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# HOPE HEADLINES

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## “A Good Word”

By Interim Sara Dick

Since November, I've been sharing reflections about Hope from the AMBS class I took on congregations in transition. The instructors recommended five focus areas for congregations during a **pastoral transition (time between settled pastors)**

1. **Heritage:** review how the congregation was formed and shaped
2. **Mission:** clarify identity & discern vision
3. **Leadership:** watch for new leaders/review organizational structure (note a correction to the order of the tasks)
4. **Connections:** relationships beyond congregation
5. **Future:** apply what is learned in developing congregational profile for search

In November, I reflected on what kinds of work I see the congregation doing and having done on **heritage** and **mission**. In December, I reflected on the work of **leadership** I've seen and in January I reflected on Hope's **connections**.

It's providential to be looking at Hope's **future** in the month when you'll be hosting a candidate for the settled pastor position! Your work to develop a congregational profile and to identify priorities for a new settled pastor is bearing fruit after more than a year of waiting. Thanks be to God!

The first weeks of February will be filled with anticipation: first of Ruth's visit, then of the congregational vote on whether to invite her to join the church as your pastor, and then, if the vote affirms that invitation, to confirm her acceptance of your invitation. I won't be part of that weekend's events, but I'll be holding you all in prayer as you meet Ruth, worship together, ask questions, and share your own stories with her.

Hope's leadership is already actively preparing for the arrival of a new settled pastor. Vision Council is preparing a more detailed job description for the pastor's position, clarifying relationships of accountability and support, and getting a few other administrative questions cleared up.

Deacons are getting themselves ready, too, by updating their list of responsibilities. They plan to share that with Vision Council for approval, and then with the congregation. This will be a big help to new deacons as well as to a new pastor.

I trust that all parts of the church are using what you have learned over the past 2.5 years—and well before that—to prepare for a new pastor. And I trust that we're all listening for the Spirit's movement to map a way forward. Hallelujah!



## Ruth Harder, A Brief Introduction

I did not know Ruth Harder prior to receiving her Ministerial Leadership Information on November 5, 2024, but I quickly felt a connection. I have had the pleasure of getting to know Ruth over the last several months. My impressions are that she is direct about her beliefs and open to dialogue, she offers room for and invites differences of opinion and she has a genuine curiosity about others and in particular, congregational life. And underneath it all, she is a person who has grit – a trait I hold in the highest regard.

In anticipation of Ruth's Candidating Weekend at Hope, February 7 - 9, I am excited to give you this brief introduction. Below is Ruth's resume. My hope is that you take some time over the next two weeks to read some of her written work and get to know her voice. And please come to Candidating Weekend and get to know Ruth further.

With Hope,

~~Katie Chlumsky, Pastoral Search Committee Chair

## Resume - Ruth Harder

Compiled for Hope Mennonite Church, January 2025

### Education

- Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary, [DMin](#), Elkhart, IN: Current
- Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary, MDiv, Elkhart, IN: 2002-2007

- [Clinical Pastoral Education Resident](#) (six units), Rush Presbyterian St. Luke Hospital and Northwestern Memorial Hospital (one unit); Chicago, IL: 2006-2007
- Bethel College, B.S. in Social Work, North Newton, KS: 1997-2001; Magna cum laude

#### Ministry Experience

Ordained in Mennonite Church USA, September 2009

- Lead Pastor, [Rainbow Mennonite Church](#), Kansas City, KS: Sept. 2013-present
- Associate Pastor, [Bethel College Mennonite Church](#), North Newton, KS: 2007-2013
- Chaplain, Northwestern Memorial Hospital, Chicago, IL, 2007
- Youth Pastor and Communications Coordinator, [LaSalle Street Church](#), Chicago, IL: 2005-2007

#### Leadership Positions/Ministry Trainings

- [Values and Ethics for Strengths-Based Social Work Practice and Spiritual Strengths Assessment](#), Webinar Training with Kansas University and Ed Canda: October 4, 2023
- The Dignity of Risk and the Duty to Care, Webinar Training with Pat Deegan and California Institute for Behavioral Health Solutions: December 15, 2021
- [Ministry Integrity Circle Participant](#), Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary: Year long program: 2021
- Board member, Sharing Community in Rosedale, Kansas City, KS: 2013-2021
- Board member, Rosedale Development Association, Kansas City, KS: 2017-2019
- Teaching Healthy Boundaries 101 & 102, [FaithTrust Institute](#), Chicago, IL: March 2020
- Women's Retreat Presenter, Mennonite Church USA, South Dakota: September 2018
- You. Lead. Now. Certification, KS Leadership Center: November 2015
- Stepping up to Staffing/Supervision, Alban Institute Training: Spring, 2013
- Our Whole Lives Sexuality Training/Certification, Lawrence, KS: August 2011
- Clarifying the Call Fellow, Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary: March, 2009
- Listening Project Fellow, Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary: April, 2007

#### Residencies/Fellowships/Awards

- Pastoral Study Grant recipient, [Louisville Institute: White Mennonites, White Jesus and Stained Glass: 2021-2023](#)
- Resident Scholar, [Collegeville Institute](#), MN: January-February 2019
- Interfaith New Clergy Fellow, Chautauqua Institution, New York: Summer 2012
- [Writing Fellow, Theology in the Real World with Kathleen Norris, Collegeville Institute](#), MN: Summer, 2012

#### International

- [Palestine/Israel Learning Tour, Mennonite Central Committee](#): October-November 2014
- Youth Mentor with [Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary Explore! Program](#), Mennonite World Assembly, Asunción, Paraguay: July 2009
- [Central American Study and Service Program, Guatemala City, Guatemala](#): 1999

#### Publications

["A lot going on at the moment," Anabaptist Worldonline: February 14, 2024](#)

["We Mennonites have deep roots in Palestine-Israel. And we're calling for a cease-fire."](#) The Kansas City Star Guest Commentary: January 18, 2024

["There are 50 shades of Mennonite. Come say hello when you see us in Kansas City."](#)

The Kansas City Star Opinion Piece: June 30, 2023

- [Gravecombing](#), Self published book
- ["Arguing with Psalm 91," Bearings of Collegeville Institute](#): April 2019
- ["City of Fountains," Menno Snapshots: July 5, 2018](#)
- ["Ashes to Ashes," Menno Snapshots: February 13, 2018](#)
- ["Water tree, find Jesus," Menno Snapshots: December 1, 2017](#)
- ["Building a peace resume together," Mennonite World Review: November 1, 2017](#)
- ["WWI exhibit teaches about peace for today," Kansas City Star: October 17, 2017](#)
- ["Vocation in the Real World," Bearings, Collegeville Institute: September 29, 2017](#)
- ["Mennos dancing with the stars," Mennonite World Review: August 21, 2017](#)

- [“Mennonite Church USA pep talk for Orlando,” Mennonite World Review: July 3, 2017](#)
- [“Sometimes tangled, always interconnected,” The World Together Blog: June 8, 2017](#)
- [“Beautiful, not barren, The Mennonite: May 2, 2016](#)
- [“The place of the cross,” Mennonite World Review: February 17, 2016](#)
- [“The Lay of the Land,” Leader Magazine: Fall 2015](#)
- [“The great \(de\)commission,” Mennonite World Review: August 12, 2015](#)
- [“Mennonites are expected to visit KC for biennial,” Kansas City Star: June 26, 2015](#)

## Candidating Weekend schedule

We are excited to welcome Ruth Harder as a pastor candidate at Hope. She and her husband Jesse will be here February 7-9. Please see the schedule below. Please note the specific time slots for certain groups as well as opportunities for the entire congregation to participate. The Pastor Search Committee and Vision Council hope that you can join us.

### Friday Feb 7th:

- 4:30 –5:30 pm Meet office staff
- 5:30 – 6:30 pm Pastor Search Committee (welcome to stay for dinner)
- 6:30 – 8:00 pm Dinner with Vision Council (Jesse invited)

**Saturday Feb 8th:** Open House - specific meeting times with groups

- 8:30 – 9:30 am Worship Commission
- 9:30 - 10:30 am Deacons and PCRC
- 10:30 – 10:45 am Break
- 10:45 – 11:45 am Stewardship and Witness and Outreach
- 11:45 am - 1 pm Lunch break on own
- 1- 2 pm Discipleship and Care & Nurture
- 2- 3 pm Young Adults (provide childcare)
- 3 – 3:45 pm Tour the facility (tour offered by children)
- 3:45– 4 pm Break
- 4 – 6 pm Open Reception Coffee hour with A Cuppa Hope (Jesse Invited)

### Sunday February 9th

- Ruth will provide a sermon during worship
- Final dessert auction – A Cuppa Hope
- Sunday School Hour (virtual option available)

- Discipleship Studio for Ruth and Jesse

### Monday February 10<sup>th</sup>

- Send any additional or follow up questions to Moderator
- Encourage Small groups to meet
- Absentee ballot distributed – due by 5 pm Friday, February 14<sup>th</sup>

### Sunday February 16<sup>th</sup>

- Congregational meeting to vote on calling Ruth to ministry



### Embark on a Lenten Journey with other women at Hope.

The Tuesday afternoon and Thursday evening Women's Bible Study will study the same book during Lent: PRONE TO WANDER: A Lenten Journey with Women in the Wilderness

by Joanna Harader. Brenda Glanzer Lilliston teaches both Bible Studies. If you are new to one of the classes or have any questions, please contact Brenda. Please order your own book.

For the Tuesday afternoon Women's Bible, the 8-week series begin on February 25 and ends on April 15. We will meet at 2 p.m. in the church library. You can choose to join via Zoom or in person.

The Thursday evening Women's Bible will meet at 7 pm on Zoom from Feb. 20 - April 24. We will not meet on April 10 (Justice Together Solutions Rally) and April 17 (Maundy Thursday).

**Prone to Wander: A Lenten Journey with Women in the Wilderness** by Joanna Harader. God meets us in the wilderness.

Though most of us have never wandered a literal desert for forty years, we have all spent some time wandering in a wilderness of one kind or another. So, too, have many women across the pages of the Bible. In their stories of doubt and questioning, of dryness and distance, we can find guideposts for the inevitable wilderness periods in our own lives. As we enter into the wilderness season of the church year, this Lenten devotional by Joanna Harader explores the stories of thirty biblical women--from Eve to Mary Magdalene--who had their own such experiences. For some, the women inhabited a literal wilderness. For others, their wilderness was metaphorical. All were drawn closer to God, who does not leave us to wander alone. As you consider these women who inhabited a swath of wilderness spaces, draw closer to the God who met them--and meets you--there.



“Justice” will be the focus of our church service on March 2 and Marcus Loganbill will be teaching a SS series on Justice beginning on March 9.

During the SS time on March 2, there will be a meeting for Justice Together Network members in the sanctuary to start thinking and organizing for May’s Nehemiah Assembly 2025. Others may consider the SS time on March 2 a social hour. If you are a Justice Together Network member, please plan to attend. This is an important meeting.

As many of us experienced in 2024 at Century Two, there is a powerful energy that comes from over 1400 people standing behind well-researched solutions and getting commitments from our local and state officials that brings more justice for our marginalized citizens. This sends the message that we are seriously committed to making Sedgwick County more just and fair for all. So we will focus on what each of us can do to make the 2025 Nehemiah Assembly a success.



**February’s Reminders...**

**Worship Participants for February**

February 2  
Worship-Lori M.  
Scripture-Randy P.  
Pianist-Amy  
Song-Adam  
Children’s story-Katie  
Prep-Connie  
Tech-Scott  
Host-Brenda L.

February 9-Candidating weekend  
Worship-Lori M.  
Scripture-Clinton  
Pianist-Cynthia  
Song-Galen  
Children’s Story-Ruthie  
Prep-Lori M.  
Tech-Mike V.  
Host-Lee

February 16  
Worship-Sara  
Scripture-Margaret  
Pianist-Ruthie  
Song-Adam  
Prep-Russ G.  
Tech-Galen  
Host-Kendal/Marjie

February 23-Choir  
Worship-Natalie H.  
Scripture-David  
Pianist-Vicki  
Song-Trae  
Prep-Ruthie  
Tech-Michelle  
Host-Barb

**Greeters**

Feb 2-Greg & Dawn  
Feb 9-Greg & Leah  
Feb 16-Margaret; Karen  
Feb 23-TBD

**Nursery**

Feb 2-Jared & Natalie  
Feb 9-Donna H.; Lily  
Feb 16-TBD  
Feb 2-TBD

**Coffee**

Feb 2-Jerold  
Feb 9-Eldon & Annette  
Feb 16-Greg & Dawn  
Feb 23-Marcus & Cynthia

