



The Vine

A newsletter of First Mennonite Church
September 2022

Season of Creation 2022: Listen to the Voices of Creation

by Sharon Monday

September is the month we celebrate the Season of Creation during our worship services. This year we are invited to “Listen to the Voices of Creation” which includes the voices of the natural world, human voices and communities most impacted by environmental destruction.

This year we are pleased to announce that Sarah Augustine will be our guest speaker on Sunday, September 25th. Sarah, a Pueblo (Tewa) woman has been a leading voice in the struggle to call Anabaptist people of faith to dismantle the structures that oppress Indigenous peoples and deprive them of their lands. Sarah, Pastor Sheri Hostetler and Anita Amstutz founded the Dismantling the Doctrine of Discovery Coalition (DDoD) which FMC joined as a Repair Congregation in 2021. Sarah is the author of “The Land is Not Empty: Following Jesus in Dismantling the Doctrine of Discovery”. Sarah is a prophet among us who calls us to a multigenerational perspective as we work to build a healthy relationship with our Earth home. [Click this link to learn more about Sarah's vision and perspective \(she speaks 23 minutes into the video\).](#)



*Sarah Augustine,
DDoD co-founder
and guest speaker
at FMC Sept. 25.*

Celebrate the Season of Creation with Outdoor Worship

Weather permitting, we will worship outdoors in the fenced yard to the west of the church building on September 4, 11 and 18 (worship will be indoors if it rains). Bring a lawn chair or blanket. The service will continue to be live-streamed and can be viewed on YouTube. We will gather in the sanctuary on September 25.

September 4: Ocean Sunday

September 11: Fauna Sunday

September 18: Storm Sunday

September 25: Cosmos Sunday



One Perspective on Worship & Practice

by Marcia E. Nelson

Is a disclaimer appropriate here? The following is being provided for discussion purposes only; it does not constitute endorsement or approval by the management. Or "[The author] assumes no responsibility or liability for any errors or omissions in the content of this site. The information contained in this site is provided on an "as is" basis with no guarantees of completeness, accuracy, usefulness or timeliness..." Guess I am covered ...

"Why do you come to worship?" is the question that Pastor Deb asked 17 of us at the Worship Workshop a couple weeks ago. Answers rolled out somewhat slowly but gathered as together we built a portrait of this practice of the Christian church. The answer seems to me to be complex. This group comes to worship at FMC for encouragement and support, for a weekly reset and renewal, for focus and challenge, for the feeling of belonging, to meet God, to have a transcendent experience, and to have the joy of seeing little ones, singing together, praying together, welcoming and being welcomed. One participant mentioned just the physicality of the experience - standing in God's presence, presenting an offering.

No one mentioned the sermons or special music or the children's story or the offering - all elements which we do appreciate and which make up the content of the service. It seems to me that the totality of the experience is what defines worship. Many felt that the fact that worship is a group experience is important. The body of Christ gathered needs all of its parts and the variety of spiritual gifts participants bring, whether or not they are up front. We listen to each other, we pray for each other, we model for each other, we challenge...and in these practices we know God. Worship is not a "spectator sport", nor one more nifty thing to consume with a bunch of fun folks.

At a Zoom workshop that I attended at Hesston college in 2021, speaker David Fitch defined the church as "a community of practices that gather us into His lordship." He looked at the early church in Acts, Ch. 2 and the practices that gathered people together: they gathered at the table, broke bread, baptized, taught, prayed, reconciled, spent time together, shared the gospel, identified each other's gifts. Jesus promised through these practices to make himself known. Presence is the way God works. He then asked us, **"do we evoke the presence of God in the core practices of our church?"**

This is not to argue for the same old/same old in the way we do church. But it is an argument to name and attend to the practices of the early church as we

seek to be the body of Christ. When we gather "in remembrance of Him" no matter how seemingly small the act or the practice, we open up space for God's presence.

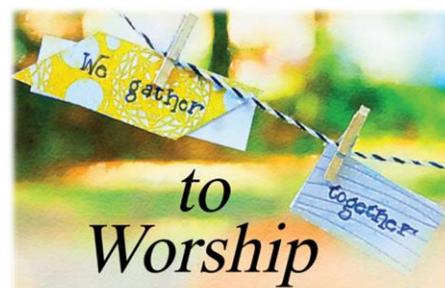
How we do church was a question Council set in early 2020, before the pandemic made sure we remembered to attend to it: "What does it mean to be church as generations, expectations, priorities and lifestyles change?" Worship is integral to the body of Christ. Ours has changed due to the pandemic. "How do we worship now and be present to God and to one another?" is a question that is very much on the table.

The impetus for this article was a request by a couple people for the words I shared as worship leader in July. **I encourage you to ask yourself: why are you here?**

Why are you here? Why am I here? And why did we choose to be together?

Some of us are here because for us, Sunday morning has no other option - not that we were birthed in the pew or chained there early in life, but any change to a lifelong habit has ever been under serious consideration. Others, are well aware of the many options that Sunday mornings present and the many responsibilities to be juggled using all the days of the week. We need the Sabbath. We need to transcend our daily lives and we need to make sense of them, week after week. Sunday morning worship is one time we do that. Other days and other places on this sacred earth also rightly call us to worship. Those calls too are best heeded.

We know Jesus' commandments: Love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your soul and with all your mind and love your neighbor as yourself. I find that last part a bit easier if I come intentionally into the presence of our Lord through worship. We join together because gathered we know the power and the comfort of the body. We come, seeking in song or in word, in praise and in prayer, transformation. Worship is where we come into God's presence and into our true selves. **Join me today for worship.**



Changes in the Nursery

by Rhonda Gibson

For over 55 years, our congregation has valued using FMC volunteers in the nursery as a way to help adults build relationships with the youngest among us. We want adults to know the names of our children and for children to know that adults at FMC care about them. Our policy requiring two "Safe Church" cleared adults with children is another way we value the well-being of our children and youth.

Returning in-person after almost two years of pandemic, we recognize that things have shifted: some former nursery workers can no longer physically help, others have health issues that prohibit close contact at this time. The demographics of the congregation have also shifted – older members and young families, but currently not as many youth and middle-aged people to lend a helping hand in the nursery. In addition, the Knit and Nurture class that provided nursery care during Sunday school for many years is no longer active.

For all these reasons, we find that changes are needed to prevent our smaller pool of volunteers from burnout, especially since they are also often helping in other roles on Sunday mornings. The Christian Education Committee (which oversees the nursery) discussed options and decided on a path forward designed to give our nursery volunteers more breaks.

Our new structure consists of two parts:

- 1) A paid nursery worker from outside FMC to work in the nursery on Sundays from 9 am – Noon.
- 2) Breaking our current group of volunteers into two groups that would work with the paid nursery worker: "nursery parent" (parents of children in the nursery) volunteers and "other" volunteers.

Each group would help with a different part of Sunday morning activities:

- **WORSHIP SERVICES** - One "other" volunteer will rotate through the nursery with the paid worker. With our current pool of 10 "other" volunteers, each volunteer would help in the nursery about every 10 weeks. Parents of children in the nursery would not work in the nursery during worship.
- **SUNDAY SCHOOL** – One "nursery parent" volunteer will rotate through the nursery (with the paid worker). We currently have a pool of 6 "nursery parent" volunteers, with the hope of adding at others who are not yet Safe Church cleared. Since the parents would rotate through every 6 weeks or more, each parent has an opportunity to attend most Sunday school sessions.

These changes begin on September 4, when Sunday school classes resume.



We are excited to introduce our new paid nursery worker, Taniya (Ta-nye-yah) Boone, from Bloomington, IL. Taniya is a U of I sophomore, majoring in psychology. She has been a U of I mentor to students at a local elementary school during the past year and currently works at a local child care center with children birth – PreK. Taniya says that she has "absolutely loved working with my kiddos and building positive relationships with them". She has undergone a background check for her work at the daycare center and has also received FMC Safe Church clearance. Taniya has certification in infant/child CPR, is fully COVID vaccinated, and has tested negative for TB (a requirement for her daycare job). She lives on campus less than a mile from FMC and has her own transportation.

An ad-hoc group from FMC interviewed Taniya: Pastor Deb (pastoral staff), Rhonda Gibson (Christian Ed Committee) and Courtney Malcolm (parent). They were impressed with her friendliness, maturity, and desire to gain more experience with children and families – her area of interest within the field of psychology.

We've included her picture so that you can greet her by name and help to extend a warm welcome when you see her in early September!



*The FMC Christian Education Committee,
Bruce Miller (Convener), Lesley Deem, Rhonda Gibson, Baggins Schneider, Pastor Michael Crosby (Staff liaison)*



Kino Border Initiative
Iniciativa Kino
para la Frontera

Our Vision

Migration with Dignity

Our Values

Faith & Spirituality
 Holistic Accompaniment
 Hope & Joy
 Human Dignity
 Justice & Equity
 Radical Hospitality

Our Mission

Promote humane, just and workable migration through:

- Direct humanitarian assistance and holistic accompaniment of migrants;
- Education and encounter between migrants and others that transforms people and communities towards solidarity with migrants;
- Policy advocacy in Mexico and the US.

The Kino Border Initiative is a bi-national, inclusive Roman Catholic organization, inspired by the spirituality of the Jesuits and Missionaries of the Eucharist; locally rooted in Ambos Nogales on the Mexico - US border and with a regional approach throughout Central America and North America.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

2022 - 2026

I. HOLISTIC ACCOMPANIMENT

Providing more holistic support for migrants in Nogales and Sonora

II. MIGRANT INTEGRATION

Sustaining communities of mutual accompaniment in the US

III. LOCAL HOSPITALITY

Promoting radical hospitality towards migrant throughout Nogales and Sonora

IV. POLICY CHANGE

Creating political will in the US to advance humane, just & workable migration policy

V. EQUITY & WELLNESS

Promoting dignity, equity and wellness among staff and volunteers

KBI has excelled at and will continue to focus on:

We will grow by FOCUSING on:

HOW we will do it:

Meeting migrants' basic needs in Nogales, Sonora.

HOLISTIC ACCOMPANIMENT.

Providing more holistic support for migrants in Nogales and Sonora, including recreation, spiritual care, empowerment and access to rights.

- Purchasing and developing neighboring land for recreation and community spaces
- Starting a transitional housing program for migrants in Nogales, Sonora.
- Responding elsewhere in Sonora in certain moments and places in which migrants are concentrated and underserved.

Encouraging follow-up action from educational partners

MIGRANT INTEGRATION.

Sustaining communities of mutual accompaniment in the US between our education partners and migrants who have come through KBI and are living in the US.

- Hiring social workers to support migrant integration in the U.S.
- Motivating and equipping educational partners to welcome and accompany migrants in the U.S.

Ensuring our outreach center is a space of hospitality.

LOCAL HOSPITALITY.

Promoting radical hospitality throughout Nogales and Sonora by influencing public sentiment, individual action, and policies that promote welcome.

- Investing more in community education in Nogales and Sonora
- Local advocacy and networking to promote more welcoming policies
- Increasing the capacity of the migrant services' team to engage in local advocacy efforts

Shining a light on the harms of current migration policy.

POLICY CHANGE.

Creating political will in the US to advance humane, just, and workable migration policy through changes in public sentiment and mobilization of allies

- Increasing leadership capacity of migrants to mobilize themselves for advocacy
- Investing in leadership and institutional commitment amongst our educational partners to influence decision makers
- Prioritizing educational programming that transforms indifferent communities towards empathy or activates key allies

Upholding migrant dignity.

EQUITY AND WELLNESS.

Promoting dignity, equity and wellness among staff and volunteers by advancing internal equity and promoting spiritual, psychological, emotional, and physical wellness.

- Creating policy and committing resources to advancing justice and equity, including just wages
- Hiring staff to support emotional, spiritual and psychological wellness of KBI staff and volunteers.

COMING IN OCTOBER...



Saturday, October 1 at 11 am – CU Pride Parade

[The 2022 CU Pride Parade](#) (free event) will step off at 11am in Campustown and then make its way to downtown Urbana. Parade map to come so attendees can know where to get a good viewing spot. Lynne Sancken is organizing FMC group to march in the parade. If you are interested in participating, please contact Lynne.

Lynne is also ordering FMC “God’s Love is for Everyone” Pride T-Shirts (see design below), available in all sizes (infant – adult); short or long-sleeved options. Cost depends upon quantity ordered. If you are interested in placing an order, contact Lynne by September 11.



Sunday, October 2 at 2 pm (pre-walk program at 1:30 pm) – CU Crop Hunger Walk

This year the [CU CROP Walk](#) begins at First Presbyterian Church of Urbana (602 W Green St., Urbana). Chuck Gibson is organizing FMC’s team. If you would like to walk, join our team at the following link (donations can be made using this link): <https://events.crophungerwalk.org/2022/team/first-mennonite-church-of-champaign-urbana>.

CROP Hunger Walks are community-based walk fundraising events held in cities and towns across the United States, created to support the global mission of [Church World Service](#), a faith-based organization transforming communities around the globe through just and sustainable responses to hunger, poverty, displacement and disaster. After a CROP Hunger Walk ends, 25% of the funds raised is returned to the host community to support local hunger fighting efforts.

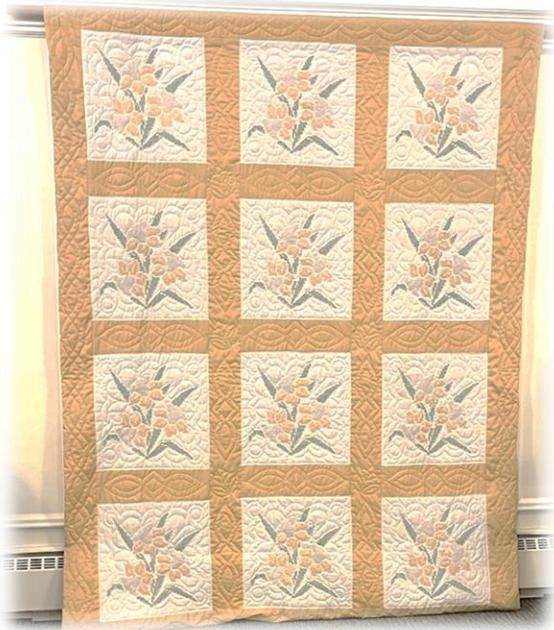
Sunday, October 2 at 5 pm – Welcome to the Table: World Communion Celebration

The Ministerial Alliance of Champaign-Urbana and vicinity is sponsoring this free community event, to be held at Covenant Fellowship (124 W White St, C). Parking: Christie Clinic Parking Lot. Questions? Contact Janet Elaine Guthrie and Peter Dyck, participates in the Ministerial Alliance.

Saturday, October 8 at 7 pm – I Go On Singing: Paul Robeson’s Life in Word & Song

This 90-minute multi-media musical documentary tells the story of Paul Robeson, the most famous African American entertainer of his day and an international celebrity as an advocate for peace and justice. His story is integral to the history of African Americans and the struggle for civil rights. “I Go On Singing” is written and performed by the gifted American baritone and international ambassador of peace Anthony Brown. The event will be held at Faith United Methodist Church (1719 S Prospect, Champaign). FMC is a co-sponsor of this event. Andrea Welty Peachey will announce ticket prices and sale date soon. For more information about the program, visit the show’s webpage: <http://www.anthonymbrownbaritone.net/i-go-on-singing.html>

RECENT FMC VISUALS



Above: Flower patterned quilt made by Merna Sutter for her son, Tom Sutter.

Below: Four Seasons Tree sculpture gifted to FMC by the Central District Conference during a recent visit by CDC representatives to listen to stories about how God is calling FMC.



Above: Double wedding band quilt made for Sheryl Dyck by her grandmother.

Below: Trip Around the World quilt made for Kathy Springer by her mother, Hilda Newcomer.



Service & Outreach Mission Corner

FMC's 2022 spending plan lists 34 organizations that are beneficiaries of our mission giving. At least five others are recipients of either the children's offering or special congregational offerings. We provide you with information about some of these important groups. Featured this month: Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Scholarship Program



Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Scholarship Program

by Janet Elaine Guthrie

Each January, a highlight of the C-U community celebration of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s life and legacy is the presentation of college scholarships to deserving high school seniors.

To date, some four hundred local students have been awarded scholarships through the program, which is coordinated by the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Advocacy for Justice Committee. The leadership of this committee has rested for many years with recently retired senior pastor of Salem Baptist Church, the Rev. Dr. Claude E. Shelby, Sr.

Rev. Shelby notes that former Champaign Police Chief Anthony Cobb was in the first group of King Scholars. Uplifting young people and supporting the next generation of leaders remains the focus of this important initiative.

Low-income students from Champaign, Rantoul, and Urbana schools who aspire to Dr. King's dream are invited to apply for a scholarship. Scholarship recipients are chosen based on their academics and a personal essay demonstrating their commitment to Dr. King's legacy. All have demonstrated financial need.

Typically, ten high school seniors are selected for \$1,000 awards. The scholarships are renewable for up to four years of study at a college of their choice. "Living the Dream" King Scholars attend colleges and universities across the country. Many recipients go to the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, which offers matching funds of \$1,000 per student. Others chose campuses such as MIT, Howard University, the University of Illinois at Chicago, Michigan State, and other fine institutions.

The scholarships are funded by tax-deductible donations given by churches, synagogues, businesses, families and individuals who share a passion for transforming the lives of young people through education.

Currently, FMC gives \$1,000 to the scholarship fund. Individuals are invited to contribute as well. Donations can be mailed to: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Advocacy for Justice Committee, PO Box 704, Champaign, IL 61824.

Here are a few essay quotes from recent scholarship recipients:

"As a student aspiring to become a supportive pharmacist for the medically underserved, I hope to continue Dr. King's legacy to achieve equality."

"While working out who I wanted to be I followed the advice of Reverend Martin Luther King, not only to drop the negativity in my spirit but to take hold of the challenges thrown at me. Dr. King's morals and teaching will consistently guide how I handle daily life and pursue my future career as a social worker."

"Dr. King's quote 'Use me, God. Show me how to take who I am, who I want to be, and what I can do, and use it for a purpose greater than myself' speaks volumes to me because this is something that God has put into my heart. My purpose in life is to help others."

Members of the MLK Advocacy for Justice Committee and the MLK Scholarship Committee are local leaders who themselves demonstrate Dr. King's dream through service to their beloved community. Visit the website to learn more about the scholarship recipients and the work of the committee: <https://www.mlkcu.com>