
HOPE HEADLINES

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Randy's Ramblings

Earlier this month we followed through on plans we made last summer – we donated Melissa's wheelchair to a non-profit agency that helps fit and repair wheelchairs.

Our daughter, Melissa, used a wheelchair for long distance mobility ever since she was about 3 years old. She outgrew the stroller and was getting too heavy to carry, so we got a hot pink wheelchair. She was not able to control her wheelchair, we simply used it to move her from one place to another. She eventually learned to use her legs to walk, but never had any sense of balance or make a cognitive connection between her feet moving and where her eyes wanted to go, so the wheelchair was always used when we went more than a few hundred feet. In many ways, it became an extension of her body.

There were Halloween costumes that incorporated her chair. There was a star we attached to her chair for Christmas programs. There were large umbrellas that allowed both the person pushing and Melissa to stay dry in the rain. There was the bag hanging on the back of it to carry a change of clothing and whatever else she would need.

She outgrew that first chair, so we upgraded and changed color to purple. Then we had to change again. Eventually she had one where she lived that she used for most of her daily activities. We kept her old one for use at our home. That chair, her old one, was the one we used when we took her to church and to family events. After her death, we moved it to our basement.

We knew where we wanted to donate it. Earlier this month, we decided it was time, so we brought it upstairs and loaded it into the van.

I should have known what would happen to me as I did so, but I found myself sobbing uncontrollably. Pushing that chair brought back a physical connection with Melissa that has been missing for many months, now.

It is one of the potholes in the road of life that I could have foreseen, but hadn't fully prepared myself for. As I processed what happened to me, I realized I am not the only one living in grief, and that there are other events and things and dates on the calendar that stir up

memories. Some bring smiles, some bring laughter, and some bring tears.

Those tears are in my mind as I read the Easter story this year. It helps me imagine the pain, the sorrow, the loss that the women felt as they approached the tomb. I don't know what they expected to find, but I can certainly imagine the sorrow they felt. I know how hard it is to see when there are tears in your eyes, for example. Those tears help explain some of their confusion when they see the stone rolled away from the tomb. It helps explain how Mary, who is so focused on what she is not seeing in the tomb, that she doesn't even recognize the voice of Jesus in the Garden. At least not until he calls her name.

I am more anxious to celebrate Easter this year than I have been in many years. Mostly, I am anxious to hear the story proclaimed so I can remember the promise that is mine – and yours – that not even death can separate us from the love of God.

There will be more tears, I am sure. And I am not afraid or ashamed of them. I am simply learning how to place them within the context of my love for Melissa and God's love for me. And that is what I will be celebrating on Easter Sunday!



Services at Hope

April 2 Palm Sunday; John Martin speaker

John Martin is United Methodist pastor who retired in 2020, was part of a clergy support group with Randy before they both retired. Two of the churches John served in Wichita include West Heights UMC and College Hill UMC.

April 6 Maundy Thursday meal & service 6:30 pm

April 9 Easter & Easter Feast, Shana Green speaker

Pastor Shana Chivon Green, a licensed and ordained Christian minister, labors with love at the intersections of ministry, trauma-informed community care, and creating thriving, inclusive, divine spaces. As a Black, Queer Mennonite, Shana takes seriously her role as a Pastor and Advocate and labors to educate and edify others on how to embrace the inclusivity of our God. Shana is also a writer, educator, doula, and a

voracious reader that advocates for non-linear approaches to wholeness that feature and reference a loving, affirming Creator.

They believe that practicing liberative living for themselves and those in their community of care means encouraging us all to ally into radical truth telling, radical rest, radical joy, and radical wellness.

Rev Shana Chivon has one teenage son and enjoys the relationship she shares with her wife, Ingrid.



Kansas MCC Relief Sale 2023

April 14 & 15

Kansas State Fairgrounds, Hutchinson

Donation Opportunities:

- Bake Sale Items
 - Cinnamon rolls
 - Angel food cake
 - Poppyseed roll
 - Peppernuts (4 cups to a bag)
 - Plain or flavored noodles
 - Other baked items
- Craft items
- Quilters' Corner items
- General auction items; Silent auction items; Children's auction items
- Plants
- My Coins Count coins and paper money (April 2 last Sunday)
- Zwieback-need four more dozen (bags on table next to mailboxes)
- All pie tins have been taken

Volunteer Opportunities:

- T-Shirt Booth
- Craft booth
- General auction
- Plants and Things booth
- Verenike booths—frying, selling, etc.
- New Year's cookie booths—frying, packaging, selling

Sign up on Relief Sale website:

www.kansas.mccsale.org/volunteer

Go to the Sale website to see the Quilt gallery and pictures of General Auction items and much more information about the Sale.

New and Returning to the Sale:

Feeding the multitude payment will be by donation.

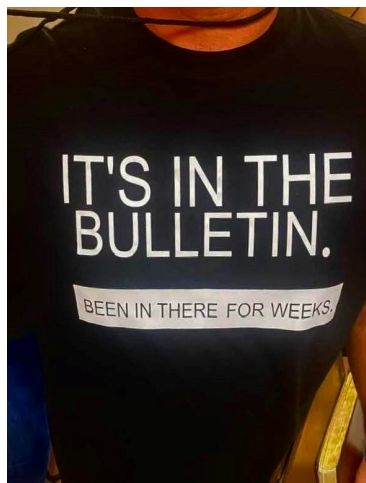
Fresh baked cookies booth is back.

Friday evening music program is back.



All Western District Conference women are invited to join a virtual event sponsored by Western District Women in Mission on Tuesday, April 25. Jenny Gehman, spiritual director, retreat speaker, and writer, will present on "Holy Host: The Hospitality of God." Join us in person or virtually. Our in-person gathering will be at First Mennonite Church in Newton, Kansas, beginning with a salad potluck at 6 p.m. followed by Jenny joining virtually from Pennsylvania at 6:45 p.m.

There is no cost to this event, but please register by April 23 by emailing westerndistrictwomen@gmail.com so you can receive a Zoom link if joining virtually. Please email your RSVP if attending in person and bring a salad to share. Church groups can consider gathering together to watch the Zoom. For more information, contact Wendy Schrag at 316-841-5245.



From the church office
.... It's all in fun... with some truth to it as well!



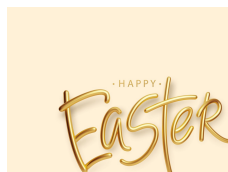
April Reminders

April 2-John Martin
Worship-Renetta
Scripture-Lee
Pianist-Ruthie
Song-Lowell
Tech-Scott
Host-TBD

April 6-Maundy Thursday @ 6:30

April 9-Shana Green
Worship-Renetta
Scripture-Donna B.
Pianist-Vicki
Song-Trae
Tech-Michelle J.
Host-TBD

April 16
Worship-TBD
Scripture-Margaret
Pianist-Amy
Song-Galen
Tech-Randy P.
Host-TBD



April 23
Worship-TBD
Scripture-Wendy
Pianist-Cynthia
Song-Galen
Tech- Mike V.
Host-TBD

April 30
Worship-TBD
Scripture-TBD
Pianist-Laurie
Song-Lowell
Tech-Galen
Host-TBD

Greeters
April 2-Jan W.; Wendy
April 9-Myron & Lori
April 16-Travis & Charity
April 23-Jerold & Donna
April 30-Jared

Sanctuary Prep
April 2-Lori M.
April 9-Russ
April 16-Ruthie
April 23-Joanna
April 30-Heidi

Nursery
April 2-Clinton & Katie
April 9-Jordon & Emily
April 16-Val & Mike
April 23-Donna H.; Lori R.
April 30-Annette & Eldon

S.S. Helpers
April 2-Cindy
April 9-Easter, NO S.S.
April 16-Alison
April 23-Jared
April 30-Renetta

S.S. Superintendent
April 2-Justin
April 9-Easter, NO S.S.
April 16-Delaine
April 23-Margaret
April 30-Laurie

Coffee
April 2-Galen & Cindy
April 9-Easter-NO COFFEE
April 16-Randy & Joanna
April 23-Bob & Delaine
April 30-Mike & Kim

Mowers...for week of
April 2-Jerold
April 9-Randy P.
April 16-Randy G.
April 23-Travis
April 30-Grant

