



# First Mennonite Church

## Midweek E-Newsletter

February 7, 2024

### To All Brothers and Sisters In Christ:

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

Hey!

Yes, you!

You beloved child of God, who's part of First Mennonite!

I'm calling on every participant at First Mennonite to choose an area of church life that you care about. Perhaps you already named your "thing" during our congregational business meeting. Thank you!

But... uh... oh..., oops!

Some people didn't put their names on the little slip of paper. I'll be checking with everyone until my list is full. Also, in case you're wondering, you can respond to more than one area. One is the minimum.

In this project, you can count on me to be a pest. I'm an experienced pastoral pest! This is not about shame. I will not publicly name anyone. It is about participation. I expect every person who already participates to participate in this way: Show up at a focus group meeting about the "thing" you care about. If you can't make the group times, I'll follow up with you at a one-on-one meeting.

Each focus groups will consider these questions:

- Tell us about a time when this went well.
- When this goes well, how do you know?
- When this goes well, what do you think contributes to its success?
- What kind of communication do people need about this?
- What values are honored in this?
- What needs do we desire to meet?
- What needs do guests and new people have that are different than, or unexpected by, long term participants? In other words, where might we be clueless?

Depending on the area, the questions might be phrased slightly differently. I will endeavor to give examples and offer lenses (so to speak) to help us FOCUS on that area of church. All ideas, all opinions are welcome; it's like a brainstorm session where we don't dismiss anything. Sometimes I ask for clarity, so I can understand better. It will also be "a thing" to distinguish between one's personal preference and what others need or desire.

This season of church life, transition season, will be like this: an emphasis on participation and listening to each other and to God. Strap on your boots and be ready!

Blessings—Pastor Kristine

### **Ministry Council News:**

- Our vote last Sunday on mission giving resulted in a majority voting to tweak our present method - encouraging special offerings throughout each month to one or two designated organizations which will be highlighted through stories and news during the month. The mission team will work out the details and send out more information soon. Keep watching!
- Next council meeting – Thursday, February 22 @ 5:30 pm.

### **Worship/Nurture/Vision News:**

- This Sunday Deryll Amstutz will continue our story in the Gospel of Luke taken from Luke 12:49 – 13:35.
- We will begin the Lenten season with an Ash Wednesday short time of worship on February 14 at 6 pm with the first Sunday of lent being February 18.
- Looking forward to having a Peace Party once a month! These will be times to work on relationship building, communication and congregational life.

**Verse for Pondering:** Luke 12:49 (NIV)

**“I have come to set the earth on fire.”**

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

- Pray for one another through our directory!
- Pray for God’s grace and protection for those traveling this week.
- Please pray for wisdom to support complex family members.
- As we provide the evening meal for CORE ministry, pray for each person involved. May the Holy Spirit be at work!

- Pray for our worship leaders for this coming Sunday.
- May we hear God's leading in our own lives and in our life together as a church.
- Because we care about each other, we want to be prepared to help one another. Please consider sharing your family contact information with the church office so we can know who to call should an emergency arise. (Example: you know I have 3 kids, but you don't know any of their phone numbers to call if I end up in the hospital unable to tell you how to contact them.) Help us out with knowing how to know one another better. Always looking for ways to improve our information and communication!
- Pray for WDC congregations and listening teams participating in WDC's conference-wide listening process. (We will do this in April) The goal is to learn how God is at work in our diverse church contexts and to consider what resources WDC can offer to support congregational hopes and priorities for the future.

## Our Upcoming Events

- This Sunday! **Still looking for a party to go to?** We will have our **"Soup Bowl Party"** here after church in the fellowship hall for anyone interested in hanging out with friends. Our own chef Lloyd Anderson will be cooking up his famous secret family recipe of soup – you just bring your bowl! Please RSVP by noon on Friday to the church office. Let us know if you want to bring something extra besides your bowl.
- **Western District Conference** invites you to a come-and-go **Open House** on Saturday, **February 10**, 10:00 am - 1:00 pm at the WDC office, 2517 North Main Street in North Newton. Check out what's new in the Resource Library, browse the used-book sale, enjoy refreshments, chat with staff, and celebrate WDC's newly renovated office spaces!
- **February 14 –**
  - Stop by the church office for **prayers, hugs and/or chocolates** from 9 to noon! You are LOVED!
  - **Lenten Luncheon** sponsored by the Hillsboro Area Ministerial Association. 12:00 to 1:00pm at the Hillsboro United Methodist Church. Join in for a time of worship and reflection followed by a light lunch and fellowship as we begin to prepare our hearts for the Easter season.
  - **Ash Wednesday meditative worship service** with music, scripture and ashes at 6 pm in our sanctuary.

- **Wednesday evenings starting February 21 – “PRAYER & SONG CIRCLE”** begins for the season of lent in the chapel. Ephesians 5:19-20 encourages us to “Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”
  - 6:30-7:00pm - prayer for one another and for seeking God’s guidance for our church body.
  - 7:00 – 7:45pm - singing what is in our hearts, mainly through our hymnals. This is just a time of God’s beloved children to enjoying singing our praise to him together. It is **not** focused on being a choir. The only planned time to share a song will be for Easter. You do not have to perform to be a part of this group. All are welcome! Also, we will be looking to share the leadership of this time as the priesthood of all believers, so start finding a song you want us to learn.

All are invited to come to one or both times any week that works for you.

Only qualification is to love Jesus and singing! No auditions ☺

- February 25 – our next **Peace Party!**

## Other Announcements

- Mark your calendar now for the 16<sup>th</sup> annual **MCC Comforter Blitz, March 4-6** just outside of Yoder, Kansas. If you can tie a knot, you can make a difference! Curious to find out more? Please check [mcc.org/comforter-blitz](http://mcc.org/comforter-blitz) or the Kansas MCC Comforter Blitz page on Facebook. The blitz takes place on Monday, March 4 from 9am-5pm, Tuesday, March 5 from 9am-9pm and Wednesday, March 6 from 9am-4pm at the 3605 East Longview Rd. Haven, KS. Questions? Please contact [brociamueller@mcc.org](mailto:brociamueller@mcc.org).
- **Volunteers Needed at Camp Mennoscah!** Two volunteers are needed every week day (M-F) to continue the work on the Retreat Center project. Work will start at 9am and end at 5pm. Bring your own lunch and water bottle, please, and meet at the Retreat Center. Park nose-first to the wooden fence. Camp Mennoscah will provide tools needed. Space heaters will be used, but temperatures inside may be around 50 degrees. Please let us know you are coming so we can be prepared.