



# First Mennonite Church

## Midweek E-Newsletter

June 21, 2023

### To All Brothers and Sisters In Christ:

#### Next Steps in our Journey - *Latest leadership plans and decisions*

- **Ministries Council:** (Doug Bartel (moderator), Jan Amstutz, Sue Buchholz, Glen Diener, Sharon Diener, Bob Jantz, Aleen Ratzlaff, and Susan Schultz.)
  - Regarding our cemetery:
    - “Recommended that the two separate tracts of land comprising Haven of Rest Cemetery be combined as one tract housed under the 501c3 of Hillsboro First Mennonite Church.”
    - We will have a brief **congregational meeting this Sunday**, June 25 following the worship service. A “yes” vote will be to combine the two tracts. A “no” vote will be to rescind the recommendation.
    - Upon affirmation, a management/policy board will create a unified policy/by-laws document to manage the cemetery activities. For an appropriate period of time, cemetery sextons representing both tracts will work together to carry out those duties guided by the new document.  
  
Doug Bartel  
Business Moderator
  - Reorganization of our committee structure:
    - During this transitional time, we have temporarily combined our Vision council and Worship and Nurture committees to become 1 team, with the 3 team leaders still remaining on the ministries council.
  - A Peppernut Project Team is being put together. A few have expressed interest, but more are needed to share the load and make it enjoyable for all. Please talk with Doug Bartel about your area of interest.

- **Worship/Nurture:** (Aleen Ratzlaff-MTL, Deryll Amstutz, Jan Amstutz, Sue Buchholz) met on Monday for planning.
  - Worship this Sunday, June 25- “Abiding in Jesus – Vine and Branches” based on John 15:1-17. Come listen in on a “conversation” about the scripture.
  - Sunday School: We will have a focused fellowship time again this week. Come at 9:30 to join in. No preparation necessary!
  - During the month of July, worship will focus on the peace that God gives us within and with others.

## **Verse for Pondering: John 15: 5**

**” I am the vine; you are the branches.**

**Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit,  
because apart from me you can do nothing.”**

## **Among Our Friends and In Our Prayers**

- **Please pray for WDC churches** grappling with changes. May we find ways forward that are creative, that meet people and families where they are, and which leave behind anything holding us back. May we remember that Jesus is the same, yesterday, today, and forever – even as our world changes. -WDC Church Planting Commission
- Praise God for the wonderful time of getting to know one another better last week during **Sunday School class at 9:30 am**. We will continue this again this week, so feel free to come and join in. A study of the gospel of Mark will begin on July 9<sup>th</sup> with introduction and then take one chapter each week for six weeks. August 27 we will stop again for a week of focused fellowship sharing. What a joy to journey as Christ’s body together!

## **Upcoming Events**

- **TONIGHT:** Meet at 7pm in the chapel to participate in Peppernut Making leadership and/or idea sharing. If you want to keep this tradition alive, your involvement is needed.
- **This coming Sunday - June 25:**

- **Congregational meeting** following worship. We will be voting on the recommendation that the two separate tracts of land comprising Haven of Rest Cemetery be combined as one tract housed under the 501c3 of Hillsboro First Mennonite Church.
- **“Faspa” Fellowship** – Sunday at 4:00pm. Stop in for fellowship and encouraging your brothers and sisters at Sue Buchholz’s home. Please bring lawn chairs as it looks like we will be able to be outside. If you want to bring food to share, that is fine also, but not necessary.
- **Changing needs:** If you know someone who is no longer using the internet and needs to receive the E-Newsletter differently, please let the church office know. Some are getting them in their church mailboxes or delivered to care homes.
- **July 2 – No Sunday School** due to the holiday weekend. Enjoy the extra rest before coming to worship!
- **Summer Food 4 Kids** continues going strong! Peek in and see the amazing ministry that we are hosting each week day and keep your ovens going with cookie baking!

## Other Announcements

- **Church Office Hours** are back to Tu - F from 9:00a to 12:30p. (Thanks for all the grace and flexibility you give me!!! - Sue)
- **150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Mennonites coming to USA:** 150 Years since our ancestors came to the USA. 1874-2024. Let’s celebrate all year. Remembering the old days with agriculture – come see a Plowing with Horses event concluding with Vintage Tractor plowing demonstration [July 15, 2023](#). And then Planting Turkey Red Wheat in October. And maybe several other events in 2023. Then more in 2024 ending with the main celebration on [August 22-25, 2024](#) at Eden Mennonite Church in rural Moundridge Kansas.

Glen Goering and his Ag Committee have invited horse and plow owners to show us how plowing was done, on [Saturday, July 15](#), at a 22-acre field west of the Moundridge Museum, 8:30-2:00. Concessions will be available from Lone Tree Mennonite and a tent for shade. You might bring a lawn chair. The Museum will also be open. Some of you will remember the annual Plowing Bee and the one at the 125<sup>th</sup> celebration. Some of you have never seen horses working the field. Come out and see it on [Saturday, July 15](#).

-Kathy Goering for the 150th steering committee.

- **2023 Western District Conference (WDC) Annual Assembly:**

It's not just for church leaders! It's for everybody! August 11-13, 2023 at Tabor Mennonite Church, Newton, KS, we'll worship, work, eat great, local food, enjoy local music, connect with new and old friends, experience faith formation for all ages, and have many choices of great workshops. We hope you'll agree Annual Assembly is a great place to learn about and grow in faith in Christ, care for the broader church, and worship our God of love and justice with God's people in Western District Conference!

**Assembly Theme:** We will explore listening to God and to each other through our theme, "Holy (Wholly) Listening." We will stretch ourselves to listen carefully to one another as siblings in Christ who understand scripture differently and can widen our cultural, racial, and identity perspectives as we focus on faith in Christ together. As we hear the concerns and joys of all of us in Western District Conference, we will explore what it means to respond to one another with God's mercy and justice. Our scripture texts that will guide us are Isaiah 51:1-8 and Numbers 27:1-11.

**Two Tracks:** This year we'll have two different "tracks" going on at the same time. The Delegate Track is for those who are sent to Assembly as church representatives to help make decisions on behalf of our conference. The Faith Formation Track is for everybody else (except kids 3 and under). MennoMedia representatives will lead adults, youth, and school aged kids in a fun, creative multigenerational faith formation experience. Yes, there will be games, art, drama, music, bible stories, conversation and more for all ages together! Don't want to join an active game? Are you wiggly and want more action? There will be fun options and choices available as we learn about following Jesus together. We hope that this experience will encourage you to bring "multigenerational faith formation" home to your congregation as a model to explore.

**MennoGrass@Assembly!** Saturday evening will be full of music and BBQ outside Tabor Mennonite Church! If you are local, invite your friends to hear some great local bands and enjoy a full BBQ meal. If you are an Assembly registrant, MennoGrass is included. Any friends you invite are asked to donate toward the cost of the food. Should be a great time for some tunes under the trees (or in the Tabor Hospitality Hall if it's inclement weather)!

Explore more on our Assembly 2023 landing page to learn more details about WDC Annual Assembly 2023: <https://mennowdc.org/2023-wdc-annual-assembly/>

Mark your calendar now for August 11 and 13! Registration is now open!

The assembly begins Friday, Aug 11 with Wroship at 7 pm. and concludes on Sunday the 13<sup>th</sup> at noon following the final workshop.

Delegate sessions will be on Saturday, August 12 from 10am-12pm, and 1-2:30pm. We have 4 delegates that can vote for decision making. Please let Doug or the church office know if you are interested in being a delegate.