

## About First Mennonite Church

First Mennonite Church is affiliated with the Mennonite denomination. The Mennonites are named for Menno Simons, one of our early church leaders, and are rooted historically in the "Anabaptist" movement (Switzerland, 1525). Some primary Anabaptist values then and now are following Jesus Christ in life through service, rejection of violence, living simply and joy in participatory worship.

Pursuing God's dreams by the power of the Holy Spirit, in the way of Jesus Christ. ~ Vision of Mountain States Mennonite Conference

## Vision: Healing and Hope

God calls us to be followers of Jesus Christ and, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to grow as communities of grace, joy and peace, so that God's healing and hope flow through us to the world.

~ Vision Statement of Mennonite Church USA

Welcome to

# First Mennonite Church

*Denver, Colorado*

## *Children's Christmas Program*



***December 13, 2009***

***Advent 3***

***Heavenly lights: Ring out your joy***

Worship 9:30 AM; Education Classes 11:00 AM

*May this be a place of hope and transformation for all who enter here.*



### First Mennonite Church of Denver

[www.fmcdenver.org](http://www.fmcdenver.org), 303-892-1038

For more information about today's schedule, the weeks to come, or about our congregation, please visit our Welcome Table in the foyer. If you are not receiving the FMC Weekly, a weekly e-newsletter from the church, go to the church's website at [www.fmcdenver.org](http://www.fmcdenver.org) to subscribe. Look for the box in the upper right corner and enter your information.

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Please recycle this sheet either at home or by leaving it here at FMC. Thanks!

Gathering Music

Emma Schrock  
Elena Miller Stutzman  
Andrew Longacher  
Ethan Mullet

Narrator 3: To us the promised child is born,  
to us a baby is given;  
and on his shoulders rests  
power in earth and heaven.

Gathering Hymns

*To us a child of hope is born* (HWB 189)  
*For mornings bright* (SJ 113)

Nikki KandeLind

Narrator 4: This baby's name shall be the way of Peace  
forevermore adored,  
a wonderful child, a counselor,  
in the shape of a loving God and Lord.

Welcome

Annie Lengacher Browning

Narrator 1: His way of peace and righteousness will extend;  
with equality and in justice based,  
and in this reign will never end.

Call to Worship and Advent Candles

Come, Child of Bethlehem,  
make your presence known to us  
and dwell in our midst as we worship.  
Come, Way of Peace,  
teach us the ways of your kingdom  
and make our lives your own.  
Come, Immanuel,  
show us the meaning of our humanity  
and bring us to the fullness of your presence. Amen.  
(adapted from HWB 678)

Casey Miller

Congregational Hymn: *O Come, O Come Immanuel* (HWB 172, vs. 1, 3, 5)

Invocation

Annie Lengacher Browning

Narrator 2: A long, long time ago, there were people who had waited a long,  
long time. They waited for land and a new home. They waited for a time of  
happiness and a time of having enough food and clothing for their families.  
They waited for a time of peace and rest so that they could be good neighbors  
to one another. They waited for many promises to come true.

**Children's Christmas Program: *The Light that Shines***

Script by Naomi Marshall Nishi, Annie L. Browning, & Barb Yoder Stutzman  
Directed by Naomi Marshall Nishi  
Accompanists: Donna Swartzendruber & Andi Hagerup  
Music Directors: Andrea Wiens & Jenny Thompson

Villager 1: "Is it time yet!?"

Villager 2: "Not yet!"

Narrator 3: It was a time of waiting and watching for a light of hope to come  
and shine in the darkness of their waiting time.

Bible Reading

Isaiah 9:2-7 (adapted from a Scottish paraphrase by John Morison (1781))

Villager 3: "I think I see it!"

Villager 4: "No, that's not it."

Narrator 1: The people who in darkness walked  
have seen a glorious light;  
the heavenly dawn broke forth on those  
who dwelt in death and night.

Narrator 4: Some dark times had come across their land. They were hungry.  
They were tired. They were heavy with fear of what would happen tomorrow.  
There was fighting and angry words among neighbors.

Narrator 2: To greet you, Sun of Righteousness,  
the gathering nations come,  
rejoicing as when reapers bring  
their harvest treasures home.

Villager 5: "I told you to keep your goats off my land!"

Villager 6: "Aw, get over it!"

Narrator 1: They wanted light to shine in the time of darkness, a promised  
light that fear and anger could not take away.

Narrator 2: They wanted peace in their lives and in their land. And still they waited.

Villager 1: “How ‘bout now!?”

Everyone: “Not yet!”

Narrator 3: Until a tiny light appeared. A light they had been waiting a long, long time to see. A light their grandmothers and grandfathers and great-great grandparents had been waiting and watching and hoping to see. It was a tiny light.

Villager 3: “I see it! I see it!”

Villager 4: “You’re crazy.”

### **Scene One: Gabriel and Mary**

Narrator 4: There was a young woman named Mary, and she lived during this time of waiting. One day she was working in her house when a bright light appeared.

Gabriel: “Rejoice! God is with you, Mary. You are gifted and full of grace.”

Mary: “What do you mean?”

Gabriel: “Don't worry. Wait and see. You will understand in time. God has noticed you, and you are going to have a baby. You will call him Jesus, and he will be a light that the people of the earth have been waiting to see.”

Mary: “A baby! How is this possible?”

Gabriel: “The Holy Spirit will be with you. Do not be afraid.”

Mary: “If these words are from God, then let it be so. I will trust this tiny light within me.”

Congregational Hymn: *My Soul is Filled with Joy* (STJ 13, vs. 1-5)

### **Mary and Joseph**

Narrator 1: Mary was going to marry Joseph, and he was also surprised by the news about Jesus. He was also worried because the difficult times were growing in their land.

Joseph: “Mary, I am worried. We need to go back to my land and find my family. It is time for us all to be counted and numbered in the land. I am from Bethlehem, and it is a long journey.

Mary: “Why do we need to be counted? It will take a long time to get there. I am very tired and my feet hurt.”

Joseph: “It will be difficult to get there, but I know we can do it. You and I are very strong. Once we get to the Bethlehem region, my family can help.”

Mary: “How are we going to make it, though? The road will be full of many travelers and there are not many places to stay.”

Joseph: “And, there’s nothing worse than donkey traffic. But, the angel did say to you that God is with us and that we can be brave and bold knowing that God will be wherever we go. I know we will make it, Mary, even though we have many questions. I will go get the donkey ready.”

Mary: “It is such a long journey, and we are still waiting to understand many things. But, you’re right. God is with us. I’ll pack up some food for the road.”

Narrator 2: So Mary and Joseph began the long, long walk to Bethlehem.

Children's Song:

*The First Noel*

### **Scene Two: Shepherds**

Narrator 3: Along the road to Bethlehem there were shepherds resting in a nearby field with their sheep.

Shepherd 1: “What a calm and peaceful night.”

Shepherd 2: “It almost helps you forget all that is happening in the land.”

Shepherd 3: “I know. Did you see that shooting star?!”

Shepherd 4: “Yeah! It was so bright in the night sky. I hope it didn't wake the sheep!”

Shepherd 5: “It's your turn to round them up, you know.”

Shepherd 6: “Hey! There's another one. Another shooting star!”

Shepherd 7: “Wait. That's not a star. It's some sort of really bright light.”

Shepherd 8: “Yeah, it's almost like a torch in the sky.”

Shepherd 1: “I hear something too!”

Shepherd 2: “It sounds like singing, but it's so loud!”

Shepherd 3: “Perhaps it is travelers from the road.”

Shepherd 4: “Or soldiers!”

Shepherd 5: “It's getting louder, brighter, closer! I'm scared!”

Shepherd 6: “Everybody get behind the bushes!”

Shepherd 7: “I'm getting behind the sheep!”

Angels appear.

Angel 1: “Get up and look. Do not be afraid.”

Angel 2: “Glory to God! And on earth, let there be peace.”

Angel 3: “Glory to God! And on earth, peace to all people.”

Shepherd 8: “Who are you!?”

Angel 4: “We bring you good news for the people of the earth.”

Angel 5: “You have been waiting for this news. It is news of great joy and deep peace.”

Angel 6: “Today there is a baby born.”

Angel 7: “A baby who is the Messiah”

Angel 8: “A child of peace”

Angel 9: “A light of righteousness”

Angel 1: “the Lord”

Angel 10: “Go and look and see.”

Angel 11: “You will find a baby”

Angel 2: “who is wrapped in a simple cloth”

Angel 3: “and lying in a trough of hay.”

Angel 4: “Follow your sheep to this manger.”

Angel 1: “And go!”

Angel 5: “Glory to God! And on earth, peace to all.”

The shepherds leave.

Children's Songs:

*Children, go where I send thee  
Angels we have heard on high*

### **Scene Three: Magi**

Narrator 1: There were men who studied scrolls and stars. They saw this bright star from a far away land and followed it for many miles to see the new baby.

Magi 1: “It has been such a long, long journey.”

Magi 2: “Yes, my feet are tired, and my camel's feet are tired too. These camels aren't as useful as we'd hoped! I think we needed bigger camels.”

Magi 3: “It will all be worth the wait. Look how the star still fills the sky!”

Magi 1: “It must be a sign of something new. A new light to shine brightly in these difficult times.”

Magi 2: “This star is different. I have never seen anything like this before, and so we must keep on going even though the journey is difficult.”

Magi 3: “It is brighter, clearer and larger than any other star.”

Magi 1: “It looks like it is slowing, maybe even stopping. What can this mean?”

Magi 2: “I don't know, but we cannot wait any longer.”

Magi 3: "Come on. Let's go."

Children's Song: *We three kings*

### **At a simple stable**

Children's Song: *Away in a manger  
I said the donkey*

Mary: "Joseph, he is finally here! Look how amazing he is!"

Joseph: "And his name is Jesus! Although, I still like Joe Jr. too."

Mary: "It's a wonderful name for a wonderful baby. It is all so simple with the stable, hay and cloth. Yet, it is all so beautiful."

Joseph: "Listen to the stillness. The whole earth seems at peace."

Mary: "Thanks be to God for the light of this night."

Joseph: "Thanks be to God for the birth of peace for all."

Mary: "Let it be so."

Children's Song: *Silent night*

### **Epilogue**

Narrator 1: After a long time of waiting and watching a baby was born in a simple way in a stable along the road to Bethlehem.

Narrator 2: After a long time of waiting and watching, Jesus was born.  
And the people who had lived in a difficult time saw this tiny light come.  
And they rejoiced that the way of peace had arrived.  
It was a way of peace that would shine brightly  
A promised light that times of darkness could not take away.

Narrator 3: And the people of the land came to see this tiny baby who was born in such a simple way.  
The shepherds came and knelt next to him.  
And the magi came and brought gifts.  
And they each returned to their people and they told them about all that they had seen and heard.  
And word about this new way of peace spread.

Narrator 4: People were amazed and rejoiced that a new time had come.  
Their waiting time had changed with the birth of a baby.

Narrator 1: And so, they praised God for the light of a night in a stable.  
They praised God for the birth of peace for all.

Narrator 2: And Mary held all of these events in her heart and said,  
"Let it be so."

Children's Song: *Go tell it on the mountain*

Offering Jenae Stutzman and Sam Martin

Sending Hymn: *Joy to the World* (HWB 318, vss. 1, 2, 4)

Benediction Annie

***Thank you to all who have given generously of their attention and talents to make this service a time of encouragement and a challenge in our walk of faith.***

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***Please join us in the Community Center following the service for coffee, tea and donuts.***