



# First Mennonite Church

## Midweek E-Newsletter

February 2, 2022

### From Pastor Tom

I “met” the president today!

I’m not talking about President Joe Biden, of course. I’m talking about President David Janzen, of Tabor College. He was the featured speaker this morning as part of Tabor’s *Ex Audio* lecture series (congratulations to Doug Miller for coordinating this series for Tabor!).

When I say I “met” him, I don’t mean I got to shake his hand afterward (although I did). I mean that he shared his life story with all of us in Richert Auditorium. He began by talking about asking questions—as a student, as a young adult trying to find his way in the world, as a successful college professor and businessman trying to keep making good decisions and doing the “right thing.” As a math major at Tabor (eventually adding Computer Science as a second major), his question was at first “What do I want to do?” That is, what job should I pursue? Etc. But meanwhile, he described how his faith was growing and becoming more important. And eventually his question became “What does God want me to do?” As a math and computer major he couldn’t see himself becoming a minister or traveling evangelist. But he discovered that God calls all kinds of people into his service. And in all kinds of jobs and locations. After working for Sprint, he answered a call to teach at Bethel College (essentially cutting his salary in half). He entered a PhD program at KU (cutting his salary in half again). He took a job as Professor of Computer Science at Cal. Poly. And all along the way, not only did he feel God’s presence with him; he felt God prodding him continually to share his faith with others. Telling his students on the first day of class at a state university, “I just want you to know that I am a Christian.” Starting a Bible study in his and his wife’s home.

He is a “slight” man (I could hardly believe that he taught water skiing at a summer camp while in college! ☺), but he is not a small man. He is a man of God. Sincere. Unpretentious. What you see is what you get. And what we got this morning is a profoundly authentic testimony of how God works in our lives. It is a journey of asking questions and listening for the answers, and journey of twists and turns and surprises. It is a journey of wanting to faithfully serve God and follow Jesus. Wherever that takes us.

Tabor College has a new president. I look forward to “meeting” him again and getting to know him further. (In a few minutes I get to have lunch with him and other area pastors in the “Blue-Gold Room” at Tabor.) And in the meantime, may all of us continually open ourselves to God’s leading, just as President Janzen has done.

# Among Our Friends and In Our Prayers

## Upcoming Events

- ☞ Join tonight's Bible Study via Zoom at 7 p.m. at the following zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/91457452132?pwd=UXU5U3VWSXViSFpyUUR4cW03aFBxdz09> Feel free to call in as early as 6:30 to chat before we start!
- ☞ **Have a heart for refugees!** The WDC Immigration Task Force encourages your congregation to offer a "love gift" of cleaning supplies between now and February 14 for arriving families. International Rescue Committee Wichita resettled 350 families last month alone! They come with so little. Let's remember our own immigrant history and be the hands and feet of Christ, bringing good news to our neighbors. You may drop off donations of supplies at the WDC Office (2517 N Main, North Newton) 8 am-4:30 pm Mon-Fri or at Shalom Mennonite Church (800 E First, Newton) from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm Mon-Thurs & Sunday mornings. Email [office@shalomnewton.org](mailto:office@shalomnewton.org) if you cannot drop off supplies during daytime hours. For more information, click IRC Donations List for the Cleaning Supply Kit List and other needed items. To make a monetary donation, go to: [rescue.org/united-states/wichita-ks](https://rescue.org/united-states/wichita-ks). Thank you!
- ☞ **Everence® February webinar:** Everence® will hold an informative Social Security and retirement income webinar on Tuesday, Feb. 15, starting at 6:30 p.m. Specifics will include Social Security strategies, including when to begin taking benefits, risks that can impact your retirement savings plus strategies to help your income last throughout retirement. There will also be plenty of time for questions. Information will be presented by staff from the Everence offices in Central Kansas. To register contact Everence at 316-283-3800, 877-467-7294 or [central.kansas@everence.com](mailto:central.kansas@everence.com). Advisory services offered through Concourse Financial Group Advisors, a division of Concourse Financial Group Securities, a Registered Investment Advisor. Securities offered through Concourse Financial Group Securities, a registered broker-dealer and member of FINRA and SIPC. Investments and other products are not NCUA or otherwise federally insured, may involve loss of principal, and have no credit union guarantee. Products and services offered through Everence Trust Company and other Everence entities are independent of and are not guaranteed or endorsed by Concourse Financial Group Securities, or its affiliates.
- ☞ **MCC U.S. is hosting a Young Adult Peacebuilders Training in Colorado from March 6-11, 2022!** Young adults ages 18-30 are invited to participate in a rich, week-long experience that will provide opportunities to build new relationships, visit organizations doing powerful work in and around Colorado Springs, and apply Anabaptist, Biblical foundations of peace and justice to real world issues. Rocky Mountain Mennonite Camp will serve as a home base for participants, offering a beautiful and relaxing space to rest, study and have fun together as a group. This Peacebuilders Training will touch on themes of racial equity, immigration, mass incarceration, gun violence and conflict transformation. It will include trips to visit RAWtools, an organization working out of Colorado Springs to move communities away from violence, as well as Casa de Paz, an organization working out of Aurora to reunite separated families. Group time together to reflect on these and other learning experiences during the Peacebuilders Training will provide young adults with tools to implement their own dreams for peace and justice projects in their local communities. The participant fee is \$200. All other costs (including travel, lodging and meals) will be covered by MCC. Please encourage the young adults in your community to consider this opportunity.
- ☞ **MCC Central States Annual Meeting** will take place virtually on Saturday, February 26 from 1-2:30 CST. Please email [tinaschrag@mcc.org](mailto:tinaschrag@mcc.org) for a link to the Zoom meeting.

- ☞ **The WDC Israel-Palestine Task Force** is sponsoring a Zoom book discussion of Jonathan Kuttab's book, *Beyond the Two-State Solution*. This event will take place on Tuesday April 5, 2022 from 7-8 pm CT. The first 20 registrants will receive a free copy of the book. To register email [wdc@mennowdc.org](mailto:wdc@mennowdc.org) or call (316) 283-6300 and provide your name, mailing address, and email address. Specific questions about the event may be referred to Bob Atchison, 785-313-2292 or by e-mail to [robertleeatchison@gmail.com](mailto:robertleeatchison@gmail.com). Below you will find a flyer with more information about the event.

## Other Announcements

- ☞ **In the introduction of his sermon back in October**, Wendell Loewen talked to us about his heart. Among other comments, he said: "I've never seen my heart, but I'm pretty sure you have." Isn't that the truth? We've all seen each other's hearts as we worship, plan, pray, eat, play, grow and fellowship together. We all know who among us has a heart for children, or who has a heart for hospitality, teaching, music, storytelling, fun, etc. Of course, these passions of the heart connect to spiritual gifts which Paul speaks of in Romans 12 and again in chapters 12 – 14 of I Corinthians. Both passages make it clear that these gifts should result in action. In our culture of financial confidentiality and secrecy regarding tithes, offerings and contributions our hearts for financial giving are largely hidden. There may be good reasons for this but, as a witness to your generosity, I wish it wouldn't be so. The biggest blessing, by far, which may not be saying much, of being your treasurer is the opportunity the position affords to be a witness to your hearts for giving. I'm sure I've said it before, this is an inspiring view, which I wish all of you could share in. (By the way, if you're really interested in that view let me know and you, too, could be treasurer.) Just as observing the actions which result from the heart passions of others can motivate us to do better and/or schedule a checkup, as I've performed the routine work as your treasurer and observed your generosity, your hearts for giving have made a clear impact on mine. Thank you.

On behalf of the staff and leadership of FMC, thank you for your hearts of generosity and the resulting financial gifts to the mission & ministries of FMC the past year. For me personally, thank you for allowing me to be a witness. Additionally, a special thanks to those who responded to my request in early December regarding a potential income shortfall for FY 2021.

- ☞ **Do you know a member of a WDC congregation who has leadership gifts, skills and perspectives to share in WDC?** The WDC Gifts Discernment Committee seeks a diversity of names to consider for potential nominations for elected leadership roles and values your suggestions as they prepare to select nominees for 2022. Suggestions may be submitted at any time using the online form on the WDC website: [Nomination suggestions for WDC Elected Positions](#) Or send suggestions to WDC at [wdc@mennowdc.org](mailto:wdc@mennowdc.org) or 316-283-6300 or PO Box 306, North Newton, KS 67117. For reference, information about WDC Executive Board and Commissions can be found here: <https://mennowdc.org/executive-board-commissions/>. Thank you!  
-WDC Gifts Discernment Committee

- ☞ **WANTED** for the Kansas MCC Sale General Auction: Cars, Trucks, Tractors, Motorcycles, Campers, etc. Call Jerry Toews, 620-367-8257, for details and pickup NOW so we have time to get them cleaned up and ready for the sale in April. ALL proceeds go to MCC. We usually get GOOD prices for your donations. Help make a difference in the lives of those struggling around the world through MCC. Thank you!

- ☞ **MDS currently has several opportunities to join our team in the U.S. and in Canada.** We have opportunities within our volunteer team, our communications team, field operations and support of our units and regions. One of our positions is the Communications Administrative Assistant which includes oversight of communications projects, working with churches,

conferences and partners and media relations. [Click here to see all of the employment opportunities.](#)

## **Verse of the Week**

“Hear, O Israel: The LORD is our God, the LORD alone. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might.”— Deuteronomy 6:4-5 (NRSV)