



Salina Mennonite Church

A Congregation of Mennonite Church USA

Salina Mennonite Church is a Christian community seeking to share God's love through celebration, nurture, service, and peacemaking.

We hold that every person is created in God's image. We embrace differences in race, gender, sexual orientation, ability or status.

December 17, 2023
Third Sunday of Advent
Farewell Sunday

Christina Litwiller, Pastor
600 State Street
Salina, KS 67401
785-825-2663

pastorsalinamennonite@gmail.com

Church: salinamennonite@gmail.com

www.salinamennonite.org

How Will We Know . . . What's Next?

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|--|--|
| Gathering Music | Christmas Carols
Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus
Still, Still, Still with Mary Did You Know
arr. Carol Tornquist | Mattson & Weaver
Quinn Kathrineberg
Lori Schmidt |
| Lighting a Candle of Joy | Leader: We light a candle for joy: joy in our hearts,
joy in our homes, joy in our world.
All: <i>May the light of joy shine through our lives.</i> | Voices Together 916 |
| Prelude | <i>Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel</i> | arr. Curt Oliver |
| Call to Worship | <i>Based on Luke 1:46-55</i>
Leader: My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior!
High voices: For the Mighty One has done great things for me,
Low voices: and holy is God's name.
Leader: God has brought down the powerful and lifted up the lowly.
People: What will God do next?
All: <i>Together we wonder.</i> | |
| Hymn | <i>My Soul Proclaims with Wonder</i> | Voices Together 222 |
| Storytelling | | |
| Hymn | <i>He Came Down</i> | Voices Together 239 |
| Drama | <i>Based on Isaiah 40:3; 61:1-2; John 1:19-34</i> | |
| Hymn | <i>Hark! The Glad Sound!</i> | Voices Together 217 |
| Meditation | <i>What's Next?</i> | |
| Hymn | <i>Open My Eyes (Abre mis ojos)</i> | Voices Together 732 |

Community Life – Sharing & Prayer

Special Music Holy Shepherd (Kathy Lane) Mattson & Weaver

Litany of Release and Blessing

Special Music Turn Your Eyes (Lauren Daigle) Jenna & Stuart Eshlemann

Community Life – Announcements

Hymn *Rain Down* Voices Together 703

The Lord’s Prayer

Lighting Candles of Hope, Peace and Joy (*on back table*)

Leader: Together we wonder.

Candlelighter: How will we know what’s next?

Leader: Go and hold fast to what is good, rejoice always, make straight the way of the Lord!

Please join us for Potluck in the Fellowship Room after Worship. There is plenty for all.
A time of sharing stories and celebration for Pastor Christina will follow the meal in the Fellowship Room.

Christian Education

For Children – *Jesus Brings Good News*

- Activities to do at home.

For Adults – 9:00 a.m. Sunday

- Bible Study – *God Connections* – In the basement
- Bible Study – Reading the worship scripture – In the fellowship room

Upcoming Events

Sunday	December 24	Sunday Worship – Fourth Sunday of Advent	10am
Sunday	December 24	Christmas Eve Service & Fellowship	7:00pm
Sunday	December 31	Sunday Worship – Sunday after Christmas	10am
Sunday	January 7	Sunday Worship – Epiphany	10am
Wednesday	January 10	Worship Committee	7pm
Sunday	January 14	Sunday Worship – Installation Service	10am
Thursday	January 17	Church Board	7pm

If you need ministry care during this time of transition, please reach out to the Church Board:
Kristin VanTassel, Pete Smucker, or Tom Claassen.

Worship Totals

2023	Attendance	Unified Budget	Other	Total
12/10	Zoom 3 Church 36 Total 39	\$1,550.00		\$1,550.00

**Litany of Release and Blessing for Pastor Christina Litwiller
Salina Mennonite Church – December 17, 2023**

Conference Minister: Today we give thanks for the ministry of Christina Litwiller and bless her for the journey ahead, as she concludes her role as Pastor at Salina Mennonite Church. This is a time of mixed emotions: Gratitude for ministry well done and good memories created, sadness at the ending of a pastoral relationship, and uncertainty in a time of change. In the midst of this, we are grateful for God's constant faithfulness and unending love.

Pastor Christina: It has been a great privilege to serve Salina Mennonite Church as your Pastor. I give thanks for ways God has worked among us, and the opportunities we have had to grow in faith together.

Conference Minister: God has provided for this congregation through Christina's ministry. As Christina ends her role as Pastor, do you as members of Salina Mennonite Church now release her from her pastoral responsibilities and relationships?

Congregation: With the help of God, we do. We give thanks for faithful and fruitful ministry together. We have shared together in joys and sorrows, in celebration and in struggle. God has been good.

Conference Minister: Christina, do you release the congregation from its loyalty to you as pastor? Do you release the members from turning to you and depending on you to provide the pastoral ministries they seek?

Pastor Christina: With God's help, I do. When I meet congregation members in the future, it will be not as their pastor, but as a neighbor and friend in Christ. I pray that all of us will be filled with the knowledge of God's will through the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, so that we may live lives worthy of Christ and pleasing to God in every way, bearing fruit in every good work.

Conference Minister: Now may God guide you, Christina, as you follow the leading of the Spirit on the next steps of your journey. And may God guide you, the congregation and leaders of Salina Mennonite Church, as you discern the Spirit's guidance in the coming weeks and months.

May our Lord Jesus Christ, and God our Creator, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word.
(2 Thessalonians 2:16-17)

Amen.

Local Announcements

Our Christmas Eve Service is at 7:00 pm on Sunday, December 24. Please bring a song, instrumental offering, or reading to share during the service and Christmas goodies to share afterward.

Office Hours: Carolyn will have limited office hours during the holiday season. Normal office hours will be Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons after 1:30pm and Friday mornings after 9am. Please have any announcements for the bulletin submitted to salinamennonite@gmail.com by Thursday evening.

Pictures Needed: For the transitional Pastor's digital pictorial directory. Please text or email Carolyn your picture.

Conferencewide Announcements & Prayer Requests

The WDC Israel Palestine Task Force invites you, your congregation, family, friends and allies to join Mennonite Action on **Tuesday, December 19**, for a public witness at Senator Jerry Moran and Roger Marshall's offices in Wichita, KS to ask for a ceasefire in Gaza and Israel. We will meet at Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church, [655 S Lorraine ST](#), at 10:30 am to rehearse the actions which include prayer, singing and sharing bread with congressional staffers and each other. We encourage fasting or bring your own lunch. We will drive and park near the offices of the Senators. There may be a \$2-\$3 parking fee. There will be a 6-block walk between Senator Moran and Senator Marshall's offices. This is a somber event, and we encourage participants to wear black. A script of the event will be provided, and we should be finished by 3 pm. Specific questions may be referred to Kathy Neufeld Dunn at 620-755-4331 or Bob Atchison at 785-313-2292.

Pray for our sister church, Iglesia Camino de Santidad (Path of Holiness Church) in Liberal KS, Pastor Moises Romero and his wife Teresa.

Western District Conference: – Pray for generous financial support for WDC congregations, as they seek to meet annual budget goals for mission and ministry.

Churchwide Announcements & Prayer Requests

Register now for the MCC South Texas Learning Tour, February 4-9, 2024! This immigration-focused learning tour presents a unique opportunity to engage directly with organizations making a positive impact on our neighbors. You won't want to miss this opportunity. Details and online registration can be found at mcc.org/south-texas-lt. Deadline to sign up is Jan. 20. Please contact Abraham Diaz Alonso with questions, abrahamdiazalonso@mcc.org.

Mennonite Mission Network: SADRA (Southern African Development and Reconstruction Agency) Conflict Transformation is a Mennonite Mission Network partner that offers a Christian response to injustice in South Africa. Pray for the conflict mediators, who train members of their communities to de-escalate situations that could lead to violence.

Mennonite Church USA: Cyneatha Millsaps, executive director of Mennonite Women USA, reflects on how gun violence has affected the country, her community and her own family in a blog for Mennonite Church USA. Read her reflection here: mennoniteusa.org/spiritually-emotionally-bankrupt

Mennonite World Conference: "Let us pray for peace, because this war impoverishes us," says Siaka Traoré, MWC regional representative for Central West Africa. In Burkina Faso, the government enlists young people to serve their country through the military, providing a dilemma for young Christians.