



# First Mennonite Church

## Midweek E-Newsletter

July 27, 2022

### From Pastor Tom

#### Jesus the Christ

I've been pondering the distinction in the Bible between Jesus and Christ. Of course, they often go together, as in "Jesus Christ." In which case Jesus is his given name, and Christ, instead of being what we would call a "last name" or surname or family name, is rather a further elaboration of who Jesus is, namely "the Christ," which is simply "the Messiah" in Greek. But the two also often appear separately, or when together point to two different aspects or natures of the same "person." Jesus points to the man who was born in Bethlehem, grew up in Nazareth, and whose story is told in the four gospels, leading up to his crucifixion, resurrection, and appearances to his disciples. Christ, then, points to the post-resurrection, spiritual, heavenly being, whose presence is powerfully felt on earth, even as he "sits at the right hand of God" in heaven (see Colossians 3:1). To put it differently, Jesus is God incarnate in human flesh, Christ is God in heaven. Jesus healed, taught, and called disciples; Christ is now present within his disciples. They are the same "person," albeit in different manifestations. In the New Testament as a whole, while the four gospels tell us primarily about Jesus, the rest of the NT tells us especially about Christ.

The Apostle Paul never met the man Jesus. Rather, he experienced (in his own words) a "revelation of Jesus Christ" (Galatians 1:12). The story of Paul's conversion in Acts, written by Luke, has the post-Resurrection Christ identify himself initially as Jesus ("I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," Acts 9:5), and has Paul testifying to him primarily as "Jesus," and sometimes "Lord Jesus." But in his own letters, Paul only rarely uses the name Jesus by itself, but instead almost always uses "Jesus Christ," "Christ Jesus," or simply "Christ." In other words, what Paul is writing about to the various churches he founded is the reality and message of the Risen Christ, and the powerful difference Christ now makes in the lives of believers, and particularly in the life of the church. While each of his letters has its own context, motivation, and specific message, the overall message is the same. Believers (which includes us) now may experience "life in Christ," a dramatically transformed reality that is indeed nothing less than life both in God and with God. It is, in other words, the "Gospel," the "good news."

This Sunday I'll be preaching on Paul's letter to the Colossians, in which Paul both describes who Christ is (see especially 1:15-20), and what life in Christ looks like (or rather, should look like; the specific lection for Sunday is Colossians 3:1-11). May God guide us at First Mennonite Church in Hillsboro to a deeper understanding of the amazing life we have been called to!

**Verse of the Week:** 2 Corinthians 13:5

*“Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you – unless, of course, you fail the test?”*

**Among Our Friends and in Our Prayers**

- ☞ Continue praying through the directory.
- ☞ Pray for continual strength and peace for our cancer patients.
- ☞ Pray for our delegates for the WDC Annual Assembly, attending remotely this Friday through Sunday.

**Upcoming Events**

- ☞ **SAVE THE DATE!!! PEPPERNUITS COMING SOON!** Don't miss out on being a part of our wonderful tradition of making peppernuts. Our goal this year is to just make 10 batches on each of two days, August 12 and 13<sup>th</sup>. Survey sheets are out on our foyer tables to let us know we can count on you. Please find your name and mark the days, times and jobs that you would be willing to help. We will then plan a schedule and enjoy our time of working together!
- ☞ **Arts & Crafts Fair Opportunity!** FMC will make our building available for ministry on September 17<sup>th</sup>, offering a place of physical and spiritual rest. The sanctuary will be open for silent meditation and prayer, restrooms available for a donation, and á la carte items for sale for a taste of the Mennonite heritage of Hillsboro - verenika, sausage and cherry moos, Please pray for this ministry and let Doug or Sue know if you would like to participate. THANKS!
- ☞ **The Lord's Prayer** study continues in Sunday School @ 9:30 a.m. in the chapel led by Nadine Friesen.
- ☞ **Bethel College Life Enrichment program** sent out information for Fall semester which begins August 25 and ends November 17. Look for the bright pink brochures on the “Bethel” bulletin board.

**Other Announcements**

☞ **Favorite hymns!** Yes, we are still hoping you will share with one another. Jot your favorites down or call in the office and let us know! (Paper and pen on the foyer table).

☞ The secretary will be out of the office this next week, August 2 – 5.