



First Mennonite Church

Midweek E-Newsletter

November 29, 2023

To All Brothers and Sisters In Christ:

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

Hi friends, There's a webinar tonight, can you come?

Last summer at the annual assembly of Western District Conference, Jes Stoltzfus Buller preached and gave a seminar on church conflict. She wrote the Peaceful Practices curriculum that MCC offers (it's free), and I even had her over for dinner to talk shop (while she was in Kansas in summer). So, when Jes offers a webinar, I show up. There's one from 6:00-7:30 tonight. I'll set it up in the church office so we can watch it together. It's called **Creating a Healthy Congregational Culture** and aims to help participants use best practices in church so small differences don't become big conflicts. If you can't come, stop in anytime* to see what you missed.

Blessings! ~Pastor Kristine

*anytime = office days will be Tuesdays (9:30-5) and Wednesdays (11-7) thru Dec., and text anytime to 574-349-7053 to arrange a visit or call

- **Ministries Council:** Mark your calendars for the Annual Meeting January 14.

Next Council meeting – Dec. 13 at 7 pm.

- **Worship/Nurture/Vision:**

- Advent will begin this coming Sunday.
 - 9:30 – Fellowship time and a short video about advent in Fellowship Hall as well as deciding how to gift our Arts & Crafts Fair proceeds.
 - 10:30 – Worship in the Sanctuary!
- Dec. 10 – Spirit 'N Celebration will sing during our worship service. Carry-In meal to follow. Plan to bring extra food to share with our guests!
- Blue Christmas – Dec. 20 at 6:30 pm. A time to acknowledge griefs, hurts and disappointments.
- Christmas Eve – worship at 4:00 pm.

Verse for Pondering: Psalm 80:3 (TLB)

“Turn us again to yourself, O God. Look down on us in joy and love; only then shall we be *saved*.”

Among Our Friends and In Our Prayers

- Pray for one another through our directory!
- Pray that God will provide His abundance for the **Food4Kids** fundraiser coming up Dec.2.
- Continue prayer for those with health needs.

Upcoming Events

- **Tonight! 1. Webinar** - “Creating a Healthy Congregational Culture” - 6 pm.
2. Choir Practice – 7:30 pm. We will be singing VT #237, “Now the Heavens Start to Whisper” this coming Sunday.
- **THIS Saturday** – Help needed running the bake sale for Summer Food 4 Kids from 9 -3pm. Check with Norma if you are available. Bring your goodies to sell by 8 am.
- **Tabor Christmas Concerts:** all are free and at the Shari Flaming Center for the Arts.
 - Dec. 1 @ 7pm – Christmas Concert w/ Concert Choir and Symphonic Band.
 - Dec. 3 @ 4pm – Handel’s Messiah
- **Bethel College Events:**
 - Friday Dec. 1 – student-directed one-act plays, 7:30 pm.
 - Sat. Dec. 2 – Five Places of Christmas, 10 am – 4 pm.
- **Hesston College Events:**
 - Dec. 1 – 3 – Prairie Lights at Dyck Arboretum
 - Dec. 2 – “A Christmas Carol” Performance at 7 pm in Hesston Mennonite Church.
- **Blue Christmas: December 20, 6:30 pm.** We offer Blue Christmas as a time to acknowledge the griefs, hurts, and disappointments that aren't easily compatible with the

world's expectation that we're supposed to be happy at Christmas. If you're grieving a hurt or a loss, come. There will be music, but no singing expected. There will be scripture and poetry and blessings that name the pain of loss. If I can manage it, there will be candles to light, or some other way to participate without speaking. Please come and invite anyone else.

Other Announcements

- **Care Boxes** for College students are being sent this week. If you still have something to add, contact Jan Amstutz.
- **Main Street Ministry Need:** size 5 diapers. Bring them to the church office if you would like to donate.
- **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. 30th St, North Newton, KS 67117). Questions are always welcome, please contact brociamueller@mcc.org or 316.283.2720. A full list of MCC kit contents can be found at mcc.org/kits.
- **A webinar hosted by Everence and Menno-Media** on the topic of year-end giving and generosity shared these thoughts with our WDC leaders.

“**Generosity can be life-transforming**, as we embrace these stewardship principles:

- God created everything and everything belongs to God.
- Generosity is an act of worship.
- We are called to manage the resources we have been entrusted with.
- Stewardship is practiced in community.
- Stewardship is a spiritual practice.

Year-end fundraisers are an opportunity to stop, pray and reflect on why we give to the organizations that we do, and to learn more about these organizations as they continue to make adjustments since the pandemic. Ask, what has changed for the organization, what has been most challenging, and what is most energizing and exciting?”