



# First Mennonite Church

## Midweek E-Newsletter

November 15, 2023

### To All Brothers and Sisters In Christ:

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

Hello friends,

One way to look at our time together might be this: **this next year there will typically be two open questions**, where there is not a single right answer but many possibilities, as we study the scriptures and listen to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The **main question** is: How is our worship, nurture, service, and community time influencing who we are as a church? I ask this because **our identity as a congregation** is an important quality to get some agreement on before we call a settled pastor. That main question is always on my mind, and I hope you consider it often also. **This week the second question** is: How can I remember to notice when I'm using the world's lens of OTHER to see someone and replace it with the Jesus' lens of LOVE? I'd be happy to hear your reflections about church, and/or your own spiritual journey. Blessings! Pastor Kristine

- **Ministries Council** discussion from last Thursday's meeting included:
  - Praying about a transition team to work with Kristine.
  - Reports from Arts and Crafts Meal and Peppernuts – will survey at the community time (9:30) on Sunday Nov. 26 for where to send the proceeds.
  - Gave approval to a request for a dignified burial in our cemetery of a person without family ties in Salem Home who is in active dying.
  - Date for Annual Meeting – January 14. (MARK YOUR CALENDARS!)
  - First draft of plans for the 2024 year to include some congregational discussions, practicing at listening, and enhance our communication.
  
- **Worship/Nurture/Vision:**
  - Nov. 19 – With the completion of the Gospel of Mark, we will consider a few lessons learned, hear a life story shared by Kent Funk, and celebrate Communion together.
  - Nov. 26 – Our Thanksgiving theme will include Norma Duerksen preaching.
  - **Special music for advent!** If you love to sing, come tonight at 7:30 pm in the sanctuary.

- 9:30 am on November 26<sup>th</sup> will be **community time for fellowship** again.
- **Bless our college students** with care packages! (details below)

## Verse for Pondering: 2 Corinthians 3:18 (The Message)

“All of us! Nothing between us and God, our faces shining with the brightness of his face. And so we are transfigured much like the Messiah, our lives gradually becoming brighter and more beautiful as God enters our lives and we become like him.”

## Among Our Friends and In Our Prayers

- Pray for one another through our directory!
- Pray for **our worship leaders** as they prepares messages for us for this Sunday.
- **Our brothers and sisters with Covid** are on the mend. Thanks for your prayers!
- Those with **stress at work**. Please pray for God’s strength and provision.
- Pray for children and grandchildren.
- Give thanks for changing seasons and pray that **WDC congregations** may discern God’s presence and guidance in the midst of the opportunities and challenges that they face.

## Upcoming Events

- **Prayer time tonight at 7 pm** in the sanctuary.
- **Singing tonight at 7:30 pm** to form an ensemble for advent.
- **OVEN WATCHERS REJOICE! You are needed!** Peppernut baking this Friday afternoon and Saturday morning. Don’t miss out on the fun!
- **Down Home Christmas** will be in our fellowship hall on December 2 from 10 – 3 pm. Support Food4Kids booth by making crafts or goodies to sell as well as participating in support of our community.

## Other Announcements

- **Care Boxes for College Students:** Be sure to bring items for 6 boxes to encourage our college students as they face finals for their first semester and sign the cards to them. The thought is to each bring small, simple items that together would bring them our love and joy.

They appreciate everything we send, and it must fit in the box, so for example, 2-3 cookies is enough. Need ideas? Consider personal items, (small boxes of Kleenex, lotion...) office supplies, (mechanical pencils, gel pens, sticky notes...) snacks, (trail mix, popcorn, crackers, nuts, chewy fruit snacks, holiday candies...) and drink packets, (cocoa, cider...) Enjoy being creative! We will also have a card for our 2 grad student, so you might consider gift cards them since they won't get a box like we send to undergraduates.

- **Main Street Ministry Need:** There are 2 moms who each have 2 children in size 5 diapers at this time. Anyone interested in donating size 5 diapers and baby wipes? They would be appreciated!
- **MCC Material Resources Center in North Newton critically low on inventory:** An MCC kit cannot be distributed until each item for the kit is assembled, but some supplies in the Material Resources Center are so low that kits cannot be processed for shipping. You can help by filling the following needs: *new* infant onesies and sleepers (6-12 month sizes); *new* bath towels (dark colored, light to medium weight); *new* hand towels (dark colored). Locally, MCC distributes prisoner care and returning citizen care kits, for those kits we currently need: men's shirts (sizes XL, 2XL, 3XL -- any color) and men's underwear (sizes 2XL, 3XL -- any color). Buy online and ship it to MCC or bring items to MCC in North Newton (121 E. 30<sup>th</sup> St, North Newton, KS 67117). Questions are always welcome, please contact [brociamueller@mcc.org](mailto:brociamueller@mcc.org) or 316.283.2720. A full list of MCC kit contents can be found at [mcc.org/kits](http://mcc.org/kits).
- **Get busy giving on Giving Tuesday at an Evening of Service at MCC!** Nov. 28 from 6:30-8 p.m. at MCC in North Newton, KS. Bring *new dark colored* hand towels with you to pack hygiene kits (the more towels you bring, the more kits we can pack!). MCC partner Offender Victim Ministries will be here with supplies to write holiday greetings to prisoners, we'll have comforters to tie and delicious snacks to enjoy. What a great way to give on Giving Tuesday!