

**The Great Conversation
First Mennonite Church
November 25, 2018**

Procession

Welcome and Call to Worship Greg Ring

Invocation

*Hymn HWB 67
“Sing hallelujah, praise the Lord”
Laura Hartzler

*Responsive Reading Psalm 126 (NRSV)

L: When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream.

C: Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy;

L: then it was said among the nations, “The Lord has done great things for them.”

C: The Lord has done great things for us, and we rejoiced.

L: Restore our fortunes, O Lord, like the watercourses in the Negeb.

C: May those who sow in tears reap with shouts of joy.

L: Those who go out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing,

ALL: shall come home with shouts of joy, carrying their sheaves.

Special Music Hank Beebe
“The Earth is the Lords”
Children’s Ensemble; Sophia Gott, flute

Conversation with Friends Gloria Hernandez Bucher
“All things bright and beautiful” (*vs. 1 coming forward, vs. 4 returning*) HWB 156

Community Prayer Lois Wetherill

Scripture Isaiah 1:1-2:5 Victoria Woods-Yee, Ruth Early
Romans 15:1-13 Jerry Weaver

Sermon “The texts Jesus read” Theda Good

*Hymn “Filled with the Spirit’s power” HWB 289

Presenting our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory Laura Hartzler

Hymn of Dedication “As saints of old” (v. 3) HWB 386

Prayer of Dedication

*Hymn “Christ is the world’s true light” HWB 334

*Benediction

Postlude

**Please rise in body or in spirit.
HWB – Hymnal: A Worship Book; STJ – Sing the Journey; STS – Sing the Story
Please ask an usher for assistance in locating large print hymnals.*

First Mennonite Church, 101 S. Jackson Street, Bluffton, Ohio 45817
419-358-5766 | fmcbluffton.org | Office open 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Monday-Friday

Church Staff

- Pastor Wanda Stopher -- Monday-Thursday, 9-4, off Friday; 419-551-1079 (cell); fmc.wanda@bluffton.edu
- Pastor Theda Good -- Tuesday-Friday, 9-4, off Monday; 419-549-2417 (cell); fmc.theda@bluffton.edu
- Interim Children and Youth Ministry Director – Carrie Mast, M-F, 8-10 a.m., mastc@bluffton.edu
- Director of Music – Mark Suderman, 419-230-5368 (cell); sudermanme@bluffton.edu
- Administrative Assistant – Mary Pannabecker Steiner, M-F, 9-4, fmc@bluffton.edu
- Custodian – Mick Hardy, 7:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m., weekends as needed

Host: Fran Core | **Greeter:** Gloria and Rich Bucher

Chancel: Anita Lehman

Nursery today: SS – Cheri Slotter and Lori Nester

Worship – Betsy and Joe Werling, Grace Paquin

Nursery next week: SS – Pat Sheidler, Mitch Kingsley

Worship – Sue and Tom Schaaf, Ben Hartzler, Theo Andreas

OUR STEWARDSHIP

Worship attendance last Sunday	FMC-195, MC-2
Volunteer hours Nov. 11-18, 2018	67.75
Spending plan giving Nov. 18, 2018 (includes e-giving)	\$6,545.00
Special fund giving Nov. 18, 2018 (includes e-giving): K-5-\$3.36; Faith/Life-\$11; Freudige-\$150	
Faithful Living-\$5; SHYF- \$335; Kitchen service-\$11.42; Flooring-\$787.20; Deacons-\$20;	
AR Ramseyer Memorials-\$200; MMN-\$25; MDS-\$1,000	\$2,547.98
Total giving Nov. 18, 2018 (includes e-giving)	\$9,092.98
Total spending plan receipts as of October 31, 2018	\$295,445.65
Spending plan expenses as of October 31, 2018	\$326,562.24
2018 spending plan	\$427,441.00

First Mennonite Church is affiliated with the Central District Conference of Mennonite Church USA. The Mennonites are named after Menno Simons, one of our early church leaders, and are rooted historically in the “Anabaptist” movement, which began in 1525, with origins in Switzerland, Germany, and the Netherlands now reaching around the world. Some primary Anabaptist convictions then and now are following Jesus Christ in service to others, rejection of violence and war, and joyful community life.



Bluffton University schedule:

Nov. 27 – “Conflict Without Casualties: Compassionate Accountability and the Art of Struggling With,” Dr. Nate Regier, 11 a.m., Yoder Recital Hall

Nov. 30 – “The Just Deserts of Capitalism and the Giant Turnip,” Friday Colloquium, Dr. Jonathan Andreas, 4 p.m., Stutzman Hall, Centennial Hall

Dec. 2 – Holiday Collage Concert, 2:30 p.m., Yoder Recital Hall

Mennonite Mission Network is offers some new service opportunities for 2019.

Youth Venture includes four locations, with two- to three-week-long trips in June and July. For more information, contact Jolene VonGunten at jolenev@mennonitemission.net. **Service Adventure** seeks leaders for its unit location in Anchorage, Alaska; adults serve as mentors and foster community with young adults in the unit. For more information, contact Susan Nisly at SusanN@mennonitemission.net. **An alumni trip**, “Service, Learning, and Civil Rights,” will visit Mississippi, March 9-16. The trip is open to alumni from Mennonite Voluntary Service, Service Adventure, and SOOP. For more information, contact alumnitrip@mennonitemission.net.

In response to God’s unconditional love for all people, we joyfully and unconditionally welcome you to join us on our journey of faith in Jesus Christ. We are committed to breaking down dividing walls and building community where all are loved and accepted. We believe in active inclusion and invite each one to participate in the life and ministry of our congregation.

CALENDAR

Today, November 25, 2018

8:15 a.m. Youth choir
9:15 a.m. SS, coffee time
10:30 a.m. Worship, Theda Good preaching
11:30 a.m. Christmas decorating, sanctuary, **congregation encouraged to help SHYF and to stay for pizza afterward**
5:30 p.m. Learning circle, supper provided, FH

November 26-December 1, 2018

Monday (11-26) Our Daily Bread, 9:45 a.m.
Tuesday (11-27) Morning prayers, 7 a.m.
Staff meeting, 9 a.m.
Swiss Historical Society, 7 p.m., AR
Wednesday (11-28) Adult bells and cherubs, 6 p.m.
Jubilate, 6:30 p.m.
Chancel choir and youth bells, 7 p.m.
Thursday (11-29) Deacons, 7 p.m., parlor
Friday (11-30) Youth leave for work camp

Next Sunday, December 2, 2018

9:15 a.m. SS, Coffee time
10:30 a.m. Worship, Wanda Stopher preaching

Welcome to our worship service today. If you are a visitor, please sign one of our guest books located at the entrances to the sanctuary. Wireless hearing aids are available. If you would like your children cared for while you worship, our nursery is downstairs in the church. Worship activity bags for children are available.

New announcements

Pastor Wanda is of town through today, Nov. 25. For pastoral care during this time, please call Pastor Theda at 419-549-2417.

Help Habitat right here in Bluffton! You can help Habitat for Humanity on Tuesday, Dec. 4 at Bluffton University. At 9 a.m., volunteers are needed to load furniture: (45 desks, 35 hutches for those desks, 25 dressers and 12 bunk beds) at Lincoln Hall on campus. The furniture is being donated to the Lima Habitat for Humanity ReStore. The money raised from the resale of these items will help build affordable, decent homes in the Lima area. Please contact Mark Suderman, volunteer coordinator, if you can help: mark@habitatlima.org or 419.222.4937.

As announced in worship last Sunday, the stewardship commission is tracking the voluntary service hours that our members donate each week to various organizations and individuals. Please write down the hours you served during the past week on one of the cards located on the back of the pews and place it in the offering plate. In each week's bulletin you will find the total for the previous week. At the end of the year we will announce the annual total at the financial meeting.

A Red Cross blood drive will be held Thursday, Dec. 13 in the First Mennonite fellowship hall from 1-6 p.m. If you can provide cookies, help with registration, make sandwiches, help serve food, or unload and load the truck with their equipment, add your name to the sign-up sheet in the fellowship hall. **To schedule your blood donation appointment**, call 1-800-RED-CROSS or go to redcrossblood.org, sponsor code "fmennobl."

The First Mennonite group subscriptions of "The Mennonite" are up for renewal. If you are already subscribing as part of our church group rate, you have been contacted via e-mail or phone. If you are NOT currently a subscriber through First

Mennonite but would like to join, please notify the church office at fmc@bluffton.edu. Cost for the upcoming year's subscription is \$37.

New in the literature rack this week:

- * Mennonite Mission Network's fall 2018 "Beyond" magazine is now available. If you prefer to read "Beyond" electronically, you'll find the current issue (as well as past issues) at: <https://www.mennonitemission.net/resources>
- * MMN's December "Prayer Vine"
- * Brochures regarding alternate Christmas giving

Reminders

Prepare for the season of Advent by joining the senior high youth in decorating the sanctuary and dining on pizza today immediately following worship.

If you prefer to receive electronic copies rather than paper copies of documents distributed by the church office, please notify the church office at fmc@bluffton.edu. Examples of these documents include seasonal brochures at Advent and Lent/Easter, as well as the Menno-Life and Central District Conference's Reporter and Focus.

A New Path Together – Commissions continue to consider questions from the September Governance Task Force retreat:

- 1.) What are you doing?
- 2.) What of your work is governance?
- 3.) What is ministry?
- 4.) What is discernment?
- 5.) Reflect on the alignment you see with the 5 Priorities.

Meanwhile, GTF work continues as we receive summary information from commissions and plan for next steps. We welcome anyone who is interested in these conversations to join us. **Next Meeting: Tuesday, November 27, from 4-5:30 in the parlor.**

-- GTF