

The mission of First Mennonite Church is to welcome all to know Christ's salvation through worship and works of love, peace and justice in service for God.

Advent 2008: *Let Your Face Shine*

Like eager children waiting for the arrival of expected guests, we long to see God's face in Advent season. We yearn to experience God's fullness in our lives. As we worship during these weeks, we will catch glimpses of God's face in the scriptures around which we gather. In the songs we sing and the prayers we offer, we will respond to the God we meet, the God who is even more amazing than we can imagine.

Each week of the Advent-Christmas season offers a different angle from which to view the mystery of God. In the beginning God seems hidden. We cry out for God to restore us. We pray for God's face to shine on us and bring salvation.

In the weeks that follow, we are reminded of the comforting face of God, the One who provides direction when we are most vulnerable. We catch a glimpse of a God who rescues us from ruin, heals our broken hearts, and rebuilds our lives.

As Advent comes to a close, the face of God becomes tangible. We watch as God's own son grows within Mary's womb. God has found a willing body in which to dwell.

Then Christmas comes. We celebrate the revelation of God in the birth of a Child of Hope. On the first Sunday after Christmas, the face of God we see is the one that saves us. Simeon and Anna hold the child in their arms and recognize that they have seen God's salvation. God's face is a light to God's chosen people and to those beyond that group—to all the world.

On Epiphany Sunday, we see the welcoming face of God reach out in loving hospitality to all the nations. Boundaries and barriers between people and nations tumble down as even Gentiles are drawn to worship the Christ child. The light of Christ shines upon all.

But there is more. The season's focus, "Let Your Face Shine," has a double intention. It is not only our plea to God, but a call for us to become part of the shining transformation of our world. Our faces can reflect the light of God as we welcome the Divine to dwell among us, embrace the way of Jesus, work for justice, and open our arms to include all whom God welcomes. Righteousness and peace are united in our world when God's people join in God's mission to reconcile and restore all things.

Reprinted from the Leader Magazine

Caroling and Chili Supper
December 14 5pm

Christmas Eve Service
December 24 7pm



We will collect canned food for Salvation Army on December 28.

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Forever Christmas

By Diana Hofstetter

*The shoppers are trying
To find the best gift.
One even bought something
That no one could lift!*

*Preparations are made
Till things are just right -
There's not enough time
To stop for a bite!
We're tired and weary -
There may be a fight!*

*Some people are frantically baking
If they smile, they may be just faking
Deep down inside hearts are breaking
They don't know giving is better than taking
Let's stop what we're doing
Look and just listen
Even snow has beauty
When it's cold it will glisten!*

*Let all of us make a complete turn around-
What are we doing?
Where are we bound?*

*Here is the way to get a new start-
Keep our dear Jesus close to your heart!*

*Then we'll have Christmas each day of the
year!!
In times of trial there's nothing to fear
We'll have lasting joy,
when Jesus is near!*

FMC & Community Announcements

New in the Library:

The Mennonite Handbook from Herald Press -
“combining reliable, historical, and theological
information, alongside some fun facts.”

No Longer Alone by John Toews with Eleanor
Loewen. Mental Health and the Church.

The Joy Factor by Jep Hostetler - “unique
approach on the importance of humor in health and
faith.”

Mennonite Life by Merle, Rebecca and Kate Good -
A Humorous Look at Mennonite Life.

Sisters of Holmes County Series by Wanda E.
Brunstetter

Bk. 1 - *A Sister's Secret*

Bk. 2 - *A Sister's Test*

Bk. 3 - *A Sister's Hope*

Gifts that support mission. Now available from Mennonite Media, a new CD just in time for Christmas giving: “All Nature Sings: Hymns and Anthems of God’s Creation.” A cappella music from the former Mennonite Hour radio program, the CD features music on nature themes from a variety of ensembles. The proceeds from the sale of Mennonite Hour a cappella music go to support the ongoing ministry of Mennonite Media, part of Mennonite Mission Network. \$12.95 CD only. Call 800-999-3534 or visit store.mennomedia.org.

MCC Great Lakes wants to hear from you! Mennonite Central Committee is engaging in a reshaping process called “New Wine/New Wineskins,” where people like you share your vision for the future of MCC. A regional meeting is taking place on Saturday, January 31, at Kidron Mennonite Church (3987 Kidron Road). The meeting will begin at 9:30 a.m. and finish by early afternoon, with a light lunch provided. For more information or to register for the event, call the Great Lakes office (574) 534-4133 or email GreatLakesOffice@mcc.org.

MCC Washington Office High School Essay Contest Calling all teenagers interested in how their faith impacts public policy! The topics for our tenth annual essay contest include the global food crisis, U.S. energy policy, and gun laws. Essays must be postmarked by December 15 and prizes will be awarded. Contest guidelines are online at mcc.org/us/washington.

*Truly He taught us to love one another
His law is love, and His gospel is peace;
Chains shall he break for the slave is our brother,
And in His name all oppression shall cease.
Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we,
Let all within us praise his holy name;
Christ is the Lord,
Oh, praise His name forever!
His power and glory evermore
proclaim!*

-Adolphe Adam



Worship @ FMC

DECEMBER:

Ushers: Darren Newcomer & Jack Rohrer

<u>Sunday</u>	<u>Greeters</u>	<u>Nursery</u>
7	Megan & Warren C.	Evelyn B.
14	Sharon G.	Nate H.
21	Lucie & Lowell N.	Sharon G.
28	Laura M. & Ruth S.	Rhonda L.

Greeters should be at the front and back door by 10:20 and ushers should be ready to hand out bulletins and seat people by 10:30.

Those in the nursery should introduce themselves to parents of young children and sit near the back to watch for children heading to the nursery.

Please remember to find someone to fill-in for you if you cannot make it.

December Birthdays & Anniversaries

5 - Sanford Rohrer
9 - Marlin Emig
13 - Ken & Norma Rohrer ('69)
25 - Mona Rohrer
30 - Rhonda Landis
31 - Carl & Eileen Lind ('43)

On the horizon...

January 4, 2009	FMC Coffee House for MYF
June 25 - 27, 2009	Central District Annual Meeting in Sugarcreek
June 30 - July 5, 2009	Columbus 2009
July 14-19, 2009	Paraguay 2009

MYF Corner

December Events:

December 14, 5:00 pm
Chili and caroling.

Play rehearsal: Sundays: December 7, 14, 21 at 9:30 am

Dress rehearsal: Saturday, December 27 at 10:00 am and Sunday December 28 at 9:30 am

Bible Quiz:

1. Who said to whom, "Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord"?
2. Fill in the missing words: "So they hurried off and found _____ and _____, and the _____, who was lying in a manger."
3. Where were the wise men when they asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews?"?
4. How did Joseph know that Herod was set to kill Jesus?

Submit your answers, include the Bible verse where you found it, to Rachel. There may be a prize.