



First Mennonite Church

Midweek E-Newsletter

January 17, 2024

To All Brothers and Sisters In Christ:

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

Hi friends!

You might wonder that I haven't mentioned it yet. Getting started with a new congregation takes some ramping up! Ministries Council has been clear that a major task for my time with you is structure and organization. We have a structure and written down requirements that no longer fit who we are today, and also don't allow the flexibility to respond to the Holy Spirit in a timely way. So, I'll be looking at all of that and listening to people and eventually proposing changes to Ministries Council and then to you all. But I need help in deciding what direction to take the various pieces. So, at the annual meeting I'll be asking: Which piece of congregational life do you feel most passionately about? In which area would you have opinions to share?

We might have some changes to grieve, of course. The work I'm talking about will take the form of focus groups that meet ONCE to respond to some question like: what qualities, values, or outcomes are important to us in this area? For example, we might say that we value joyfully hospitable welcome for guests and visitors to worship. Then, what are we doing now that meets that goal, and how can we describe that? The outcome of this work will enable us to continue meeting our goals even when the people currently doing them aren't able to.

That's the fun I get to have. Meanwhile, I fly out tomorrow. I love you - bye bye!

Blessings--Pastor Kristine

Ministry Council News: Only a week and a half to find that new recipe you want to try and share at our carry-in lunch on January 28. Our "Peace Party - Annual Meeting" will be a celebration you won't want to miss. Pastor Kristine has some fun ideas up her sleeve to make the event memorable. [Bring your noise makers!](#)

Worship News:

- Sunday, Jan.21 - Pray for Sue Buchholz who will share this week on how Jesus' ministry takes shape. We will review Luke 4:14-21 and only read portions of Luke 4:31-

6:16. If you want to read ahead, be thinking about what Jesus' ministry looks like and how people respond to him.

- It is also “Anabaptist World Fellowship Sunday.” Mennonite World Conference (MWC) represents the majority of the global family of Christian churches rooted in the 16th century Radical Reformation in Europe, particularly in the Anabaptist movement.

MWC membership in 2023 included one international association and 108 Mennonite and Brethren in Christ national churches from **60 countries**, with around 1.45 million baptized believers in close to 10,180 congregations. About 84% of baptized believers in MWC member churches are African, Asian or Latin American, and 16% are located in Europe and North America.

- The worship team meets Thursday afternoon for future planning. Let us know if you have a story to share!

Verse for Pondering: Luke 5:16 (CEB)

“But Jesus would withdraw to deserted places for prayer.”

Among Our Friends and In Our Prayers

- Pray for one another [through our directory!](#)
- Praise God for the warmer weather coming and intercede for the many around the world who do not have the luxury of warm homes and heaters like we have.
- Pray for wisdom for our church family as we consider how to best move forward in being the body of Christ, proclaiming the “good news” and caring for one another.
- **WDC Request:** Give thanks for generous financial contributions to WDC, supporting our mission of empowering Anabaptist/Mennonite congregations to witness and invite others to faith in Jesus Christ, dwell in just and loving relationships, and connect to God’s mission in the world.

Our Upcoming Events

- January 28 – Peace Party & Annual Meeting!
- February 8 – We are providing an evening meal for CORE ministry. If you would like to help with this, contact Norma Duerksen.

- February 14 – Ash Wednesday.
- February 25 – Peace Party!

Other Announcements

- **Do you enjoy welcoming others to our worship services?** We are typing a new greeter schedule for Sunday mornings and there is a need for more people willing to be in the rotation. Please let Sue know in the office if you would like to join in.
- **Pastor Kristine leaves tomorrow for vacation** through next Wednesday, and will be in the office on Friday afternoon, January 26.
- **Everence® January Workshop: Social Security and retirement income**

Everence® will hold an informative Social Security and retirement income workshop on Thursday, January 25, starting at 6:30 p.m. Topics will include, Social Security strategies, including when to begin taking benefits, risks that can impact your retirement savings plus strategies to help your income last throughout retirement. There will also be plenty of time for questions.

The in-person workshop will be at the Everence office: 3179 N. Main St. Suite 1B, North Newton, KS. Information will be presented by staff from the Everence offices in Central Kansas. To register contact Everence at 316-283-3800, 877-467-7294 or central.kansas@everence.com.

- **January 30 - History of Prairie Fires**
Join the Winter Lecture Series at Dyck Arboretum of the Plains and learn about the history of prairie fires. You will learn about how fire helped shape the Great Plains and the lives of its residents. The lecture begins at 7 p.m. and will be held virtually. Visit dyckarboretum.org/events to register. There is a \$5 cost.
- **WDC Event coming next month! Saturday Library Book Sale & Open House:** Stop by the Conference Resource Library on **Saturday, February 10** from 10am-12pm. Browse the book sale, check out what's new for individuals, families, children and more for home and congregational use. Enjoy a hot drink and stories with Bethel College Students.
- **WANTED**—Cars, Trucks, Motorcycles, RV's, Campers, Tractors, Modern Farm Equipment, etc. for the KS MCC Sale. Items you no longer need can help Feed and Cloth Thousands in desperate living conditions. ALL donations are Tax Deductible. Call Jerry Toews for info: 620 367 8257. Help make a difference. -KS MCC Sale Committee
- **News from Rocky Mountain Mennonite Camp.** A newly received newsletter is posted on the bulletin board for the latest update. It is time to consider being on staff also.