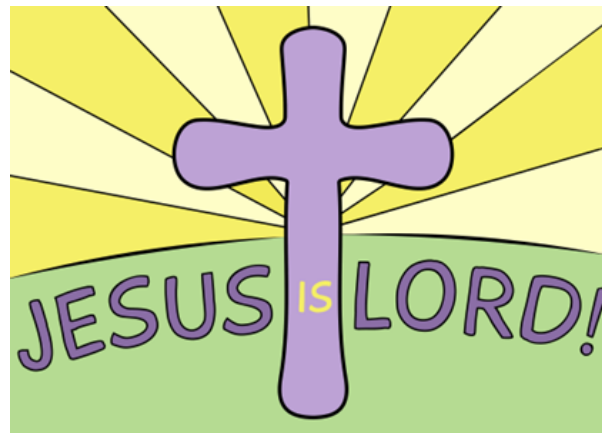


Resurrection Rumbblings

In *Easter Earthquake*, James A. Harnish explores the “earthshaking promise” of Jesus’ resurrection. Easter Sunday “shatters the power of fear,” he writes. “Because Christ is risen, we no longer allow fear to dominate, control or manipulate us. We don’t remain imprisoned in the tombs of our past failures or buried under the weight of present anxiety. In the risen Christ, old things pass away and everything becomes new.”

Easter, Harnish adds, is proof that God hasn’t forsaken us and is present among us. “The Resurrection contradicts the assumption that Christ resides on an ethereal cloud in a distant heaven. Rather, we find him on the dusty road that leads to the real stuff of our ordinary world.”

Jesus’ followers can find him everywhere, Harnish concludes. “The risen Christ will meet us along the confused, chaotic, fearful paths of our lives and speak the same words the women hear at the tomb, ‘Do not be afraid.’”



The Church Corner

March 2024

Volume 48, Number 3



First Mennonite Church

427 West Fourth
Halstead, KS 67056
www.firstmennonitehalstead.org
Steve Wilcox, Pastor

Office Phone (316) 835-2282
Steve’s Cell (316) 322-5651
rskw13@gmail.com

Sunday School at 9:15 am
Worship at 10:30 am and
Live Streaming at 10:30 am on the
church Facebook page

“We are a community of
believers who follow Jesus
Christ as we receive and
share God’s love.”

We, of First Mennonite Church,
Valuing the convictions of our faith,
Endeavor to:
Engage our members in ministry,
Expand community outreach,
Embrace new people,
in the love of Christ.

Worship Arts



What do you think of when you think of “worship arts” or even just worship? For most of my life, I have almost completely thought of this in terms of music. If someone says something about worship, I immediately think of singing. In my own times of devotion and worship, I often use music and singing. Beyond music, I think of words and using liturgies, Bible readings and preaching as forms of worship. However, the worship arts go well beyond just singing and speaking. It would include things like dramas, dancing, painting, drawing, sculpting, etc. These are often referred to as visual worship arts.

I know that I don’t think about this avenue of worship as often as I should. There is a very long history of using art in worship. In the early church, the visual arts flourished. The walls of the Roman catacombs, or burial chambers, are filled with drawings of Christian symbols and scenes and characters from the Bible, including events in the ministry of Jesus. These drawings became how people identified things as particularly Christian. The visual arts used in worship bring the gospel to life. They call

us to make the biblical story our own story by tapping into our God-given imagination. Art in worship invites us to respond in much the same way a good piece of art or a spectacular sunset may call us to appreciate what God has done. Beautiful, liturgical art stirs our hearts to remember the connection between beauty and God. For those of us with perhaps less imagination, it allows us a different window into the biblical narrative.

With Easter approaching, I would like to put together something that highlights visual worship arts. I invite anyone, regardless of age or skill level, to create art illustrating any part of the Easter story. Use your favorite art style—you could draw or paint, sculpt or build, take a photo or create a video—to depict the stone being rolled away, or Mary meeting Jesus, the sun rising on that day, or whatever else about Easter is meaningful to you. We will then scan or photograph your work and use it in a slideshow during Easter morning!

Any questions or ideas please let me know.

Blessings, Pastor Steve



Camp Mennoscah

- ⇒ Registration for 2024 Summer Youth Camps is open! The theme for the summer is *Linked By Love* and looks at the many ways we experience God's love through relationships.
- ⇒ Two volunteers are needed daily to help with Retreat Center HVAC work from Monday through Friday. Construction skills are not a requirement. Please let the staff know you are coming.
- ⇒ Scholarship funds are needed for summer youth camps. There are campers who are unable to come to camp without assistance. Give to the Scholarship Fund or Scholarship Endowment to help more campers learn about Christ while in God's creation
- ⇒ Summer Youth Camps take many hands to make them run. Nurses, head cooks, kitchen staff and maintenance volunteers are needed for every week of camp. The summer camps range from 3 to 6 days and begin June 9.

Contact camp or register:
(620) 297-3290

www.campmennoscah.org
office@campmennoscah.org

An Irish Blessing:

May there always be work for your hands to do;
May your purse always hold a coin or two;
May the sun always shine on your windowpane;
May a rainbow be certain to follow each rain;
May the hand of a friend always be near you;
May God fill your heart with gladness to cheer you.

Be the Donkey



Corrie ten Boom, a devout Christian who helped shelter hundreds of Jewish people from Nazis during World War II, was asked how she stayed humble despite her fame.

“When Jesus rode into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday on the back of a donkey, and everyone was waving palm branches and throwing garments onto the road and singing praises, do you think that for one moment it ever entered the head of that donkey that any of that was for him?” she replied. “If I can be the donkey on which Jesus Christ rides in his glory, I give him all the praise and all the honor.”

Jesus told his followers they’d need to carry (or “take up”) their cross. But how well do you carry your Savior? How do you bring him into a world that desperately needs the good news of the gospel?



Camp Spring Cleaning

Spring Cleaning at Camp Menoscah sponsored by Western District Women in Mission (WDWM) will be held on Saturday, March 23 from 10 am – 4 p.m. Come for part or all of the time. Women, men, kids, youth groups, Sunday school groups are all invited. If children younger than high school attend, they need to be supervised by their parents (no child care or children’s activities will be provided).

Dress warm, bring a full water bottle, \$5 to cover the cost of lunch, and the following cleaning supplies if you have them: rakes, long handled brooms for cobweb reaching. Other cleaning supplies will be provided. Register by March 18 by e-mailing westerndistrictwomen@gmail.com. Space is capped at this event to manage the jobs, so don't delay in registering. Thanks!

Gaza Ceasefire Pilgrimage

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, see: <https://www.gazaceasefirepilgrimage.com/>.

Team Brownsville



Coats for the Cold

MCC partner Team Brownsville welcomes your gently used winter coats and jackets! Team Brownsville seeks to share God’s love by welcoming asylum seekers, including providing them with warm coats.

It’s as easy as collecting your gently used coats and jackets, boxing them up and shipping (up to) 70 lb./box to Team Brownsville – just follow the instructions on the poster on the bulletin board.

Spring clean your closets and help Team Brownsville prepare for next winter! Have questions? Please email the MCC Central States Immigration Team at centralstates@mcc.org and either Abraham Diaz Alonso or Becky Teiwees, will respond.



“Being negative only makes a journey more difficult. You may be given a cactus, but you don’t have to sit on it.”

—Joyce Meyer



Church Announcements

- 1. The Neighbors Store pantry needs monetary donations for Easter boxes.
- 2. The deadline for the April newsletter is March 25.
- 3. Offering schedule for March:
March 3: MC USA
March 10: Church Budget
March 17: Bethel College
March 24: Neighbors Store
March 31: Church Budget
- 4. The link for our church online library is librarything.com/catalog/FMCHalstead.

Treasurer’s Report

Budget balance @ 01/01/24	8,613.26
January receipts	7,246.21
January expenses	(13,059.80)
Budget balance @ 01/31/24	2,799.67

Women’s Mission Society

The Women’s Mission Society will meet on Monday, March 11 at 9:30 am for a work day at Linda’s downtown studio. All women are welcome to attend!

March Calendar


March 4-6	MCC Comforter Blitz
March 5	7:45 am Early Birds Breakfast
March 6	5:00 pm Kids Club
	6:00 pm Supper
	6:45 pm Adult Bible Study
March 7	7:00 pm Girl Scouts
March 10	2:30 pm Mennonite Men’s
	6:00 pm Mom’s Group
	6:00 pm Jr. & Sr. High Youth
March 11	9:30 am WMS
March 17	2:30 pm Mennonite Men’s
March 18	6:00 pm Nurture & Mission
	7:00 pm Church Council
March 19	7:45 am Early Birds Breakfast
	9:00 am Prayer Team Meeting
March 20	7:00 pm Bell Choir Practice
March 22	6:00 pm Pine Village Anchors
	Banquet
March 24	2:30 pm Mennonite Men’s
	6:00 pm Mom’s Group
	6:00 pm Jr. & Sr. High Youth
March 27	7:00 pm Choir Practice
March 29	TBA Good Friday Service
March 31	7:00 am Sunrise Service
	9:00 am Breakfast
	9:30 am Kids Sunday School
	10:30 am Easter Worship



Don’t forget to set your clocks ahead one hour on March 10!

Prayer & Praises

- * Pray for Jessica Dyck who has injured her ankle and is having hearing issues. Pray she can find just the right solution and make adjustments to improve her hearing.
- * Praise God for the Verenike Supper and our community and school who will receive the generous donations. We served around 550 meals and the receipts before expenses exceeded \$11,000. Thank you to everyone who helped in any way to contribute to the success.
- * Please pray for the Nurture team as they consider new Sunday school curriculum for the children and youth.
- * Continue praying for Cameron Nightingale as he continues his battle with pancreatitis and the long rehabilitation he will require. He is the nephew of James and Debbie.
- * Praise God for our Wednesday night programming for both children and adults. Pray that the seeds planted will be watered and will grow to bring glory to God.
- * Pray for our Lenten journey as a congregation and as individuals. Look inward and see where God is leading you.
- * Continue to pray for peace around the world and in our own communities.



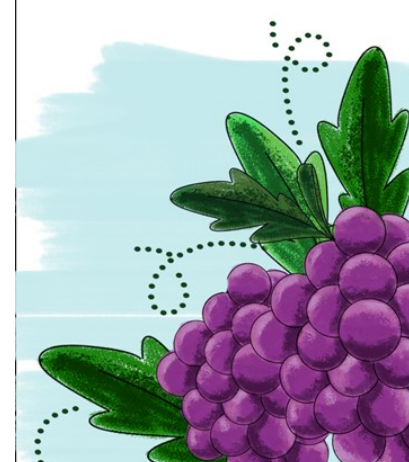
Try this chilly new take on a healthy snack.

What you need:

- 30 grapes, washed and dried
- ½ cup vanilla yogurt
- 4 graham crackers, crushed
- Toothpicks
- Parchment paper

What you do:

1. On a baking sheet lined with parchment paper, arrange grapes in a single layer. Freeze for two hours.
2. Insert a toothpick into each grape.
3. Dip each grape into the yogurt, coating half of it.
4. Roll each dipped grape in the crushed crackers. Place back on the parchment.
5. Freeze for two more hours. Enjoy!



Mark your calendars for the **Kansas Mennonite Relief Sale** on April 12-13 at the Hutchinson Fairgrounds! There are many ways you can be involved:

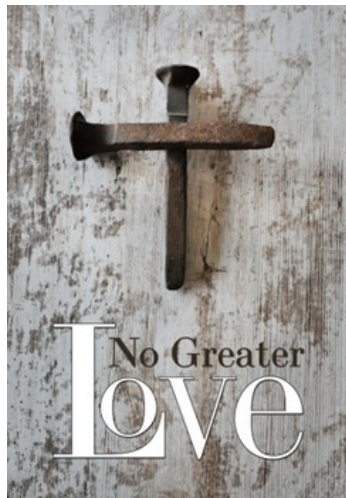
- ♦ Verenike Making Day is April 6 at Parkview MB Church, 610 S. Main St., Hillsboro and Bohne Beroggi Baking is April 6 at Moundridge High School, 530 Cole Street. Sign-up to help either day at kansas.mccsale.org/volunteer/
- ♦ Quilter's Corner needs donations of fabrics, quilting supplies, vintage linens, unfinished quilting projects, etc.
- ♦ Items are needed to offer for sale! Be working on fabric projects, crafts, wood items, etc. Begin stocking your freezer with zewiback, poppy seed rolls, cookies, pies, etc. to donate.
- ♦ Service opportunities are available as a volunteer. Over 1000 volunteers are needed over the two days. Volunteers are needed to help at Feeding the Multitude, New Year's cookies, frying, general auction help, selling, etc. It's fun and a great way to interact with others!
- ♦ Funds are needed to pay for all the needed supplies BEFORE the sale, so all the money raised goes directly to MCC. Sunday school classes, individuals, other groups, etc. are welcome to make donations.
- ♦ The Run-for-Relief sign-up sheets are available at the sale's website or scan the QR code on the bulletin board flyer. Sign-up to run or walk and gather your friends and their money to support you!
- ♦ Stay up-to-date on all things relating to KMRS by liking them on Facebook or at the website www.kansas.mccsale.org.



Swiss Mennonites

“An insiders view of the 100 year celebration of the coming of the Swiss Mennonites to America” is the focus of the presentation given by Frank Stucky at the annual meeting of the Swiss Mennonite Cultural and Historical Association. Frank is a lifelong resident of Newton, Kansas. He is the middle son of Harley J Stucky and Ruby Stucky, formally of North Newton. Frank graduated from Newton high school and Bethel College where he played football and basketball and had double majors in history and English and a minor in political science. He spent time with MCC in the Congo before going to graduate school at the University of Kansas. He has been an active real estate broker for over 46 years. Frank enjoys golf, watching Bethel College sports, travel, and spending time with his six grandchildren. He is married to Kathy (Jackson) and has two sons and a daughter.

The annual meeting will be held March 10, 2024, at 2:30 at the Wellness Center at Pine Village in Moundridge, Kansas. Refreshments will follow the meeting.



A Goodly Heritage

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.

Because Jesus Said So

One intriguing person in the Passion account is the thief on the cross whom Jesus promised a same-day entrance to paradise (see Luke 23:43). Pastor and radio host Alistair Begg says he can’t wait to meet that man and ask how everything unfolded. “You were cussing [Jesus] out with your friend,” Begg says. “You’ve never been in a Bible study. You’ve never been baptized. You didn’t know a thing about church membership, and yet you made it!”

In a sermon, Begg pictures an imaginary angel at the pearly gates, growing frustrated during the sinful thief’s entrance interview. After receiving no clear answers from the thief about doctrines such as justification, the angel finally asks, “On what basis are you here?” The thief simply replies, “The man on the middle cross said I can come.”

Anchors Banquet



Ahoy Matey! It’s time again for the Pine Village Anchor’s Banquet! Come and hear *Kilometer 81*, while supporting Pine Village by attending this year’s Anchor’s Banquet to benefit the Memorial Home Endowment Foundation.

The event will be on Friday, March 22 in the Pine Village Wellness Center. Dinner will begin at 6 pm, with the meal being provided by Pine Village Catering. We are grateful for your support!

Tickets are \$100 and all the proceeds will go to the endowment fund. Make your reservations by calling Pine Village at 620-345-2901. Reservation deadline is Monday, March 18. Your continued support is greatly appreciated! For more information or to purchase tickets online visit our website at www.pinevillageks.org

Our Feeble Prayers, Our Father’s Response

In *He Still Moves Stones*, Max Lucado recalls the story of Derek Redmond, a 1992 Olympic competitor in the 400-meter race. Halfway through Redmond’s semifinal run, a torn hamstring sent him tumbling to the ground. His dad, Jim, immediately ran onto the track. He met up with Derek, who, though crying, had managed to stand and was hopping forward.

“You don’t have to do this,” Jim said. But Derek insisted. “Well, then, we’re going to finish this together,” said Jim, who supported his son as he hobbled to the finish line. The crowd cheered and wept as Derek, with Dad’s assistance, finished the race.

Lucado writes: “What made the father do it? ... Was it the strength of his child? No, it was the pain of his child. ... God does the same. Our prayers may be awkward. Our attempts may be feeble. But since the power of prayer is in the One who hears it and not in the one who says it, our prayers do make a difference.”



Bethel College Lecture Series

Bethel College invites you to their *Bethel College Hartzler Lecture Series* with this year’s presenters César García, Mennonite World Conference General Secretary, and Sandra Báez, Pastor and Executive Assistant to the General Secretary. This is open to the public on Sunday, March 17th at 7:00pm in the Administration Building Chapel and on Monday, March 18th at 11:00am in Krehbiel Auditorium. All are welcome!

Local Church leaders are also invited to a luncheon with César and Sandra on Thursday, March 21 at 12:00pm at the Kansas Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (KIPCOR) on College Ave, North Newton, KS. Church leaders, please fill out this registration form if you plan to attend: <https://forms.gle/Xrg5xidGwsveG1519>

SCUBA VBS 2024

Save the Dates!

The Halstead Community VBS will be held May 28-31, 2024 from 9-11:30 am in our church. At SCUBA VBS, kids and adults will go deep into an amazing under-sea adventure where they'll experience the ever-flowing, never-ending love of God. Kids will be immersed in the Word and discover what living water is really all about! Volunteers are needed to help guide the 100+ kids during the week.

Volunteer jobs include:

- Adult and Tween/Teen Helpers for Preschool
- Registration Helpers
- Elementary Crew Leaders
- Jr. Crew Leaders (kids entering 6th & 7th grade)
- Snack Helpers
- Nursery Workers

Participant and Volunteer Registration is at <https://firstmennonitehalstead.org/vbs>.



Wednesday Nights

Our Wednesday night programming is coming to an end March 6. The final night will include Kids Club, Supper, Adult Bible study and childcare for the study. Some nights we have had 50+ children attending Kids Club and over 90+ sharing supper together.

Thank you to all those who have planned, led studies, helped, prayed, contributed food, cooked, cleaned up and attended. It has been a busy eight weeks and we are thankful for the opportunity to share fellowship with so many! Plan to attend next fall!



By Faith

'Tis by the faith of joys to come
We walk through deserts dark as night,
Till we arrive at heaven our home.
Faith is our guide, and faith our light. ...

Cheerful we tread the desert through,
While faith inspires a heavenly ray,
Though lions roar and tempests blow
And rocks and dangers fill the way.

So Abraham, by divine command,
Left his own house to walk with God;
His faith beheld the promised land,
And fired his zeal along the road.

—Early American hymn

March Celebrations

- | | |
|--------|---------------------------|
| 1 | Joyce Lee |
| 2 | Anna Lee Ewert (91 years) |
| 3 | Luann Yutzy |
| 4 | Tom Rose |
| 5 | Audra McEvoy |
| 6 | Maggie Black |
| 6 | Gregg Dalke |
| 9 (A) | Paul & Julia Kaufman |
| 12 | Mary Cummings |
| 14 (A) | Barry & Ann Unruh |
| 14 | Joshua Finley |
| 15 | Larry Finley |
| 15 (A) | Terry & Karen Linn |
| 17 | Maranda Whorton |
| 18 | Lee Snell |
| 20 | Brian Penner |
| 22 (A) | Waldon & Rhonda Regier |
| 24 | Jaxon Smoker |
| 27 (A) | Brian & Jennifer Penner |
| 29 | Delton Klassen |
| 29 | Hannah Chandler |
| 30 | Jocelyn Kloepfer |
| 31 | Everett Pankratz |



Christian Symbol:

Butterfly— The butterfly symbolizes resurrection, Easter and the new life we have in Christ Jesus. As a caterpillar disappears into a chrysalis, so Jesus' lifeless body was hidden in a tomb. The emergence of the butterfly, rising into the sky in its beautiful new body, reminds us of Christ's resurrection — and ours.

Pressed

Gethsemane, the name of the place where Jesus prayed before his betrayal, is an Aramaic word for "olive press." During Bible times, olives were pressed three times to remove all the valuable oil. Before being arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus felt the full pressing weight of our sins on his shoulders. Surrounded by olive trees, praying fervently while sweating drops of blood, the perfect Son of God asked his heavenly Father three times to remove the cup of suffering.

Instead of removing that trial, God used it to redeem and save humankind. Likewise, God uses our hardships to refine and strengthen our faith.

In *The Rock, the Road and the Rabbi*, TV host Kathie Lee Gifford and Messianic Rabbi Jason Sobel speculate that if Peter, along with James and John, hadn't fallen asleep in Gethsemane, he may have had the strength to not deny Jesus later that night.

"All of us must be vigilant to watch and pray so that we don't succumb to the temptation to deny the Lord when we go through the olive presses of life and feel like we are being crushed by our situation and circumstances," the authors write. "We must remember that it is the crushing that brings out the true inner value and worth of the olive."