



FIRST  
MENNONITE  
CHURCH,  
NEWTON

**Our Mission is to glorify God:**

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

**Inside this issue:**

|                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Thank you and Caregiving Corner | 2 |
| Update from Sharon Harder       | 3 |
| Church Board Report             | 6 |

# FMC Connections

Volume 26, Issue 9

October 2016

“The words of the Teacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem: What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done; there is nothing new under the sun.” (Ecclesiastes 1:1 and 9)

I’ve been thinking quite a lot about the time in which we are currently living. It seems to me as if it’s a time which is filled with more than has been experienced before: more change, more economic disparity, more societal unrest, more violence and warfare around the world, more ethnic division and hatred and also more information, more knowledge, more opportunity, more interest in ethics...more of everything, I am tempted to think, than any other time in history.

Now certainly we do live in our own moment. But whether our moment is more fraught—with potential or pessimism or both—I don’t know. What I do know is that it helps me to remember the (rather melancholy) words

of the Teacher from Ecclesiastes and be reassured at the thought that there really may be nothing new under the sun.

However, even if it is true that what is happening now has happened in some form before and will likely happen again, what is also true is that this is the first time that I (or you or we) have lived. So, whether or not history repeats itself over and over again, we each have a call to live our limited lives in such a way that the “arc of the moral universe” will indeed “bend toward justice,” as Martin Luther King, Jr. said in one of his speeches. Or, like Jesus said, we each have a call to live in the kingdom of God like tiny mustard seeds that grow large or like a little yeast that leavens lots of dough.

There is another truth to remember when this time of ours seems so difficult to sort out. Beyond the reality of this world is the ultimate reality of God: “For the word of the Lord is upright, and all his work is done in faithfulness. He loves righteousness and justice; the



Pastor Anita Kehr

earth is full of the steadfast love of the Lord.” (Psalm 33:4-5) And, even more, “The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. ‘The Lord is my portion,’ says my soul, ‘therefore I will hope in him.’” (Lamentations 3:22-24)

Placing our hope in the One who is steadfast and faithful keeps us where we’re supposed to be: both in this world and working for the good of it but also citizens of the reign of God that is beyond anything that our time might hold.

May we be a hopeful, hope-filled people—

*Anita Kehr*

# Thank you!!

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. Your gift helps each student in some capacity. 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~  
We wanted to write and thank you for your contribution to the Harvey County Homeless Shelter. We appreciate your continued support!  
God's Blessings~  
HCHS staff and residents

From Mennonite Mission Network~  
Thank you for your generous and faithful support!  
Sandra Miller, Director for Church Relations

Dear Friends:  
Thank you for your recent gift toward the mission of Health Ministries Clinic. In 2015, community support like yours enabled more than 1,550 people with low income and no health insurance to receive comprehensive, quality primary-care services. Your gifts are helping us to carry out our mission in Harvey County.

Sincerely,  
Matthew Schmidt  
Executive Director

# Thank You!

## Caregiving Corner

Greetings from the unnamed Sunday School class!

Many of you have heard that a group of young adults at FMC have decided to begin a new Sunday School class (we consider ourselves in the post-college and “are we really sure we are adults?” age range). We are in the stage of building relationships and getting to know one another. Eventually we will take some deeper dives into bible studies, theological discussions, etc., but we are mostly conversational at this point. We appreciate the encouragement and interest from others in the congregation. If you know of anyone who might be searching for a Sunday School class and might fit in with our group, then point them our direction. Please don't be afraid to ask questions, make comments, or bring a Sunday morning snack for the class. Someday we might decide to name the group, but don't wait for the other shoe to drop.

## Update From Sharon Harder

What a week! All returning and 23 new students have arrived from more than 15 Latin American countries. The summer lull of a quiet, peaceful campus is now filled with the high energy and joyful spirit of college students! Even so, the high heat index keeps us indoors most of the time but we do enjoy the cool, fresh air, flowers and gardening from October to April.

I am thankful for freedom at work to take off time to get out in the woods and stay in the State Parks with my little RV trailer. This summer was a mountaintop experience for me spiritually to spend quality time with the Lord, to study, read and visit dear friends and 9 of the 13 units of my immediate family. I especially enjoyed spending time with my nieces and nephews, children of my older sister who passed away last December.

It was also a good time to evaluate the past and do some vision and planning for the future. I now will be working four days a week Monday-Thursday, 8:00-5:00 PM instead of 5 days a week, plus helping from time to time with weekend events the radio holds on this side of the border. This is more in line with my part-time retirement status with TEAM, as well as my energy level! ;) Also, I'm finding it impossible to receive the number of people seeking counsel at the Radio and meet all of their needs. So many only desire to come for their felt need at the

moment. I will continue to listen and pray with those individuals in 1-3 appointments of several hours each but prefer to spend quality time with those who are willing to do the work to receive Jesus' freedom in each area of their lives. This has freed up my stress level considerably. If the Lord reminds you, would you join me to pray:

- that I will have wisdom to know how to "work wiser."
- that the Lord will send the people He desires and that they will understand the root cause of their problem and how to go to Jesus for healing?

Pray too for the leadership of the Rio Grande Bible Ministries. They are facing many decisions in a tremendous growing ministry. For example: the school is receiving numerous requests for Spanish church planters in US communities, for the construction of housing for married students, the filming of the Bible College courses, beginning a master's degree program, etc.

We praise God for His continued protection and blessing over all the ministries and individuals here but each of us needs His wisdom.

Recently a lady came to the office separated from her husband. She realized she was living far from the Lord, was experiencing the consequences of making numerous decisions without Him,

and had destroyed her marriage through a dominant, offensive spirit. As she confessed and prayed through areas of forgiveness, pride, and her own heart damaged by a dominant mother, her face was radiant. During the last weeks she has been keeping a close relationship with the Lord, is caring for her 13-year-old daughter's heart so hurt from the past, is filling her own heart with Jesus instead of "things" since coming out of a life-style of obsessive buying and high debt. Now she says Jesus guides her when she goes to the mall and is amazed that there's no need to fill her heart with material possessions. Although it looks impossible, she is praying and trusting God to work in her husband and restore them to a happy marriage.

The privilege to come alongside individuals, providing a safe place to be heard and pray through their issues is a blessing you provide through your prayers and contributions. You are making an investment in lives and there is no way to thank you except to praise Him together with you and those who come for help!

Thank you for continuing to be a part of this ministry to hurting people!

Lovingly,  
Sharon Harder

## Happy Birthday

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

Tyler Shelly—10/1  
Gladys Graber—10/3  
Dwight Regier—10/3  
Alma Ewert—10/6  
Amy Grochowsky—10/6  
Jordan Penner—10/6  
Helen Entz—10/9  
Lynette Erb—10/9

Eli Weaver—10/10  
Karen Bachman—10/11  
Mark Gerbrand—10/13  
Kay Schroeder—10/15  
Florene Wiens—10/15  
Kenna Graber—10/16  
Naaman Frey—10/17  
Krys Hiebert—10/17  
Bryan Becker—10/18  
Denetta Denno—10/18  
Elvera Suderman—10/19  
Tyler Doty—10/20

Megan Voth—10/20  
Jerry Decker—10/21  
Seth Bontrager—10/22  
Marvin Gerbrand—10/22  
Dave Goering—10/22  
Kevin Hamm—10/23  
Ethan Entz—10/24  
Addie Regier—10/24  
Cameron Weaver—10/25  
Hannah Epp—10/27  
Rod Schmidt—10/27  
Gary Grochowsky—10/29

Sarah Koehn—10/29  
Lewis Wiebe—10/29  
Galeard Hackney—10/30  
Callie Knopp—10/30  
Carson Knopp—10/30  
LaVerna Schierling—10/30  
Kiley Schmidt—10/30



## Happy Anniversary

Rod & Ethel Wedel—10/3      Wilbur and Arlene Schmidt—10/14  
Tim & Kathy Wiens—10/5      Phil & Linda Gaertner—10/16  
Don & Helen Bachman—10/9      Jeremy & Jyl Ewy—10/18  
Roy & Sheralyn Goering—10/14      Bill & Wenda Black—10/29

### SAVE THE DATE!

**Saturday, October 22, 8:00 AM-Noon**

FMC has a long history of doing service projects for others. We will celebrate this by working together at the Kansas Food Bank Wichita.

**BREAKFAST:** 8:00 AM in Fellowship Hall

**KANSAS FOOD BANK:** 9:30 AM-Noon

This is a project for ALL AGES!

Come join us!

## Church Family Nights are every Wednesday, September 28-November 16

Mark your calendars for Fall Church Family Night, every Wednesday beginning on September 28-November 16. Supper will be served from 5:30-6:30 PM. Following supper, there will be activities for all ages. "Kids' Travel Guide to the 23rd Psalm" will be the theme for grades K-6. There will also be a class for Preschoolers, ages 3 and 4 in room 234. Jr. High

will be meeting in room 126, High School in room 122-124, Adult Bible Study will be studying the Gospel of Mark in room 224, and Choir will meet in the Sanctuary. Please join us and bring your friends for Fall Church Family Night!

Some important dates to remember during Church Family night:

**October 5**—Flu shots will be available during the meal. (5:30-6:30 PM) Heath Kerr, Pharmacist from Dillons, will be available to give a flu shot. The cost is \$40 or free for Medicare patients. Medicare cards will need to be seen at the time of service. Please bring cash.

**November 9**—Youth Group Turkey Dinner.

# October 2016

| Sun   | Mon   | Tue   | Wed   | Thu   | Fri   | Sat   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|   |   |   |   |   |   | 1   |
| 2<br>Casa Betania Service<br>4:00 PM<br><br>YG Bible Study<br>6:06 PM   | 3   | 4   | 5<br>CFN meal 5:30 PM<br>Bible Study 6:45 PM<br>YG 6:45 PM<br>Choir 6:45 PM<br>Worship Band<br>8:15 PM  | 6<br>FH reserved<br>10 :00 AM<br><br>Nurture 7:00 PM            | 7   | 8<br>FH and Kitchen<br>reserved 11-5 PM                             |
| 9<br>Casa Betania Service<br>4:00 PM<br><br>FIRST potluck-noon<br><br>Book of JEBB concert<br>7:00 PM-Sanctuary | 10  | 11  | 12<br>CFN meal 5:30 PM<br>Bible Study 6:45 PM<br>YG 6:45 PM<br>Choir 6:45 PM                            | 13<br>Church Board<br>7:00 PM<br><br>FH and Kitchen<br>reserved | 14<br>FH and kitchen<br>reserved<br><br>IBA dinner<br>6:30 PM | 15<br>Men's Grubfast<br>8:00 AM<br><br>FH and Sanctuary<br>reserved |
| 16<br>Casa Betania Service<br>4:00 PM<br><br>YG Bible Study<br>6:06 PM  | 17<br>Property-7:00 PM                          | 18<br>Women's Fellowship-<br>FH-9:30 AM<br><br>Caregiving-7:00 PM | 19<br>CFN meal 5:30 PM<br>Bible Study 6:45 PM<br>YG 6:45 PM<br>Choir 6:45 PM<br>Worship Band<br>8:15 PM | 20  | 21  | 22<br>Breakfast-FH<br>8:00 AM<br><br>Kansas Food Bank<br>9:30 AM    |
| 23<br>Casa Betania<br>Service<br>4:00 PM<br><br>30<br>Casa Betania Service<br>4:00 PM                           | 24<br>Casa Betania Service<br>4:00 PM<br><br>31 | 25  | 26<br>CFN meal 5:30 PM<br>Bible Study 6:45 PM<br>YG 6:45 PM<br>Choir 6:45 PM                            | 27  | 28<br>FH reserved   | 29<br>Women's Fellowship<br>Brunch<br>9:00-10:30 AM-FH              |

All events must be scheduled in the Church Office and cannot be schedule more than six months in advance.  
 \*Church Family Night. Meal starts at 5:30 PM. All other activities start at 6:45 PM.

## Church Board Report

The Church Board met on September 8, 2016. Jordan Miller led devotions using the group devotions from the Youth Retreat from Luke 10 about Mary and Martha and led an opening prayer.

Board members were asked to send their 2017 budget proposals to Dewayne Pauls so the budget can be presented for approval at the October Board meeting and then at the November congregational meeting.

The Board moved to the Fellowship Hall to read/post events on the Mission/Vision time line. Joel encouraged reflection and posting more events on the time line and encouraged board members to support others in identifying the shaping events from the past. It was reported that some people in the congregation have expressed concern about the hard things posted on the time line and that the last vision process was 19 years ago.

Joel shared the next phases of the Vision and Mission process. Phase 2 will focus on today and will be from September 11-25 and phase 3 will focus on tomorrow and be from September 25-October 13. The Church Board will gather between Phase 2 and 3 for more processing in preparation for Phase 3. The Board discussed various ways to allow feedback from church membership once vision and mission statements have

been formulated. There was a strong desire that those who wish to offer input into the statement have an opportunity to do so. It was decided to provide opportunities for this during Wednesday Church Family Nights. The remaining meetings for the mission/vision process were presented:

October 9: table conversations/sharing about vision for the future.

October 13: Church Board processing.

October 23: Church Board finalize statements.

October 30: Present statements to the congregation.

November 13: Submit statements for affirmation at fall Congregational meeting.

The Fall Congregational Meeting was set for November 13.

Anita highlighted that since last November there have been a number of very big events that affect us, some good and some very hard, and there is some weariness in the church as well as in leadership in relation to that. She encourages us to persist in prayer for the congregation as we continue to support one another. Kay reported the first choir rehearsal was Sep-

tember 7<sup>th</sup> and that it was good. The treasurer reported the August giving was \$4789.43 behind expenses and giving for the year is \$20,751.63 behind expenses. Also, church financial information has been moved to the main computer server at the church where it gets backed up each day. Stewardship reported the organ fund is \$13,000 short and the stained glass windows fund is \$20,000 short. They are optimistic that church members will continue to support these funds. Property Committee reported the dishwasher needs replacement soon. The frames for the stained glass windows are being made for the seven windows that have been funded. Nurture reported children's Sunday School classes will not meet on Christmas Day, which falls on a Sunday. The Board approved the donation of a Vernon Rickman Pieta painting from Dave and Elena Wiebe.

Kay led the Board in closing prayer.

Brian Kennell,  
Interim Church Board Chair





**THE**  
**Book**  
**OF**  
**JEBB**

**Sunday, October 9, 2016  
7:00 PM**

**First Mennonite Church  
429 East 1st Street  
Newton, KS**

Showcasing strong vocals, blazing solos and tight harmonies, the Book of JEBB has been entertaining and astounding audiences since 2007. Come hear bluegrass, gospel and folk music played with taste and skill by Bethany

Amstutz Schrag, Ben Regier,  
Eric Schrag and Tim Regier.

An offering will be taken for the  
First Mennonite Church  
Musical Instrument Fund

## FMC Connections

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



### **Donovan and Helen Bachman 65th wedding anniversary**

Don and Helen Bachman were married on October 9, 1951. They and their children want to celebrate and thank God for the years they had together.



Celebrating 65 years of Bachman wedded bliss!!



Dear First Mennonite Congregation,

Thank you so much for your contribution to our Service Adventure unit! It is greatly appreciated by all of us. Please keep our unit in your prayers throughout this year.

Susannah Epp, Jenessa, Hannah, Caleb, Niklas, and Valerie