



Worship in December, 2009

Mennonite Church of the Servant's Sunday morning worship gathering begins at 10:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall of the Fairview Christian Church facility, 1650 N. Fairview, Wichita, KS.

Bursting in & breaking out

December 6: ADVENT 2 *Get ready! God calls us to choose the path of peace*

The anticipation of God's "bursting in" means that we must be ready. God's agenda is radical. Jerry Truex will give the sermon. Doug vonEhrenkrook will be the worship leader. Communion will be a part of our worship service. Scripture texts are: Malachi 3:1-4; Luke 1:68-79; Like 3:1-6; Philippians 1:3-11

December 13: ADVENT 3 *Rejoice! God comes in mercy to turn us around*

God's turning us around toward right living is our salvation. This is reason to celebrate. Lois Barrett will give the sermon. Vangie Truex will be the worship leader. Scripture texts are: Isaiah 12:1-6; Zeph. 3:14-20; Luke 3:7-18; Philippians 4:4-7.

December 20: ADVENT 4 *God delivers!*

Pat Cameron will give the sermon. Doug vonEhrenkrook will be the worship leader. Scripture Texts are: Psalm 80:1-7; Micah 5:2-5a; Luke 1:39-56; Hebrews 10:5-10.

December 24: Christmas Eve *Unto us a child is born!*

Glory from the heavens embraces creation. Enter God's presence, and be reborn! Our annual Christmas Eve celebration will be on Thursday evening beginning at 6:30 p.m. Join this celebration of the coming of the Incarnate Word. Lois Barrett will be the worship leader.

December 27: Christmas 1 *Let all creation praise God!*

The whole cosmos is integrated into an enormous liturgy of worship: "Praise the Lord"! Jerry Truex will give the sermon. Vangie Truex will be the worship leader. Healing Prayer will be a part of this worship service. Scripture texts are: Psalm 148; 1 Samuel 1:18-20; Colossians 3:12-17; Luke 2:41-52.

<p>Transformation Servant Group will meet from 7:00 to 9:00, Sunday evenings. Our Servant Group is using <i>Take Our Moments and Our Days; an Anabaptist Prayer Book</i> for worship. Contact Lois if you would like to order a copy. Our name comes from Romans 12:2: "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds so that you may discern what is the will of God--what is good and acceptable and perfect."</p> <p>Women's Bible Study Starts October 5 A six-session Bible study, "When Godly People Do Ungodly Things," will begin Monday, October 5, 6:30-8:00 p.m., and continue every other week through December 14. The study for women will include a 30-minute DVD session led by Bible study teacher Beth Moore, followed by discussion and prayer. The group will meet at Cindy Snider's home. Call 832-0050 for more information.</p>	<p>http://www.mennowdc.org/2009-11-Memo.pd</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Verse of the Month</u></p> <p>Isaiah 9:6. For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. (NRSV)</p>
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The MMA Difference

When you choose MMA, you're able to do more with your money. You are also helping fellow members, congregations, and service organizations in the spirit of mutual aid and shared values. MMA is unique among financial service organizations, because of the way members help other members by using our financial services and products to improve their own lives. Please be sure to read the two brochures I put in each of your mailboxes. The first one Live Your Faith explains how to make financial choices that reflect your values. This explains MMA's mission very well. The other one is explains the confidential credit counseling service that MMA has established to help us through these tough economic times. Use it yourself or pass it on to a friend in need of help. It's a valuable resource. This year the revised sharing fund "Faith in the Future" grant available for us to use. The sharing fund provides matching grants to help people in need as part of MMA's mission to help our members integrate their finances with their faith. Money to fund these grants is generated by the sale of MMA products and services. The purpose of the Sharing Fund is to help people who are struggling financially and who are often in crisis or are facing an emergency. It's a valuable resource and a blessing for us and our congregation.

Annual Wassail

The annual Wassail will be held on Saturday, December 19, from 7:00-9:00 in the fellowship hall. Please bring friends, a treat to share, and a voice ready to fellowship and sing Christmas songs. Wassail (and other drinks) will be provided. Childcare will also be provided. Contact Geneva at 262-2644 with questions.



2

The Unity of God and the Immigration Crisis

By Jerry Truex (Pastor MCS)

The central prayer and commandment for Jesus was the *Shema*. A scribe once asked Jesus which was the most important commandment and Jesus replied by quoting the *Shema* (Mark 12:28-31; cf. Deut. 6:4ff). The most famous part of the *Shema* is the first six words:

Shě-ma' yis-ra-el Adonai e-lo-hey-nu Adonai e-chad (Hebrew; Deut. 6:4).

"Hear O Israel: The LORD is our God, the LORD is one" (NET; Deut. 6:4).

"Hear, O Israel: The LORD is our God, the LORD alone" (NRSV; Deut. 6:4).

Jesus and the earliest Jewish followers of Jesus, like all faithful Jews, recited the *Shema* twice daily, once in the morning and once in the evening. Here are four comments about the *Shema* that pertain to our church in our times.

1. **Hear** (Heb. *Shema*). Currently, our world is filled with noise, especially about the immigration crisis. It is a sacred duty to listen (*Shema!*). But to Whom?

2. **LORD**. We should listen to the LORD. The word "LORD" (lower case capital letters) represents the divine Name, *Yahweh*. Many Jews do not pronounce the sacred Name, but instead say, *Adonai* ("Lord") or *Ha-Shem* ("The Name").

3. **The LORD is our God.** Literally, the Hebrew says, "Yahweh our God." This is a pledge of allegiance to Yahweh alone. This is to say "no" to false gods, "no" to false allegiances (racial, ethnic, national), and "yes" to *Yahweh*. Allegiance belongs to God. All other allegiances must conform to that allegiance or be abandoned.

4. **The LORD is one.** Literally, the Hebrew says, "Yahweh one." The declaration of God's oneness or unity is at once a denial and an affirmation.

God's unity denies God is two. It denies there are many deities. It denies there are powers beyond God. It denies God's purposes or plans are fragmented or confused.

God's unity affirms one Source and one Sustainer. It affirms a unified natural order, a unified moral structure, a unified field of truth, and—what is very important for our church in our times—a unified humanity.

If, like Jesus, we affirm the *Shema*, then we stand shoulder to shoulder with all human beings without regard to race, gender, origin, ethnicity, or nationality. There is no "separate, but equal," only "united and one." The Apostle Paul understood this very clearly.

"Is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, since God is one" (NRSV; Rom. 3:29-30).

The implications are undeniable. We need only swap a couple of Paul's terms to see the implications of the *Shema* for our church in our times.

"Is God the God of *American citizens* only? Is he not the God of *Latin Americans* also? Yes, of *Latin Americans* also, since God is one."

The *Shema* affirms the unity of God and the unity of all God's people. The *Shema* is a declaration of faith, a pledge of allegiance, and a call for action.

DECEMBER 2009

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
6 <i>Greeters Dori</i> Childcare: Karissa Preschool SS	7	8	9	10 Happy BDay Christian C.	11	12
13 <i>Greeters Nancy & Jen</i> Childcare: Dori & Alex Preschool SS	14	15	16	17 Happy BDay Theresa T.	18	19 Wassail
20 <i>Greeters Dori</i> Childcare: karissa Preschool SS Church Life	21	22	23	24 Happy BDay Robert ER	25 Merry Christmas <i>December Newsletter items due by noon</i>	26
27 <i>Greeters Nancy & Jen</i> Childcare: Sally & Jen	28	29	30	31 Happy BDay George W.		