



First Mennonite Church

Midweek E-Newsletter

May 18, 2022

From Pastor Tom

This is actually not from me, but rather from “Moderator Doug.” He and I debriefed together this past Monday about Sunday’s meeting with our two Western District Conference ministers to discuss our relationship with them and with the conference. And he showed me the daily devotional he had just read first thing Monday morning. My jaw dropped just as his had. This is from a book of devotionals called *Uncommon Key*, written by former NFL coach Tony Dungy.

May 16. Encounters of the Civil Kind. *(God blesses those who work for peace, for they will be called the children of God. Matthew 5:9)*

“I’m a big proponent of standing firm for what I believe, including important issues that we as followers of Christ are facing today. What I’d caution is that we don’t throw too many “rocks” at each other in the process, by being strident or intolerant or intentionally sowing seeds of discord. It’s easy to get caught up in an attempt to prove we’re right and someone else is completely wrong.

It’s clear that Jesus didn’t bend on the essential truths He instructed us to live by. But when others disagree with us on those points, do we automatically put up walls or instead try to find common ground for discussion, without compromising the essentials?

When we dig in and become immovable in our views, even belittling another person’s belief in order to win the argument, aren’t we really undermining Christ’s Kingdom?

I’ve heard it said this way: conflict is unavoidable, but combat is a choice. Are we choosing combat? Are we dealing with conflict in a constructive manner? Conflict can illuminate differences and in the process actually help us. But pushing it to the next level of combat is rarely, if ever, productive.

And sometimes it seems like our response is more strident if it’s a Christian who takes a position contrary to ours. Or if the church takes a position we believe to be wrong. Rather than striving for peace, we automatically wage war, moving into combat before we have provided an opportunity to understand the differences.

God wants us to bring people together, to build bridges, not walls, wherever possible. Especially within His church.”

Thank you, Tony Dungy, for your Spirit-led insights. May the same Holy Spirit guide us at First Mennonite Church.

Upcoming Events

- ☞ **Baking Party** on May 25th starting at 1:30pm! Enjoy the fun of baking together here in our church kitchen. You can come and go through the afternoon or in the evening. Let Jan Amstutz know when you want to join her. Cookies will be baked for the Food 4 Kids program at Trinity to give now as well as to freeze for later in the summer.
- ☞ **SAVE THE DATE!** June 5th - Farewell for Doug Miller and Holly Swartzendruber! We will fellowship after worship with a carry-in meal.
- ☞ **Creativity Camp!** Students completing grades 1 – 6 are invited to come and learn to paint, sew, and cook here at FMC on June 7, 9, 14, and 16 from 1:00 to 2:30 pm. Anyone who would like to help with registration, cooking assistance, prayer support, supply donations or clean up, please contact Jan Amstutz or the church office.
- ☞ **June 25th** we are hosting two events and need **help with serving meals!** Please consider a dinner for the Hagan/Jantz family at 11:30 and the Ediger Memorial at 4:00 followed by supper at 5:00pm.. A sign-up sheet is up on the entrance white board! Please join in this important ministry to families who are grieving.
- ☞ **Gardening for good: Creation care tips for your backyard and stories from Bolivia, May 26 at 7 pm CDT, 6 pm MDT.** In this virtual visit, we'll explore what it looks like to care for the planet—from our own backyards to remote Bolivian communities. Join us to learn gardening and conservation tips in your own garden, then travel south to hear incredible stories from MCC's projects in Bolivia. [Learn more and register at mcc.org/virtual-visits](https://mcc.org/virtual-visits).
- ☞ **2022 WDC Annual Assembly** - "United in Purpose, Together in Love" is our WDC Annual Assembly theme for our July 29-31, 2022 gathering at Camp Copass, Denton, TX. There will be time to pray, serve, discern the ministry of the church, and play together.
- ☞ The joint "**Sunday School Picnic**" we share each summer with Trinity Mennonite Church will be **August 14** (not the first Sunday of June, as it has often been in the past). The musical group "Hopeful Blues (from Hope Mennonite Church in Wichita) will provide the program. The worship will start at 10:30 in Trinity Mennonite's building, and a carry in lunch together will follow outside if weather permits.

- ☞ **Oct. 7th in Salina**, Tony's Pizza Events Center, will host a concert with **Zach Williams** and special guest Ben Fuller. A Grammy award winner Zach Williams and his signature blend of southern rock, country and faith-filled songwriting are truly unlike anything else in Contemporary Christian music today. Call for tickets or information to Brenda, Box Office Manager 785-826-7200.

Other Announcements

WDC News:

- ☞ Building a Lasting Connection Relationship Retreat – Communication is key for a healthy and long-lasting relationship. During this 2-day retreat, couples will learn and practice skills together that promote healthy communication with one another in order to promote ways of effectively expressing hope, validating feelings, and navigating concerns together. While these skills are helpful for all people, this retreat will be geared toward couples who have been together for 10 years or under (married, engaged, or dating are all welcome). This retreat will be held at Camp Mennoscah and led by Katie Dyck (LCMFT) and Renee Reimer (WDC ordained pastor)
- ☞ Mini Service Projects at WDC Annual Assembly - July 29-31, at Camp Copass, Denton, TX, adults, youth and kids will help with on-site service projects, including tying comforters for MCC to send to people who have fled their homes, and making MCC hygiene kits. Please ask your church to help collect the following items and bring them to Camp
- ☞ Summer Story Hour--God Rocks! - All children ages 3-8 in the central Kansas area are invited to God Rocks! Summer Story Hour at the WDC Conference Resource Library 2517 N. Main in North Newton. Fun Stories and Activities with Leader, Marjie Warkentine and Resource Library Director, Jennie Wintermote. Mondays at 10:00am on June 27, July 11, 18, 25 & August 1 & 8

Verse of the Week: **2 Peter 1:2**

“Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.”