



January 2020

HIVELY AVENUE MENNONITE CHURCH

Happenings



Like the Magi, we are asking questions

Jake Hess, pastor

Another year has turned, a new decade is unfolding before us. This is the time of *Epiphany*: the space in the Christian year where we celebrate the manifestation of Christ to the Magi (to Gentiles). For those of us born outside the Jewish tradition, it is a season of unexpected homecoming, where all tribes, tongues and nations are drawn by the light of a mysterious star, by one who is born King of the Jews. “*The light shines in the darkness,*” and it beckons us on a journey. Come and see. Come and see. The dawn is breaking.

The light doesn’t illuminate everything immediately, though. The journeying Magi still question—“*Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews?*” And they still search in the wrong places—among a jealous king in an unsettled city. The Magi saw the light, yet they still needed guidance to find the way to the one who is *The Way*.

After crossing the threshold of two millennia and a score since the strange western star appeared, we (like the Magi before us) are still drawn, still journeying, still questioning. “*Where is justice?*” “*When will there be peace?*” “*Why do the innocent suffer?*” In short, we too are asking the two-millennia-old question of the Magi’s—“*Where is the Savior?*”

This Epiphany season, we will be asking these questions together in our worship services, the questions that churned among us during Advent. We will ask and we will seek. We will search and, by God’s grace, we will find. May this season be like the road from Jerusalem to Bethlehem, guided (like the Magi) by the voice of the prophets before us. May it truly be a time of Epiphany, of Christ made manifest to the world. May we yearn—especially in the dark—and “lean in toward the light.”

See page 2 for more details about our Epiphany season worship services: the questions we are asking and songs that point us toward light and hope.

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Photo at left: On Hively’s fall work day, November 16, John Alter and Ed Kauffman “lean in toward the light” as they clean the sanctuary light globes.

Epiphany worship series, Jan. 5-Feb. 23

Lean in toward the light

Exploring questions of faith
and singing songs of hope and light

Date	Faith question	Song
Jan 5	Where is justice?	Ain't gonna let nobody
Jan 12	Is Jesus the only way?	I want to walk as a child of the light/SJ 95
Jan 19	What is my identity and call? How do I discern my call?	Anthem/ <i>Leonard Cohen</i>
Jan 26	When will there be peace on earth?	Lean in toward the light/ <i>Carrie Newcomer</i>
Feb 2	How do we combat the trend of casting doubt on truth?	Let there be light, Lord God/SJ 67
Feb 9	What are the gifts and challenges of a multicultural, multi-racial congregation? (Cyneatha Millsaps)	The Lord is my light/SJ 97
Feb 16	Why do good people suffer?	Longing for light/SJ 54
Feb 23	Will bad people face consequences after death? Where is heaven?	My life flows on/HWB 580

Carrie Newcomer's song "Lean in toward the light" is a theme song for this series.

Listen to it on Youtube: www.youtube.com/watch?v=fxAUMNjWals 

Peace Vigil: No war with Iran

A peace vigil is planned for Saturday, January 25, from 3:00 to 3:45 pm, at the Elkhart County Courthouse, 101 N. Main Street, Goshen. Organizers are looking for additional help: musicians, people to hand out information, someone to bring chairs, prepared hot chocolate if it's a cold day. To assist, call Susan Mark Landis, 330-749-8794, or Bruce Bishop, 574-312-0098.

There also is a weekly Wednesday vigil against war at noon at the county courthouse. 

The Elusive Dream: Being a multicultural church at this time and place

Wednesdays, January 29 and February 5
6 pm: meal
6:45 pm: presentation and discussion



We will examine the challenges and joys of worshipping and leading with those different from ourselves. We will talk through the challenges that tradition, culture and socio-economics present in multicultural/multiracial congregations. We will speak candidly about how we feel in this space at this time. And we will celebrate the work of the Holy Spirit that is evident now and our trust in its work as we grow together. We will laugh, lament and find peace in the love of God.

Presenter:

Cyneatha Millsaps is executive director of Mennonite Women. Previously she was pastor of Community Mennonite Church, a multiracial congregation in Markham, Ill., and also was program director for Mennonite Central Committee Great Lakes. She is an Elkhart native and a graduate of Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary.

Cyneatha also will preach on this theme on February 9.

Announcements

Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary

Leadership Clinics: Monday, March 2. Sessions include Shine Curriculum's Vision for Faith Formation; Forming Faith in Digital Spaces (a collaborative research project); and Healthy Boundaries 101 and 201. Sign up by Jan. 13 for the lowest rate; group discounts available. ambs.edu/leadershipclinics

Understanding Anabaptist Approaches to Scripture: Feb. 12-March 24. Join Loren Johns, Ph.D., in this six-week online short course to study how the early Anabaptists approached Scripture both similarly to and differently from Catholics and other Protestants, and to understand this in light of today. No grades, no papers! CEUs available. Sign up by Jan. 22 and save \$50. ambs.edu/shortcourses

Anabaptist Witness 6.2, "Mission and Migration," can be read online for free. Authors explore ways in which migration has shaped identity as well as how identity has shaped migration and ways of being and belief, both in the past and the present. anabaptistwitness.org

Mennonite Church USA

Register now for **Hope for the Future 2020**, a Mennonite Church USA people-of-color event. Registration is open through January 15 for this Anabaptist networking and equipping event in Arlington, Texas, Jan. 24-26. Hope for the Future gathers leaders of color from church and related ministries to explore the ways that power, privilege and racism function in our denomination. For more information, visit <https://cvent.me/IVENAm>. 

Hively's Sunday School program 36 students and four teachers

Thirty-six children and youth are on the roster of Hively's Sunday school program. In a congregation with average worship attendance of 73, this is remarkable ... and challenging.

Four classes meet in the education wing: early childhood, primary, junior youth and high school youth. The Christian Education commission had hoped to organize five classes to keep class sizes smaller, but was unable to secure a fifth teacher. The current teachers are Crystal Underwood, Jan Stair, Kathee Kirchner and Melanie Quinn.

The challenges of this large number of children and youth in Hively Sunday School program include:

Space. The primary class could have as many as nine children meeting in one of the small downstairs classrooms. The junior high class has been meeting upstairs by the piano so young women don't need to sit in preschool chairs—but that space is open to anyone who uses that hallway.

Substitutes. The CE commission is still seeking substitute teachers.

Cost: While this is not a major issue, it is helpful to note that the annual cost for curriculum is between \$1,500 and \$1,700.

The blessings of this strong Sunday School program are plenty, including:

Extending our mission: These classes help us live out our goals of hospitality and becoming more multicultural.

Connections: Because some of the students come from Hively's neighborhood, we can learn more about our context and become more engaged with both the needs and the strengths of our community.

Making disciples: The energy and delight of the students as they learn can encourage all of us to focus on our own study of the Bible and deepening faith.

Ways you can help

Pray. Pray for the classes and consider "adopting" a teacher or a student to pray for regularly.

Volunteer: Let the Education Commission know if you are willing to be a substitute, assistant or teacher.

Be curious: Ask the children what they are doing in their classes. Discover the creativity of the teachers and the engaging ways the children are learning about God, about Jesus and about the Bible. 🍃

Photos by J. Tyler Klassen, December 2019



Junior high students Aniah, Kamauri, Lucile and Neveah compete in a Bible Jeopardy game organized by Kathy Kime Kirchner. Milo Wiese set up the electronic buzzers the students used to signal when they knew an answer.



More scenes from Hively's Sunday School classes



The early childhood class is usually taught by Crystal Underwood, but Samantha Crosser occasionally substitutes. Here Louisa, Everett and Rolene are playing a game with stars.



Primary students, (L-R around the circle) Kaylee, Billi Jo, Aniah, Layliana, Narkiso and Asher, embarked on a journey to Bethlehem one Sunday before Christmas. Jan Stair says they enjoy activities that engage them and especially like art projects.



The high school class is led by Melanie Quinn. Several other adults (Trish Habegger (pictured), Jake Hess, Tim Stair, Sueann VonGunten and Larry Underwood) take turns joining the class.



Joyce, John and Peace are three of the potential 15 members of the high school youth class.

Note: Children in these photos are identified by first name only because Hively Happenings is posted on the website where names are searchable.

Announcements

SPA Women's Ministry

Register by Feb. 3 for the fundraising event on Feb. 8. This ministry is a Christ-centered, residential treatment program that empowers women to address root causes of life-controlling issues. They were featured in a Hively Mennonite Women event in November. www.spaministryhomes.org

Mennonite Church USA

The first excerpt from Mennonite Church USA Archives' oral history project, which features interviews of young people between the ages of 24 and 40 within MC USA, is now available. In this excerpt, Dona Park asks, "How do we bring people who are on the outside inside?" and challenges leaders to intentionally encourage students from marginalized communities. Visit <http://mennoniteusa.org/tag/oral-history-project/>

Buzzing at the Hive



Hively calendar

January 12, 19, 26

5:30 pm
Spaghetti and Scripture

**January 29
February 5**

6 pm
Spiritual Emphasis

For the annual Hively Avenue Preschool Christmas program, the sanctuary was once again filled with standing room only. Children performed songs and rhymes while parents, grandparents and siblings watched. The program ended with a manger scene in which each child

had a role.

After the holiday break, classes resumed on Monday, Jan. 6.



This preschool class was preparing for a song about snowflakes.

Area activities

February 8

10 am-3 pm
Central District Conference
Regional Gathering
at Hively Avenue
Mennonite Church.

Congratulations

Megan Erwin, senior budget and policy analyst in the Office of Budget and Strategic Planning in Norfolk, Va., was named to the Traeger List by the group Engaging Local Government Leaders, which works to amplify the good in local government. Megan made the list for her innovative efforts to bring budget information to residents including the "Budget Bracket Challenge," her work to support the city's plans to transform the St. Paul's area, and creating a women's professional development series for city employees.

Megan is a member of Hively.

Our sympathies

We extend our sympathies to Melanie Quinn, whose mother died December 18. Melanie traveled to Pennsylvania the weekend of January 4-5 for the funeral.

The Mennonite

The Mennonite will focus the March magazine on prayer and calls for stories that explore the mystery and power of prayer. If you have a story or reflections to share, ask Mary Klassen for more information about how to submit your piece. The deadline is January 31.

Hively Happenings
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