

“The Embracing Face of God”

Christmas 1

“Simeon took Jesus in his arms and blessed him.” -Luke 26:28

Gathering to Worship

PRELUDE

Cross Road

LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE Art and Ruth Schmidt

WELCOME & CALL TO WORSHIP Worship Leader, Carol Duerksen

Leader: Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord from the heavens on high.

**People: Sun, moon, and stars, solar systems and galaxies -
praise the Lord.**

Leader: Praise the Lord from the depths of ocean and canyon.

**People: Sea creatures swimming deep below the surface and plant
life growing in the crevices of the earth, species known
and those yet to be discovered - praise the Lord.**

Leader: Praise the Lord from the land, in all its thriving diversity.

**People: Microbes, insects, wild and domestic animals, women
and men, infants, elderly, and everyone in between -
praise the Lord.**

**ALL: For our eyes have seen your salvation which is for all creation
- love incarnate in the Christ child. Praise the Lord!**

Praising God

*SINGING OUR PRAISE *“Angels we have heard on high”* No. 197

*INVOCATION

*SINGING OUR HOPE *“Oh, how joyfully”* No. 209

*GREETING EACH OTHER and ANNOUNCEMENTS
please pass the welcome pads

OFFERING OUR GIFTS IN WORSHIP

CHILDREN’S STORY Gayle Funk

SPECIAL MUSIC *“Let’s Make a Baby King”* Jude Krehbiel & Cross Road

Hearing God’s Word

HEARING THE OLD TESTAMENT *Isaiah 61:10-62:3*

CONFESSING

SONG *“O little town of Bethlehem”* No. 191

THE GOSPEL *Luke 2:22-40* with Art and Ruth Schmidt

SERMON *“Faces Representing God’s Embrace”* Corey Miller

Responding to God's Word

CHRISTMAS SONG	<i>"Let your face shine"</i>	No. 150CS
CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER		
*HYMN	<i>"Hark! the herald angels sing"</i>	No. 201
*BENEDICTION		
POSTLUDE		

Today

Even as we struggle to hold on to hope, God's salvation appears in front of us. Our communities reflect the face of God when women and men, young and old together behold and celebrate God's salvation. Today, we want to reflect on all those faces that have represented God's embracing face to us.

We are so glad that you are here to worship with us! May you have a blessed Christmas season of joy and peace!

Thank you to Layci Froese for the bulletin cover picture.

This morning you were greeted by Donavon & Deloris Schmidt and Elmer & Lynne Voth. *Please take time to fill out our friendship pads.* Come back and join us again.

Childcare is provided by Sharleen Francis in the nursery during worship.

Blood pressure checks in the church office following worship.

There will be no Sunday school class following worship. Instead you are invited to a time of fellowship with refreshments in the basement.

On the table in the foyer are **Prayer Request Cards**. You are invited to fill one out if you have a request and return it to a pastor's box.

This Week

Thursday, January 1

Church offices will be closed.

Next Sunday, January 4

9:30 a.m.—NEXT SUNDAY we will continue our theme, "**Let Your Face Shine**" with Epiphany Sunday. The focus of the morning will be "*The Welcoming Face of God*." The texts for day are Isaiah 60:1-6, Psalm 72:1-7, Ephesians 3:1-12 and Matthew 2:1-12 and Corey will be preaching. We will be serving communion so prepare your hearts and your lives to receive these gifts of grace.

10:45 a.m.—Sunday School for everyone.

Prayer Requests

The following items were shared on Sunday, December 21:

- ★ Corey shared that Florence Weins' brother, of Inman died rather quickly on Saturday.
- ★ Elaine Schroeder shared that while our centennial books may not fit in stockings by the fire, they still would make great Christmas gifts.
- ★ Nancy Miller shared a thanks to the congregation for all the support they have given the Tabor Food Pantry through cash and food donations. Nancy shared that Christmas Food Boxes would be delivered that afternoon helping to meet the needs of some 50 people.

Happenings this week:

- ★ *Caring Quilt Location:* The Caring Quilt and Children's Quilt are home.

Remember to pray for:

- ★ Western District Conference: What ways do you remember as showing the "face of God" in your congregation this past year? Give thanks!
- ★ Mennonite Mission Network: MMN workers Lillian and Norm Nicolson have returned to the village of Tin in Burkina Faso following a period of language study. Pray for Norm working in the recording studio and for Lillian in Bible translation.
- ★ Mennonite Education Agency: Instituto Bíblico Anabautista, MEA Pray for the IBA students of the three study centers in Puerto Rico who are studying "Book of Acts" or "Introduction to the Bible" this trimester. Pray that these courses bless them and encourage them to continue learning about God's word. Pray that God's wisdom and patience be with the volunteer tutors—Angel Rivera, Enrique Ortiz, José E Jimenez and Samuel Lassus. Pray that through IBA, God forms new future leaders for the Mennonite Church in Puerto Rico.

Announcements

Coming Soon: Family Pizza Night! - January 7: All children, ages 1 month all the way up to High School are invited with their parents to a special Family Pizza Night held at Tabor Mennonite Church for an evening of fun and games. There will be great food and a special something is planned with JELLO! We will begin serving at 6:30pm and our games will begin at 7:00pm. Hope to see you there!

Annual Reports Due: Now is the time to prepare and turn in your annual reports for fiscal year 2008. You may email them (preferred if possible) to kfunk@tabormennonite.org. Reports are due January 8.

Upcoming junior high event: Know Jesus!, which will be held January 17-18, 2009 on the Hesston College campus. Look forward to an incredible time of inspiration, fellowship and fun!

Sunday Night Alive! Make plans to attend "*Sunday Night Alive*", a very non-traditional second half annual meeting. This is a family friendly event with activities for children of all ages. There will be live music, door prizes, inspirational thoughts, important decisions made about padding on the pews and the columbarium and a slideshow of what happened at Tabor this past year. The college task force will be serving an amazing dessert buffet (this is a fundraiser for Mennonite College Task Force) and a great time will be had by all! The celebration is scheduled for **January 25** and starts at 6:00pm and will be done by 8:00pm! What better way to thaw out those winter blues!

What are you good at? It takes a variety of people to oversee the Mennonite Heritage Museum. Do you like communicating to others a vision of what could be? Do you like organizing special events? Do you like celebrating why and how we got here to Goessel? We need board members with a variety of gifts. If you are interested in serving on the board, call Donavon Schmidt, 367-2391.

On the Bulletin Boards:

- * Christmas greetings from Corey, Nancy, Hannah & Rachel, Doug & Jude Krehbiel, and others.

The Embracing Face of God brings Peace

“God speaks to us in [God's] own special sign language--a baby. Not much. A small December child. A baby is birth, beginnings, potential without guarantee. A baby is helpless but not hopeless. A baby is someone to watch. A baby is the future appearing now. Are there baby-signs from God signaling hope to us watchers on the hillsides?
- *Robert A. Raines*