



First Mennonite Church

Midweek E-Newsletter

July 20, 2022

From Pastor Tom

Sitting at the Feet of Jesus, Part 2:

Wouldn't it be nice if we really could?

Do you ever think (or dream) about that? I do. I have a growing list of questions I'd like to ask him! (Of course, given his MO, he'd probably turn them back into questions of me! ☺) But in the absence of that literal possibility, I thought I'd ponder a bit more about the figurative possibility. First, to review my observations from Sunday's sermon, 1) It requires setting aside some time; 2) It might mean setting aside some more "pressing" activity (Cooking? Cleaning? Favorite television show?). 3) It should include at least as much listening as talking. 4) It helps if one begins with a humble attitude (or even posture, like kneeling).

Now, how to do it? (And believe me, I'm no expert.) Here are ten ideas.

- 1) Begin a daily devotional. There are all kinds available. Two that our denominational publishing agency MennoMedia puts out are *Upper Room* and *Rejoice*. (Free copies are available at church! Let Sue know if you take one, so she can order more.) These may not always focus on the actual words of Jesus as recorded in the four gospels. But I doubt he'd feel slighted if it focuses on a psalm or any other passage of Scripture!
- 2) Read the Bible! You might even start with the goal of reading all four gospels, starting with Matthew. Choose a doable number of verses to read each day (it doesn't have to be a lot). Consider beginning and ending your time with a simple prayer. To get even more out of it, start a reading journal, to record your questions, thoughts, images, what stood out, etc. each day after you read.
- 3) Start a "Feet of Jesus Journal." "Ask" Jesus some of your questions. Try to imagine what he might say in response (including questions he might ask you!).
- 4) Ask questions of other characters in the stories you read (for example, Jesus' parables). Imagine (and write out) entire dialogs between you and them.
- 5) Pick a hymn about Jesus and sing it aloud or quietly to yourself. Think about the meaning of the words.
- 6) Go for a "Jesus Walk." (He'll come along if you ask him!)
- 7) Try some form of Christian-based meditation. Again, there are all kinds. One is called "Centering Prayer." There are lots of helps on the internet.

- 8) Try a “guided meditation,” in which a leader or narrator talks you through an imagined experience of some kind. Again, the internet would be a rich resource. One example would be to imagine yourself entering a house where Jesus is staying, sitting at his feet, and having a conversation!
- 9) Pray the Lord’s Prayer, pausing after each phrase (even if just a couple of words, like “Our Father . . .”).
- 10) Read a book about Jesus. (Again, LOTS and LOTS of them are out there!) You might start with a favorite religious writer. Or, ask a trusted friend for recommendations.

What are your ideas? Write them down on the whiteboard in the hallway outside the kitchen. In the meantime . . . have a great week!

Among Our Friends and in Our Prayers

- ☞ Continue praying through the directory this week.
- ☞ A member shares a meaningful devotional he enjoyed lately. *“Here’s the bottom line: God, through what Jesus Christ did for you, changed your life forever. You are not today who you were before God changed your life, and you are becoming more of the person He wants you to be each day. Share **your** story-don’t worry about knowing all the Scripture verses or about teaching the Bible to someone. Just share your story.”* Thanks for the encouragement!

Upcoming Events

- ☞ **Arts & Crafts Fair Opportunity!** We are still thinking about possibilities. The top idea at this point is to offer a “tasting of Mennonite heritage foods”, serving á la carte items such as verenika, sausage and cherry moos. We would buy the verenika already prepared and ready to serve. Also still wanting to continue our peppernut tradition, just on a smaller scale! If you would like to be involved, let us know your favorite way to participate! THANKS!
- ☞ **This week’s riddle:**
 We pray it every Sunday.
 We can say it in our sleep. But...
 What does it mean?
 All are invited and welcome to a 3-week study of the Lord’s Prayer. Sunday’s @ 9:30 a.m. in the chapel led by Nadine Friesen.
- ☞ **WDC Fall Book Study on *Healing Haunted Histories*** - Sept. 8-Dec. 1, 2022
 - Elaine Enns, co-author of [*Healing Haunted Histories: A Settler Discipleship of Decolonization*](#), will be leading an online, intensive book study this fall for the Dismantling the Doctrine of Discovery Coalition. Two-hour sessions will be

every other Thursday, 6-8 pm Central Time, on Sept 8 and 22, Oct 6 and 20, Nov 3 and 17, and Dec 1.

Other Announcements

- ☞ **Thank you** to our two members who have agreed to be our delegates for the WDC Annual Assembly. They will attend remotely while the gathering is held July 29 – 31 at Camp Copass in Denton, TX.
- ☞ **Vision Council** continues to meet each month. Recent discussions and discernment have been based on the statement, “don’t let what you can’t do determine what you can do” as applied to our church. Some thoughts that surfaced include –
 1. A desire for stronger emphasis on spiritual growth in whatever we do.
 2. The possibility of providing an opportunity for a men’s group.
 3. Planning events for women.
 4. Offering a lighthearted event to which community would be invited.
 5. Updating the appearance of the East door to make it more inviting.
 6. While continuing to welcome, hope and pray that those who seem to have pulled away from the church will join in participating again. Vision senses that it’s important for the church to focus on meaningful nurture and ministry for those who are involved and not only on numbers and those whose participation we miss.
 7. We continue to rely on and pray for the Holy Spirit’s guidance in our discussions and the suggestions we bring to church ministries counsel and the congregation.Another significant part of our focus continues to be follow up on the last pastoral review done with Pastor Tom regarding the ministry areas for which he was hired and has agreed to for his second 3 year term including:
1) **preaching/teaching** 2) **pastoral care** and 3) **administration**.
Vision processes together with him in evaluating his ministry among us in each of those areas. We remain open to and welcome hearing suggestions and questions from the congregation. Look for a copy of Vision’s summary of priorities for Pastor Tom’s second term based on congregational feedback and Vision discussions with him in your mailbox in the next week or two.
Nadine Friesen, Vision MTL
- ☞ **Help Wanted:** Let the church secretary know if you would be willing to drop off a Sunday Worship DVD at Parkside Homes for our members to watch.
- ☞ Thanks for sharing your **favorite hymns!** Pastor Tom and I are so encouraged to hear from you and feel more connected, knowing more about you, and singing your favorites with you in worship on Sunday mornings! We are **still accepting more!**

☞ A **thank you note arrived** from Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS). Check it out on the east bulletin board.

☞ **Last week to order Colorado peaches for the Colorado MCC Relief Sale fundraiser.** They come to MCC in North Newton for pick-up around August 22. A 10 lb. box for \$27 or 18 lb. box for \$38 and must be ordered and paid for by July 25. Call 316.283.2720 or email patsydirksen@mcc.org.

Verse of the Week: Psalm 84:4

“Blessed are those who dwell in your house;
they are ever praising you.”