



First Mennonite Church

Midweek E-Newsletter

February 24, 2021

From Pastor Tom

Finding Hymns for Lent

Say you have your own copy of the new hymnal *Voices Together*, and you want to find a hymn to fit a particular season— for example, the Season of Lent, which began one week ago today. How would you do so? One way would be to look in the table of contents (officially page v). There you will notice that *Voices Together*, just like its predecessor, *Hymnal: A Worship Book*, is organized according to a typical Sunday morning order of worship. You'll find the following sections: Gathering, Praising, Reconciling, Telling God's Story, Confessing Faith, Celebrating Baptism, Celebrating Communion, Sharing Our Stories, Praying, Giving, Living God's Story, and Sending. So where would one find hymns appropriate to a particular season of the church year, in this case Lent? A quick scan of the table of contents does not show "Lent" as one of the subheadings. However, under the section Telling God's Story we find such subheadings as "Jesus' Advent," "Birth of Jesus," "Jesus' Death," and "Jesus' Resurrection." It's not hard to figure out that those subheadings would fit the seasons/occasions of Advent, Christmas, Good Friday, and Easter. Seems like we're on the right track. And it seems like Lent should be somewhere in between Christmas and Easter, right? Which indeed it is—just by a different name. After Birth of Jesus, we find "Jesus' Epiphany"; "Life, Teaching, and Ministry of Jesus"; "Journey to the Cross"; then we're to hymns for Jesus' death, resurrection, and beyond. Quick: guess where Lenten hymns will be? If you guessed "Life, Teaching, and Ministry of Jesus," you guessed wrong. But if you guessed the next subheading—the one that comes right before Good Friday and Easter (as Lent does), namely "Journey to the Cross"—congratulations! You guessed right. There you will find the songs we sang recently at our Ash Wednesday service: "Sign Us with Ashes, Merciful God," #304, and "The Glory of These Forty Days," #305. The very next song is "I Want Jesus to Walk with Me," #306. Does that sound like it would fit the Season of Lent? You bet! And so will #s 307-314, after which we find a couple that fit Palm Sunday, a couple more for Maundy Thursday, and then voila! It's Good Friday, and the subsection called "Jesus' Death."

There is at least one other way of finding hymns to fit a particular day or season of the Christian Year (as well as other themes or topics). Look in the back, in the index titled "Topics and Uses in Worship." Topics are listed alphabetically, and guess what? Under "Lent," there are 47 hymns listed, as well as twelve worship resources (in brackets). In other words, you should be able to find something that suits. Have fun!

Upcoming Events

- ✎ Join individuals from across Western District Conference via Zoom on **Thursday, Feb. 25 at 7:00pm** to talk about "**Invited: The Power of Hospitality in an Age of Loneliness**" by Leslie Verner. Email Jennie at the Resource Library to register for the discussion or to borrow a book at crlib@mennowdc.org
- ✎ **You are invited to join the virtual MCC Central States annual meeting on Saturday, February 26 at 9 a.m. CST.** The meeting will include a reflection on MCC in pandemic times, details about what COVID-19 has meant for MCC thrift shops and a look at our financial statements. To join the meeting please email centralstates@mcc.org and then Zoom meeting information will be sent directly to you.
- ✎ **Now What?! Post Pandemic Faith Formation:** Do you want to talk with other people who care about faith formation? What have we learned about new ways of sharing the Jesus story in the past year? What will we lay aside? What questions remain unanswered? Join Kathy Neufeld Dunn and Resource Library Director Jennie Wintermote for a virtual dialogue **Saturday, February 27, 9 am CST.** To register, please email wdc@mennowdc.org for the Zoom link.
- ✎ **MCC Alumni Gathering, July 9-11 at Rocky Mountain Mennonite Camp!** All MCC alumni are invited to Colorado to relax in the cool mountain air this summer. We realize there is still uncertainty about summer activities due to COVID-19. At this point, we are planning to have this gathering, all registrations will be refunded if the event gets cancelled. We ask that you still go ahead and register if you plan to attend. Find all the details, including COVID-19 protocols that the camp is following and REGISTER at mcc.org/alumni-gathering.

Other Announcements

- ✎ **"Plants and Things" MCC Booth**– One of the most popular booths at the Kansas Mennonite Relief Sale is "Plants and Things," where you have traditionally been able to buy flowers, shrubs, and garden plants. Since July is a bit late to be thinking about starting or adding to a garden, the "Plants and Things" booth will be open on April 10 at the regularly scheduled time. "Plants and Things" will be set up at the MCC Building in North Newton utilizing the parking lot and the warehouse facilities. They will be accepting the plants that you wish to bring to the sale. So please start the seeds that will become a part of your contribution to MCC and the sale event. If any questions arise, please contact Kristi Unruh at 620-3456867 or by email at kdunruh97@gmail.com.
- ✎ **MDS** will be using an alternative single team model for the spring season (March and April) to minimize COVID-19 risks. This involves a group of leadership and long-term crew volunteers working together for four weeks or more at a project after isolating for 10 days prior to serving. There will not be weekly volunteer groups coming and going each week. Anyone who agrees to serve within this model will need to complete the Long-Term Volunteer application and interview process. All interested volunteers should contact Deanna Frey at dfrey@mds.mennonite.net, for further conversation and scheduling.
- ✎ **Camp Mennoscah** is a wonderful space for families and groups needing space to spread out! Facilities for differently sized groups are available with a variety of gathering areas. Trails and fields are waiting to be hiked and used for fun activities, too! Contact Camp Mennoscah at 620-297-3290 or office@campmennoscah.org to reserve. You are invited to enjoy this sacred space!

Weekly Encouraging Bible Verse

"Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near." – James 5:7-8 (NRSV)