



# First Mennonite Church

## Midweek E-Newsletter

July 6, 2022

### From Pastor Tom

#### “Following Jesus Together Across Barriers”

Barriers that separate and divide us come in all forms. Some are structural, like fences and walls. Some are ideological, like politics or religion. Some are cultural, like language, and music. And of course, some are geographical. This week, from Tuesday July 5 to Sunday July 10, around 700 Mennonites from around the world are gathering in Central Java, Indonesia to attend the Mennonite World Conference global Assembly. The event, which takes place every six years, is featuring morning and evening worship gatherings, workshops, tours, service opportunities, and recreational activities. Separate programs for youth and children are also being held.

Worship services will feature thirteen speakers from ten different countries and seven continents, speaking on a variety of themes related to the challenges and joys of following Jesus, including “Across Barriers,” “Learning Together,” “Living Together,” “Caring Together,” and “Celebrating together.” Music and singing as always will be a highlight, including an international choir singing “old favorites and new hits” (quote from the MWC Assembly website!).

A couple of years ago, General Secretary Cesar Garcia of Columbia came to Hillsboro, and I joined him for a luncheon at Tabor College with other Mennonite and Mennonite Brethren pastors from the area. I remember him challenging us pastors to reclaim our Anabaptist faith tradition, with its unique emphases and contributions, including our emphasis on world-wide peace and justice. I found it very inspiring to have this aspect of the gospel re-affirmed by the head of Mennonite World Conference (for a list of “Shared Convictions” of MWC, go to <https://mwc-cmm.org/shared-convictions>, or simply Google “Mennonite World Conference Shared Convictions”)! And I find it inspiring to think that at this very moment (difference in time zones assumed!) , 700-plus Mennonites are gathered in Indonesia to reaffirm those same convictions in different languages, across a wide range of often exclusive barriers. I hope to be able to attend an Assembly of Mennonite World Conference at some point in the future. For now, I encourage us at FMC to lift up “Assembly 17” in prayer!

### Among Our Friends and In Our Prayers

☞ This week continue to pray for those in our directory

☞ Pray for **Mennonite World Conference** “Assembly 17” in Indonesia, concluding today!

☞ **Our “family” living in Parkside homes are all** finding things that they are enjoying.

Remember to keep them in your prayers on your visiting schedule!

☞ **Dwight Schmidt** died this past Sunday, after being taken to a hospital in Topeka. His throat cancer had returned, and he had been undergoing treatments in Salina. A public Celebration of Life service at FMC will be held on Saturday afternoon, July 16. Pray for the family as they care for all the details and grieves his loss.

☞ **Praise God for healing** from Covid.

☞ Pray for **those still struggling with** Covid.

## Upcoming Events

☞ **TONIGHT: Time of Prayer:** Meet in the sanctuary at 7:00pm for a time of meeting with God for praise, sharing our needs, and seeking direction.

☞ There will be a **fellowship meal** after worship this Sunday, July 10<sup>th</sup>. It is just to get together to eat and fellowship, no meeting or agenda. Bring your favorite foods to share!

☞ **Youth Group Meeting:** also, this Sunday after church. We will eat with the rest of “the family” and then gather to discuss our Bible study. I John chapter 4.

☞ **Kitchen help is needed** for the memorial service supper on July 16<sup>th</sup>. Please let the office or the kitchen committee know if you would be available to help.

## Other Announcements

☞ **Enjoying our Favorite Hymns!** It is not too late to get yours added to our Sunday worship plans as well. Send an email or drop a note off in the basket on the table in the foyer. Please include your name so we can know whose favorites they are. Thanks! Sue

☞ **Adult Sunday School Class:** The topic this week will be; “God said it, I believe it, that settles it”, a “Half Truth” that the Bible doesn’t say! Everyone is invited. Come to the chapel on Sunday at 9:30am for a short video clip followed by discussion. No advance preparation necessary.

☞ **From MCC: Colorado peaches are back!** Place your order for fresh Colorado peaches today just \$27 for 10 lb. box and \$38 for 18 lb. box by calling MCC at 316.283.2720 or emailing [patsydirksen@mcc.org](mailto:patsydirksen@mcc.org). **Peaches must be ordered and paid for by July 25.** The peaches are offered as a fundraiser for the Colorado MCC Relief Sale, please make payment by check to Beth-El Mennonite Church with “peaches” in the memo line. Generous volunteers Jerry & Leann Toews will bring the peaches from Colorado to MCC in North Newton for you to pick-up around August 22.

☞ **From Western District Conference:** “Why should I take part in Annual Assembly? What’s happening this summer?” I’ve heard these questions over and over. I get it. Many of us are tired. We’re assessing if we have the energy to participate, especially after attending the MC USA Special Delegate Session. Others are working very hard and wonder if we can take time off. Then there are the financial considerations.

Your Annual Assembly Planning Team has heard your concerns. We are doing our best to make WDC Annual Assembly 2022 inspiring, inexpensive, and energizing. Here are some highlights to expect:

- Time for fellowship and conversation over comforter tying, a cup of coffee, around delegate tables, or on the way to prayer by the lake
- Space for fun activities together—swimming, basketball, horseshoes, puzzles, mini golf, board games, fishing, gaga ball, giant coloring pages, and Menno Jeopardy (and more!)
- Delegates will consider whether to invite into WDC membership a congregation from outside of the US, take time for table discussion, release another congregation, and consider next year’s budget and slate of volunteers
- Inspiring worship and communion with preachers Dianne Garcia, Pastor of Family Ministry, San Antonio Mennonite Church, and Heidi Regier Kreider, Conference Minister
- Workshops with themes to challenge and inspire you, both virtual and in-person. Here are just a few: Church planting, the danger of Christian Nationalism, communion, why healthy boundaries are important, and more
- Discounted costs thanks to generous underwriters and donors. Five meals for \$28! Housing for two nights for \$135 (or even less if you bring your camper). Youth get special discounts of \$25 for the whole weekend! Bring your kids, youth, and non-delegate friends. There will be so much to do for all ages.
- Lots of hearty food and “table talk.” Want to talk about faith formation? Sit down at the Resource Commission or Resource Library table. Want to learn more about disaster relief? Join Tim at the MDS table. Saturday lunch and supper will have many options for conversation partners. You can also join friends at a table without a set theme.
- You can choose whether to participate virtually or in-person. Virtual delegates will have access to online workshops and prerecorded videos, as well as the delegate sessions (including conversation in break-out rooms). Anyone may join worship virtually by going to YouTube Live “Western District Conference (MC USA). Consider a “watch party” with members of your congregation who won’t be at Camp Copass.

Whether virtually or in-person, we hope you’ll join us for WDC Annual Assembly 2022 as we are “United in Purpose, Together in Love.” Wherever two or three are gathered in Christ’s name, the risen One is with us. We look forward to being together with God and each other!

-Kathy Neufeld Dunn, WDC Associate Conference Minister and Annual Assembly Coordinator

**Verse of the Week: Joshua 1:9 - “Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid. Do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”**