
HOPE HEADLINES

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Randy's Ramblings

I am SO glad to be back with you as we begin another season together.

That is not to say I didn't enjoy being away. We had a great time. Our time included all

of what we had hoped with a little extra, as well. We were able to hit a couple of Presidential Libraries (one of my "bucket list" items). We made a few personal, spiritual pilgrimage stops as well. We worshiped in the space where I made my first public profession of faith, a church that has changed as much as I have since that date! We worshiped in the space where I gave my first sermon, a church that has also changed much since I was a member there. We visited the oak tree I planted as an acorn at the foot of the parsonage driveway; it was great to be reminded of how much I have grown in my faith since I planted it 30+ years ago. We also spent significant time at the homes of family members who live in Washington: with my sister and my brother and our granddaughter. And it was refreshing to put my feet in the salt water and smell the salt air.

Our trip took us into 11 different states, but most of our time was spent along the coast of California, Oregon, and Washington. We also ventured into British Columbia one afternoon to watch the international fireworks competition. I don't know that I can list all the highlights because we had such a good time in so many different places. We made advance reservations for four different tours, one of which we changed as the vacation unfolded; but most of the itinerary was flexible. We intentionally kept an open agenda, limiting our time in the car to less than 4 hours a day as much as possible, stopping to see whatever piqued our interest and staying as long as we wanted. We stopped often and saw things we didn't know were there to see! It was unlike any other vacation I've ever taken.

But, in the end, we were ready to be home. That became ever clearer as our hearts and our clocks shifted from Pacific Time to Mountain Time to Central Time. We even skipped invitations we received at the end of our trip, each of which would have added no more than a day apiece: to visit my brother in Denver, to see our daughter who was camping not far off the road we were traveling, and to spend more time with a high school classmate of

Ronda's who joined us for dinner the last night we were on the road.

As Dorothy reminds us in the Wizard of Oz, there's no place like home. It makes me wonder if that is the feeling Jesus had when he was at home in Capernaum (Mk. 2:1). But that is grist for another rambling moment at a later date.

Thank you to the Deacons who stepped up to provide additional care. Thank you to Heidi K Greenwood Doell for preaching and to the Worship Commission for making sure things ran smoothly. Thank you to the Vision Council for allowing me to "push the envelope" of what is typically expected of Interim Ministers!

I don't know how much longer we will be walking this journey together, but I'm glad to be back.



Greetings from Camp Mennoscah!

It has been an amazing year so far! With the help of program volunteers, support volunteers and the Summer Staff we welcomed 383 campers back to share faith & fun for eight weeks of youth camp programming at Camp Mennoscah. Many lives were influenced by our 155 dedicated volunteers and staff, most of who come from supporting churches. We are thankful and blessed by the number of people willing to share in Camp Mennoscah's summer programming! The people listed below are those from your congregation who volunteered this summer. Some volunteers asked not to be acknowledged, others left the church information blank, and we may have missed a few. Someone's name has likely been misspelled, too. For any and all omissions and errors, we humbly apologize. **Elisha Miller, Karin Koch, Greg Shelly-Unruh.**

Additional people from your church have likely volunteered at work days and retreats. All volunteers are valuable to Camp Mennoscah's ministry as mentors and living examples of a Christian life. Please help acknowledge them in some way. Our camp would be empty without their generosity. We will look to see you next summer!

May your ministry be filled with joy and laughter, whatever shape they fill! With peace, The Camp Mennoscah Staff

SAVE THE DATE: OCTOBER 28-29, 2023

Hope Mennonite Church Retreat at Camp Mennoscah

Annually our entire Hope Church community gathers at Camp Mennoscah and that date is soon approaching. We will begin gathering at 4:00 pm. on Saturday, October 28 at the Retreat Center. First come, first served to choose your favorite room! Enjoy a walk outside and some visiting time prior to dinner at 6:00 pm. Evening activities are open to spontaneity, then campfire at 9:00. Lights out at ????? Sunday morning worship on the 29th will be at 10:00 am, followed by brunch.

You are welcome to participate for any part or all of the weekend. Registration forms will be coming. Our goal is to make the weekend affordable and enriching for all.

Care and Nurture Commission: Annette Chlumsky, Carol Preheim, Lori Regier, Jan Worley



How the gift of school supplies can change a life.

What does school look like without school supplies? For lots of us shopping for notebooks, pencils and erasers can be just as strong a memory of school as sitting at our classroom desks. But for many children around the world, getting those supplies is difficult or outright impossible, whether due to conflict, disaster or affordability. That's why MCC created school kits.

MCC's school kits offer children who don't have access to basic school supplies their educational essentials: pencils, pens, an eraser, a pencil sharpener, ruler, colored pencils and four spiral-bound notebooks. Last year, MCC sent out nearly 90,000 school kits to children on five continents, but one of the countries that received a lot was South Sudan.

Students at Rumbek Comboni Primary School in Rumbek, South Sudan, have incredibly limited access to basic school supplies. Even if they were able to find all the items in a school kit at the local market, they could easily cost more than 5,000 South Sudanese Pounds (around \$8:30 U.S.) — an entire month's wages — for the items in a single kit.

Mary Aniong Achien, 16, is a student at Comboni. She's in her eighth and final year of primary school and wants to be a doctor when she graduates. She's received a school kit both of the last two years at Comboni and says it's made a huge difference for her as a student.

"How do you take notes without notebooks? I did not

understand well in class before I had them, but now I can take notes in all my classes," says Achien. "And the bag makes everything easy to carry around — otherwise we just leave our materials on the ground."

Achien also noted that she's very aware of how difficult it would be for her parents to buy her supplies like these. "We girls — our mothers are not educated, so it is very difficult for them to get enough money. But with the school kit, my parents can buy food instead of books. May God bless the people who gave us these books."

John Gai Mabor, 17, is also a student at Comboni. He's in year seven and says he doesn't think his grades would be as good as they are without the school kit. "The school kit is very important to me. They allow me to take my notes better," says Gabor. "You cannot be [effective] in the class without the supplies."

Of the 2,000 students that attend years one to eight at Comboni, most will receive one school kit each year. Principal Sister Lydia Assenga says it's very clear what impact the school kits have on the students.

"When I arrived here in 2019, I could go into the classes and see no students writing at all. Now, the students with the school kits are the ones who write. When parents want to send their children here, we can assure them their children will write and that is a big incentive," says Assenga. "God has given our school a special gift."
By Jason Dueck June 12, 2023



Register now for the fall 2023 Bluestem U semester courses.

Bluestem U is lifelong learning partnership program between Bluestem Communities, Bethel College and Hesston College for those age 55 and better. Courses are taught by former or current Bethel College or Hesston College instructors or local experts. The fall 2023 courses are:

- "Music through the ages" taught by Ken Rodgers, Tuesdays from 1 to 2:30 p.m., September 12 through October 17 at the Schowalter Villa Chapel.
- "Oops. We got here again! Communication and conflict" taught by Kevin Wilder, Thursdays from 10 to 11:30 a.m., September 14 through October 12 at Schowalter Villa's Mullet Place Theater.
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Each course is \$50. Register at bluestemu.org.



DART (Direct Action & Research Training Center)- New Justice Ministry Begins in Sedgwick County

We are excited to let you know that Hope Mennonite Church has joined a new interfaith justice ministry in Sedgwick County. Our leadership group at Hope (Brenda Glanzer Lilliston, Marcus Loganbill, Lowell Birkey, Joanna Pinkerton, Vicki Howard, Randy Pinkerton, Jarod Regehr and Wendy Wiens) has been trained along with over 150 other church members from 40+ faith communities. We are excited to spearhead a ground-breaking initiative inside our congregation to do justice with other congregations and faith groups in Sedgwick County.

Our first step is to conduct listening sessions here at Hope. Each faith community will be dedicating time specifically to share personal stories surrounding the most pressing problems facing our community. A person from the leadership team will soon be in touch with you inviting you to participate in a listening session.

This first step helps us because we cannot understand what impacts us all until we listen to one another. So, come, tell your story of “What keeps you up at night?” or “What anxieties keep you up at night worrying?” Together we’ll unleash powerful stories, discover common threads, and forge a grassroots network dedicated to fostering a healthier, more equitable community.

Future steps of the process after the listening sessions:

Notes from our meetings will be sent to the Sedgwick County Multifaith Justice organization. Their team will study the responses gathered from all participating faith communities to determine common community issues.

On November 9, major priorities gleaned from the gathered responses will be presented to the representatives of the faith communities. **Two priorities for Wichita will be selected by a representative vote.**

At that same meeting, **the group will be voting on a permanent name for our justice ministry.** Currently, the ad-hoc name for this initiative is “Sedgwick County Multifaith Justice Organization.” Each locality determines its own name. For example, in Lawrence, KS, they named their interfaith Justice Ministry Organization, “Justice Matters.”

Then, from **November through April**, the **research-to-action process** occurs. Volunteer research committees will be formed to determine viable solutions

that will resolve the problems of the selected priorities long-term, as well as identify the public officials in Wichita who have the authority to implement those solutions.

On **April 11**, a solution briefing takes place where **research findings and stories about the problem will be presented.**

The organization will hold a **large public meeting called a Nehemiah Action on May 9.** Members from all of the congregations involved (usually thousands of supporters) **gather to present the well-researched solutions to public officials.**

On June 20, a **celebration** will be held to celebrate our work and raise funds to keep our efforts going.

Doing Justice Example: Mental health

Similar organizations in Kansas have used this process to transform their communities. Here is an example from Lawrence KS and their justice ministry called, Justice Matters.

In the fall of 2014, nineteen interfaith communities known as **Justice Matters** in Lawrence, KS organized 112 small group discussions with over 1,400 people in attendance. Discussions centered around an open-ended question, “What anxieties keep you up at night worrying?”

The organization was shocked to hear the same story again and again regardless of geography, income, race, or gender: people suffering from mental illness could not find adequate treatment in Lawrence and it fell to the police to handle people in crisis.

They learned the system of care was in disarray – police handled 8 mental health calls/shift, the state mental hospital was under federal investigation for mismanagement, and the jail was overcrowded with people whose primary reason for arrest was lack of treatment.

A father testified how his daughter died one night in jail because of alcohol withdrawal. There was nowhere else to take her and the jail was unable to recognize the signs of withdrawal.

Justice Matters led a delegation of officials to San Antonio, Texas to witness firsthand a Mental Health Crisis Center that people could go for care or be taken to as an alternative to jail.

Over four straight years, Justice Matters organized a Nehemiah Assembly each year with a total of 5,000 people in attendance calling for a Mental Health Crisis Center in Lawrence.

Justice Matters challenged the County Commission to build a Mental Health Crisis Center like the one in San Antonio.

Commissioners agree to put the question on the ballot for the voters. A lay leader from First United Methodist Church of Lawrence, Rose Schmidt reflected at an event to celebrate the breakthrough. "People of faith kept showing up together in large numbers to bear witness to the sick who needed treatment. In the end, the community caught up to the church and together we did what was considered impossible just four years ago."

The initiative passed in November 2018 with over 70% voter approval (a historic landslide); Justice Matters attended Commissioner Meetings where construction contracts are discussed. The County broke ground on the Behavioral Health Campus in February, 202 and is ready to open and operate 24/7 in July 2023.



September reminders...

Worship

September 3

Worship-Lowell
Scripture-Barb
Pianist-Vicki
Song-TBA
Tech-Scott
Host-Lee

September 10

Worship-Lowell
Scripture-Randy P.
Pianist-Cynthia
Song-Galen
Tech-Mike V.
Host-Brenda

September 17

Worship-Lori M.?
Scripture-Chris T.
Pianist-Ruthie
Song-Trae
Tech-Randy P.
Host- Kendal/Marjie

September 24

Worship-Mike V.
Scripture-Marcus

Pianist-Laurie
Tech-Michelle J.
Host-Barb

Greeters

September 3-Margaret
September 10-Greg & Leah
September 17-Jason, Michelle J.
September 24-Bob & Delaine

Sanctuary Prep

September 3-Ruthie
September 10-Joanna
September 17-Heidi
September 24-Connie

Nursery

September 3-Justin & Tiffany
September 10-Clinton & Katie
September 17-Jordon & Emily
September 24-Val & Mike

Coffee

September 3-No Coffee
September 10-Greg & Dawn
September 17-Eldon & Annette
September 24-Marcus & Cynthia

Mowers

September 3-Randy P.
September 10-Randy G.
September 17-Travis
September 24-Grant

Memorial Garden

September 3-Marcus
September 10-Marcus
September 17-Ruthie
September 24-Ruthie

