

Service Opportunities

The Et Cetera Shop in Newton is BUSTIN' AT THE SEAMS with housewares and book donations! We have explored numerous options to process these items more quickly, but none seemed to be the solution. We are asking for the support of our supporting churches to help us process these items, and we are reducing our prices to move them more quickly. Are there youth groups, men's groups, women's groups, or any individuals who would like to help us out? Give us a call at 316-283-9461 to schedule a time to come in. Please invite your friends, family, and congregants to join in. This DOES NOT mean we will be turning donations away. We are just trying to move the stock we have as quickly as we can.

The Bethel College Service Club invites you to join them for an evening of singing and service on Friday, April 24, from 6 - 8 p.m. at the MCC building in North Newton. A meal of hotdogs and hamburgers and a concert by Bethel College's Woven and Open Road groups will take place prior to the packing of relief kits. The meal is by donation with all proceeds benefiting MCC. The Service Club has a goal of packing 500 kits for the evening.

April 2026
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The Church Corner



First Mennonite Church
427 W. 4th Street
Halstead, KS 67056
www.firstmennonitehalstead.org
Pastor Steve Wilcox

Phone: 316-835-2282
Email: office@firstmennonitehalstead.org

Sunday School: 9:15 a.m.
Worship Service: 10:30 a.m.

**The service is livestreamed on the church's Facebook page.*

"We are a community of believers who follow Jesus Christ as we receive and share God's love."

We, of First Mennonite Church, valuing the convictions of our faith, endeavor to:

- Engage our members in ministry
- Expand community outreach and
- Embrace new people in the love of Christ.

The Crusade of the Wayward Lid A Sir Menno Knight Tale

The final echoes of "Amen" had long since faded into the rafters, and the last car had pulled away. In the storage room, the air shifted. With a sound like a drawer full of silverware being shaken by an earthquake, Sir Menno Knight returned to his duty.

He adjusted his helmet, though the plume still drooped stubbornly to the front, and surveyed his kingdom with an air of anticipation. His flaking black paint shimmered in the moonlight as he stepped over a rogue hymnal. He was a guardian of the peace, a sentinel of the sanctuary, and, tonight, a seeker of the lost.

There, lying in the middle of the hallway like a discarded bubblegum wrapper, was a Tupperware lid.

It was a translucent, slightly warped square with a cracked corner, likely a veteran of a hundred potlucks. Sir Menno knelt, his knees emitting a screech like a broken organ pipe.

"Fear not, Lady Translucent," he whispered into the empty hallway. "You are but half of a whole. I shall not rest until you are reunited with your kindred spirit."

He scooped up the lid, tucked it under his gauntlet, and began the long trek toward the kitchen or as he referred to it, the "Chamber of Eternal Leftovers."

He bypassed the fellowship entrance where the "Dragons" (known to the common folk as bats) lived, opting instead for the "third way" through the southeast side.

Upon entering the kitchen, Sir Menno was confronted by a terrifying sight: the Great Cabinets of Chaos.

"By the grace of the cooling rack," he muttered, "where does a square soul find its fit?"

He approached the first counter and spotted a massive industrial soup pot. With a flourish, he attempted to crown the pot with the lid. It hovered over the opening like a tiny hat on a very large head before dropping into the pot. "No," he sighed. "The vessel is too vast for such a humble cover."

Next, he found a stack of plates. He tried to press the lid onto the top plate, but it simply laid there and then fell, clattering against the stainless steel sink. He then attempted to fit the lid onto a stray coffee carafe. "A glass tower!" he exclaimed. But the lid merely sat perched at a useless angle.

He even tried to anoint a rogue crockpot with the lid, but he could tell it would never work.

Sir Menno paused, his metal chest heaving (though he technically did not need to breathe). He remembered that sometimes the bravest thing is not charging forward, but choosing the wiser path. He began opening the lower drawers, one by one.



Mission Ministry Focus Givens Family Update

The Givens family—Joseph, Rachel, Elijah and Micaiah—serve in Calais, France, with Mennonite Mission Network. They staff the Maria Skobtsova House (MSH), which offers temporary shelter to mostly refugee women and children as they migrate, primarily from the Middle East and Africa to the United Kingdom. The MSH was purchased by an individual to be used as a safe house. It has 5 bedrooms and can house up to 15 people; the Givens have their own home and do not comprise the 15 individuals in the MSH.

Most of the people who stay at the MSH speak Arabic or Farsi and are in the process of learning some English. They generally stay 3-4 months so there's a constant flow of new residents mixing with the old. Additionally, the rhetoric regarding migration is very tense and results in a lot of fear in the residents. Rachel spends a lot of her time mediating interpersonal relationships within the house.

The Givens family is currently supported by our church. They are seeing increasing support from French Mennonite groups, some of which lately included the purchase of a car to aid in transportation of the house guests and remodeling the kitchen.

A Mennonite Mission Network Peace Pilgrimage to Calais to witness the Givens' work firsthand will take place in April.

Submitted by Sandy Allen

Church FAMILY PRAYER LIST

- Pray that those who attend the events of Holy Week and the Easter weekend will be blessed and reminded of the great love Jesus has for them. Pray that any who do not have a personal relationship with Jesus will desire that change in their lives.
- Praise God for the gift of Jett James Regier, born on March 23 to Kyle and Tia Regier.
- Pray for the Discernment Team as they seek the right person to serve when needs arise.
- Pray for the upcoming church camp out weekend at the beginning of May. Pray it would be a refreshing time of fellowship and worship for those who attend.
- Pray for those organizing the Kansas Mennonite Relief Sale, that they will get the volunteers and items they need in order to conduct a successful sale.
- Pray that we will be open to the Spirit's leading in reaching the people God places in our lives.
- Pray that we all would be consistent in our own personal time with the Lord.
- Pray for any unspoken prayer requests, that each person who has a need will see God move on their behalf.

Council Meeting Minutes

from Mar. 23, 2026

- Debbie opened the meeting with prayer. Minutes were approved from February as written.
- Discernment Team: They have begun the conversation via text to find a new member for the Mission Team.
- Vision Team: No report, they will meet on March 24.
- Care Ministry: Ron reported they will serve communion on Palm Sunday.
- Hospitality Ministry: Kaitlen reported that Camp Mennoscah is planned for May 2-3. Sign ups will go out after Easter. Raquel is planning at Dutch Blitz (regular card size version) game day April 19 at 2 p.m. in Stauffer Hall. College care baskets will be delivered. Two Last Sunday Potlucks are coming up: March 29 and April 26 (followed by membership conversation). A Sunday School fellowship snack for Easter will be prepared by Steve and Raquel. April 12th is the Baby Sprinkle for Jett Regier.
- Mission Ministry: Sandy reported that Dwight will be taking back over as chair for a couple months. Four reimbursement requests for camp scholarships have been approved. Sandy met via Zoom with the Givens (in France) for an update on their mission work.
- Nurture Ministry: Debbie reported that adult Sunday School in the summer will likely be video driven sessions. They evaluated Wednesday nights and thought they went well. The church picnic is June 7 at 5 p.m. at

the Nightingales. VBS is May 26-29. We donated \$462 to the USD 440 backpacks from last quarter's Sunday School offering. This next quarter will go to MDS.

- Stewardship Ministry: David reported the budget balance at the end of February is \$6,223. He will look into which fund is used for camp scholarships. James reported the carpets were cleaned last week, and they are working with Becker Construction on an estimate for the sidewalk on west side of the church. They are looking into sources to replace some of the stained glass panels.
- Worship Ministry: They will meet on March 30.
- Pastors Report: Pastor Steve reported he is continuing to work on the Unbound series for Lent. He has also been visiting shut-ins. The Maundy Thursday and Sunrise Services are coming up.
- New & Continuing Business: A membership conversation will take place April 26 following the potluck. Steve will come up with the format for the conversation and facilitate it. The church constitution and covenant will be available for people to read. Steve will also give a history of membership/historic change of the meaning of the term "membership." Questions to be addressed include: What is the purpose of membership? What is the goal for membership? What are the ways to become a member?

Next meeting: April 27, 2026

APRIL

April Calendar

Apr. 1	7:30 p.m.	Easter Cantata practice
Apr. 2	6:00 p.m.	Maundy Thursday meal and reflection
Apr. 4	9:30 a.m.	PEO Bunny Breakfast, Stauffer Hall
Apr. 5	7:00 p.m.	Jesus! Cantata
	6:45 a.m.	Easter Sunrise Service
	9:15 a.m.	SS for children/youth only
Apr. 10-11	10:30 a.m.	Worship Service
Apr. 11	5:00 p.m.	MCC Sale
		Neighbors Taco Dinner
Apr. 12	6:00 p.m.	Jr. & Sr. High Youth Groups
	6:00 p.m.	Women's Bible Study
Apr. 19	2:00 p.m.	Dutch Blitz Game Afternoon
Apr. 20	7:30 p.m.	Vision Team meeting
Apr. 22	6:30 p.m.	VBS meeting

Apr. 23	1:00 p.m.	Care Team meeting
Apr. 26	12:00 p.m.	Last Sunday Potluck & membership conversation
	6:00 p.m.	Jr. & Sr. High Youth Groups
	6:00 p.m.	Women's Bible Study
Apr. 27	6:00 p.m.	Nurture meeting
	7:00 p.m.	Church Council meeting
Apr. 30	9:00 a.m.	Prayer Team meeting

Easter Weekend Schedule

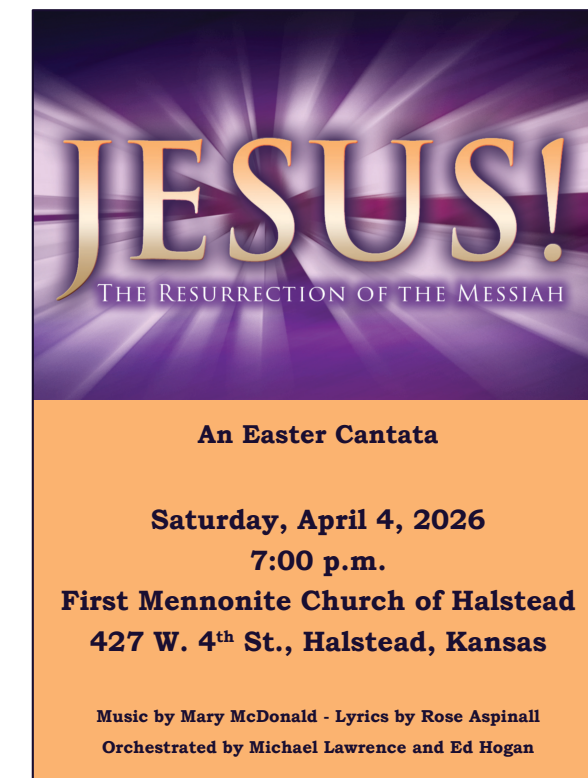
April 2	6:00 p.m.	Maundy Thursday meal and reflection, Stauffer Hall
April 4	7:00 p.m.	Jesus! Cantata
April 5	6:45 a.m.	Easter Sunrise Service at Nightingale's pond
	9:15 a.m.	Sunday School for Children & Youth/ Fellowship Hour for Adults
	10:30 a.m.	Worship Service

Upcoming Church Events

Last Sunday Potluck & Membership Conversation

Join us for the April Last Sunday Potluck on April 26 following the worship service. All are welcome! A conversation on membership will follow the potluck. Questions to be discussed include: What is the purpose of membership? What is the goal for membership? What are the ways to become a member?

Jesus! Cantata Easter Weekend



JESUS!
THE RESURRECTION OF THE MESSIAH

An Easter Cantata

Saturday, April 4, 2026
7:00 p.m.

First Mennonite Church of Halstead
427 W. 4th St., Halstead, Kansas

Music by Mary McDonald - Lyrics by Rose Aspinall
Orchestrated by Michael Lawrence and Ed Hogan

Dutch Blitz Game Time!

Come enjoy an afternoon of the fast-paced Dutch Blitz game at the church on Sunday, April 19, at 2:00 p.m. in Stauffer Hall. We'll play in rotating pairs or as a larger group. Bring a light snack to share and invite a friend to join in the fun. All levels are welcome!



DUTCH BLITZ GAME NIGHT!

Overview of how to play

Sunday, April 19,
2:00 PM
First Mennonite Church of Halstead

May bring a small snack to share.
Contact Raquel for questions, 30rwilcox@gmail.com

APRIL

Birthdays and Anniversaries

- Morgan Haury
- Mattaniah Kawanguzi
- Lu Siemens
- Laryssa Stahl
- Marilyn Mueller
- Kristy Mueller
- Marylin Balzer
- Jim Sutcliffe
- Cathleen Frost
- Tyler Gehring
- (A) Kevin & Heather Finley
- Sage Rose
- Raquel Wilcox
- Tom Koehn
- (A) Jim & Joyce Koehn
- Lucy Regier
- Melissa Vogt
- Eli Wilcox
- David Friesen
- Pauline Regier
- (A) Richard & Robyn Schmidling
- Alan Mueller
- Joyce Rodenberg
- Pamela Keller
- Amanda Keiser
- Maeanna Regier
- Matthew Regier
- (A) Kenneth & Audra Black
- Jim Koehn
- Dee Ann Lintz
- (A) Steve & Raquel Wilcox

- Elizabeth Robinson
- Hannah Finley
- Arnita Haury
- (A) Bill & Betty Schowalter
- (A) Dan & Wilma Mueller
- Leon Schmidt
- Mick Bean
- (A) Elvin & Sue Conard
- Elijah Mueller
- Mark Rodenberg
- Robyn Schmidling
- Katie Penner
- Addilyn Smoker
- (A) Bruce & Larisa Nightingale

Church Camp-Out at Camp Mennoscah

Our Camp Mennoscah Weekend will be May 2-3. It is always a fun-filled weekend with food, fellowship, outdoor activities and worship. A registration form and additional details, as well as a food sign-up list, will be available soon. There will be no services at church on May 3.



The Broader Church & Community Events

Kansas Mennonite Relief Sale

The Kansas Mennonite Relief Sale is April 10-11 and is powered by over 1,000 volunteers each year. Check out the available positions at <https://kansas.mccsale.org/volunteer/> and consider signing up. There is something for everyone!

Neighbors Store Taco Dinner

The Neighbors Store Taco Dinner fundraiser meal will be on Saturday, April 11, from 5:00-7:00 p.m. at Garden View Mennonite Church. Our church is responsible for providing 4 pies and 5 workers for various shifts. Please sign up on the bulletin board if you're able to help in any way.

Kansas Mennonite Men's Concerts

The Kansas Mennonite Men's Chorus invites you to their upcoming concerts: Sunday, April 12, at 4:30 p.m. in Memorial Hall on the Bethel College Campus, and Saturday, April 18, at 4:30 p.m. in Richert Auditorium on the Tabor College campus.

Men and Boys Retreat

A men and boys retreat is scheduled at Camp Mennoscah for April 17-19. Lodging is available in the bunkhouses,

cabins or your own tent. Meals are available for Saturday evening, Sunday breakfast and Sunday lunch. Contact Kevin at (316) 322-5515 with any questions

Women and Girls Salad Supper

All women and girls are invited to the annual Mennonite Women in Mission's potluck salad supper on Monday, April 20, at 6 p.m. at Tabor Mennonite Church, rural Newton. Our guest speaker will be Kate Mast speaking on "Our Time, Our Stories, Our Stuff." Please bring a potluck salad and one small item that is a treasure of yours to share with your table group. RSVP is not required.

Pine Village Car Show & BBQ Dinner

Join us for our 5th Annual Pine Village Car Show on Saturday, May 9, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Enjoy the BBQ dinner from 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. (by donation). The event is free for spectators and includes inflatables for the children. Pulled pork and baby back ribs sold by the rack are available for pre-order and must be ordered by 4 p.m. on April 24. BBQ pre-orders can be picked up at the Wellness Center during the Car Show or on May 11 or from 12-3 p.m. The form for BBQ pre-orders and to enter a car in the car show can be found at pinevillageks.org.

VBS Registration Now Open!

VBS registration is now open! VBS will be held May 26-29, from 9-11:30 a.m. for children 3 years to entering 5th grade. We can't wait to step into the rainforest to explore the nature of God this summer!

We need volunteers to serve in various roles to help the week run smoothly. There are a variety of jobs available from crew leader to station leader to kitchen help. If you'd like to help or want to register your children, please go to: <https://vbspro.events/p/09cf9e>.



Looking Ahead

May 2-3	Camp Mennoscah Weekend
May 26-29	Vacation Bible School
June 7	Sunday School Picnic

The Crusade . . . cont'd

Finally, in the back of the third drawer, beneath a tangled nest of mismatched items, he saw it: a scuffed, square plastic container, lonely and empty.

With slow steady hands, he brought the lid down. Snap. The seal was perfect. The click echoed through the kitchen like a joyful "Hallelujah."

As the first hint of dawn touched the stained glass, Sir Menno returned to his post. He stood motionless once more, but with a hidden smile of contentment. He reflected on the night's crusade. In the Great Kitchen of the Kingdom, no piece is too warped or too dented to be of value. For just as the lid is lost without its bowl, we are all part of one body—each piece essential, each piece loved, and each piece eventually finding its way home.

Treasurer's Report

Budget Balance @1-31-26	\$8,595.94
Feb. Receipts	\$10,674.75
Feb. Expenses	(\$13,047.34)
Budget balance @2-28-26	\$6,223.35



John Will has been part of First Mennonite Halstead all his life. A gifted builder, he has blessed our church with his skills and talents.

John Will has been part of First Mennonite Church of Halstead for all of his 91-plus years—a fact he jokes about, saying, "That's starting to sound old!"

John was born while D.C. Wedel was pastor of FMC and grew up on a farm northwest of Halstead. However, he did not pursue farming as an adult. Instead, he found his niche and calling in construction.

After graduating from high school, John attended Bethel College for two years before beginning work for his uncle. During that time, he met Marge at the skating rink in Halstead—now the school district's bus barn. The two were married in 1956 and shared 61 years together before Marge passed away in 2017.

Shortly after their marriage, John

was drafted into the military. He and Marge spent two years in Watertown, New York, where John initially served as an engineer building temporary bridges. However, when Marge developed preeclampsia during her first pregnancy and spent three weeks in the hospital after the birth of their oldest daughter, Linda, John transitioned to office work so he could be closer to his family.

After returning home, John continued working for his uncle before taking a position with a construction company in Newton. In 1963, he started his own business, typically employing two to three people at a time. The first house he built still stands at the northeast corner of 4th and College Streets in Halstead. Over the years, John built 72 houses, 52 of them in Halstead. His only commercial projects included multiple remodels of The Halstead Bank and the construction of the bank's drive-up building, which he completed after his retirement.

"People were surprised I could build a house," John said. "And I thought, well, I



John Will

wouldn't be in the business if I didn't know how to build a house."

Despite his expertise, John and Marge did not always live in a home he had built. At one point, they were living in an older house in Halstead when a prospective client came to discuss a new build. After seeing the condition of John's home, the visitor turned around and left—apparently unimpressed. Following that encounter, John told Marge it was time to build a house of their own.

John retired in 1999 at age 65, but he never truly stopped working. He began crafting cedar chests, jewelry boxes, Lincoln Log-style houses, and block sets. Even today, he still spends time in his shop making block sets for children.

John's skills have also greatly benefited FMC over the years. He served for many years as a trustee—now known as the Stewardship Committee—and continues to be involved. Among the major projects he has contributed to is the construction of Stauffer Hall, replacing the wooden front doors with glass doors—a project he noted grew more complex than any other he had undertaken—installing the elevator, and remodeling the foyer at the back of the sanctuary. Many of these projects were completed alongside Leon Schmidt, with the two of them lending their talents and expertise to benefit the congregation.

When asked about some of his favorite memories at FMC, John replied, "Just working on all the different things. I did a lot in that building. It always seemed to me there was something to fix."

His favorite project was the foyer

remodel he completed with Leon Schmidt. Decisions were made throughout the process, with input from the congregation along the way. "We couldn't have hired a contractor to do that because we made decisions on it as we went along," John said.

Thank you, John, for serving your church so faithfully for so many years. We are grateful for your many contributions, which have helped shape our building into the space it is today.



Church Announcements

1. The deadline for the May newsletter is Wednesday, April 22.
2. The Neighbors Store pantry requests cash donations for the Taco Dinner fundraiser meal for April.
3. Offering schedule for April:
April 5: Church Budget
April 12: MC USA
April 19: Church Budget
April 26: Pine Village
4. The link for our church online library is [librarything.com catalog/FMCHalstead](http://librarything.com/catalog/FMCHalstead).