



# First Mennonite Church

## Midweek E-Newsletter

October 4, 2023

### To All Brothers and Sisters In Christ:

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

- **Tonight: Prayer time in the sanctuary from 7- 7:30 pm.**
- **This coming Sunday:**
  - We will continue to think about why church? Pray for Alene Ratzlaff as she will be bringing us a message about God's mission.
- No visuals projected on the wall during worship. We will use your Bibles and hymnals!
- **Ministry council** met with Kathy Neufeld Dunn from Western District Conference and a **transition pastor candidate**. We will be continuing a dialog with this person, so please keep the ministry council in your prayers.
  - It is IMPORTANT to note, this is NOT an INTERIM PASTOR.
  - To clarify, a transitional pastor works to get to know the congregation, listen to them, and study the structural and relational systems to help the congregation clarify who they are and how they want to do church.
  - While an interim pastor would fill in to meet the immediate needs and keep the church running (such as preach, care for people in need, resource leadership, etc), a transition pastor would only preach occasionally and instead spend time personally visiting everyone, asking questions, and working with a "transition team" of leaders who would wrestle with the findings, clarify identity and cast a vision for the work of the next few years.
  - The hope is that as we clarify our focus, we would be better prepared to find a settled (permanent) pastor.
  - If you have questions, speak with Doug Bartel or any Ministries Council members.

## Verse for Pondering: Mark 11:17a (NRSV)

“He (Jesus) was teaching and saying, “Is it not written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations’?”

## Among Our Friends and In Our Prayers

- **Praise God** for our FMC family of brothers and sisters and lift up one another’s’ needs!
- Pray for the Holy Spirit’s leading regarding a possible **transition minister**.
- Give thanks for **Tabor, Bethel, and Hesston Colleges** and pray for their students, faculty, and staff to embrace God’s mission for each of them.
- Pray for all **our young adults** who are away at college!
- Pray for clarity for each of us as we learn to **listen to the Holy Spirit** and discern how to best **use our spiritual gifts** and talents that God has given us.

## Upcoming Events

- **Mark chapter 11** this week.
- **Special offering:** this coming Sunday for MCC Meat Canning
- **Prayer time** in the sanctuary – October 4, & 18 at 7:00pm.
- **Discussions about the church** for the whole body –October 11, & November 1.
- The Sunday School class will be providing **a meal for CORE** on October 12. Talk to Norma Duerksen if you want to join in.
- Next **Ministries Council meeting**, October 18 at 7:30 pm.
- **MEN!!! – You have an amazing opportunity right in Newton.** A half-day men’s retreat: Living that Matters - November 11, 2023 8 am – noon in Newton at Shalom Mennonite Church. This retreat draws from Living that Matters: Honest Conversations for Men of Faith (Herald Press, 2023), which each participant will receive. The retreat is led by Steve Thomas, US coordinator of Mennonite Men. They will “examine the scripts we’ve been given, explore differing expressions of masculinity, and reconsider our purpose and aims in life.” Check out the flyer on the bulletin board!

## Other Announcements

- If you missed the **discussion last Wednesday** evening and would still like to share ideas, please jot down your thoughts to the following questions or call the church office. We would love to hear your ideas!
  - What are your favorite practices for the church? (Communion, Advent, ...)
  - What do you see as the purpose for these practices?
  - What communicates to you that you are cared for?
  - What does FMC have to uniquely offer to our community?
- The **MEDA (Mennonite Economic Development Associates)** newsletter this month shared their project IREM in which “MEDA and its partners worked to **protect agricultural value chains, strengthen the resilience of MSMEs, speed their economic recovery, and increase diversification of production and economic growth.**” Here are further quotes from their newsletter:  
“MEDA is grateful to share that our IREM project has reached a significant milestone, sustaining and increasing agricultural productivity for over 19,000 women and youth led agricultural producers in remote areas of Senegal.

We'd like to ask you to **pray with us as we give thanks for MEDA's IREM project in Senegal** that increased the agricultural productivity of 15,689 women and youth clients from 2020 to 2023.

Consider making a gift that will **positively impact many others who are a part of MEDA's projects like IREM.** Visit our website to contribute to our Fall Appeal and witness the impact of your support!”

Their website is: [meda.org](http://meda.org)