



# First Mennonite Church

## Midweek E-Newsletter

April 21, 2021

### From Pastor Tom

#### How Then Shall We Pray?

The verdict, as we all know, is in. Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin was found guilty on all three charges against him in the death of George Floyd. Some are praising the verdict, proclaiming that in this case at least, justice has finally prevailed. Others feel that police officers and departments around the country are not being allowed to simply do their jobs, jobs that, after all, are to “serve and protect” their community. A “not guilty” verdict would undoubtedly have led to a new wave of riots and protests, and this morning our country is quieter because of the jury’s decision. But that doesn’t mean that the divisions in our country are any closer to being healed today than they were at this time yesterday.

Enter the Church. We who are called by God to be his ambassadors. Called to be the “body of Christ.” Called to be different than the world around us. Called to be instruments of peace amidst the endless cacophony of violence and division everywhere we turn. Called to be Jesus’ disciples. So, what does that look like—today, twenty-four hours after the verdict was announced?

Yesterday, just as that announcement was being made, I was working on this next Sunday’s worship service. Rick Bartlett of Tabor College will bring the morning’s message, which he is entitling “Honest to God.” Among his texts are Psalm 23 and John 10:11-18, both of which proclaim the Lord to be our “shepherd.” As I was looking for possible worship resources that might fit his theme, I found the following reading in the back of our hymnal (#1044). Perhaps this speaks to this day and hour, and to our calling as Christ’s body, the Church:

#### “Response to Community Crisis”

In our doubt and fear, may we know the compassion of the Shepherd, who tends us in the valley of shadows and will sit with us as long as we need.

In our anger and frustration, may we know the passion of the Prophet, who overturns the tables of injustice and curses this fruitless age.

In our pain and despair, may we know the healing of the Comforter, who strengthens us with hope that is stronger than death.

Make us a community of costly and courageous love, overcoming destruction and injustice wherever we may find it.

We pray in solidarity with those whose hearts and bodies are aching today. (*silence*)

By the tender mercy of our God, may the dawn from on high break upon us, to give light to those who sit in shadows, and to guide our feet in the way of peace.

## Upcoming Events

- ☞ **Sunday, April 25, 2 p.m.** – Award-winning syndicated columnist **Leonard Pitts Jr.**, who packed out Memorial Hall at Bethel College in 2017 with his lecture “America in an Age of Trump,” makes a return engagement, **live online, speaking on “Is America Possible?”** This is part of the Peace Lecture Series from the Kansas Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (KIPCOR). **Register for the Zoom link at [kipcor.org](http://kipcor.org)**
- ☞ **Tabor College** is excited to bring **The Triumphant Quartet** to campus Sunday, April 25 at 7 p.m. in the Shari Flaming Center for the Arts. This quartet has been singing quality gospel music since 2003, quickly gaining national attention and several #1 songs. The group received a Dove award in 2019 for their album YES, voted southern gospel album of the year. Please join them April 25 for a wonderful evening of beautiful music. Tickets may be purchased at [www.tabor.edu/tickets](http://www.tabor.edu/tickets) or by phone at 620-947-3121 ext. 1401.
- ☞ **Kauffman Museum’s spring fundraiser is FaspBox – *faspa* in a box.** *Faspa* is a light evening meal traditional among Low German-heritage Mennonites. Each box serves one and costs \$50. Reservations must be made by Monday, April 26 (for pickup or delivery on May 2) at [www.kauffmanmuseum.org/faspbox](http://www.kauffmanmuseum.org/faspbox) or by contacting the museum with credit card information at [kauffman@bethelks.edu](mailto:kauffman@bethelks.edu) or 316-283-1612.
- ☞ After a year of virtual and on-campus concerts, **Hesston College’s Bel Canto Singers** are hitting the road to perform a program entitled “Lift Every Voice” at locations across Kansas, Nebraska, Minnesota and South Dakota. The concerts will feature choral numbers as well as special music by soloists and small groups. All performances will be held outdoors, and concert attendees are asked to bring their own lawn chairs for socially distanced seating. The concert will be broadcasted over FM radio for those choosing drive-in parking. Up-to-date concert information—including locations—can be found at [www.hesston.edu/everyvoice](http://www.hesston.edu/everyvoice). The itinerary and host churches are:
  - Monday, May 3, 7 pm – Dyck Arboretum of the Plains with Marie Engle, Hesston, Kan.
  - Tuesday, May 4, 7 pm – First Mennonite Church, Hutchinson, Kan.
  - Thursday, May 6, 7 pm – Pleasant Valley Mennonite Church, Harper, Kan.
  - Friday, May 7, 7 pm – Heartland Community High School, Henderson, Neb.
  - Sunday, May 9, 4 pm – Salem-Zion Mennonite Church, Freeman S.D.
  - Monday, May 10, 7 pm – Bethel Mennonite Church, Mountain Lake, Minn.
  - Thursday, May 13, 7 pm – Banman Residence, 8538 Mette Street, Lenexa, Kan.
  - Friday, May 14, 7 pm – Tabor Mennonite Church, Goessel, Kan.

## Other Announcements

- ☞ **Bethel College Women's Association** invites donations to help purchase two earth-friendly water refill stations for the Bethel campus. The stations will accommodate water bottles, and cost \$890 each. Donate at [bcwamarketonline.com](http://bcwamarketonline.com) by April 30, 2021. Thank you for your support!
- ☞ Are you a parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle or other close friend or relative to a precious little one who is *12 months or younger*? If so.....do you know if you have been vaccinated against whooping cough? By receiving the Tdap vaccine, you can provide protection for infants whose immune systems are most vulnerable and may not be old enough to receive or complete the vaccine series yet. Marion County Health Department has a special, reserved stock of Tdap vaccine for individuals who meet the criteria at a cost of only \$20. Call us today at **(620) 382-2550** to make your appointment to receive your vaccination to provide the precious ones in your life with possible life-saving protection.

## **Verse of the Week**

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.” –Matthew 5:6 (NRSV)