



FIRST  
MENNONITE  
CHURCH,  
NEWTON

**Our Mission is to glorify God:**

- ✦ Through expressing our love to God in worship.
- ✦ Through experiencing Christian love in community.
- ✦ Through extending God's love to the world.

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# FMC CONNECTIONS

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September 2016

## EXAMINING YESTERDAY AND EMBRACING TODAY

As you likely already know (hopefully!), beginning in August and going into the first part of September, we will be looking back at the history of First Mennonite Church (or—for some of us—maybe just the history of our own involvement with FMC). Then part-way into September, we'll shift into doing an assessment of where we have been in recent years which has culminated in where we are today.

These acts of looking back and assessing today are meant to be congregational activities. As we all add our own reflections into the mix, what emerges will be a picture of our corporate life together. It will give us all a sense of those values and priorities that we together hold most dear.

These acts of looking back and assessing today are part of a larger process. Before we look toward the future in clarifying our vision and mission according to God's leading, we need to see where we've come from. How has God already shaped our congregation? How has God gifted us as this unique part of

the Body of Christ? What is it that we have to offer to each other, to our community, and to the world that extends the reign of God so that "thy will be done, thy kingdom come, on earth as it is in heaven"?

While it is the Church Board that will gather up what they hear and work at listening, discerning, and shaping the messages of vision and mission, your participation is needed. First of all, we ask you to pray for the congregation during the whole process so that we may be attentive to the word that God has for us.

And, second, we ask you to participate in the timeline exercises of examining yesterday and embracing today. It is what the Church Board will find through your reflections and responses that will provide the base material for whatever comes next.

After these first two steps in the process are completed, we'll finally turn our eyes toward the future. We'll ask for your participation then, too, to dream and think and listen and watch for the call of God to us.



**Pastor Anita Kehr**

But that's not yet. First, we look back and assess today. My hope is that this process in which Pastor Joel Schroeder is leading us will kindle gratitude in and among us as we see the evidence of God's long faithfulness. My hope is that this process will inspire us to deepen our own commitment to faithfulness. My hope is that this process of discernment—beyond whatever the outcome is—will itself be a blessing.

With gratitude for each of you.  
*Anita*

# MANY THANKS!!

Dear Friends at First Mennonite Church,

Thank you for another great gift to MCC! As always, we really appreciate your generosity.

You are making a difference in places like Serbia where MCC is helping to promote education in Roma communities and giving kids the tools they need to succeed in school.

Thanks for being a blessing to communities around the world.

Anna Yoder  
Donor Relations Coordinator  
MCC Central States

Greetings from Camp Mennoscah!

Thank you so much for your gift! Our vision to create a sacred space for people of all ages to renew themselves, their relationships, and their connection with God through Jesus Christ is realized only with your help.

On behalf of the Camp Mennoscah Board of Directors and the Camp staff, I would like to thank you for your donation to Camp Mennoscah. Your gifts will be used to continue our mission to provide a retreat for people of all ages.

Olivia Bartel, camp director

Dear First Mennonite Church:

Thank you for the ways that you enrich Bethel College—the students you send, your thoughts, your prayers, and your financial support. Thanks for all you do for Bethel College and for the generous gift for the Bethel College Fund! It is very much appreciated!

Rob Schunn  
Annual Fund Director

Dear First Mennonite Church:

Thanks for the donation provided to us by your church! God has truly blessed us with you!

Harvey County Homeless Shelter staff and residents



## You are invited to join the choir!!



7:00 PM



Sanctuary choir loft

Questions?  
Call Pastor Kay at  
316-217-1272

**Rehearsals begin on Wednesday, September 7**

# CHURCH BOARD REPORT

The Board met August 11, 2016. Dave Wiebe led devotions with words and thoughts from Marty Troyer's *The Gospel Next Door*. He closed devotional time with prayer and Anita led a special prayer for Dana, Kathleen and Darnell Neff.

Joel presented the upcoming congregational Vision and Mission process. The church board will be the leading group in this Vision and Mission process. Joel encouraged the board to listen carefully to everyone regarding this process. He presented and proposed the "Reboot" process and introduced three phases of the process. Joel asked for thoughts and input on his proposal. There was general discussion and affirmation for the process.

Dewayne Pauls updated the board on the Capital Fund Development Committee Projects that were approved by the congregation on November 1, 2015. Phase one (the roof repair) is complete. However, the roof fund is short by \$6300 which will be covered by the parsonage fund. Fund-raising is in progress for phase two (\$222,000) with emphasis on the first two items of the phase—window and organ re-

pair and renovation. For the organ fund, about \$23,000 of the \$40,000 budget has been raised. There is hope that the organ fund-raising will be completed by January 1, 2017. If necessary they will borrow from the parsonage fund to complete the project in 2017. If money is borrowed from the Parsonage Fund it will be paid back through finishing the fund-raising. It is church policy to pay back the Parsonage fund. The window fund is at approximately \$56,000—enough to complete seven windows. It is not possible to complete the window project if the organ project fund-raising is not completed as there are not enough funds in the parsonage fund to cover both projects. Dewayne emphasized that all sizes of contributions are important to the fund-raising efforts. Pledges are considered cash.

FMC is planning 8 celebrations around the theme of stewardship over the next year. The first one is the Partnership Home Project celebration at Son Wray Ranch (near Newton) on August 20<sup>th</sup>. There will be homemade ice cream and cake.

Dave Wiebe, Pastor Anita, and Pastor Kay shared reflections from the Western District Conference they attended. The Treasurer reported that July was a good giving month for local expenses but the year to date expense is about \$16,000 above income. The Property Committee reported the last couple of months have been busy for air conditioner repairs and servicing. The dishwasher will also need repair or replacement in the near future. They are looking at costs for both. The Gifts Discernment Committee reported they are working on the ballot for fall. The Outreach, Missions, and Peace Commission reported that Carla and Gary Histan will be sharing on the morning of August 21. In September they are planning a celebration mission evening and inviting short- and long-term missionaries to share their experiences through missions and the importance of missions. A free-will offering will be taken for short-term mission.

Pastor Kay led the board in closing prayer.

Brian Kennell, Interim Church Board Chair

## LINDA SHELLY WINS AWARD

Linda Shelly is the recipient of the 2016 AMBS Alumni Ministry and Service Recognition. Shelly is regional director for Latin America for Mennonite Mission Network. She has worked for decades in and for Latin America for Mennonite Central Committee and Mennonite mission boards. In the Fall, she will have an oppor-

tunity to share with the seminary community about her ministry and will receive fuller recognition at that time. Linda Shelly has been instrumental in planning and organizing various Sister Care seminars presented in Latin America.



Linda (left) with Lizette Flores at the Bolivia Sister Care seminar.

# September 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Casa Betania Sanctuary 6:30 PM  Nurture 7:00 PM	2	3  Youth Group leaving at 11:15 AM  <b>YOUTH</b>
4 Casa Betania Church Service 4:00 PM  <b>FALL</b>	5 Church Office closed Labor Day  Youth Group returns about 1:00 PM  <b>RETREAT</b>	6	7 Choir 7:00 PM	8 Casa Betania Sanctuary 6:30 PM  Church Board 7:00 PM	9 Christian Co-Workers SS class gathering-FH 2:30 PM  <b>Women</b>	10  <b>and Girls</b>
11 Casa Betania Church Service 4:00 PM  Mission Celebration & Faspa 5:30 PM-FH  <b>Retreat</b>	12	13	14 Choir 7:00 PM	15 Casa Betania Sanctuary 6:30 PM	16	17
18 Casa Betania Church Service 4:00 PM	19 Property 7:00 PM	20 Women's Fellowship- 9:30 AM  Caregiving 7:00 PM	21 Choir 7:00 PM	22 Casa Betania Sanctuary 6:30 PM	23	24  FH reserved all day
25 Casa Betania Church Service 4:00 PM	26	27	28 Church Family Night starts! CFN meal 5:30 PM Choir 6:45 PM Youth Group 6:45 PM	29 Casa Betania Sanctuary 6:30 PM	30	

All events must be scheduled in the Church Office and cannot be scheduled more than six months in advance.

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

If you see these people,  
wish them a Happy Birthday!

Belva Unruh—9/1

Amy Frey—9/3

Delia Schroeder—9/4

Matthew Shelly—9/4

Ryan Koehn—9/5

Abigail Epp—9/6

Ira Frey—9/6

Jan Sommer—9/6

Rachel Unruh—9/6

Sarah Fleming—9/9

Melvin Pauls—9/9

Jenna Ratzlaff—9/9

Elizabeth Epp—9/11

Jan Claassen—9/12

Randy Doty—9/12

Bev Regier—9/13

Esther Epp—9/14

Stefanie Knopp—9/16

Dale Schrag—9/16

Ken Bachman—9/17

Jan Groves—9/17

Doug Pauls—9/17

Beverly Buller—9/19

Dennis Flickner—9/19

Ella Regier—9/19

Ashlynn Hamm—9/21

Haleigh Machmer—9/21

Levi Knopp—9/21

Roy Goering—9/22

Joel Schroeder—9/22

Carol Entz—9/23

Rod Pauls—9/23

Brian Kennell—9/24

Lori Kingsley—9/25

Gail Pryce—9/25

Jeryl Murphy—9/26

Harry Ensz—9/29

Pamela Garcia—9/30

Mason Unruh—9/30



## HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

Frederic and Aurore Ducroquest—9/11

Donnie & Lori Kingsley—9/12

Dewayne & Betty Pauls—9/12

Bryan & Kathy Becker—9/23

Sammie & Robin Simmons—9/26

**Church Family Night starts on September 28!!**  
**The Church Family Night kids theme will be**  
***Kids' Travel Guide to the 23rd Psalm***

CFN meal-5:30 PM

Youth group-6:45 PM

Choir-6:45 PM

Adult Bible Study-6:45 PM

**Everyone is welcome to come!!**

## FMC Connections

First Mennonite Church  
PO Box 291  
429 East First Street  
Newton, KS 67114



September 2016

## CAREGIVING CORNER

Recently it was mentioned that the Caring Fund was running a low balance, and you responded graciously. Thank You! When someone falls on hard times and needs a monetary gift to help them along, the Caregiving and Membership Commission of FMC is able to do that from this fund. Jan Sommer meets periodically with those who have this need to evaluate and make those gifts. Other one-time gifts are given to members at times when the need arises. It is also from the Caring Fund that regular contributions to the Harvey County Homeless Shelter, Health Ministries, Harvey County Safe House, and Salvation Army are given. Again, thank you for your contributions to the Caring Fund!

~The Caregiving and Membership Commission

Dear Friends at First Mennonite Church:

All of you have been so nice in such  
a thoughtful way,  
It's hard to find a way to thank each  
of you today.

But hopefully this special message will show,  
at least in part,  
The many warm and grateful thoughts  
this brings straight from the heart.

Many thanks for all you have done for us!

Jimenez/Nuñez family



Thank You!