



First Mennonite Church

Midweek E-Newsletter

April 20, 2022

From Pastor Tom

Easter: A Way of Life!

As holidays go, it can seem as if Easter is over practically before it started. It's not like Christmas, with the long lead-up, and the decorations that take weeks to finally disappear. Granted, as Christmas is preceded by Advent, Easter also comes with a "season" of solemn preparation known as Lent. And then of course Holy Week is a truly big deal on the liturgical calendar, especially Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. But Easter itself is always held a bit at bay until it's actually here. One can't really shout Christ is Risen! or swap out the purples (or blacks) for the whites one minute before Easter Sunday. And then the next day, it's over, right? It's back to work and school, and if you're lucky the chocolate may last until Wednesday or so.

But the truth of the matter is, you can't get rid of Easter so quickly or easily. In fact, at all, or ever! Thanks be to God!! For adherents of the Christian faith, Easter is like all the holidays rolled into one, including Christmas, Valentine's Day, Fourth of July, and perhaps especially, New Year's Day. Something profoundly new came on Easter day, a gift beyond imagine, covered in love, worthy of the best ever fireworks. And we call it, simply, the Resurrection. Everything changed, forever. Darkness became light, night turns to day, the deepest despair to the highest joy. Christ is risen; Christ is risen indeed!

Perhaps most importantly a whole new way of living was and is ushered in by Easter. For one particularly profound example, think about the Apostle Paul. In the days after the Risen Christ made himself known to Saul/Paul; a fearful Pharisee became a fearless Apostle of the good news. Nothing was ever the same; in fact, it was infinitely better—criticism, persecution, and eventually execution notwithstanding. In light of Easter, none of that mattered one whit!

So, here's the question: what's keeping us from living that way? Nothing but our own bad habits! Along with our head-scratching forgetfulness. Who possibly could or can ever forget the Resurrection? Every day from now until, well, eternity is like the greatest holiday of all. May God keep teaching us to live like it! Christ is risen; Christ is risen indeed!

Among Our Friends and In Our Prayers

- ☞ Let's all **think** of someone we know and love who does not yet know Christ as fully as they could. Ourselves included! And now let's **pray** for them, **that the light and love of Christ will break through for them (for us!) in new ways** in the days to come.

Upcoming Events

- ☞ **Summer Food 4 Kids** is starting on May 31 at Trinity Mennonite Church at 211 South Elm. It will be in-person dining this year, feeding children who face food scarcity during the summer. We need your help to sit with kids at the table and take an interest in their lives. These kids need good male role models. So, men, if you have the noon-hour free, please sign up for one day during the week. You even get a good hot meal free! We need 5 people per day. Call Trinity at 620-947-3824 and reserve your day of the week.
- ☞ **2022 WDC Annual Assembly** - "United in Purpose, Together in Love" is our WDC Annual Assembly theme for our July 29-31, 2022 gathering at Camp Copass, Denton, TX. There will be time to pray, serve, discern the ministry of the church, and play together.
- ☞ **The McPherson Community Brass Choir** under the Direction of Jerry Toews will give a Sunday afternoon Concert in The Church of the Brethren, 201 N. Carrie, McPherson, KS on Apr. 24 at 4pm. FREE and FUN. Everyone is invited.
- ☞ **Tabor College:**
 - *Friday, April 22 – Switchgrass String Quartet – From Mozart to Modern, 7:00 pm
 - *Center for Mennonite Brethren Studies – P.C.Hiebert, Forgotten Leader presented by Jim Juhnke and Voices of Conscience Exhibit, Peace Witness during World War I. April 30. **Reservations due TODAY!**
- ☞ **Bethel college:**
 - *Fri., April 22 - student Bryce Wilson, junior saxophone recital, 7 p.m., Ad Building chapel

Other Announcements

- ☞ **In Your Mail slots:** Please find an informational letter sent to all Western District Conference Ministers and Congregations. A summer of the letter by FMC Leadership is attached. If you do not have a mail slot or did not find the letter in your mail slot, please get one from Sue in the office.
- ☞ **Creativity Camp!** Nurture committee is listening and seeking to discern where God would lead us to minister to children this summer. Thinking to combine introducing life skills such as sewing, cooking, art, and/or something else combined with the idea that we are all made in God's image – therefore creative! Please pray, talk to Jan Amstutz or Sue Buchholz, and consider if God would want you to join in this ministry. It will target older children, small groups to nurture, and 3-5 days in June depending on who is interested and available.
- ☞ **Two devotional books on I John are still available** in the church office. Come pick up a copy and join in on studying along with the youth. In *This Is How We Know*, J.D. Walt invites us on a forty-four day devotional journey to explore what he refers to as "the second half of the gospel" as presented in I John. Just as the Big Dipper points us to true north, John 3:16 points us to the much less commonly recited I John 3:16: "This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters." The journey of awakening is the Spirit-empowered, hard-fought movement of John 3:16 to I John 3:16. This is how we know.
- ☞ **Planning to update the bulletin board with our family photos!** Photos will be arranged as -those in Hillsboro, -those scattered abroad, and -those "among the great cloud of witnesses". (Heb. 12:1) If you

have a newer photo of yourself or your family that you would like to use, please bring it by or email it to the church office.

☞ **Main Street Ministries:** Looking for a way to help your community? Consider volunteering at Main Street Ministries! We have many ways you can help.

Transportation

- appointments
- elementary school drop off and pick up
- Walmart donation pick up
- Church

Child Care

- Sundays (4:15pm-6pm)
- Tuesday Bible Study (5pm-7pm)
- Friday Celebrate Recovery (4:15pm-6pm)
- Overnight while mom works (6pm-8am)

Maintenance

- light fixtures
- replacing ceiling tiles
- bathroom repairs

Please email volunteersm@gmail.com for more information or to offer assistance. The leadership at Main Street Ministries is working on putting together a list of willing volunteers for occasional help. Let them know if you would like to be a part of this ministry. Thank you!

☞ You are invited to write a **blog for MC USA!** Menno Snapshots are blogs from diverse voices across Mennonite Church USA. They are stories of peacemaking, finding God's presence and how to live out faith. Check out their website to join in! [Menno Snapshots page](#)

Verse of the Week:

Psalm 118:27a

"The Lord is God, and He has made His light shine upon us."