

# New Holland Mennonite Church

December 8, 2024 • Volume 69, No. 49

Fellowship: 8:30 a.m. • Sunday School: 9:00 a.m. • Worship: 10:00 a.m.



## Gathering & Praising God

*We Come (VT 225)*

Jenn Esbenshade

Call to Worship / Candle Lighting

Bryan Hower

Prayer for Illumination

*Bless'd Be the God of Israel (VT 223)*

## Hearing God's Voice

Offering

Conversation with Children

Michele Good

"Three Women" based on Ruth 1,

written by

Rev. Anna Strickland

Scripture: Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

Sermon: "We Can't Go Alone"

Pastor Dawn Ranck-Hower

## Responding

Prayer of Confession / Words of Forgiveness

*To Be Known*

Prayer of the People

Dawn Kaczor

Sharing

Lord's Prayer

Announcements

## Sending

*O Come, O Come, Immanuel (VT 210) (Vs. 1, 7)*

Benediction

Liturgy by Rev. Sarah Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

**Coffee:** Ray Hurst; **Greeters:** Brenda & Ray Hurst

**Sound:** Kai Esbenshade; **Nursery:** Danika Snader

**Offering:** Wade Esbenshade & Wanda Gonzalez-Bortzel

**Close:** Tim Martin

## December 1

**Attendance:** 39 (7 on Zoom) • **Offering:** \$1,215.00

**Nickels For Neighbors 2024 Total:** \$176.39

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

**December 14:** Bob Martin

## NEXT SUNDAY: December 15

**Coffee/Greeter:** Judy Schweitzer

**Song Leader:** Jenn Esbenshade; **Children's Time:** Ray Hurst

**Worship Leader:** Dawn Kaczor; **Sound:** Wade Esbenshade

**Sermon:** Dawn Ranck-Hower

**Prayer:** Steven Lantz; **Nursery:** Bryan Hower

**Offering:** Mike Good & Brenda Hurst; **Close:** Mike Good

## UPCOMING EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

All events are at New Holland Mennonite Church unless otherwise indicated

**DUE MONDAY: Administrative Elder Vote:** The Elder Nomination Committee (Ruth Douglas Miller, Dawn Ranck-Hower, Lois Zimmerman) is recommending extending Wade Esbenshade's term as Administration Elder for one additional year. Wade has served well in this role for the past 9 years, and, extending one more year will create continuity in managing the sale of the parking lot to Goodville Mutual and giving leadership to the congregation in managing monies received from that sale. Vote at: <https://forms.gle/rnypGjGUXAYzUN7XA>

**DUE MONDAY: 2025 Directory Response:** Please check your information in the 2025 Directory (link in weekly update). If everything is ok, please email and say "OK". Email corrections and a new photo if you have an updated one.

**Thursday, December 12: ELC Christmas Celebration:** 5:30-7:00 p.m. A variety of activities and opportunity to connect with ELC families and staff as we celebrate the Christmas season.

**Friday, December 13: Book Club:** Location & Leaders: Brenda & Ray, 7 p.m. Book: Atonement. RSVP on link in weekly email.

**Saturday, December 21: Mennonite Action: Longest Night Vigil for Gaza** at Blossom Hill Mennonite Church. See weekly email for details.

**Sunday, December 29: Christmas Brunch and Worship:** 9 a.m. Brunch (**Note new time!**) 10 a.m. An informal worship service around tables led by Brenda and Ray Hurst. **Signup by Thursday, December 26** (link in weekly email) if you plan to attend and to bring food for the meal. Note: There is no Sunday School on December 29 and there is no Zoom for this service.

### Projected Artwork: "Binding Braids"

by Nicolette Peñaranda

Inspired by Ruth 1

Acrylic, markers, paper, and mixed media collage on canvas

When I was a child, my mother used to give my older sister and I a unibraid down our backs. She was never particularly good at doing our hair. We always had flyaways and little bits of frizz at our edges accompanying our bright big smiles on picture day. It wasn't long until I started braiding my own hair. At the tender age of nine I would spend hours in the bathroom staring at myself in the mirror with two hands to heaven. The more I did my own, the more I noticed others' braids as well. I would learn to appreciate our shared kinship. Our braids were our ancestors, our heritage, and our culture. Our designs were our creativity and our individuality. Braids bind us in ways that go beyond the physical—we are forever entwined.

Ruth and Naomi find themselves bound by their widowhood and familial grief. And while Orpah made the choice to return to her village, Ruth bound herself to her mother-in-law: "Where

you go, I will go." They too have spiritual connections that are deeper than the surface. To the left, Naomi is embodied by purples, yellows, and greens. While purple is most commonly associated with royalty, here it's meant to hold her grief. The deep color reflects her processing the loss of both of her sons and husband while the contrast of the yellows and gold represent the glimmers of hope she finds in companionship with Ruth. Her chest holds a subtle landscape detailing her and Ruth holding hands while journeying back to Naomi's native land. The image is soft like the clouds surrounding her, as if her story is suddenly easier now that Ruth is with her.

To the right, Ruth is filled with blues, oranges, and greens. Whereas Naomi's portrait holds grief and duality, Ruth's color palette is meant to feel more hopeful and vibrant. There is something pure about her as reflected in the pearls around her neck. In the middle of the canvas, Ruth and Naomi's braids are woven into each other. The two of them are also portrayed on opposing sides of the braids, seeking each other while also latching onto their bond. Ruth and Naomi are also the two hands pressed upon each other like a prayer. It feels like two worlds are colliding with the rounded waves and galactic triangles surrounding them. Above the hands is an omnipresent moon, as if God is looking over their bond.

This piece conveys several different forms of connection over a blanket of decorative textiles quilted together. It is meant to invite the audience into an otherworldly, fluid space for biblical wonderment.

—Rev. Nicolette Peñaranda

**Land Acknowledgment:** We acknowledge, with humility, that the land where we sit and stand today is land that was home to the Susquehannock, Shawnee, and Lenape people. Let us be aware that we occupy their homeland, and that their presence is imbued in this land.

**Pastor:** Dawn Ranck-Hower

**Leadership Team:** Wade Esbenshade, Dawn Kaczor, Ruth Douglas Miller  
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