



First Mennonite Church

Midweek E-Newsletter

March 9, 2022

From Pastor Tom

"When you have come into the land that the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance to possess, and you possess it, and settle in it, you shall take some of the first of all the fruit of the ground, which you harvest from the land that the LORD your God is giving you, and you shall put it in a basket and go to the place that the LORD your God will choose as a dwelling for his name. ⁴When the priest takes the basket from your hand and sets it down before the altar of the LORD your God, ⁵you shall make this response before the LORD your God: "A wandering Aramean was my ancestor; he went down into Egypt and lived there as an alien. When the Egyptians treated us harshly and afflicted us, by imposing hard labor on us, we cried to the LORD, the God of our ancestors; the LORD heard our voice and saw our affliction, our toil, and our oppression. The LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with a terrifying display of power, and with signs and wonders; and he brought us into this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. So now I bring the first of the fruit of the ground that you, O LORD, have given me." You shall set it down before the LORD your God and bow down before the LORD your God. Then you, together with the Levites and the aliens who reside among you, shall celebrate with all the bounty that the LORD your God has given to you and to your house" (Deuteronomy 26:1-11, excerpts).

The above passage was actually one of the lections for this past Sunday, and it is an important one. Due to the length of the service, we were not able to include it in the worship service, but do so now. It reminds us that everything we have has been given us by God, and in order to symbolize that we are to offer a portion of our income and resources back to God as an act of worship. Since the onset of the pandemic two years ago, we have suspended the weekly ritual of collecting an offering during the worship service by passing offering plates, but instead have placed these plates at the back of the sanctuary. Thanks be to God, your faithful generosity has continued, and we have been able to meet our budget! But we have missed the weekly ritual, and have been "poorer" for it! So this coming Sunday, the Second Sunday of Lent, we will reinstate this practice as part of the worship service. We will once again have "ushers" to pass the plates, and then bring them forward to the Communion Table. (You may want to bring a glove or handkerchief along with you to use as you pass the plate, to further minimize any risk of Covid.) Let us offer to God our first fruits and tithes!

In Our Prayers

- Please continue to pray for peace and safety in Ukraine. MCC is evaluating the situation and giving support to staff and partners as the situation allows. All international MCC staff have been evacuated from Ukraine including two SALT participants from Kansas. Aaron Ensz from Buhler has returned to the U.S. and Micah Epp from North Newton has relocated outside of Ukraine. Please keep them and their families in your prayers as well.

Upcoming Events

- ☞ **Registration is now open for MC USA's Special Session of the Delegate Assembly, May 27-30, 2022, in Kansas City, Missouri.** All conferences, congregations and Racial/Ethnic groups are encouraged to send representation. This is an in-person event. No Zoom option will be available. The fee for registration is \$250 per person (for delegates and non-delegate attendees). Childcare is available for children up to age 2 for \$50. Lodging information will be in your registration confirmation email. See the FAQ for frequently asked questions about delegate representation, Delegate Assembly hours, meals, scholarships and more. Visit the Delegate Assembly Resource Hub for everything you need to know about the Special Session.

Other Announcements

- ☞ **A signup sheet for preparing Wednesday night meals is posted on the white board in the hall.** Please consider volunteering to prepare one of the only three meal slots open.
- ☞ **This Sunday:** offerings will be split between **Main Street Ministries and CORE.**
- ☞ **Rocky Mountain Mennonite Camp:** Flyers have arrived and are posted on the bulletin boards in the hallway with upcoming camp dates.
- ☞ **Western District Conference:**
Pray for the WDC Gifts Discernment Committee as they consider nominees for elected leadership positions in our conference.
Volunteer Opportunity - As springtime approaches, the WDC office is in search of a volunteer to plant and take care of the flower pots in front of our building this year. If you would be interested, email wdc@mennowdc.org or call 316-283-6300 to fill this role.

Verse of the Week – Psalm 91:1-2

- ¹ **You who live in the shelter of the Most High,
who abide in the shadow of the Almighty,^a**
- ² **will say to the LORD, "My refuge and my fortress;
my God, in whom I trust."**