

# Grace Hill Mennonite Church

November 30, 2008

Whitewater, Kansas

Worship 9:30 a.m.

Sunday School 10:45 a.m.

Pastor: James Voth

Youth Pastor: Katherine Goerzen

Keyboard: Linda Harms

Chorister: Katherine Goerzen

Worship Leader: Valerie Klaassen

## First Sunday of Advent – Communion

*Restore us, O God; let your face shine,  
That we may be saved. Psalm 80:3, 7, 19*

*When we wander in darkness and despair, God's face seems hidden from us. We cry out to God to restore us, keeping alert and watching for God's face to shine among us.*

### Prelude

### Welcome and Announcements

*A special welcome to each of our guests! During this time we spend a few moments introducing our guests. We're glad you have come to worship with us. May you sense God's peace and direction as we meet together with our Creator and Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.*

- \* **Hymnal No. 186** *Fling wide the door, unbar the gate!*  
*Lighting of the God Candle*

- \* **Call to Worship** Based on Isa. 64:1-9, Ps. 80:3 and Mk. 13:24-37

Leader: People of God, look around you. The time is ripe for God's coming.

**People: The earth is silent, the darkness is tangible,  
our world is in upheaval, and God often seems hidden.**

Leader: People of God, stay alert. The season of God's coming has arrived.

**People: How will God be revealed? Will it be like a fire,  
an earthquake, or a knock at the door?**

Leader: People of God, keep watch. God comes in places and at times we least expect.

**People: Without God's presence, we wither and die.  
We are blown away like a leaf in the wind.**

*All: Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved.*

### \* Invocation

- \* **No. 173** *Savior of the nations, come!*  
*Lighting of the First Advent Candle by Carine Claassen*

**Offering** Local Church

### Prayers of the Congregation

Leader: Unseen God, we bring to you our concerns

*Sharing of concerns by the congregation*

Leader: For the darkness of waiting, of not knowing what is to come,  
Of staying ready and quiet and attentive,  
We praise you, O God.

Unseen God, we bring to you our joys and thanksgivings

*Sharing of praise and thanksgiving by the congregation*

Leader: For the darkness of hoping in a world which longs for You,  
For the wrestling and laboring of all creation,  
For wholeness and justice and freedom,  
We praise you, O God; Spirit filling us  
and Christ with us. Amen.

### Children's Moments

Kristine Goossen

*Children to age 5 may be dismissed to the library for child care*

**Old Testament Reading** Isaiah 64:1-9

Laura Harms

**Special Music**

Mylin Brimm

**Gospel Reading** Mark 13:24-37

Brett Harms

**Sermon** *Tear Open Heaven and Forgive Us!*

- \* **Hymn of Response 463** *Let all mortal flesh keep silence*

### Celebration of the Lord's Supper

### \* Benediction

\* **Benediction Hymn No. 172** *O come, O come, Immanuel*

**Postlude**

\*Indicates those comfortable in doing so, please stand

At the conclusion of the worship service we invite the adults to be seated and take a few moments to greet one another while the children are dismissed to their Sunday school classes.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES BEGIN AT 10:45 A.M.  
EVERYONE IS WELCOME!**

**For Sharing and Prayer**

The Administrative Council is pleased to announce that Rev. Marvin Zehr, former Western District Conference minister, will serve as our interim pastor beginning January 1, 2009. He will serve  $\frac{3}{4}$  time, preaching two Sundays a month plus the fifth Sunday. He is planning to have his office at the church; office hours will be posted at a later date.

**Western District Conference:** Pray for Dorothy Nickel Friesen as she attends the annual MC USA and MC Canada conference ministers' meeting in Kansas City, MO. Also pray for the WDC staff transition in Texas.

**Mennonite Mission Network:** Please pray for Mennonite Voluntary Service participants serving with a refugee and immigration resettlement program and with youth care in Sioux Falls, SD – Udo Behn, Betha Maust and Ryan Troyer.

**Harvey County Homeless Shelter** A Team Leader for the homeless shelter in Newton is needed from our congregation. The team leader arranges for volunteers and meals for four nights during our church's week which comes approximately every 13 weeks. Please contact James Regier or Diana Schunn.

## Church Events

**Monday at 2:00 p.m.** Hands of Friendship meet at the church. Note change of regular date and time. Program: Emma Mae Litton will share a special Christmas program "God Gave Us The Seasons" with Rita Patterson giving the devotions. Bring finger food snack with recipe printed on one side of the card or page. Recipes will be returned. Financial Project: Salvation Army families.

**Wednesday 6:10 p.m.** Kid's Meal at the church\*  
**6:50 – 7:30 p.m.** Adult Choir  
**7:00 – 8:15 p.m.** Christmas Program Practice  
**7:30 – 8:00 p.m.** Adult-praise, prayer, biblical reflections\*\*  
\*If you are unable to attend the meal, please contact Kaye Penner (283-3948) or Barb Voth (283-2644).

Cost of the meal: High School & Adults \$3.00 Children \$2.50  
\*\**Each Wednesday evening* from 7:30 to 8:00 p.m. all are welcome to a time of celebrating our faith, sharing our prayers and reflecting on the Scripture from the past Sunday's sermon. Come and join us in the room just west of the kitchen. Pastor Jim

**Sunday, December 14** Middle school and high school Christmas caroling with the Spiritual Council. Meet at the church at 2:00 p.m. We plan to return to the church by 5:00 p.m. for chili and all the fixins.

**Sunday, January 4** Farewell for Pastor Jim and Barb

## high school youth group

**Columbus 2009:** Today is the LAST DAY to let Pastor Katherine know whether you wish to go to Columbus 2009 (MCUSA Convention).

**Angel Tree Shopping:** We will be going to Wal-Mart for our annual Angel Tree Shopping for our Wednesday evening activity on Dec. 3, after the fellowship meal. Please bring \$10 per person.

**Christmas Party at Peter and Katherine's:** Sunday Dec. 7 from 1-5. Bring a White Elephant gift (\$5 or less) to exchange.

## Announcements

**The elective Sunday school class** on disciple-making using Brian McLaren's book More Ready than You Realize continues today in the fellowship hall with chapters 12, 13 & 14.

**Salvation Army Christmas Project.** Help Hands of Friendship provide for families this Christmas with donations. Make checks payable to Hands of Friendship and place in box in foyer. Please give donations by today.

**Mittens/Gloves:** We are inviting you to purchase mittens and gloves for the Salvation Army in Newton. Please put them on the Christmas tree in the Fellowship Hall by December 14. Hand of Friendship Committee

**The Mennonite subscription list is being updated.** The church has a group-rate policy and each subscription costs the church \$33.00. If you are not receiving *The Mennonite* and would like to, or if you are currently receiving it and would like to discontinue your subscription, please contact Debbie Claassen today.

**You're invited to join "Prayers of the Church"** each Sunday morning from 9:00 – 9:10 a.m. in the classroom next to the kitchen. Please feel free to place prayer requests in the prayer box in the foyer.

**Special Music Next Sunday:** Celebration Singers  
**Keyboard Next Sunday:** Julia Washburn

**Nursery This Sunday:** Diana Schunn and Emily Klassen  
**Nursery Next Sunday:** Joyce Wedel and Elizabeth Martin  
**Ushers Next Sunday:** Lon Hiebert and Dean Patterson

**Offering Last Sunday:** Western District Conference \$2,010.50  
**Offering Next Sunday:** Mennonite Church USA

### CHURCH OFFICES

**Pastor:** James Voth

*E-mail:* [pastor@gracehillmc.org](mailto:pastor@gracehillmc.org)

**Youth Pastor:** Katherine Goerzen

*E-mail:* [youthpastor@gracehillmc.org](mailto:youthpastor@gracehillmc.org)

**Church Secretary:** Debbie Claassen

**Church Website:** [www.gracehillmc.org](http://www.gracehillmc.org)

## Et Cetera

**Sunday-Afternoon-at-the-Museum**, this afternoon at 3:30 pm, "A Charge to Keep: The Story of Hall's Chapel AME Church in Newton." The program will present the history of this African Methodist Episcopal congregation that has been in existence in Newton, Kansas, for 107 years. Memories recorded in a recent oral history project will be shared as well as the website developed from historic documents and photographs. The program is free and open to the public. Kauffman Museum at Bethel College is located at 27th and North Main in North Newton. Call 316-283-1612 for more information.

**Community Playschool** benefits from the Ten Thousand Villages sales on December 4 (from 5:30 – 8:00 p.m.). That is the night of the Newton Parade of Lights parade with Santa – and the evening the proceeds from sales at TTV go to support Playschool, which is an outreach mission of our church.

**The Quiltmaker's Gift Dinner Theatre** - The Harvey County Homeless Shelter's Largest Fundraiser of the Year will be held December 5 and 6 at 7:00 p.m. at Salem United Methodist Church, 1<sup>st</sup> and Old Main in Newton. Tickets are \$15.00 per person. Reserve tickets by calling Regier Construction (Christa or Darla) at 316-283-3729 or email your reservation to: [hhomeless\\_shelter@yahoo.com](mailto:hhomeless_shelter@yahoo.com). For more information, see the flyer on the bulletin board.

**The Five Places of Christmas**—Saturday, December 6, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. A feature of *The Five Places of Christmas* will be the Bethel College Administration Building on the Bethel College campus. The main floor, chapel and windows in the staircase will be decorated. Tasty holiday baked items will be available at the bake sale. Also, Administration Building ornaments, Bethel College stadium seats, cookbooks will be for sale. Shuttle service will be available leaving from the Fine Arts Center parking lot.

**All are invited to an evening of praise and singing, Saturday, December 6 at 7:30 p.m.** at the Country Side Gym. One of the singers, Karis Busenitz, is excited to share about her upcoming adventure! God is leading her to share His love with street kids and orphans in Jos Nigeria – serving with the mission organization, SIM – Serving In Mission. Looking forward to singing with you! Any questions concerning this event, call 316-616-5609.

**All are invited to celebrate with local illustrator Jesse Graber** during his signing and release party on Sunday, December 7, from 2-4 p.m. at Faith & Life Bookstore in Newton. Jesse illustrated three Project Play Books, released this week and written by Marlene Byrne of Niles, IL. The three books tell the adventures of the kids of Edgebrook neighborhood, while inspiring readers to play backyard games that use creativity, imagination, and organizational skills.

**Harvey County Homeless Shelter** December Volunteer Training and Information Session will be held on December 8 and December 16 at 6:30 p.m. at the HCHS staff area. Questions, call Christa Jahay at 316-284-4205.

**Learn the basics with "Foundations of Worship and Preaching."** Expand your knowledge of the Bible through courses in "Isaiah" and "Gospel of Matthew." Cultivate the practices of the missional church with a course in "Social and Cultural Contexts of the Missional Congregation." Check out these and other courses at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary – Great Plains Extension, North Newton at [www.ambs.edu/GreatPlains](http://www.ambs.edu/GreatPlains). Weekend and evening classes. Register for January classes by December 1; for spring semester classes by January 6. For more information, contact Lois Barrett, Director, AMBS – Great Plains, P.O. Box 306, North Newton, KS 67117; phone: 316-283-7098; email: [lbarrett@ambs.edu](mailto:lbarrett@ambs.edu).

**The Relief Sale Fellowship Meals** will be on Sunday, February 22, 2009 and Sunday, March 1, 2009. Please pick up a form in the foyer, fill it out, and return it to Barbara and DuMont Schmidt, preferably by January 4, 2009 but no later than January 25, 2009. If you cannot get it to Barbara or DuMont by January 25, please mail it directly to Marvin and Marjorie Stucky at 200 17th Village, Apt. 18, Moundridge, KS 67107-7002. The adult meals are \$15.00 each and children (6 – 12) are \$6.00. Children under 6 are free. Checks should be made payable to: Kansas Mennonite Relief Sale and handed in or sent in with the form. Gift certificates are available.