



December 21, 2022

From the the Secretary:

In New York, New York!

The sights in New York City are certainly stimulating! There is such diversity of beauty and sadness. This picture, out the window of my son Lyle's apartment, shows a little of the beautiful architecture. I've had some time to also notice the people of course. There are so many, you can't miss them. I'm definitely not in Kansas anymore! Lyle describes it as "all walks of life living so close together, literally the homeless and millionaires sharing subways and brushing elbows."

As we have been waiting for Jesus arrival, I can't help thinking about how many of these people are longing for the same light that we long for. Each one created from the same dust of the earth, breathed into with God's breath, created in His image with all of His possibilities and promise. But also broken in our relationship with our creator, just as we are, longing for His hope, peace, joy and love.



The thing is - whether I'm in a rural place or an urban place, God is Emmanuel. He is with us and He HAS given us His gift of love. We will celebrate it on December 25th, but we have it now! It is a free gift to EVERYONE! But we must unwrap it and receive it. And because it is God's love, there is always more of it to keep discovering and receiving. May we not leave His gift under our trees, or worse yet, still in a bag, hidden in the closet. God's love really is ours! He is Emmanuel whether we are "in the weeds", on a mountain top, in New York City or in Hillsboro Kansas. Keep believing! Keep seeking!

I'll be back in the Hillsboro office next Tuesday. Have a wonderful Christmas! Sue

Verse of the Week:

Matthew 1:23

"The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" (which means "God with us").

Among Our Friends and In Our Prayers

- Keep praying through our directory.
 - Continue to pray for **all those who are grieving** the loss and absence of loved ones in this season of the year.
 - Pray for **open hearts, minds and ears to hear what God is doing** here at FMC and how we might follow Him.
 - **Give thanks** for God's gift of love and Christ's presence.
 - Ask that our lives may **make Him tangible to one another** in our church family and to all with whom we come in contact.

Upcoming Events

- **Christmas Eve Service:** At 6:30 pm we will gather in the sanctuary for a service of Carols and Readings and then have time to visit in the fellowship hall afterwards with drinks and snacks. A special offering will go to help the families at Main Street Ministries.
- **Special Request for Help:** A volunteer is needed willing to do the FMC live stream this Sunday. The person would need a Cell phone with the Facebook app installed. It's also helpful if the phone has a 3.5mm headphone jack which allows sound to be captured through the sound system. Please let Glen know if you are willing!
- **Christmas Morning:** Worship will be at our regular 10:30 am time, but with no Sunday school before hand. There will be a request time to share favorite carols, so come with a song in mind!
- **Faspa for Epiphany!** The Sunday School class will be hosting a 4:00 pm faspa on Sunday, January 8th at Mark and Sandy Hiebert's home. This will include zwieback and other tasty snacks along with the special Christmas episode of "The Chosen" video series. Following tradition, Mark and Sandy will be prepared for "unexpected guests", so consider being one of those.
- **NEW CONSIDERATION:** We have received an opportunity to host the Goshen College Chamber Choir, where pastor Tom's daughter works and others of you have connections. This is the school's mixed choir of 36 voices directed by Dr. Scott Hochstetler. The Chamber Choir will be touring from February 24 - March 3, 2023 and are interested in visiting our congregation beginning **Sunday night, February 26**. Our congregation's responsibilities would be providing an evening meal on Sunday night (simple is great), the venue for our concert, the ability to take a freewill offering, and lodging for the group on Sunday night. This seems like a God-sized task for us at this point, but since God is with

us, we need to consider it. If you are interested in hosting students in your home, please let Sue know in the office ASAP so we can give them an answer soon.

Other Announcements

- **Ministry Team and Council Leaders:** Please turn your annual reports in to the church office ASAP.
- **December 18th congregational meeting outcome:**
 - The summer Food4Kids program will be housed at FMC and distribute food to children in need beginning summer 2023.
 - Pastor Tom's resignation was received. Details are yet to be determined, but he will continue to minister with us until some time in April.
- **Annual Congregational Meeting will be January 22.** Expect a previous meeting for questions, sharing and prayer about God's direction for our congregation.