



# First Mennonite Church

## Midweek E-Newsletter

January 25, 2023

### From Pastor Tom

#### Saying Goodbye (Part One)

There are lots of goodbyes in life. Some are said frequently and casually, like the goodbye to one's spouse each day on the way to work. Some are said more thoughtfully and meaningfully, like the goodbye to friends and family who have been visiting from out of town. Some are said habitually and perfunctorily, like the "bye-bye" at the end of almost every phone call. Some are said painfully and profoundly, like the sometimes whispered or even silent goodbye at a loved one's death bed. Some are complicated, involving layers of thoughts and feelings. And some just simply take a while to say.

Perhaps the last type best describes the goodbye between a pastor and his congregation. It's a goodbye of transition and changing relationship, less about physical separation than emotional, even spiritual letting go.

I don't mean to jump the gun. I'm going to be around a while yet. And I'll undoubtedly have more to say on the topic in weeks to come (think "Part Two," maybe even "Part Three"—you get the picture!). But neither do I want that time to pass without at least opening my door.

Since announcing my resignation I've had the thought that I want to make myself available to all of you here at FMC. We can sit in my office or go out for coffee. We could go for a walk or take a drive. We can talk about a lot of things, or something very specific. Something light, something heavy, or even just whatever comes up.

So consider this both an offer and an invitation to "stop on by." Or better yet, contact me in advance, so I can set some time aside. If you want or need to visit with me, I want to visit with you! (Got it? 😊)

*Tom*

#### Verse of the Week:

Acts 2:42 – ***"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers."***

## Among Our Friends and In Our Prayers

- ☞ Pray for our **Ministry and Vision Councils as well as Western District leadership** as we continue seeking God's guidance for the future and meet together on February 8<sup>th</sup>.
- ☞ **WDC Request:** Pray for WDC pastors, chaplains and other credentialed ministers, and give thanks for the important ministries and leadership they offer.

## Upcoming Events

- ☞ **Youth Group Swim Party** – February 4<sup>th</sup> at 5 pm we will go to the Marion pool. Let Jan or Sue know if you would like to join us and we will gladly share the details!
- ☞ **Sat., Jan. 28 – Kauffman Museum annual Kansas Day event, “Kansans Create!” noon-4 p.m., museum parking lot and grounds.** Featuring local artists and artisans, a community art project, food trucks and much more. For more information, see the Kauffman Museum Facebook page or [kauffmanmuseum.org](http://kauffmanmuseum.org), or call 316-283-1612.
- ☞ **February 6 – Sunflower Performing Arts: Our Song, Our Story at Hesston College.** Come at 7 p.m. to Hesston Mennonite Church for a great performance, *Our Song, Our Story: The New Generation of Black Voices*. Performing opera, art song, spirituals, and jazz, these world class black artists will pay homage to Marian Anderson and Jessye Norman who were at the vanguard of black classical singers. Tickets can be purchased online at [hesston.edu/sunflower-performing-arts/](http://hesston.edu/sunflower-performing-arts/) or by calling 620-327-8158.
- ☞ **February 19 - Bella White**  
Join the Dyck Arboretum Feb. 19 at 4 p.m. to hear Bella White. The singer, songwriter and multi-instrumentalist hails from Canada and grew up listening to bluegrass bands thanks to her father. Come enjoy her original voice and the undeniable magic she creates by mining the rare duality at the heart of her artistry. Crust & Crumb will be serving during intermission. Learn more at [dyckarboretum.org/events](http://dyckarboretum.org/events).
- ☞ **March 1 to 5 - Spring Musical**  
Hesston College Performing Arts will present the musical *The Apple Tree* by Bock and Harnick, the same duo that wrote *Fiddler on the Roof*, in the Black Box Theater in Keim Center March 1 to 5. *The Apple Tree* is a series of three musical playlets - *The Diary of Adam & Eve*, *The Lady or the Tiger*, *Passionella*. Learn more at [hesston.edu/fine-arts](http://hesston.edu/fine-arts).
- ☞ **MCC and MCUSA are partnering in a new webinar series, *Beyond incarceration: A hard look at dismantling the prison system and building healthy communities*.** Join us to learn about the ways the faith community is actively understanding and working against these complex systems of confinement. The webinars will take place on Feb. 7, Feb. 21, March 7, and March 21 at 6:30 p.m. CST/5:30 p.m. MST. They will be followed by learning

tour opportunities in different parts of the U.S. **Registration link:** [mcc.org/beyond-incarceration-webinars](http://mcc.org/beyond-incarceration-webinars)

☞ **Volunteers needed for Numana** - Junior high youth will be putting their faith into action by packaging meals with Numana during the Know Jesus retreat at Hesston College on **Saturday, February 4**. We are looking for **20 adult volunteers** to serve as green shirt leaders from 1:00 - 5:30 p.m., which includes a time of training, helping with set up and then facilitating the food packaging. High school students and all ages of adults are invited to participate! Email Melissa Landis at [melissahlandis@gmail.com](mailto:melissahlandis@gmail.com) if you'd like to volunteer.

☞ **Mennonite Disaster Service** sent this encouraging poem in their monthly newsletter by Jan Richardson.

***Blessed are you***  
who bear the light  
in unbearable times,  
who testify  
to its endurance  
amid the unendurable,  
who bear witness  
to its persistence  
when everything seems  
in shadow  
and grief.

***Blessed are you***  
in whom  
the light lives,  
in whom  
the brightness blazes—  
your heart  
a chapel,  
an altar where  
in the deepest night  
can be seen  
the fire that  
shines forth in you  
in unaccountable faith,  
in stubborn hope,  
in love that illumines  
every broken thing  
it finds.

It is MDS's busiest season from January to March. Volunteers are bearing the Christ light in "stubborn hope" in 17 locations across the U.S.!

☞ The **26th Annual KS MCC Run for Relief** will be on Saturday, April 15, 2023. If you know of people who would like to join in, direct them to their Facebook page (Kansas Mennonite Relief Sale-Run/Walk for Relief 5K).

## Other Announcements

- ☞ **Hosting Goshen College Chamber Choir:** Thanks to your wonderful support, we will be blessed to enjoy a concert on Sunday night, **February 26<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm** with this 38-voice choir. Invite your friends and neighbors!
- ☞ **WANTED** — Cars, Trucks, Motorcycles, RVs, Campers, Tractors, Modern Farm Equipment, etc. for the Kansas MCC Sale. Items you no longer need can help Feed and Clothe thousands in desperate living conditions. ALL donations are Tax Deductible. Call Jerry Toews for info: 620 367 8257. Help make a difference.
- ☞ **SAVE THE DATE!** Come join the fun at **15<sup>th</sup> annual MCC Comforter Blitz** on **March 6, 7 and 8** on the Journey Yoder Campus, one mile north of Yoder, KS. Times are Monday and Tuesday 9-5 and Wednesday 9-4. No sewing skills are required, we will teach you. Lunch is available by donation each day, or you may bring your own sack lunch. Bring snacks to share during the workday. This event is hosted by Kansas Friends of MCC to make comforters for relief to be sent to refugees or places after natural disasters. Please contact the MCC Central States office with questions at #316-283-2720, or check the Comforter Blitz Facebook Page, “Kansas MCC Comforter Blitz”.