



First Mennonite Church

Midweek E-Newsletter

June 9, 2021

From Pastor Tom

How Does Our Garden Grow?

The Bible overflows with references to the world of nature, including the realm of things that grow, whether wheat, or weeds, or trees, or bushes, or grass. Such things have obviously been around a long time. Make that a long, long time! And despite all the concrete and asphalt and brick, and steel, and lumber in our world today, we continue to be blessed by God with growing things.

What I love about living in Hillsboro is how aware I am of all the growing things, far more than I was in Wichita. There, when I went for a walk, it was around the block on busy streets. Here, when I take a walk, it's usually out my back gate, through the cemetery, past Tabor College athletic fields and facilities, and suddenly I'm amidst beautiful wheat fields, bordered by great, green groves of trees. I find it grounding and life-giving.

Two of the lections for this coming Sunday have to do with growing things, and how it is ultimately God who is the Farmer and Tender. Ezekiel 17:22-24 promises new life to old, dying trees, and a powerful reversal of fortunes for those feeling dry and dead. Mark 4:26-34 feature two of Jesus' parables of the Kingdom of God, the first about how grain grows even when the planter doesn't understand how until it is time for his role in the harvest, and the second about the tiny mustard seed that grows into the greatest of trees. I look forward to considering with you how these texts speak to our lives at First Mennonite Church, Hillsboro, Kansas!

In the meantime, may your grass and trees stay green, may your wheat ripen, and may your flower and vegetable gardens flourish with beauty and abundance!

Upcoming Events

- ☞ **Our annual Sunday School picnic with Trinity Mennonite is June 20!** Get ready to enjoy a morning of praising and singing, fun and fellowship with our fellow Trinity friends at the southwest end of Memorial Park at 10:30 a.m. Bring lawn chairs and/or blankets, insect repellent, and a picnic lunch for fellowship time following the service. Please note that there will be a special time for kids' activities!

Other Announcements

- ☞ **The FMC Nurture Committee has decided we just do not have the resources to do VBS this summer.** This is disappointing! Even though we expected we'd have to do something less than has been done in the past, we were hoping to minister to our children and those in the neighborhoods in some form. And we don't want to forget those children. We have some ideas for both fun and nurturing events this summer on a lesser scale. We or someone else may be

contacting you about whether you might help make those events possible. In the meantime, as FMC emerges out of our COVID protocols, we are trusting to be able to love and serve one another more fully once again!

- ☞ **Summer Food 4 Kids is back this summer!** Grab-n-Go meals are served from 12-12:30 every weekday, but **we need cookies** for the near 80 kids we feed! Please consider how you can contribute, whether through cookies or other simple sweet treats. Call 620-947-3824 if you can help. Thanks for your part in making summer a sweet one for these children.
- ☞ **Mennonite Mission Network** has openings for a Director of Finance and Director of Human Resources, two new positions for the agency. You can find details on our website at www.MennoniteMission.net/employment . To begin the application process, send a resume to StaffRecruitment@MennoniteMission.net.
- ☞ **Vacation Bible School!** Nurture Committee is exploring whether we will have Vacation Bible School this summer. We are partnering this year with the Hillsboro United Methodist church. Do you feel a sense of interest and excitement about providing children with a VBS experience this summer? If so, please contact Doug Miller or Pastor Hank and let them know! dougmillier4@outlook.com youthpastor@fmchillsboro.com
- ☞ **Guidelines for summer youth camps have changed**, and Camp Mennoscah is working to change within the guidance of state and local agencies. If you have questions or concerns about how the camp masking and distancing guidelines may have changed, please contact Camp Mennoscah at 620-297-3290 or olivia.bartel@campmennoscah.org.
- ☞ **There's still time to register for camp!** Camp Mennoscah has a few openings at most camps. Register online at campmennoscah.org!
- ☞ **The sewing group is making Dignity kits for MCC.** We are sewing the basic kits but need help collecting the other items to fill them. We will need ladies' cotton briefs (sm, med, lg), hand towels, washcloths, bars of bath soap, bars of laundry soap, wide tooth combs, nail clippers, wooden or plastic clothespins. Please put any of the above donations in the storage cart in the narthex. Thank you for your help!
- ☞ **The Kansas Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (KIPCOR)** at Bethel College is offering its core mediation training (Practical Skills for Managing Interpersonal Conflict) via Zoom June 14-18. Visit kipcor.org for more information.
- ☞ **Join Jerusalem Seminar this winter!** Bethel College and Tabor College are again sponsoring a trip to Jordan, Palestine, and Israel, from December 26, 2021, to January 15, 2022. The four emphases of the trip are to (1) understand the Bible in its context, (2) learn about the three major religions of the area (Judaism, Islam, Eastern Christianity), (3) understand the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and (4) take time for reflection, worship, and prayer together. There is currently room for additional persons to participate. If interested, contact Peter Goerzen (pgoerzen@bethelks.edu) immediately. Cost is estimated at \$4700-\$4900 per person.

Verse of the Week

"Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. ¹⁸ And all of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord, the Spirit."— 2 Corinthians 3:17-18 (NRSV)