



FIRST  
MENNONITE  
CHURCH,  
NEWTON

**Our Mission is to glorify God:**

**OUR VISION:** Together in Christ: rooted deeply, reaching widely, loving well

**OUR MISSION:** With Jesus as our center, we are called to be:

- Faith-Focused—Growing spiritually, anchored in God's love and faithfulness
- Mission-Minded—Sharing hope and grace through Spirit-inspired, passion-driven faith in action
- Community-Connected—Worshiping together, welcoming, accepting, encouraging, and inviting all to follow Christ

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# FMC CONNECTIONS

Volume 28, Issue 7

July/August 2018

## REFLECTIONS ON CELEBRATIONS BY DEWAYNE PAULS



Here are some of my personal reflections on

what FMC celebrations have done for me and hopefully for the church as well. Some of our church celebrations were at times when our church was going through difficult times and we needed reminding of God's many blessings. Many of the celebrations were closed with a communion service. The celebrations could not have been accomplished without the help of many of you. It is amazing how many people have been a part of the hours of planning it takes to have a celebration.



Our first celebration was in 1990

with the theme of Celebrate God's Blessings. We learned to know each other by bringing tools of our trade to use as centerpieces. The theme for the Saturday evening meal which was served by the Faith Mennonite Church was

"Many Gifts—Same Spirit." Sunday morning's theme was "God's People are our People" and the evening theme was "We are God's Family." The Sunday evening meal was served by Hope Mennonite Church.



In 1991 the celebration was a reunion of the New Directions which had been a singing group directed first by Vyron Schmidt and later by Roger Smith, both of who had been youth directors of FMC.

The Hobby Fair was in 1992 during the time we were working with outreach through the LIFE (Living in Faithful Evangelism) program. Many people filled the basement rooms with their hobbies.

"Praise Events" was held in 1993 with a large tent in the east parking lot of the church. The tent was filled to overflowing.



Verney Unruh retired in 1998. The church celebrated his retirement.

In 2000 we celebrated with "Blessing and Beginnings."



Fun Fest was held in 2002. The community was invited to share in this event with inflatable rides and games set up in the west parking lot. Over 900 persons attended the event on Saturday despite the 100 degree temperature. Numerous thank you cards were received from community persons attending.



The 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the church was celebrated in 2003. A bus ride with narration was provided to various historical areas around Newton that had been instrumental in starting FMC. Historical skits were given. The worship service gave praise to God for all the blessings given to the church.

In 2016 and 2017 several mini-celebrations were held. The first was celebrating the completion of the Nebraska house. The evening celebration was held at Son Wray Ranch. Another celebration was in the form of a service project to the Wichita Food

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# VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2018

Together In Christ

“How good and pleasant it is when God’s people live together in unity.”  
Ps. 133:1

Vacation Bible School at First Mennonite Church is always a whirlwind of activity, and this year was no exception!



On Friday evening the children, their families, friends, and church members enjoyed hot dogs, hamburgers, watermelon and fellowship in the church parking lot. Shortly after the meal was finished, many chose to head to the city pool for an evening of free swimming. It was a wonderful way to cool off on a hot summer day.

On Saturday the children were led through a day of Bible stories, crafts, and activities centered on the theme, “Together in Christ,” the key message of our church logo. Singing songs related to the theme started the day off right, as well as memory work and an opportunity to learn about how the logo was created. The children learned that perseverance is an important attribute; much trial and error went into completing a logo that represented our church well. Each participant tie-dyed a white t-shirt which had the church logo printed on the front.



The first group of stations addressed the topic of being “rooted deeply” in Christ. The Parable of the Seed and the Sower was told using examples of the various soils in clay pots. The children planted flowers to beautify the church as well as their own seeds. They created their own “dirt cup” snacks complete with crushed cookies and pudding dirt and gummy worms.



Next, the children learned about various examples of what it means to “love well.” The poor traveling victim in the Good Samaritan story visited VBS and shared how blessed he was when someone finally stopped to help him. They were encouraged to think about ways to show love to those around them. The modern-day story, *Enemy Pie*, was also read and the children wrote thank-you notes to some of the ladies from Casa Batania who were kind enough to prepare and serve a delicious lunch.

“Reaching widely” is also a part of living together in Christ. The

VBS kids discussed what that would look like in their schools, neighborhoods, state, country and the world. They created welcome hats after hearing the story, *Mr. Brown’s Fantastic Hat*, and put together MCC Hygiene Kits.

As if the day wasn’t eventful enough, it ended with time for ice pops, jumping in the bounce house and water games on the front lawn. In addition to the many activities taking place at VBS, the children created original leaves to be included on a banner representing the logo. The banner will be shared with the congregation later this summer.

Once again, we acknowledge it would not have been possible without those who volunteered to help out with VBS. Thanks is extended to those who donated items, planned lessons and activities, helped supervise children, prepared and served the Friday evening cook-out and Saturday lunch, and who upheld Vacation Bible School in prayer.



# JULY 2018

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

1 Casa Betania Service 4PM FH reserved 9-10:30AM	2 Rm 225 reserved 6:15 PM Prayer Meeting 6:30 PM Ladies Exercise-FH 7PM	3 Rm 224-225 reserved 5:30PM	4 Church Office closed	5 Rm 225 reserved 5:30PM Ladies Exercise-FH 7PM	6	7
8 Casa Betania Service 4PM FH reserved 9-10:30AM	9 Rm 225 reserved 6:15 PM Prayer Meeting 6:30 PM Ladies Exercise-FH 7PM	10 Rm 224-225 reserved 5:30PM	11	12 Rm 225 reserved 5:30PM Ladies Exercise-FH 7PM Church Board 7PM	13	14

**—————YOUTH GROUP MISSION TRIP—————**

15 Casa Betania Service 4PM FH reserved 9-10:30AM	16 Rm 225 reserved 6:15 PM Prayer Meeting 6:30 PM Ladies Exercise-FH 7PM Property Comm. 7PM	17 Rm 224-225 reserved 5:30PM Caregiving Comm. 7PM Prayer Room 7PM reserved	18 Worship Comm. 12Noon	19 Rm 225 reserved 5:30PM Ladies Exercise-FH 7PM	20	21
22 Casa Betania Service 4PM FH reserved 9-10:30AM	23 Rm 225 reserved 6:15 PM Prayer Meeting 6:30 PM Ladies Exercise-FH 7PM	24 Rm 224-225 reserved 5:30PM	25	26 Rm 225 reserved 5:30PM Ladies Exercise-FH 7PM	27	28 FH/Kitchen reserved 12-6PM
29 Casa Betania Service 4PM FH reserved 9-10:30AM	30 Rm 225 reserved 6:15 PM Prayer Meeting 6:30 PM Ladies Exercise-FH 7PM	31 Rm 224-225 reserved 5:30PM				

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY—JULY

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

Clay Nye—7/14	Myrna Grochowsky—7/15
Rhonda Brown—7/16	Randall Goering—7/16
Wendy Funk Schrag—7/16	Cora Voran—7/16
Evelyn Smith—7/17	Michael Garcia—7/18
Evelyn Pankratz—7/18	Nancy Entz—7/21
Willis Harder—7/25	Jackson Hiebert—7/29
Larry Entz—7/30	Pat Litsey—7/31
Dana Neff—7/31	

Paige Weaver—7/2  
Nancy Pauls—7/3  
Ray Franz—7/7  
Kacie Schmidt—7/7  
Kaven Denno—7/8  
Rebecca Epp—7/8  
Stephanie Brown—7/9  
Donnie Kingsley—7/9  
Janet Regier—7/10  
Steven Voth—7/11  
Delora Decker—7/12  
Paul Buller—7/13

Remember to pray for each other!

## HAPPY ANNIVERSARY—JULY

Chuck & Bev Regier—7/2  
Brody & Haleigh Machmer—7/2  
Ken & Neva Frey—7/6  
Ryan & Angela Nye—7/11  
John & Jan Sommer—7/12  
Randy & Lynnette Doty—7/14  
Marvin & Carol Gerbrand—7/14  
Nathan & Marissa Murphy—7/26  
Ken & Amy Regier—7/30



Bank. In March we celebrated our diversity of talents with music and sharing of

our hobbies and crafts. An August Sunday was spent with a Children's Day celebration. Youth participated in the morning worship. In the afternoon there were games for the children and the evening was spent with hay rack rides and a cookout at the Don Horst farm.

Our most recent celebration was at Camp Mennoscah. The following are some reflections of persons who attended.

"I have often wished that our church would have such a weekend retreat at the camp. This weekend was truly such a time of celebration for me. To see so many people from our congregation come together for Saturday and Sunday was very special."

"The day was a large success, memorable and a gift to our congrega-

tion in the midst of other challenges." "I think the weekend came at such an important time for our congregation. We have been through a lot, and the time at Camp Mennoscah was a respite from it all—a time of enjoying each other and God's creation and the gift of faith with the baptisms."

"To worship the Lord at a place where so many of our youth have found their faith in the Lord was such a blessing for me. To see the range of age from [the littlest ones] to a few of the ones from the oldest Sunday School class all enjoying God's great outdoors was pretty fantastic."

"Worshiping outdoors has a whole different atmosphere. It was a very enjoyable and relaxing time and conversation comes easily."

"It was our first time at Camp Mennoscah and our first time camping as a family! The campground was amazing. Our kids' favorite part was the river and the pool, but they also really loved the big campfire and all the fun activities with their friends. I appreciated

the really delicious and thoughtfully prepared meals. The homemade pies were simply amazing."

"How are we going to top this one!"

Many enjoyed being able to visit with persons whom they don't get to visit with very often.

The baptism and worship was listed as a highlight. Being a part of the baptism at the river together as a church family was special.

"Amid conflict whether great or small, do not be discouraged, God is over all. Count your many blessings, name them one by one, and it will surprise you what the Lord has done."--from the song "Count Your Blessings."

God has truly been and continues to be good to us at FMC.



# AUGUST 2018

Mon

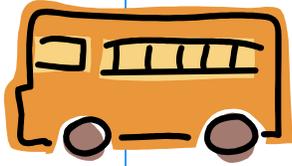
Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat



2  
Sanctuary reserved 8:30AM  
Rm 225 reserved 5:30PM  
Ladies Exercise-FH 7PM

5  
Casa Betania Service 4PM  
FH reserved 9-10:30AM

6  
Rm 225 reserved 6:15 PM  
Ladies Exercise-FH 7PM

7  
Rm 224-225 reserved 5:30PM

8  
Worship Comm. 7PM

9  
Rm 225 reserved 5:30PM  
Ladies Exercise-FH 7PM  
Church Board 7PM

10

11

12  
Casa Betania Service 4PM  
FH reserved 9-10:30AM

13  
Rm 225 reserved 6:15 PM  
Ladies Exercise-FH 7PM

14  
Rm 224-225 reserved 5:30PM

15

16  
Rm 225 reserved 5:30PM  
Ladies Exercise-FH 7PM

17

18

19  
Casa Betania Service 4PM

20  
Rm 225 reserved 6:15 PM  
Ladies Exercise-FH 7PM  
Property Comm. 7PM

21  
Rm 224-225 reserved 5:30PM  
Caregiving Comm. 7PM

22

23  
Rm 225 reserved 5:30PM  
Ladies Exercise-FH 7PM

24

25

26  
Casa Betania Service 4PM  
Worship in the Park  
No Sunday School

27  
Rm 225 reserved 6:15 PM  
Ladies Exercise-FH 7PM

28  
Rm 224-225 reserved 5:30PM

29

30  
Rm 225 reserved 5:30PM  
Ladies Exercise-FH 7PM

31



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

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY—AUGUST

Remember to pray for each other!

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

Emma Menninga—8/1  
Penny Dorado—8/2  
Fern Koehn—8/5  
Ted Krehbiel—8/5  
Kathleen Neff—8/5  
Joey Menninga—8/6  
Rod Wedel—8/6  
Mike Combs—8/7  
Hannah Gaertner—8/7  
Joanna Epp—8/12

Keith Knopp—8/14  
Bertha Steinle—8/15  
Kent Erb—8/16  
Phil Gaertner—8/16  
Anne Groves—8/16  
Ryan Weaver—8/18  
Rob Thieszen—8/19  
Carol Goering—8/20  
Derek Entz—8/22  
Ethel Wedel—8/22  
Kathy Wiens—8/23  
Louise Janzen—8/24

Bethanie Wedel—8/24  
Tonessa Driskill—8/25  
LaWanda Wiens—8/25  
Pat Denno—8/26  
Dwight Claassen—8/27  
Brent Voran—8/27  
Isaac Entz—8/28  
Alyssa Becker—8/29  
Harry Ens—8/29  
Rick Ortman—8/30  
Henry Nickel—8/31



## HAPPY ANNIVERSARY—AUGUST

Larry and Carol Entz—8/5  
Dwight & Connie Claassen—8/7  
Barry and Darlene Bontrager—8/8  
Alan & Joan Entz—8/8  
Rod & Marsha Schmidt—8/11  
Greg & Melody Bontrager—8/12  
Tim & Michelle Regier—8/13  
Woody & Nora Miller—8/15  
Steven & Wynette Voth—8/15  
Bryan & Anita Kehr—8/16

Brent & Cora Voran—8/17  
Dana & Kathleen Neff—8/18  
Eric & Lori Shelly—8/18  
Mark and Joyce Pankratz—8/19  
Henry & Marilyn Nickel—8/21  
Dennis & Diane Flickner—8/23  
Greg & Laura Myers—8/24  
Justin and Angela Black—8/26  
Ronald & Shirley Dietzel—8/29



## QUICK UPDATE FROM SHARON HARDER

Sharon Harder  
2840 Damascus Rd  
Hebron, KY 41048

Please disregard all telephone numbers except Cell: 316-217-3872.

Damascus?...Hebron?...plus you pass by Bethlehem Lane and that's all on Mars Hill (neighborhood). No Kidding!!! No, it is not Christian or "Over 55" housing. With those names I'll have to be spiritual!!

My brother-in-law built this rental home in the early 1990's. I am filled with gratitude at how God has provided and continues to do so. The help I have received in different ways during this transition is nearly overwhelming.

These weeks are busy: cleaning, lots of yard work, house repairs, painting, getting to know the area through furniture shopping and visiting area churches, time with three different visitors, and even get-

ting out in the abundant woods in this area.

Future ministry is still a question. God has reminded me several times that I need to keep my mind off my own inadequacies, that it will be His leading and only His power and presence that can accomplish it.

Thanks for your prayers for me during this time.

## Outreach: Showing God's Love to People Outside Our Church Walls



Did you know that FMC has helped to set up 3 apartments for refugees arriving in Wichita this year?

As a result of connections that were made after FMC's Adult Sunday School class on Issues of Immigration in the US in January 2017, we were asked by St. Francis Migration Ministries to set up two apartments for refugees arriving from Democratic Republic of the Congo on the evening of January 23, 2018. One apartment was to be set up for a family of 3, and the other apartment was to be set up for a single man. Thirteen individuals from our congregation (in an informal group called the Refugee Interest Group) met up in Wichita and moved couches, dressers and various household items. We arranged rooms, made beds, washed all the newly donated dishes, set up the kitchen and even got a crock pot going. (The family of three was arriving that very night!)



Typically, the Migration Ministry in Wichita is only given a

few days' notice before a family arrives. They rely on volunteers like us to come with only a few days' notice to set up. It took us almost 4 hours, but was a thrilling experience. Afterwards, several of us had the amazing and heart-warming opportunity to greet the family at the airport. It was an experience we'll never forget!

On June 6, 2018 we were once again asked to help set up an apartment for a refugee who would be arriving in Wichita only days later. Once again, it was a young man from the Congo (age 22). Can you imagine moving to a completely new place, new culture at the age of 22? Never mind the trauma he's most certainly already endured in his homeland. Luckily, the apartment complex we moved him into was the same one with the family of 3 in January. And we were told that there are at least 10 other families in this large complex that arrived



here from the Congo as refugees within the last year. So there will be a community for him of people who can wholeheartedly relate. A Congolese family next door already offered to make him his first meal on the evening that he was to arrive.

We loaded up a couple of trucks with furniture from St. Matthews' Episcopal Church, picked up totes of toiletries and household staples like toilet paper, hand towels, clean-



ers, dish soap, and toothbrushes from St. Francis Migration Ministries head office, and moved the items up 3 flights of stairs to the apartment (with help from the neighbors), set it all up and made it feel welcoming for the following hour or two. It was challenging, exciting, bonding and outreaching. Since the SS class on Immigration



and our first apartment set-up, we have had several people from our congregation contact St. Francis Migration Ministries to donate household items and lightly-used furniture. Thank you! Please let any member of the Outreach Commission know if you are ever interested in helping with an apartment set-up or donating an item. You can also email [kendra.alison606@gmail.com](mailto:kendra.alison606@gmail.com) if you have lightly-used furniture that you would like to donate.

Thank you to all of you who encourage, pray, help, donate and show God's love to immigrants and refugees in our wider community!

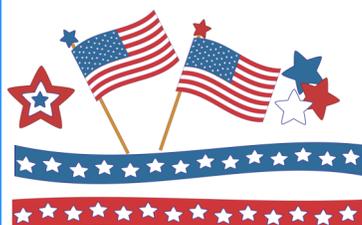
~FMC Outreach Commission



## FMC Connections

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

## July/August 2018



### Caregiving Corner

#### If you haven't been to First Mennonite Church lately....

Worship in the Park is going to be a little different this year. The Caregiving and Membership Commission has spent time praying for each person in the Church Directory and is now putting faith into action by sending a special invitation to everyone who hasn't been to a First Mennonite Church event lately. Now is a better time than ever to come back and

see what you've been missing!

The Worship in the Park joint service with Casa Betania will include special music as well as all the fun, food, and fellowship you could want! Current FMC regular attenders are invited to bring plenty of extra food to share. Make sure to bring your friends as well, especially those who haven't been around First Mennonite in awhile! We look forward to welcoming you to Worship in the Park this August 26, 10:30 AM at Athletic

Park in Newton, 700 W 1st Street.

"Together in Christ: Rooted Deeply, Reaching Widely, Loving Well"

