



First Mennonite Church

Midweek E-Newsletter

January 26, 2022

From Pastor Tom

Will You Let Me Be Your Servant?

Does that question sound familiar? If so, it's most likely because it's the title of a hymn that was in the old hymnal (HWB 307) and is also in the new (VT 778). For some reason, it doesn't have a question mark, in either book. There's probably a simple explanation for that. But is it possible it's because posing it as a question would make it too uncomfortable?

*Will You Let Me Be Your servant—let me be as Christ to you?
Pray that I may have the grace to let you be my servant too.*

To be someone's servant is, practically by definition, to be subservient to them, to be subject to their authority, in a position of lesser power. Which begs the question why anyone would want to be the servant of another. Granted, in many cases it comes with compensation of some sort—money, food, maybe even housing. Is that why?

*We are pilgrims on a journey; we are trav'lers on the road.
We are here to help each other walk the mile and bear the load*

To what journey is the hymn writer referring? A summer vacation? A long walk? A backpacking trip, perhaps? That would explain the reference to bearing a "load." A long time ago I helped lead backpacking trips for the Mennonite organization "Outspokin.'" One needs to carry a lot when they go backpacking—everything one needs to survive in the wilderness.

*I will hold the Christ-light for you in the nighttime of your fear.
I will hold my hand out to you, speak the peace you long to hear.*

What does being a servant have to do with Christ? And what is a "Christ-light?" At Jesus' baptism in the Jordan River, a voice from heaven said, "Here is my servant, whom I have chosen, my beloved, with whom my soul is well pleased" (Matt 12:18). And Jesus himself said to his disciples, "whoever wishes to be great among you must be your servant," implying that just as God called Jesus to be a servant, so too are we (Matt 20:26).

*I will weep when you are weeping; when you laugh I'll laugh with you.
I will share your joy and sorrow till we've seen this journey through.*

There's that word again: "journey." A journey of highs and lows, good times and bad times, joys and struggles. A journey we go through and share together. Hmm. Sounds like life.

*When we sing to God in heaven, we shall find such harmony,
Born of all we've known together of Christ's love and agony.*

“Harmony.” “Together.” Sounds like the church! “Love and agony.” Sounds like Christ’s death on the cross. And also like . . . the church!

*Will You Let Me Be Your servant—let me be as Christ to you?
Pray that I may have the grace to let you be my servant too.*

So let’s recap. To be part of the Church means to journey or “walk” through life’s joys and sorrows together. It means to be a servant (be subservient?) to one another. And it means to let ourselves be served. Sounds hard! Sound like it requires us to put grace in place of pride. Sounds like it requires us to be, well, like Christ to one another. Perhaps we’ll even hear that same voice from heaven saying (or singing!) “Here is my servant, whom I have chosen, my beloved, with whom my soul is well pleased!”

Among Our Friends and In Our Prayers

- ☞ This is a challenging week for Lloyd and Julie Anderson. Lloyd is receiving not two but three radiation treatments. Julie, meanwhile, had a scan yesterday in Kansas City, has another tomorrow, and a chemo treatment. How can we be “as Christ” to them?
- ☞ Let us also pray for all others in our Church who have health struggles and concerns. We are many.
- ☞ Glenn Goertz is feeling settled and secure in his apartment at Parkside, even as he feels lonely without Jan.
- ☞ Velda misses coming to church, now that she has given up driving. And, she is baking zwiebach today!
- ☞ Clariece Schroeder is a beautiful example of accepting what life brings you. Thanks be to God!

Upcoming Events

- ☞ Join tonight’s sermon discussion via Zoom at 7 p.m. on the sermon “Has Christ Been Divided?” at the following zoom link:
<https://zoom.us/j/98678967993?pwd=M3lYMWZLRGITTWF0czlvN0N4eThxdz09>
- ☞ **Hesston College invites you to enjoy a production of *Freedom Riders*** by the Mad River Theater Works Friday, Jan. 28 at 7:30 p.m. at Hesston Mennonite Church. The performance is offered as part of the 2021-2022 Sunflower Performing Arts season.
“This original play with live music looks at the work of the Freedom Riders – people, both black and white, who rode together on buses that crossed state lines in order to protest the illegal segregation practices still in use in the early 1960s. The play emphasizes the importance of working together and the value of non-violent protest. At this time when our nation, our world, is engulfed in divisiveness and distrust, we need to examine these important ideas – collaboration, peace and trusting others – and this play will help us do so.”
- ☞ **Sat., Jan. 29 – Kauffman Museum annual Kansas Day event, “Famous Kansans,” noon - 4 p.m.** (with food trucks in the museum parking lot starting at 11:30 a.m.), *museum and grounds*. Along with activities inside and outside the museum, there will be presentations on Gordon Parks (Kirk Sharp, director of the Gordon Parks Museum), Blackbear Bosin (Erin Raux, director of the Mid-America All-Indian Center) and William Allen White (Bev Buller, author and retired educator).

For more information, see the Kauffman Museum Facebook page or kauffmanmuseum.org. *Current Bethel COVID protocols require masking indoors regardless of vaccination status.*

- ☞ **Buhler Mennonite Church's ANNUAL CHICKEN NOODLE SOUP SUPPER is just a few weeks away on Wednesday, February 9.** While we will not have a dine-in experience in our church basement, we will be offering a carry-out featuring noodle soup, pie and bread. ORDERS WILL BE ACCEPTED THROUGH TODAY, JANUARY 26. Call or text 620-664-7699 or 620-727-5128 to let us know how many orders you want. Pick up will be at the north entrance of the church from 4:00-6:30 on Wednesday, February 9. ENTER FROM THE SOUTH SIDE PARKING LOT ON B STREET. This is a free will offering with all proceeds going to outreach meals. Checks may be made out to Buhler Mennonite Church – cash donations will also be accepted that evening. Buhler Mennonite Church – 220 W Ave B, Buhler, KS 67522

- ☞ **Have a heart for refugees!** The WDC Immigration Task Force encourages your congregation to offer a “love gift” of cleaning supplies between now and February 14 for arriving families. International Rescue Committee Wichita resettled 350 families last month alone! They come with so little. Let's remember our own immigrant history and be the hands and feet of Christ, bringing good news to our neighbors. You may drop off donations of supplies at the WDC Office (2517 N Main, North Newton) 8 am-4:30 pm Mon-Fri or at Shalom Mennonite Church (800 E First, Newton) from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm Mon-Thurs & Sunday mornings. Email office@shalomnewton.org if you cannot drop off supplies during daytime hours. For more information, click IRC Donations List for the Cleaning Supply Kit List and other needed items. To make a monetary donation, go to: rescue.org/united-states/wichita-ks. Thank you!

- ☞ **MCC U.S. is hosting a Young Adult Peacebuilders Training in Colorado from March 6-11, 2022!** Young adults ages 18-30 are invited to participate in a rich, week-long experience that will provide opportunities to build new relationships, visit organizations doing powerful work in and around Colorado Springs, and apply Anabaptist, Biblical foundations of peace and justice to real world issues. Rocky Mountain Mennonite Camp will serve as a home base for participants, offering a beautiful and relaxing space to rest, study and have fun together as a group. This Peacebuilders Training will touch on themes of racial equity, immigration, mass incarceration, gun violence and conflict transformation. It will include trips to visit RAWtools, an organization working out of Colorado Springs to move communities away from violence, as well as Casa de Paz, an organization working out of Aurora to reunite separated families. Group time together to reflect on these and other learning experiences during the Peacebuilders Training will provide young adults with tools to implement their own dreams for peace and justice projects in their local communities. The participant fee is \$200. All other costs (including travel, lodging and meals) will be covered by MCC. Please encourage the young adults in your community to consider this opportunity.

Other Announcements

- ☞ **Do you know a member of a WDC congregation who has leadership gifts, skills and perspectives to share in WDC?** The WDC Gifts Discernment Committee seeks a diversity of names to consider for potential nominations for elected leadership roles and values your suggestions as they prepare to select nominees for 2022. Suggestions may be submitted at any time using the online form on the WDC website: [Nomination suggestions for WDC Elected Positions](https://www.mennowdc.org/nomination-suggestions-for-wdc-elected-positions) Or send suggestions to WDC at wdc@mennowdc.org or 316-283-6300 or PO Box 306, North Newton, KS 67117. For reference, information about WDC Executive Board and Commissions can be found here: <https://mennowdc.org/executive-board-commissions/>. Thank you! -WDC Gifts Discernment Committee

- ☞ **WANTED** for the Kansas MCC Sale General Auction: Cars, Trucks, Tractors, Motorcycles, Campers, etc. Call Jerry Toews, 620-367-8257, for details and pickup NOW so we have time to get them cleaned up and ready for the sale in April. ALL proceeds go to MCC. We usually get GOOD prices for your donations. Help make a difference in the lives of those struggling around the world through MCC. Thank you!

- ☞ **MDS currently has several opportunities to join our team in the U.S. and in Canada.** We have opportunities within our volunteer team, our communications team, field operations and support of our units and regions. One of our positions is the Communications Administrative Assistant which includes oversight of communications projects, working with churches, conferences and partners and media relations. [Click here to see all of the employment opportunities.](#)

Verse of the Week

“Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.”– Philipians 4:8 (NRSV)