



First Mennonite Church

Midweek E-Newsletter

February 21, 2024

To All Brothers and Sisters In Christ:

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

Hi friends,

We don't need to repeat the Telephone Game to know how communication can go wrong. I mean the game where one person whispers a message to the next, and so on, and ten whispers later we all hear and laugh how the message got garbled. So good news! We won't be whispering our messages on Sunday, but speaking aloud. The goal will be to listen:

- Start listening with a strong sense of God's love of both the speaker and myself
- Listen without interrupting
- Listen to understand, not to prepare your own response
- Welcome silence that enables thinking

And, once we've listened, we practice understanding:

- Paraphrase what we've heard, and ask the speaker if we understood
- Ask questions for clarity: who, what, when, where, how
- Ask why, kindly offering a possible underlying feeling or need.

Probably everyone will be the speaker once. When you speak, answer this question: "What did you do on your time off?" For example, say "On Saturday I _____" –went or stayed, did or didn't do, etc. I can imagine this exchange... **speaker in bold**, *listener in italics*

On Saturday I went grocery shopping.

You went grocery shopping on Saturday, right? (very simple example to start, I know!)

Yes.

Did anyone go with you?

Yes, my son Karl went. He is very helpful with menu ideas and carrying bags.

Did you go in the morning, or when?

No, we went in the evening when it's quieter.

Where did you shop? Try anyplace new?

No, not new! We almost always shop at (north) Dillons in Newton.

Did you shop because you were hungry?

Well yes, but also because I prefer to plan ahead. I'm calm and satisfied with a stocked kitchen.

That's what we'll do. I hope my description is clear; call anytime to check signals. I asked Sharon to make a lot of food, because we'll all be there! See you Sunday and have a great week until then.
Blessings–Pastor Kristine

Worship/Nurture/Vision News:

- The focus on the Gospel of Luke continues with a bit taken from Luke 16:1- 18: 30 this coming Sunday. Marsha Brubaker, Tom Voth and Phil Duerksen will lead our music! Worship will continue with a Peace Party in the Fellowship Hall. No need to bring anything – lunch will be provided.
- TONIGHT– Prayer time at 6:30 pm in the chapel followed by singing/choir from 7 – 7:45. We are calling this a “song circle” in hopes of it sounding inviting for all who enjoy praising God in song! We will be preparing an amazing song to share on Easter Sunday morning.

Verse for Pondering: Luke 18: 27 (CEB)

Jesus replied, “What is impossible for humans is possible for God.”

Among Our Friends and In Our Prayers

- Pray for one another [through our directory!](#)
- Lent is the season of 40 days which lead up to Easter. It is a time to draw near to God and walk with Jesus on his difficult journey to the cross. Consider guiding your thoughts and prayers with a **Daily Lenten Worship Guide and calendar**. These are available in the church foyer or available as a PDF at this link.
<https://www.mennoniteeducation.org/resources/lent-at-home/>
- Pray for Pastor Kristine and one another as we share during **focus groups** and **Peace Parties** to discern God’s leading during this transitional time.
- **Mennonite Mission Network** requests prayer for Jae Young Lee, Karen Spicher and their children, who live and work for peace from their home in the Peace Building in South Korea. Pray for them and all the ministries housed in the Peace Building – restorative justice programs, Grace and Peace Mennonite Church and Circle Café & Bakery.
- **WDC**: Prayer for current church planters and for those that feel called to undertake this ministry. Prayer for the developing opportunity to travel to Guatemala to support and encourage our WDC church plant in that location. Prayers for resolve to continue the day to day challenges of planting churches. (-WDC Church Planting Commission)

Our Upcoming Events

- **Tonight - 6:30 pm in our chapel** – Prayer time!
7:00 pm – 7:45 pm - Song Circle
Choir prep for Easter Sunday will be done at the end so if you are not available to sing on Easter, you may leave before this time. We would love to have everyone stay of course!
These Wednesday evenings will continue through March 27.
- **Peace Party!** Our first full peace party will be this coming Sunday, February 25. Stay for food and fellowship!
- **Thursday Meetings:** 1:00 pm – WNV Team
5:30 pm – Ministries Council

Other Announcements

- **Local concert @ Tabor College!** This Thursday evening at 7 pm, Jazz in the Atrium. Tabor Jazz Band will be playing and Adrienne's/Starbucks will be open.
- **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 sleepers* (6-12 month sizes)
 - bath towels (dark colored, light to medium weight)
 - wide-toothed combs
 - laundry soap (such as Fels Naptha or Zote brands)
 - shampoo (20 oz min)
 - fingernail clippers (good quality)
 - hand towels (dark colored).

Locally, MCC distributes prisoner care and returning citizen care kits, for those kits we currently need:

- men's T-shirts (sizes L, XL, 2XL, 3XL -- any color)
- men's underwear (sizes L, XL, 2XL, 3XL -- any color)
- men's crew socks
- lotion (12 oz min)
- adult backpacks.

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.

- **Winter Coats and Jackets** sharing opportunity. Begin to clean out your closets with this in mind. We would like to have coats and jackets to lay in our sanctuary on Palm Sunday as Jesus' followers did when he entered Jerusalem.

Then we can partner with MCC Central States Immigration Team in a unique opportunity to share with a ministry in Brownsville, TX on the U.S./Mexico border called Team Brownsville. They have been welcoming asylum seekers since 2018 and are looking for gently used winter coats and jackets to give to people as they prepare for the final leg of their journey heading to U.S. destinations with colder climates. If you are interested in packaging them for Texas, please let us know in the office as we need to let the planners know.

- **Salem and Parkside Homes** are requesting people who would be willing to lead worship with the residents on Sundays. Pre-Covid, churches would visit Parkside at 3 and Salem at 4. Would we be willing to hold a service or two? Please pray about this and let the office know your thoughts.
- **Gaza Ceasefire Pilgrimage – anyone interested?**
The WDC Israel-Palestine Task Force invites you to make a Lenten pilgrimage. Walk in prayerful solidarity with other Christians around the globe who are calling for a ceasefire in Gaza. Raise money for relief work before you go. Walk 25 miles (in small stretches or in one day). This is the length of Gaza. Pray as you walk. For more details and to look for a pilgrimage in your area, go to: <https://www.gazaceasefirepilgrimage.com/>. There is a group in Wichita doing this. Does anyone want to plan a local pilgrimage?
- Rehearsals have begun for **“A Goodly Heritage: A Musical Drama** Sharing a History of the Swiss Volhynian Mennonites.” Jenny Schrag has written and is directing this drama along with Dawn Abrahams. Bo Howard is serving as musical director. Mark your calendars to attend the drama which will be performed at Eden Mennonite Church **Saturday, March 23** at 7 p.m. and **Sunday, March 24** at 2:00 p.m. An event of the celebration of 150 years since Swiss Volhynian Mennonites and many other groups came to the US in 1874 from Volhynia, Russia.

--Kathy Goering for the 150th steering committee and Jenny Schrag