

## Christian Education Sunday

On **September 14**, we will celebrate Christian Education at FMC and all the people who help make Sunday School classes, Kids Club, Youth Groups and Wednesday night Bible studies possible. During the worship service we will dedicate the school kits for MCC, recognize our third graders with new Bibles and pray over our Sunday School teachers and leaders for the coming year.

Following the worship service, there will be a potluck lunch with games and prizes! Please bring a dish or two to share if you're able and help us kick off the new year of Christian Education.

## Camp Mennoscah Announcements

- The Fall Scrapbook and Crafts Retreat is October 10-12. Registration is not yet open, but will be soon. Activities and lodging will be in the dining hall and bunkhouses.
- Camp Mennoscah's Annual Meeting will be held at Hope Mennonite Church on October 19 at 6:30 p.m. All are invited to attend.



September 2025  
Volume 49, No. 8

# The Church Corner



**First Mennonite Church**  
**427 W. 4th Street**  
**Halstead, KS 67056**  
**[www.firstmennonitehalstead.org](http://www.firstmennonitehalstead.org)**  
**Pastor Steve Wilcox**

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**Sunday School: 9:15 a.m.**  
**Worship Service: 10:30 a.m.**  
***\*The service is livestreamed on the church's 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 and
- Embrace new people in the love of Christ.

Let every thing that  
hath breath  
praise the LORD.  
Praise ye the LORD.  
*Psalm 150:6, KJV*



## Happy New Year

It is a new start this year for our family as Ethan begins college while Eli starts 10th grade and Raquel resumes teaching. The beginning of the school year marks the starting of a "New Year," and I have been thinking about how many different "new years" we actually encounter in the course of our lives. January 1 is the traditional New Year's Day, but for many families, August (or September) feels like the true turning of the year, when the school schedule begins again. Our birthdays mark another kind of new year. And in the church, the season of Advent brings the beginning of the Christian calendar.

Each of these moments is a reminder that God has created us with a rhythm of time that includes new beginnings. These milestones provide us with natural points of reflection to consider what has been, and to look ahead with renewed purpose. I believe this is by God's design. In Ecclesiastes we read: "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven" (Ecclesiastes 3:1). Time itself is one of God's gifts to us, and within time, God graciously provides opportunities for renewal.

It is no accident that when one year ends and another begins, we feel the need to refocus, to set goals, or to make resolutions. Something in our human nature longs for a fresh start. We see this reflected in Scripture as well. The people of Israel had appointed times throughout the year when they were called to begin anew – festivals of harvest, Sabbaths, and

the great Day of Atonement. Each of these was a reminder that God gives His people new opportunities to re-align their lives with His will.

Paul echoes this idea when he writes in Philippians 3:13-14: "But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." Yesterday's failures and yesterday's accomplishments are not the end. God calls us forward into what He is doing next.

So whether it is January, the start of the school year, the celebration of a birthday, or the beginning of Advent, each "new year" moment can be received as a gift from God. These are invitations to stop and ask: What is the Lord calling me into in this season? Where might He be asking me to grow in faith, in obedience, or in service? Where might I need to repent and start fresh? Where might I need to trust Him more deeply?

Perhaps the truest "New Year's" for the Christian is found in Christ Himself. In Him, every day is a new beginning. The forgiveness He offers is a fresh start no calendar can mark. His Spirit renews us daily, making us new creations even as the world turns in its old familiar cycles.

As we encounter the various rhythms of the year, let us be attentive to the Spirit's prompting. Let us ask: "Lord, what are You calling me into, in this new start of my life?" And let us step forward in faith, trusting that the One who makes all things new will guide our steps.

Grace and peace,  
Pastor Steve



## September Calendar

Sept. 2	7:45 a.m.	Early Birds Breakfast	6:00 p.m.	Wed. Eve. Supper
Sept. 3	5:00 p.m.	Kids Club	6:45 p.m.	Adult Bible Study
	6:00 p.m.	Kids Club Supper	Sept. 25	9:00 a.m. Prayer Team meeting
Sept. 8	9:30 a.m.	Women's Mission Society	Sept. 28	12:00 p.m. Last Sunday Potluck
Sept. 9	7:30 p.m.	Vision Team meeting		6:00 p.m. Jr. & Sr. High Youth Groups
Sept. 10	5:00 p.m.	Kids Club		6:00 p.m. Women's Bible Study
	6:00 p.m.	Kids Club Supper		
Sept. 14	10:30 a.m.	Christian Ed Sunday	Sept. 30	7:45 a.m. Early Birds Breakfast
	12:00 p.m.	Potluck		
	6:00 p.m.	Jr. & Sr. High Youth Groups		
	6:00 p.m.	Women's Bible Study		
Sept. 15	7:00 p.m.	Council meeting	Oct. 5	10:30 a.m. Communion during Worship
Sept. 16	7:45 a.m.	Early Birds Breakfast	Oct. 12	P & M Pumpkin Ranch
			Nov. 15	Mission Supper
Sept. 17	5:00 p.m.	Kids Club		
	6:00 p.m.	Wed. Eve. Supper		
	6:45 p.m.	Adult Bible Study		
Sept. 21	10:30 a.m.	Mission Sunday		
	12:00 p.m.	Lunch		
	1:00 p.m.	Givens family report		
Sept. 22	6:00 p.m.	Nurture meeting		
Sept. 24	5:00 p.m.	Kids Club		

## Looking Ahead





Council Meeting Minutes

from Aug. 18, 2025

- Pastor Steve opened the meeting with prayer. July minutes were approved as written.
- Discernment Team – No report
- Vision Team – Chuck reported they have not met but will be meeting in September.
- Care Ministry – Ron reported World Communion Sunday will be in October. There are sign-up sheets on the bulletin board for available drivers and also those needing a ride to church and appointments.
- Hospitality Ministry – Kaitlen reminded everyone about the end of month potlucks inviting college age and those in the community. P & M Pumpkin Patch outing will be October 12 from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m.
- Mission Ministry – Dwight reported that there were Service Trip Fund disbursements to the youth group service trip of \$1700 and also for the Jubilee (Georgia) service trip of \$1760. The Mission Supper will be November 15. The Hog Roast will be in October sometime, need to determine a date yet. There will also be a Mission Sunday, possibly September 21, with Weldon Martens presenting.
- Nurture Ministry – Kaitlen reported that the Fall mission offering will go for Angel Tree/Neighbors. Kids Club will start September 3 and go through October 22. Adult study will start September 17 and go through

October 22. Youth groups and Women’s Bible Study will start September 14. September 14 will be Christian Education Sunday with a potluck at noon (MCC school kits will be the offering). Third grade bibles will be given to Emily and Isaiah. All teaching positions have been filled with the exception of one Junior High spot. Safe Sanctuary forms were handed out to all those involved with children and youth.

- Stewardship Ministry – Treasurer’s report – Larry reported a budget balance of \$7730.20 at the end of July. No report for Stewardship.
- Worship Ministry – Denice reported they have not met but will be meeting in September.
- Pastor’s report – Steve reported that the Old Settlers Community worship service went well as did working with other churches. He hopes to start planning earlier next year.

The next council meeting will be

Sept. 15, 2025

Treasurer’s Report

Budget Balance @1-1-25	239.32
Jan.-June. Receipts	73,191.58
Jan.-June Expenses	(71,367.34)
Budget Balance @6-30-25	2,063.56
July Receipts	17,187.997
July Expenses	(11,521.35)
Budget Balance @7-31-25	7,730.20

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SEPTEMBER

Birthdays & Anniversaries

1 (A) Mark & Cheryl Berger

2 Katherine Ewy

4 (A) Scott & Angela Chandler

5 Marlo Klassen

5 Carol Linn

5 Karen Linn

6 Scott Mueller

7 Matthew Balzer

8 Carrol Flickinger (91 years)

9 Bill Ewert (94 years)

9 Emmit Jacob

10 Valerie Keller

10 Jena Black

10 Nicholas Schmidling

11 Kim Brandt

12 Shaun Ortman

12 Marilyn Schrag

13 Keith Dalke

13 Brett Rose

14 Kevin Finley

15 (A) Robert & Luann Yutzy

16 Ewan Jacob

16 Rhonda Regier

16 (A) Lee & Vivian Snell

17 Michelle Dalke

17 MeKial Bliss

17 Draco Miller

18 (A) Alan & Marilyn Mueller

18 Elvin Conard

18 Mallory Loflin

18 Kyndal Lee

18 Trevor Gadue

19 (A) Larry & Carrol Flickinger (71 yrs)

19 Evelyn Heath

20 Johnathan Haspels

20 Larry Flickinger (90 years)

21 Hannah Sutcliffe

22 Glenn Mueller

23 Jacob Whitesell

23 (A) Gregg & Julie Dalke

23 (A) Mike & Jane Fitch

24 (A) Mark & Shirley Rodenberg

25 Dale Dick (90 years)

26 Ron Dick

26 Melisa Kaldenbach

26 Monty Westerman

27 Ron Gundy

28 David Mueller

28 Jesse Mueller

28 Christian Kloepfer

28 Mike Fitch

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Upcoming Church Events

Fall Sunday School Classes

The fall Sunday School class term begins September 7 and is a great time to join a class if you aren’t already involved. Please talk with a member of the Nurture Ministry if you have any questions or suggestions about our program offerings. Members are Debbie Nightingale, Melanie Haspels, Kaitlen Ortman, Lauren Mueller and Kent Dick.

Church Announcements

1. The church calendar is now online! It can be found on the homepage of the church’s website (firstmennonitehalstead.org).

2. The deadline for the October newsletter is Tuesday, Sept. 23.

3. The Neighbors Store pantry requests toothpaste and toilet paper for the month of September.

4. Offering Schedule for September:

Sept. 7: Western District Conf.

Sept. 14: Hesston College

Sept. 21: Church Budget

Sept. 28: MC USA

5. The link for our church online library is librarything.com catalog/FMCHalstead.

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Kids Club Begins Sept. 3

Kids Club returns for another session on Wednesday, Sept. 3, from 5-6 p.m. and will continue through Oct. 22. A supper will follow at 6:00 p.m. for Kids Club participants and their families.

Elementary kids (K-6<sup>th</sup>) will continue lessons from the Sermon on the Mount and what it means to be part of God’s Kingdom. Preschool kids (3-5 years) will learn about some of the big Bible stories from the Old Testament.

If you know a kid age 3 through 6<sup>th</sup> grade, please encourage them to join us!

Discover the keys to God’s Kingdom.

Jr. & Sr. High Youth Groups Resume

Junior and Senior High Youth Groups will resume meeting on Sunday, Sept. 14, from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. and will meet on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays of the month. Junior High includes grades 6-8 and Senior High includes grades 9-12. Encourage the 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders you know to check it out!

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Thoughts on a different perspective and a new book to check out

I love when our church gets together to knock out a big project: cleaning up the storage rooms, clearing storm-damaged trees out of the park, tying a comforter top. The comradery is fun, the accomplishment is satisfying, and our work is very, very efficient.

It was a bit of a cultural education, then, to build a house at Jubilee Partners in Georgia in July with a loose plan, a slow pace, and no real concern for a finish line. Helpfully, founding partner Don Mosley offered me a book for our church library he had written titled, "Faith Beyond Borders." The early chapters followed the three small families who quit their jobs and pooled their resources together in 1979 to build the Jubilee Partners compound and, with no plan at all, eagerly waited for God to use them.

When refugees began washing up on U.S. coasts from war-ravaged Vietnam in crowded, leaky boats—with up to half of them dying at sea—the partners knew their first calling had arrived. And they’ve been working slowly, listening and adjusting, ever since.

I’m so thankful for the prayers of our church while we traveled and for the financial support of the church’s Service Fund to send a little bit of Halstead efficiency to this building project. The partners were extremely grateful! And I’m glad to have been educated in another way to see the world.

If you’re interested, “Faith Beyond Borders” is now on display in our church library. Check it out!

Casey Jacob, church librarian

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## Seven from FMC travel to Georgia to volunteer at Jubilee Partners

For the past three winters, Chuck and Ruth Mueller have spent time living and working at Jubilee Partners in Georgia, an ecumenical Christian service community that exists to offer hospitality to refugees and other immigrants who have left their homes because of violence and persecution. In July, they introduced five additional people from FMC—James Nightingale and Bret, Casey, Emmet and Ewan Jacob—to Jubilee Partners. The group traveled to Georgia to continue work on a new house build for a member of the Jubilee community.



Top left: Emmet and Ewan Jacob secure the attic floor. Bottom left: Bret Jacob, James Nightingale and Chuck Mueller work on finishing the framing. Right: Casey Jacob and Ruth Mueller paint siding for the next crew to install. Top of the next page: *Left picture* - The whole group in the house they worked to build. *Right picture*- Chuck and Ruth Mueller.

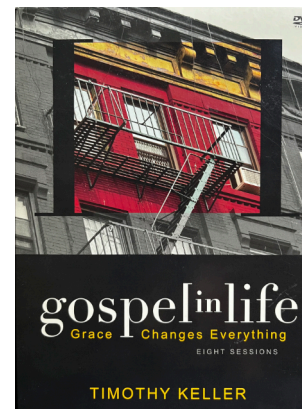
## Women's Bible Study

All women are invited to participate in a fall Bible study titled *The Armor of God* by Priscilla Shirer. The study will begin on Sunday, September 14, from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m., and will meet on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays of each month. Sessions will include video teachings and a workbook for personal study. We are working on securing funds to provide the workbooks, so please speak with Kaitlen or Melanie if you're interested so we know how many books to order.



## Adult Bible Study Begins Sept. 17

The fall session of Adult Bible Study will begin on Tuesday, Sept. 17, at 6:45 p.m. following a supper at 6:00 p.m. This year we will be using *Gospel in Life*, a DVD series by Timothy Keller. This study explores how the gospel shapes every part of our lives—our hearts, our communities, and



even the way we engage with the world. Each session includes teaching, Scripture, and discussion that helps us consider how the good news of Jesus transforms both our daily living and our witness to others.

Whether you have been part of Bible studies for years or have never attended, come and be encouraged as we discover how the gospel truly is “good news for all of life.”

## Missions Sunday

A Sunday focused on missions and one of our mission partners—Joseph and Rachel Givens—will be held on Sunday, September 21.

Weldon Martens, a former pastor at Grace Hill Mennonite in Whitewater, will bring the morning message. A sandwich lunch will follow the worship service after which Martens will report on his Just Peace Pilgrimage to Calais, France, where he spent time with the Givens family. Come learn more about the work the Givens family is doing in France as they provide shelter and support to migrating people seeking refuge as they journey to England.



This month's focus is on Edith Unruh, who has been a faithful part of First Mennonite Church for 73 years.

**How long have you attended FMC?** Edith has attended First Mennonite Church for 73 years—ever since she moved to Halstead in 1952 at the age of 18.

**What brought you to Halstead?** Edith grew up in rural Oklahoma, southwest of Oklahoma City. When she graduated from high school, she knew she didn't have much opportunity for work where she lived. Her brother had previously moved to Halstead, and her cousin, Winifred Koehn, also lived here, so she moved north to join them.

She found a job as a waitress in a restaurant where D'Angelo's is today. That job was how she met Benny Unruh, a Halstead native who was home on leave from the Air Force at the time Edith began working. He and some friends came in to eat—and then they

kept coming back. Benny began calling and writing to her, and “the rest is history.” They married in 1956.

**What brought you to FMC?** Edith attended a Mennonite church in Oklahoma and began attending First Mennonite once she arrived in town. FMC had a larger congregation than her home church, and at that time, the Sunday School classes were held wherever space could be found. The addition with more Sunday School classrooms wouldn't be built for another twelve years.

**What work have you done in your life?** While she spent some time working in a greenhouse and a flower shop, most of Edith's life's work has been in the food industry. She eventually

owned the cafe where she first waitressed, renaming it Edith's Cafe during the two years she operated it. Her longest tenure was at Halstead Hospital, where she worked for 15 to 16 years. She began as a cook and later became the dietary manager.

**What ways have you served or been**



Edith Unruh

**involved at FMC over the years?** In her early years at FMC, Edith taught Sunday School. Her love of music led her to be part of both the Sextet—a women's singing group—and the Bell Choir when they first began. (The green dress in the Historical Room was worn by members of the Bell Choir and belonged to Edith). Her life-long work with food led her to contribute her time and talents on the Social Committee, Mission Supper Committee, and the Mary Martha Committee.

**What about FMC means the most to you?** Edith appreciates the music and the weekly fellowship at church. “I just need that every Sunday fellowship,” she said. “The week is just not right without it.”

**What's a special memory you have connected to FMC?** “I like all the traditional things we do at Christmas,” Edith said. “The tree, the choir program, and the Christmas Eve service are all meaningful.” She also appreciates the blend of both traditional hymns and newer songs in the worship service.

**What's something people might be surprised to learn about you?** “I love to read and will go through two to three books a week,” Edith said. She also enjoys playing cards and dominoes at the community building near her apartment. Games start at 1 p.m. every Monday through Friday, and everyone is welcome to join.

Edith has three children—Arleta McGinn, Barry Unruh and Sandy Lewis—nine grandchildren, ten great-grandchildren and one great-great grandson, who is two years old.



- Pray for Jason and Lauren Mueller and their families with the sudden passing of Lauren's father at the end of July.
- Pray for Edith Unruh as she recovers from a fractured ankle. Pray for complete healing.
- Pray for Debbie Nightingale who is recovering from back surgery. Pray for patience in the healing process.
- Pray for Brad Rodenberg who is experiencing back pain and waiting for an appointment to determine the cause. Pray for healing and relief for him.
- Pray for Delton Klassen as he recovers from a procedure on his shoulder.
- Pray for all the friends and family members of those in our congregation who are dealing with various forms of cancer and other illnesses.
- Pray for Mick and Mary Bean and their family as they mourn the loss of their son's best friend.
- Pray for the start of Kids Club and Youth Groups, that those kids who need to be here will come.
- Pray for the Missions Sunday, that it will expand our vision for missions.
- Pray for the Last Sunday Potlucks, that they will be a blessing to our community.
- Pray for any unspoken prayer requests, that each need will be met.