relative — also miraculously pregnant — did she go visit?

- A. Esther
- B. Elizabeth
- C. Anne
- D. Anna

B. Elizabeth

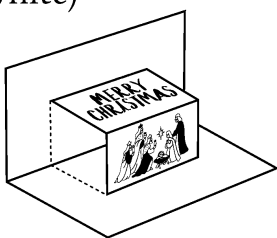


POP-UP CARD

Share the good news of Jesus' birth with this creative Christmas card.

What you need:

- Construction paper (two pieces, including one white)
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Pens
- Glue stick



What you do:

1. Neatly fold the white paper in half, short side to short side.
2. Draw two parallel lines (at least 2 inches apart) from the fold to about halfway to the edge. Cut along the lines.
3. Fold the cut section back and forth so it pops up.
4. Push the section up so it pops up inside the folded paper. Draw a nativity scene on the pop-up box.
5. Fold the colored paper in half, short side to short side. Place the white paper inside it and glue the white paper down, being careful not to glue the pop-up box.
6. Write a Christmas message and give or send the card to someone.



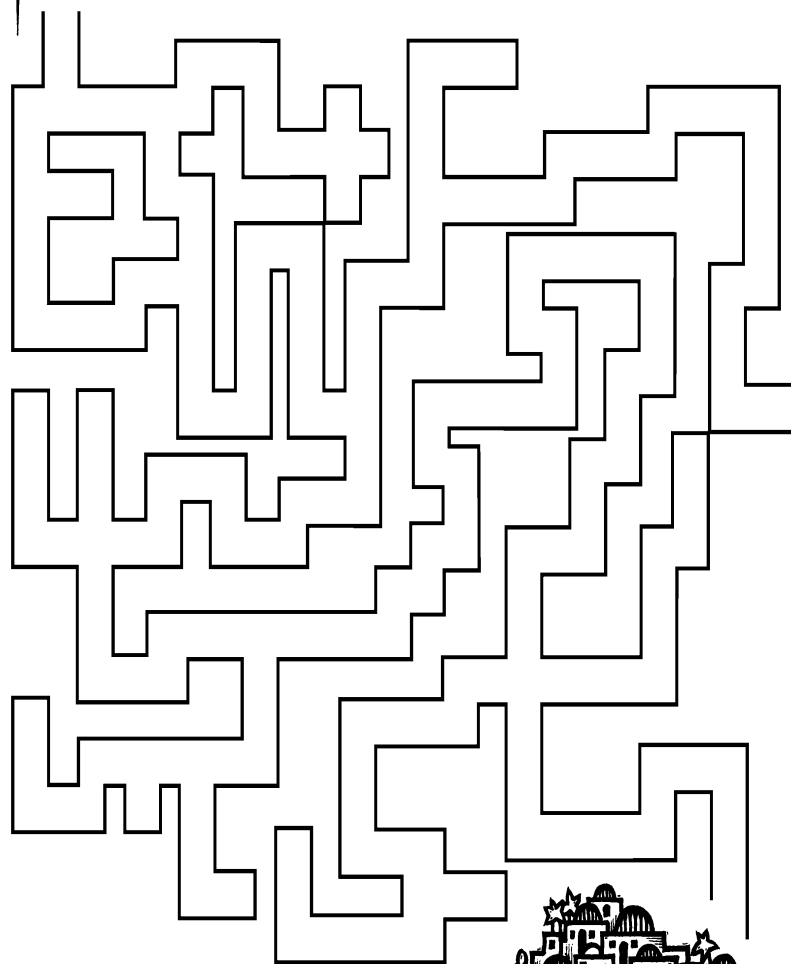
JOURNEY TO BETHLEHEM



START

In the Christmas story in Luke 2, an angel tells some shepherds to go see baby Jesus in Bethlehem.

Directions: Follow the maze to arrive in Bethlehem.



BETHLEHEM





- | | |
|--|---|
| 1- Karey French
Nick Graber
Roberta Ollenburger | 20- Christina Graber
Kollen Shirack (Ross & Christy) |
| 2- Tony Schrag | 21- Victoria Stucky
Danny Zerger |
| 3- Leland Goering
Polly Schrag
Angela Tipton | 22- Emmi Schrag (David & Hillery Schrag)
Jason Neufeld |
| 4- Alexis Westfall (Jacob & Tonya) | 23- Chelsey Knight |
| 6- Bill Toews | 24- Marla Gillmore
Ruth White |
| 7- Annie Toews | 26- Charlene Epp
Ronald Stucky |
| 8- Calvin Preheim
Katelynn Stucky (Kevin & Gayle)
Teresa Stucky | 27- Annah Schrag (Matt & Rashelle)
Lauren Bonde |
| 9- Alison Schrag (Matt & Rashelle) | 28- Blair Goering
Annie Schrag
Judy Sebo |
| 10- Galen Waltner | 29- Kim Cutting
Aaron Parsons (Rob & Lori) |
| 11- Deborah Koehn
Bryan Zerger | 30- Dick Zerger |
| 12- Ethan Knight
Miriam Krehbiel
Norman Wedel | 31- Ronnie Schrag |
| 13- Reese Gehring
Christine Goering
Tonya Westfall
Haley Schrag | |
| 16- Makenna Hayes (Mike & Kelly)
Sarah Erb | |
| 18- Becky Setser
Kurt Graber
Leda Kaufman
Jerry Stucky | |
| 19- Seth Goering
Zaeta Knoll (Dan)
Ernest Krehbiel
Judy Krehbiel
Jacey Krehbiel
Kyle Schrag | |

If there has been an omission or mistaken date please notify the church office.



- | | |
|--|--|
| 3- Fred & Polly Schrag | 22- Mark B. & Sheila Goering |
| 11- David & Margaret Goering | Robert D. & Katy Schrag |
| 16- Kirby & Christine Goering | 28- Matt & Lindsey Begnoche |
| 17- Josh & Emily Regier | 29- Don & Bonnie Kaufman
Darrell & Bobbi Schrag |
| 18- Steve & Barbara Goering
Michael & Margaret Krehbiel | 30- Stephen & Sandra Koontz
DaWayne and Britney Stos
Emory & Naomi Wedel |
| 19- Daniel & Janet Schrag
Kelly & Donna Stucky | |
| 20- Homer & Dorothy Goering | |

Up-Coming Events

Dec 5:	6:30 p.m. Edu/Disc Commission mtg. at church office
Dec 6:	7:30 p.m. Ladies Choir
	8:00 p.m. Chancel Choir
	8:45 p.m. Men's Chorus
Dec 12:	6:30 p.m. Worship Commission mtg.
Dec 13:	6:00 p.m. Deacon Potluck @ Laurie Schrag's home
	6:30 p.m. Christmas Eve service practice
	7:30 p.m. Ladies Choir
	8:00 p.m. Chancel Choir
Dec 20:	6:30 p.m. Christmas Eve service practice
	7:30 p.m. Ladies Choir
	8:00 p.m. Chancel Choir
Dec 21:	7:00 p.m. The Longest Night Service
Dec 24:	7:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Program
Dec 25:	Christmas Day—Church Office closed
Jan 1:	New Year's Day—Church Office closed
Jan 10:	6:00 p.m. Potluck meal in fellowship hall followed by games
	7:30 p.m. Ladies Choir
	8:00 p.m. Chancel Choir
Jan 17:	6:00 p.m. Meal
	6:45 p.m. Bible Study for children and adults
	7:30 p.m. Ladies Choir
	8:00 p.m. Chancel Choir
	8:45 p.m. Men's Chorus

December 2017						
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10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						



January 2018						
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14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			



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