



First Mennonite Church

Midweek E-Newsletter

September 29, 2021

From Pastor Tom

But it's HARD to be humble!

Why is it so hard to be humble? To admit others are right and I'm wrong? To see the log in my own eye and not just the specks in everybody else's? To apologize for something I've done to hurt or offend another?

I have long thought that humility is perhaps the single most important character trait in those who profess to follow Jesus. Unfortunately, for even longer, I have failed to embody that trait, to live it out in the way I treat others. The word "humble" appears 99 times in the NRSV Bible, and "humility" another 15. Jesus didn't mince words. "Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt 18:4). "All who exalt themselves will be humbled, and all who humble themselves will be exalted" (Matt 23:12). Paul could be more gentle: "I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love" (Ephesians 4:1-2). But he didn't shy away from reminding us what true humility looks like: "he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death—even death on a cross" (Philippians 2:8). (Oh yeah, that's why I don't like being humble!) And James, amidst all of his "scolding," reminds us the potential benefits of humility: "Therefore it says, *'God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble'*" (James 4:6).

Still, sometimes I wonder whether nothing short of a complete transplant (Heart? Brain??) will help me. But what if . . . after all else has failed . . . the church could help? What if the church were like . . . a sports team? Where we teach humility, and model it, and practice it, and treat it as the ultimate, final goal (what it means to "win," as it were)? Or what if the church were like . . . a choir, in which humility was something we "performed" all together at the same time, each time that we gather working to improve it and perfect it until the result is a beautiful work of art?

This much I know: I need others with whom to work on it. Because I definitely seem unable to do it alone! Want to join me?

Upcoming Events

- ☞ **Wednesday Evening:** Come at 6:15 p.m. to enjoy a meal together! In this week's Bible study, we'll be studying James 3:13 – 4:10. Come learn about the "two kinds of wisdom!"
- ☞ **The FMC Ministries Council has set this Sunday, October 3,** for a brief congregational meeting following the Sunday worship service. At this time, a yes or no vote of members will be taken answering the question: Do you wish Pastor Tom to be affirmed for a second three-year term as lead pastor of First Mennonite Church? The ballot will provide a short space for you to

explain your answer if you wish. Our constitution specifies: "A lead pastor is called by affirmation of at least a two-thirds majority of the members present at a congregational meeting and the absentee ballots." Those members who anticipate they cannot be present for that meeting should arrange now to submit their ballot **this week** by contacting Kara Unruh at the church office or their Care Committee member. In anticipation of this vote, FMC members are encouraged to review the Pastor/Congregation Review document by Marv Zehr (April 15, 2021), the Amended Final Assessment Report by KIPCOR (August 19, 2021), and the KIPCOR transcript of the congregational meeting on Sept. 8. Copies are available in the church office.

Note Kara's office hours and especially the evening hours available **tonight**:

Today, 3:00-7:00pm

Thursday 3:00-5:00pm

Friday 9:00-12:30pm

- ☞ **Marion County Core Community** invites you to its graduation Thursday, September 30 at 6:30 p.m. at Trinity Mennonite Church of Hillsboro. Please join the celebration to congratulate the graduates! A reception will follow the ceremony.
- ☞ **Bethel College's Fall Festival is Sept. 30-Oct. 3, with most activities taking place Saturday, Oct. 2, on campus.** Features include music, food, class reunions, football, the comedy *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)*, and the STEM Symposium honoring Professor Emeritus of Chemistry Richard Zerger.
See <https://www.bethelks.edu/alumni/events/fall-festival> for the complete schedule.
- ☞ **Bakers and Crafters Needed!** Help support Bethel College Women's Association by donating pies for BCWA's Pie-By-The-Slice booth or any baked item or craft item for the Market in the Round at Fall Fest 2021. Peppernuts, zwieback, cinnamon rolls, and coffee cakes are popular items! Bring your pies (no refrigerated or custard pies please) to Seminar A in Schultz Student Center 4-6:30 p.m. Friday, October 1 or 8-11a.m. on Saturday, October 2. Baked goods and craft items can be dropped off at the Luyken Fine Arts Center Rm 140 on Friday 1:30-4:30pm or Saturday 7-8 a.m. All proceed go to support Bethel College.
- ☞ **The Gospel Echoes Teams will be holding their annual prison ministry banquet** Tuesday, October 5 at 6:30 p.m. at the Journey at Yoder Activity Center, 3605 E. Long View Rd., Haven, KS. This program is a collaboration of multiple teams coming together for this special presentation. The song arrangements were put together for a recent video produced for prison broadcast. The theme includes songs about the cross, Christ's resurrection and the victory we have in Jesus. The evening will include a homestyle dinner, music, and a prison ministry presentation. For tickets, contact Dale and Miriam Lehman at 620.694.9823.

Other Announcements

- ☞ **COVID-19 protocols:** The FMC Covid response team is urging the following regarding the Covid virus: 1. Masks are required when we gather indoors, 2. FMC should reduce capacity in the sanctuary and fellowship hall to 50%.
- ☞ **Our hearts go out to the people of Afghanistan.** The compounding effects of drought, displacement, decades of conflict, and COVID-19 are creating a massive humanitarian emergency. This devastating situation has led to a near-collapse of the healthcare system, the destruction of family livelihoods, and the threat of mass child starvation. An estimated 18.4 million men, women, and children need life-saving aid.

It's critical that essential services continue, and we need your help. World Vision is committed to serve in Afghanistan long-term, aiming to help 1 million people over the coming months through interventions such as food and nutrition assistance, healthcare, child protection, and access to clean water, sanitation, and hygiene programming. [Your support matters. Please join us by donating today.](#)

Verse of the Week

“For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God.” -John 3:20-21 (NRSV)