



First Mennonite Church

Midweek E-Newsletter

December 2, 2020

From Pastor Tom

Another word about Palestine

Here is a version of the Lord's Prayer I recently received from *Sabeel*, a Palestinian Christian organization that works for peace with justice in Israel/Palestine. I found this both helpful and powerful.

The Lord's Prayer for Palestine

God – Our Father and Mother,

Creator of all of us in your wonderful, diverse human family,
loving all of us as your children, men and women, black and white, Palestinian and Jew,
sending Jesus who resisted empire, paid with his life,
and was resurrected to empower all of us with life in abundance,
inspiring us with his creative and prophetic spirit;

Hallowed be your name –

You revealed your name in a blaze of fire from the midst of a bush,
calling Moses to liberate his people from the oppression of slavery,
to face Pharaoh with God's word of warning.
You revealed your name as "hearing the cry of the oppressed,"
as "God being with them now and in the future," Yahweh;

Your kingdom come –

Your new just world, where no one fears a checkpoint,
where no woman is stopped on the way to the hospital,
where no child is taken in the middle of the night,
where no farmer is violated by colonists,
where no peaceful protester is shot by a military sniper,
where no citizen is hit by a rocket;

Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven –

Your will, revealed in the Torah, in the words and deeds of Jesus' and the Apostles,
in the Qur'an, the book of our Abrahamic brothers and sisters,
your world of love and justice and mercy and care,
inspiring Jews, Christians, Muslims and people of all faiths to resist injustice, racism and inequality and
to work for peace, healing and a new beginning,

and for the common future of Jews and Palestinians in the Holy Land.
Help the Jewish people heed the prophets of justice in antiquity and today,
guide the West to stop supporting Israel's violation of international law and human rights;

Give us this day our daily bread –

Let no one die of hunger,
with enough food for everyone.
Liberate the Palestinian economy from the strangulation of occupation.
Lead us to a financial and political order directed towards the well-being of people and earth,
cooperative forms of working, sharing and caring;

And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors –

Break the dominance of the owners of capital and weapons, pushing whole societies into the slavery of debt.
Empower us to discover the power of forgiveness, a new beginning in all dimensions,
forgiving the oppressors and establishing new lines of communication,
loving even enemies, enabling their liberation from the evil of dominance and oppression;

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil –

All of us are tempted by the lust for power:
men over women, parents over children, white over black, educated over non-educated, politicians over
civilians, and all other forms of domination;
At this moment we are tempted to lose hope,
as the Israeli government, together with the power of empire,
violates international law by annexing, once again, land that is not theirs,
deepening the apartheid system in the Holy Land, heaping violence upon violence;

May civil society and the governments of the West awake to this lawlessness
and cease their financing of the occupation through military aid and trade agreements;
Let cooperation proceed only when international law is followed and human rights restored,
strengthening the hope and resilience of the Palestinian people;

Especially we pray for Christians and the churches around the world
to hear this Cry for Hope and Call for Decisive Action.

May they realize that We cannot serve God and the oppression of the Palestinians.
Grant that their silence end, that they act faithfully for the rights of the Palestinians,
that they stand up against the misuse of the Bible for justifying the theft of Palestinian land.

For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever.

Amen

Worship Resources for celebrating the Second Sunday of Advent at home

How did it go last week? Were you able to get your Advent wreath set up? Contact Aleen, Cheryl, or Tom if you have questions about how to do that. Attached to this email are resources you can use to celebrate and worship at home. Printouts are also available at the church.

Ways to Help

- ☞ **Change the world with one dollar a day challenge.** Marion County Core Community is looking for 140 brave and generous people who will pledge \$1 a day or \$30 a month for one year. \$1 a day can solve poverty by inviting families experiencing poverty to a safe place where their voices are heard, they are treated with honor and dignity as they unpack their lives, gain new relationships and build resources. Text or call Mark Rogers @ 620-877-0899. All gifts are tax deductible.
- ☞ **MCC asks for support for Central American hurricane recovery.** Not one, but two hurricanes within two weeks have caused extensive flooding in Honduras, Guatemala and Nicaragua. Hurricanes Eta and Iota have destroyed crops and forced people from their homes. MCC is working with churches and community organization to provide emergency food, hygiene supplies and cleanup support. Join us as we help these communities recover. You can donate online mcc.org/eta-iota-relief, by phone (888) 563-4676 or by mail at MCC, 21 S. 12th St., PO Box 500, Akron PA 17501.
- ☞ **Bethel College Women's Association (BCWA)** is looking for Newton-area bakers to help support the college by supplying baked goods for this year's "5 Places of Christmas" on Dec. 5. Follow this link for sign-up options: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0D4BABA2EA4FDCF8-baked>.

Upcoming Events

- ☞ **Have yourself a honkin' good holiday at MCC in North Newton!** This drive-thru event on Dec. 11 from 4-6 p.m. is a unique way to safely enjoy some delicious Christmas cheer while supporting the worldwide work of Mennonite Central Committee. Each charcuterie box is composed of seasonal artisan meats and cheeses, olives, fruit, mixed nuts and seasonal treats with crackers served on the side. A box serves two generous appetizer portions. RSVP by 5 p.m. on December 4 to reserve yours! Share your Christmas joy by ordering extra boxes to deliver to family and friends. Take a moment and treat yourself this holiday season! Suggested donation per box is \$25. Email centralstates@mcc.org to reserve your charcuterie box today! Find more information and photos at mcc.org/honkin-holiday.
- ☞ **Join MCC for a series of "MCC and me" webinars to hear more about service opportunities.** Are you ready to step out and into service? To gain new skills and experiences while working for relief, development and peace in the name of Christ? MCC is working to adapt our programming as the situation with COVID-19 develops. All sessions relate to anticipated service needs, though timing and some other details may be subject to change.
 - December 9 at 7 p.m. EST: Serving and Learning Together (SALT)
 - January 13 at 3 p.m. EST: Summer Service leadership program
 - February 25 at 10 a.m. EST: Sharing With Appalachian People (SWAP) summer staff
 - February 25 at 8 p.m. EST: International service worker
 - March 6 at 12 p.m. EST: International service worker
 - March TBD: Mobile Meat CannerFor more information and to register: mcc.org/mcc-me-webinar-series-service-opportunities.

- ☞ **Everence** will host a *Social Security and retirement income planning* webinar, on Monday, Dec. 14 at 6:30 p.m. Attendees will learn about Social Security strategies, risks that can impact retirement savings and strategies to help income last throughout retirement. This online workshop is free. Register soon by contacting our office at 316-283-3800, 877-467-7294 or central.kansas@everence.com.

- ☞ **You are invited** to a socially distanced Christmas Gathering at **Camp Mennoscah** on Saturday, December 12, at 2:30pm. Camp will provide s'mores and a beautiful outdoor space. **Registration required.** Email office@campmennoscah.org or call 620-297-3290. Bring a mask for indoor spaces and those times when you cannot be 6 feet apart. Those under 18 must be accompanied by an adult. Dress for the weather and don't forget to register!

- ☞ **Bethel College alumni and friends are invited to take part in the annual Lighting of the Green on Sunday, Dec. 13, from wherever you are.** Lighting of the Green is a long-standing Bethel Advent tradition celebrating the Light that shines in the darkness, the life and light of Christ who came into the world giving light to all humankind – normally held on the Green in the center of campus. This year, the gathering will take place virtually, **live on Zoom and YouTube** (see links below) with some parts pre-recorded. Please join the Bethel community at **8 p.m. on Dec. 13:** YouTube: <https://youtu.be/LZeLxduHoVk> or Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/98444357235?pwd=N1MzQlpiQ29HQWZlWUs2NGpNWWtIZz09>

Other Announcements

- ☞ **The WDC Garden December 2020/January/February 2021 issue** is now available for viewing at: <https://mennowdc.org/wdc-garden-december-2020-january-february-2021/>. Learn about how WDC is engaging with racial justice and cultural diversity, the impact of Covid-19 on Hispanic churches, an announcement about Sandra Montes-Martinez as the new WDC Associate Conference Minister (Texas-Based), and more!

- ☞ **Camp Mennoscah** is a wonderful place for family gatherings of whatever size! A variety of facilities fit any number of family groupings. Maybe you only need a space during the day for walking the trails or playing disc golf. There is plenty of outdoor space! Contact Camp Mennoscah at 620-297-3290 or office@campmennoscah.org to reserve! You are welcome here!

- ☞ **SOOP** (Service Opportunities with our Partners) is accepting applications! Use your gifts and skills to work alongside others in a network of ministries across the church. Flexibly designed for retirees, families, and adults over 25. Visit MennoniteMission.net/SOOP to learn more!

- ☞ **Youth Venture** is accepting applications for summer 2021! Discover and experience the work that God is doing in the world with a team of other young people as you serve, learn, worship, and build relationships. Visit MennoniteMission.net/YouthVenture to learn more!

- ☞ **We have 2021 Calendars** in the church office if you would like to pick up one during office hours or email Maura and she can put one in your mailbox here at church. One is from MCC and the other is from Yazel-Megli Funeral Home. Both have beautiful scenic pictures and verses for each month.

Weekly Inspirational/Encouraging Bible Verse

I wait quietly before God, for my victory comes from him. Psalm 62:1