

Ruth 4:1-22

4 No sooner had Boaz gone up to the gate and sat down there than the next-of-kin, of whom Boaz had spoken, came passing by. So Boaz said, "Come over, friend; sit down here." And he went over and sat down. ² Then Boaz took ten men of the elders of the city, and said, "Sit down here"; so they sat down. ³ He then said to the next-of-kin, "Naomi, who has come back from the country of Moab, is selling the parcel of land that belonged to our kinsman Elimelech. ⁴ So I thought I would tell you of it and say: Buy it in the presence of those sitting here, and in the presence of the elders of my people. If you will redeem it, redeem it; but if you will not, tell me, so that I may know; for there is no one prior to you to redeem it, and I come after you." So he said, "I will redeem it." ⁵ Then Boaz said, "The day you acquire the field from the hand of Naomi, you are also acquiring Ruth the Moabite, the widow of the dead man, to maintain the dead man's name on his inheritance." ⁶ At this, the next-of-kin said, "I cannot redeem it for myself without damaging my own inheritance. Take my right of redemption yourself, for I cannot redeem it." ⁷ Now this was the custom in former times in Israel concerning redeeming and exchanging: to confirm a transaction, the one took off a sandal and gave it to the other; this was the manner of attesting in Israel. ⁸ So when the next-of-kin said to Boaz, "Acquire it for yourself," he took off his sandal. ⁹ Then Boaz said to the elders and all the people, "Today you are witnesses that I have acquired from the hand of Naomi all that belonged to Elimelech and all that belonged to Chilion and Mahlon. ¹⁰ I have also acquired Ruth the Moabite, the wife of Mahlon, to be my wife, to maintain the dead man's name on his inheritance, in order that the name of the dead may not be cut off from his kindred and from the gate of his native place; today you are witnesses." ¹¹ Then all the people who were at the gate, along with the elders, said, "We are witnesses. May the LORD make the woman who is coming into your house like Rachel and Leah, who together built up the house of Israel. May you produce children in Ephrathah and bestow a name in Bethlehem; ¹² and, through the children that the LORD will give you by this young woman, may your house be like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah." ¹³ So Boaz took Ruth and she became his wife. When they came together, the LORD made her conceive, and she bore a son. ¹⁴ Then the women said to Naomi, "Blessed be the LORD, who has not left you this day without next-of-kin; and may his name be renowned in Israel! ¹⁵ He shall be to you a restorer of life and a nourisher of your old age; for your daughter-in-law who loves you, who is more to you than seven sons, has borne him." ¹⁶ Then Naomi took the child and laid him in her bosom, and became his nurse. ¹⁷ The women of the neighborhood gave him a name, saying, "A son has been born to Naomi." They named him Obed; he became the father of Jesse, the father of David. ¹⁸ Now these are the descendants of Perez: Perez became the father of Hezron, ¹⁹ Hezron of Ram, Ram of Amminadab, ²⁰ Amminadab of Nahshon, Nahshon of Salmon, ²¹ Salmon of Boaz, Boaz of Obed, ²² Obed of Jesse, and Jesse of David.



FIRST MENNONITE CHURCH

In Christ -
Making Disciples through
Loving Relationships.

Worship 10:30 a.m.

First Sunday of Advent – November 28, 2021 Dare to imagine God's goodness!

Can we, dare we, embrace *hope* once more? We can when we remember God's steadfast goodness and the goodness of learning and walking in God's ways.

GATHERING

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| Gathering Music | Jenny Epp |
| Welcome, Announcements, Greeting | Sandy Hiebert |
| Prelude to Worship | Jenny Epp |
| *Call to Worship | Sandy Hiebert |

As we begin our Advent season seeking hope and imagining the goodness of God,

we acknowledge the goodness of creation, every rock and tree, every cow and chicken, every cat and dog, every man, and woman and child.

To imagine God's goodness is to honor creation, to worship the Creator, and to acknowledge that the world is not yet what God created it to be.

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| Hymn | Longing for Light (verses 1-4) | VT 715 |
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Candle Litany

We light a candle of hope.

And we imagine:

God's righteousness, God's steadfast love, God's justice.

We light the candle to see God's goodness in us, among us.

Imagine that . . . we are God's wonders, blessed wonders.

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| Hymn | Longing for Light (verse 5) | VT 715 |
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Confession and Assurance

*A friend once said children grow taller at night—
while at rest—bones quietly stretch, and bit by bit their bodies grow.*

*Trees grow silently, too—
from deep inside—energy is released.
Branches reach for the light.
People can grow silently, too.*

**We confess that all too often we stifle the growth
God inspires deep inside of us,
preferring the immediate, the good enough, the comfortable.**
*In Advent—O God—cause us to get up on our tiptoes,
lean forward and extend our gaze.*

**Surely God, who caused the righteous Branch to spring up,
will enliven our imaginations in this season of hope.**

(silence)

*The kingdom of God is near.
Listen—can you hear it?
Look—can you see it?
Our God says, “Surely the days are coming—
they are already here!”*

Time for God’s Children

Sue Buchholz

SHARING

Sharing and Prayer

Pastor Tom

Hymn O Come, O Come, Immanuel (vs. 1-3)

VT 210

LISTENING

Scripture

Ruth 4:1-22

Message The Roots of Redemption

Pastor Tom

RESPONDING

Hymn O Come, O Come, Immanuel (vs. 4, 5, 7)

VT 210

Sharing the Lord’s Supper

Invitation

Coming forward to receive God’s Goodness

Words of Institution, and eating together

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Hymn Bless’d Be the God of Israel

VT 223

Benediction

Pastor Tom

Postlude

Our musicians this morning are: Holly Swartzendruber (song leader),
Jenny Epp (piano), Tom Voth (violin), and Tom Harder (5-string violin
and guitar).

FMC Advent Ensemble will sing during the Dec. 19 worship service. We will rehearse Dec. 5 and 19 from 9:00-9:30 and will prepare one or two songs. We will rehearse with masks and will hear from the FMC Covid Task Force about singing without masks during the service. Paper/ disposable masks are, in Holly's opinion, easier for singing. Please join us as we make a joyful noise!

Poinsettias: You are invited to share poinsettias for Advent! Please place plants in the Fellowship Hall south window area. Plants can be taken home after the December 24 Christmas Eve Service. Thank you!

'TIS THE SEASON FOR ANNUAL REPORTS! The deadline is **December 15** this year for your annual reports to be submitted to the church office. Thank you for your hard work throughout the year, committee and council members!

Sat., Dec. 4 – Five Places of Christmas, the annual holiday open house, includes Kauffman Museum and Goerz House on the Bethel College campus, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. No charge for admission. The Bethel College Women's Association (BCWA) is the host at Goerz House, where there will be baked goods and other items for sale. Please plan to wear a face covering indoors and follow all COVID-19 protocols requested by the venue. (Other locations: Warkentin House, Harvey County Historical Museum and Carriage Factory Gallery, all in Newton.)

**Bakers and craft makers are invited to make items for the event. Please bring any donated goodies to Goerz House Friday, Dec. 3 from 1:30-4:30 p.m. or Saturday, Dec. 4 from 7-9 a.m.*

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