



First Mennonite Church

Midweek E-Newsletter

March 29, 2023

From Pastor Tom

Here Comes the King!

This coming Sunday will be the last day of Lent before Passion Week begins. It is also known as both Palm Sunday and Passion Sunday, and the lectionary texts include Matthew 21:1-11, which tells the story of Jesus riding into Jerusalem on the back of a donkey. This story is sometimes referred to as “The Triumphal Entry,” an ironic, perhaps even unfortunate title given what Jesus would be facing within a week. Leading us to ponder: in what ways, exactly, was his riding into Jerusalem “triumphal?” The crowds who gathered to welcome him were certainly excited, and were shouting “Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!” In other words, they greeted him as if he were a king, and not just any king, but the long-awaited Messiah foretold by the prophets. But what kind of a king comes riding on a donkey? Shouldn’t he be riding a war horse? And shouldn’t he be riding the wave of a recent military victory? Indeed, one has to wonder whether “king” is in any way an appropriate title for Jesus. And yet, there it is. In the Bible—not to mention in many of our hymns!

Perhaps the solution is simply to face the irony, to remember that the same crowds who hailed him as king one day would turn on him the next, calling for his crucifixion, and that if we are honest, we would have been part of that crowd, and maybe still are. But perhaps we may also embrace the title itself, to hail him and proclaim him to be a king, albeit a king unlike any other, and remember that his “kingdom” is one not of this world, but rather of another world or realm, indeed, of heaven. It is no surprise that throughout his ministry Jesus taught about something he called the “Kingdom of Heaven” or “Kingdom of God,” and always in stark contrast to the kingdoms of this world.

And as for his “triumph,” it too was and is and will be one not of this world, no military victory or conquest. His victory was (and is and will be) a victory over anything that opposes the kingdom of heaven, including the oppressive powers of this world (which the Bible personifies as “Satan”), and of course of death itself. Now that is a triumph!

So let us, during the week and the Sunday to come, proclaim Jesus as “King,” remembering as we do so that that is but one of many titles that express who he is and what he has done (and is doing, and will do) for us!

Tom

Verse of the Week:

Luke 4:8 – Jesus answered,

“It’s written, You will worship the Lord your God and serve only him.”

Among Our Friends and In Our Prayers

- The Jesus cross newly hung in the sanctuary was created by **Lloyd Anderson**. Thanks, Lloyd, for sharing your gifts with your FMC family.
- Pray for the **Anabaptist Community Bible**, a project of MennoMedia that is in progress among Anabaptist study groups. In 2025, the global Anabaptist church will commemorate the 500th anniversary of Anabaptist beginnings as they seek renewal of the Anabaptist movement. May The Truth be made clear and hearts be turned toward Jesus!
- **Continue to seek God’s leading for FMC and Pastor Tom** – Pray for present peace and future work.
- Pray for **Trinity Mennonite Church** as they end time as a congregation with a closing service on Easter Sunday. Give thanks to God for Trinity’s faithful witness and ministry over many years.

Upcoming Events

- Tomorrow night – Thursday March 30, Tabor college is hosting a **guest recital featuring David Pickering on the organ**. It is from 7:00 – 9:00 pm.
- **This Saturday: Verenika making** at Parkview Church. Help is still needed, especially in the afternoon. Shifts are 8am -12pm and 12-4pm. You can sign up to help at www.kansas.mccsale.org. Check in on the east side of the building close to the gymnasium/activity center.
- **This coming Sunday:**
 - **Palm Sunday!** Prepare your hearts for a time of worship, celebration and sorrow as we complete our Lenten journey with the joy of the triumphant entry into Jerusalem and the beginning of Holy Week.

- **Our Coins Count:** This will be the last week to empty your coin jars and drawers to help the efforts of the Kansas Mennonite Relief Sale.
- **Faspa Fellowship at 4pm:** Park on the north side of Salem home and join our hostess, Verda Albrecht at her residence. She and several others have plenty of food planned, but if you want to contribute, fruit or veggies would be best.
- **Next week: April 5th will be the last** session of the Bible Study for our “Anabaptist at 500” contribution, led by Doug Miller. The study will be on Psalm 20:1-9. Come prepared at 7:00pm in the chapel.
- **Easter Lilies:** You are encouraged to bring an Easter lily for the Easter morning worship service. They can be put in the Fellowship Hall the week prior. If you would like to dedicate the lily in memory of someone, let Sue know by Thursday, April 6th, at noon so we can share this on the screen during worship.
- **Holy Week:**
 - Maundy Thursday Worship - 7:00pm on April 6th. The first part of our celebration will be in the Fellowship Hall as we honor Jesus washing His disciples feet by washing one another’s hands (for those who wish) after which we will all share communion together. Then we will move to the sanctuary for the Tenebrae service of scripture and song. The word Tenebrae means darkening).
 - Sunrise Service @ Hiebert’s - 6:30am April 9th.
 - Easter Brunch @ FMC Fellowship Hall - 9:00am, April 9th.
 - Easter Worship - 10:30am in the sanctuary, April 9th.
- **Kansas Mennonite Relief Sale (KMRS)** is coming soon! April 14 & 15. Be sure to check out the many ways you can volunteer to help or donate things to be sold. Details are on the poster on the bulletin board or the website – www.kansas.mccsale.org
- **Kansas Mennonite Men’s Chorus:** Two concerts are coming! April 16 - 7pm at Tabor College and April 23 - 7pm at Bethel College. See the flyer on the bulletin board.

Other Announcements

- **Easter Breakfast Plans:** Egg casserole and drinks will be provided. If you would like to bring something to share, please consider fruit, cheese or a breakfast bread/coffee cake item. See you then!

- **Camp Mennoscah:** March 31 – April 2, **Men and Boys Retreat!** Don't miss this great opportunity to build relationships! Brochures are on our bulletin board or contact Kevin Neufeld at 310-322-5515 for more information.
- **Registration is now open for MennoCon23 coming to Kansas City, MO July 3 – 6.** Let Jan Amstutz or Sue Buchholz know if you are interested in going. We are considering taking our youth group to this gathering.
- **Know Before You Go! What To Expect During MennoCon 23.** An informational webinar hosted by Glen Guyton with Iris De Leon-Hartshorn, Lisa Lehman and Christie Hain will be held on March 30 at 7pm ET on Zoom. MennoCon is Mennonite Church USA's leading faith formation event. It's a time to worship, learn and connect with our Anabaptist faith values and each other. Register online at the Mennonite Church USA website.
- **Main Street Ministries:**

Please join us for a Main Street Ministries Come and Go Open House. We would love to share with you what God has done through your faithfulness to prayer and giving. Come see our new renovations, enjoy some fellowship, refreshments and a time of prayer and worship. The open house is Sunday, April 16, 2023 from 2:00-4:00 PM with the time of worship and prayer at 4:00 PM. MSM is located at 415 S. Main in Hillsboro. We hope you can join us!

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

1. Transportation: appointments -elementary school drop off and pick up -Walmart donation pick up -Church
2. Child Care: -Sundays (4:15pm-6pm) -Tuesday Bible Study (5pm-7pm) -Friday Celebrate Recovery (4:15pm-6pm) -Overnight while mom works (6pm-8am)
3. Maintenance: -light fixtures -replacing ceiling tiles -bathroom repairs

Please email volunteersm@gmail.com for more information or to offer assistance. Thank you!

- **Hesston College Events:**

- **April 2 - Sunflower Performing Arts: pax duo**

Join the Sunflower Performing Arts on Sunday, April 2 at 3 p.m. to hear pax duo. Exceptional percussionists Micah Detwiler (Tom and Lois's son-in-law) and Tristan Swihart will bring a multi-media percussion concert integrating acoustic percussion and lighting design. The concert will be held at Hesston Mennonite Church. Find more information and purchase tickets at hesston.edu/sunflower-performing-arts.

□ **April 20 to 21 - Flora Kansas Spring Native Plant Days**

Come find plants at affordable prices and enjoy supporting the mission of Dyck Arboretum. Hundreds of varieties of plants will be available, many locally grown. Knowledgeable staff and volunteers will be on hand to answer questions and give suggestions. April 20 will be open to members only and the 21st will be open to everyone. Learn more at dyckarboretum.org/events/

□ **April 27 to 30 - Theatre for Young Audiences: Tomato Plant Girl**

Theatre lovers of all ages will love Tomato Plant Girl. It is a powerful exploration of friendship between Little Girl, Bossy Best Friend and the messy Tomato Plant Girl. This production will delight young audiences with its physical action and playful, high-energy conflict. Highlighting the issues of bullying and acceptance of others, this play challenges the character of Little Girl to bravely discover the power of making up her own rules and leading with kindness. Learn more at hesston.edu/theatre.

• **Bethel College Events:**

Singers wanted: Bethel College's annual Masterworks concert will be Sunday, April 30, with choir and orchestra under the direction of Dr. Henry Waters performing Beethoven "Choral Fantasy" and Mozart "Coronation Mass." The community is invited to participate. Practices begin Tuesday, April 4, 6-8 p.m. in the choir room in Luyken Fine Arts Center on the Bethel campus, and take place the other Tuesdays in April (11, 18, 25), with a four-hour rehearsal Sat., April 29 (3-7 p.m.; dinner provided), and performance at 4 p.m. on Sunday, with a call time of 3 p.m. Scores and rehearsal tracks will be provided. Sign up using this form: <https://forms.gle/rqjK4dqSpYieVTvP8> or come to the first rehearsal on April 4.

- **Mennonite Mission Network:** Did you know that **more than 600 pastors and church leaders** in Anabaptist-affiliated churches have participated in at least one service program through Mennonite Mission Network? Consider your own congregation. Have any leaders in your community experienced a similar opportunity that opened them to new perspectives? How have those experiences helped them grow in their love for God, others and themselves? While God works in many ways, we can see how “service” and joining in God’s mission in the world with intentionality has kept people engaged in local churches. As you think about the future of your church, give thought to how people in **your congregation can intentionally take part in the work of God in the world, through one of the programs offered by Mission Network.** Let us continue in the good work that God has started among us and grow into the vibrant faith communities that declare the reign of God in our world.
- All Western District Conference women are invited to join a **virtual event sponsored by Western District Women in Mission** on Tuesday, April 25. Jenny Gehman, spiritual director, retreat speaker, and writer, will present on "Holy Host: the Hospitality of God." Join us in person or virtually. Our in-person gathering will be at First Mennonite Church in Newton, Kansas, beginning with a salad potluck at 6 p.m. followed by Jenny joining

virtually from Pennsylvania at 6:45 p.m. There is no cost to this event, but please register by April 23 by emailing westerndistrictwomen@gmail.com so you can receive a Zoom link if joining virtually. Please email your RSVP if attending in person and bring a salad to share. Church groups can consider gathering together to watch the Zoom. For more information, contact Wendy Schrag at 316-841-5245.