



First Mennonite Church

Midweek E-Newsletter

March 10, 2021

From Pastor Tom

“God of Wonders” (VT 178)

I’m a sky person. Night or day, as long as it’s not completely cloudy, I’m drawn to the “heavens above.” Whether it’s star-spangled or bright blue, I’m drawn by its infinite vastness. As far as we know, as far as science can explain, the sky has no end. As I said to our kids during the Time for Children this past Sunday, when we look at the sky, it is like looking at God.

The writer of Psalm 19 felt the same. “The heavens are telling the glory of God,” he (or she) wrote, “and the firmament proclaims his handiwork.” It reads like a song worthy of singing, again and again.

So it is with *Voices Together* #178, “God of Wonders.” The hymn begins by stating the obvious: the world in which we live, “water, earth, and sky,” is nothing less than a wondrous creation by the “Lord of all creation.” Indeed, what else can one say whenever moved by its sheer beauty? Well, the chorus says it all:

God of wonders beyond our galaxy, you are holy, holy.
The universe declares your majesty; you are holy, holy.
Lord of heaven and earth, Lord of heaven and earth.

This hymn is one of eight comprising the section called “Telling God’s Story: Creation.” The section includes such familiar favorites as “All Things Bright and Beautiful” (#177); “This is God’s Wondrous World” (#180; while the new title may leave some of us with a sense of loss, it also better conveys what the hymn is really about); and “I Sing the Mighty Power of God” (#182). Accompanying these familiar hymns are ones with fresh new texts and, as in this case, new melodies. “God of Wonders,” written by Marc Byrd and Steve Hindalong in 2000, is at once simple and immensely singable. Indeed, it has one of those melodies that easily gets stuck in your head, especially the refrain. But what better words to get stuck in one’s head and to carry around with us wherever we go, daytime or nighttime, than these? ☺

Upcoming Events

- 🌸 Easter lilies and flowering plants are beautiful expressions of new life! Please consider sharing flowers or lilies with our church as we look forward to Holy Week and Easter morning. Contact Cheryl Bartel for more information.
- 🌸 **Friday, March 12:** The Tabor College Symphonic Band will hold its winter concert in the Richert Auditorium in the Shari Flaming Center for the Arts at 7 p.m this Friday. Tickets are required and may be purchased at tabor.edu/tickets. Livestream is also available on YouTube: search Tabor Webcast to view.

- ☞ **All women and girls are invited** to the Western District Women in Mission 2021 Spring Soiree Thursday, April 8 at 7:00 pm. In lieu of attending our annual Spring Supper, gather with us for a **virtual night of worship, music and a reflection** on "Faith in Turbulent Times" offered by special guest speaker and freelance minister, Georgia Metz, M. Div. Special music will be provided by Erin Regier Graber and Addie Regier Kauffman. Email WDWM2021SpringSoiree@gmail.com to register by April 5. A zoom link will be sent to registered participants prior to the event.
- ☞ **Lombard Mennonite Peace Center:** For those who have already taken our *Mediation Skills Training Institute (MSTI)*, we are pleased to offer a new one-day event: the **MSTI Refresher Course!** Sessions are available on Tuesday, May 11 and Saturday, June 12. The fee is \$99, and the event runs from 9:00am to 4:00pm Central Time. The full five-day version of *MSTI* is also available on May 3-7, June 21-25, August 2-6, October 11-15, and November 15-19, 2021. The session in August will include the option for in-person attendance in the Chicago area. Registration for all events being offered by the Lombard Mennonite Peace Center is open now at www.LMPeaceCenter.org/ticketspice/. Questions? Please consult the attached *MSTI* Brochure, call 630-627-0507, or send an email to Admin@LMPeaceCenter.org.

Other Announcements

- ☞ **Mennonite Mission:** Looking for a non-traditional pastoral role? Become a unit leader for Service Adventure, a gap-year program for ages 17-20 from Mennonite Mission Network. Unit leaders, who are at least 24 years of age, serve as mentors to the young adults in the Service Adventure household. Leaders are needed in Colorado Springs, CO and Johnstown, PA. Learn more by contacting SusanN@MennoniteMission.net.
- ☞ **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

Verse of the Week

"Who is like the LORD our God, who is seated on high, who looks far down on the heavens and the earth? He raises the poor from the dust, and lifts the needy from the ash heap, to make them sit with princes, with the princes of his people. He gives the barren woman a home, making her the joyous mother of children. Praise the LORD!" – Psalm 113:5-9 (NRSV)