

FIRST MENNONITE CHURCH

Weekly Announcements and Menno-Life, 2-3-2019

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

- 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

Calendar

Sunday, Feb. 3, 2019

9:15 a.m.	SS, coffee time
10:30 a.m.	Worship, Rev. Karol Farris, pulpit exchange
Noon	Connections potluck
2:30 p.m.	SHYF leaving FMC for ice skating in Findlay
5:30 p.m.	Learning circle, supper provided, FH
6:30 p.m.	Learning circle, Maple Crest

Feb. 4-10, 2019

Tuesday (Feb. 5)	Morning prayers, 7 a.m. Staff meeting, 9 a.m., parlor Financial Peace U, 7 p.m.
Wednesday (Feb. 6)	Adult bells, Cherubs, 6 p.m. Jubilate, 6:30 p.m. Chancel, youth bells, 7 p.m.
Thursday (Feb. 7)	Community dinner, Bluffton Senior Center, 6 p.m. Worship, 7 p.m.
Sunday (Feb. 10)	SS, coffee time, 9:15 a.m. Worship, Doug Luginbill preaching, 10:30 a.m. Whole congregation mtg., Mapping the New Path, 4 p.m., supper available

Locations of weekly announcements

You'll find copies of the weekly announcements **every Sunday morning (1) in the fellowship hall with the guest book (2) with the bulletins near the balcony entrance, and (3) at the Church Street entrance**. At the end of the trial period, March 3, we'll reassess our plan. We encourage feedback so write down your suggestions, sign and date, and place in an offering plate or one of our mailboxes.

Et Cetera grateful for contributions to funding for new store

On behalf of the Et Cetera Board, we thank First Mennonite Church members for their generous support of the new store fund drive. The renovation and move to the building at 327 N. Main (old Glove Factory) will be a tremendous boost to the mission of Et Cetera.

Funding MCC for world-wide ministry, re-using items that would otherwise be wasted, providing a source of economical clothing and other goods, building community bonds among volunteers and clients are reasons we are working hard to make this new location even better.

We set a goal of raising \$200,000 in order to reduce borrowing for the renovation. Presently, we have reached nearly \$100,000 in donations, a great milestone. First Mennonite donations amount to more than \$12,000.

We anticipate construction to begin in the next month or so. If you haven't had a chance to make a contribution, you may make one by designating it for Et Cetera and placing it in the offering plate at FMC or speak with one of us. ~ Bill Suter and Mitch Kingsley

Pastoral notes

Pastor Theda is attending a board meeting for Brethren Mennonite Council in Lombard, IL, and will return on Feb. 4. For pastor care needs please contact Pastor Wanda.

REMINDERS

Our next Red Cross blood drive will be held Thursday, Feb. 7 in the 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 “fmennncl.”



Due to the cancellation of church on January 20, the Governance Task Force has revised the schedule for the Whole Congregation Meetings, as follows:

- **February 10: Mapping the New Path Together**
- **April 7: Making the New Path Together**
- **April 28: Moving on the New Path Together**

Please plan to participate in *Mapping* ways we live into the 5 Priorities on Sunday, Feb. 10, from 4-7 p.m. We will be using an Open Space Technology (OST) format which specializes in empowering all attendees to contribute. To learn about OST, go to the links on the GTF page on our website. Over the next few weeks, consider the 5 Priorities and think about how First Mennonite Church can best live into them. What ministries do we need? In what ways should we provide oversight and visioning? What are the essentials? What are you/we passionate about? Please have conversations with friends, family, and those among us you may not know well. The 5 Priorities are printed on light green paper and copies are in the racks in the fellowship hall. There will be opportunities to participate if you want to. The youth will provide refreshments and a light supper; donations welcomed! Childcare will be provided; if you need childcare, please email Elizabeth Kelly: ekelly.2018@gmail.com for headcount and age appropriate programming.

Hygiene and relief kit drive: We are collecting hygiene/relief kits for the next few months. Lists for both kits are posted at the collection area near the church library. Please limit your generosity to the items listed.

Hygiene kit contents:

(NEW items in original packaging)
1 adult-size toothbrush (in packaging)
1 large bar bath soap (leave in wrapper)

1 nail clipper (good quality)
1 hand towel (medium weight, dark or bright colors. approx. 16 in x 26 in)
1 wide-toothed comb (6-8 in)

Relief Kits - These kits are larger and more expensive to collect, but are also needed. They would be a good project for Sunday school classes or small groups. Relief kit lists are also on the bulletin board. Pack all items into a box, label it “Relief Kit”, and place it near the kit collection area. We will get it to MCC where the items will be placed into a new 5 gallon plastic pail with a lid. We have many bags for kits, but if you wish to sew bags, there are directions in the kit collection area. Some precut bags and cords are also there. We also accept donated fabric.

~ Jean Miller

Workshop planners sought: Often the words “End of Life” make us feel we are planning our death. What we are doing is taking care of details that will assist family and friends if we can no longer make decisions. Creating wills, estate planning, establishing power of attorney, living wills and planning memorial services helps us live with less stress. If you are interested in helping to plan a workshop on this topic, contact Pastor Theda.

Electronic Giving: Electronic giving is an option for giving in support of First Mennonite Church. There is a link, "ONLINE GIVING," at the far right of the red navigation bar on the FMC website. To register, you will need your bank routing and checking account numbers. You'll choose a starting date, as well as frequency. All forms of donations are still appreciated, whether by cash, check or e-giving.

Menno-Life



First Mennonite Church • Bluffton, Ohio • Vol. 66, No. 2 • February 2019



Performers in “Mennonite Women: 100 Years in Story and Song” included Wendy Chappell-Dick, Wanda Stopher, Jan Wiebe, Ana Neufeld Weaver, Joanne Niswander, Beth Boehr, Laurel Neufeld Weaver, and Sara Brenner. (See story on page 2)

Generosity of deacons' benevolent fund serves many

Each time we celebrate Communion, there are baskets at the doors for benevolent gifts to help people in financial need of various kinds. There are other events at which the offering is designated for this fund, and sometimes individuals specify it in their giving. This is one way we live out our commitment to follow Jesus together, joining the ministries of healing the sick, feeding the hungry and bringing relief to the poor. Unless you've served as a Deacon, this may be all you know about the Deacons' Benevolent Fund. So here are some details regarding the Benevolent Fund of First Mennonite Church and specifically how the funds have been used this year.

- All requests for assistance are treated as confidential.
- Pastors are authorized to grant requests up to \$500.
- Deacons are consulted for requests of more than \$500.
- In general the benevolent funds are used to help people who live in the Bluffton school district. We have also received requests and responded to active participants of FMC who bring a need of someone they know or with whom they work who lives outside the school district.
- 39 requests for assistance were received in 2018.
- 20 families or individuals were assisted in that period of time.
- Requests cover a wide range of needs: \$25 gas card, \$25 food card, utility assistance, help with medical bills, and car repairs.
- We have been able to be generous in responding to requests due to the generosity of this congregation.

(Continued on page 2)

(Generosity, continued from page one)

- Some requests are one-time events and we are able to help people who are typically self-sufficient and just have an acute situation or crisis need.
- When there are repeat requests, we work hard at building relationships. We sometimes can offer so much more than monetary assistance as we learn to know one another.
- It is a holy trust to walk with people in times of need.
- The generosity of the congregation is deeply appreciated by the recipients. Thank you!
- Requests for assistance or questions may be directed to Pastor Theda or Pastor Wanda, or to any of the Deacons (Gloria Hernandez Bucher, Elysia Bush, Steve Harnish, Ruth Naylor, Ray Person, Adam Phillips, Tim Schumacher, Lissa Shelly, Lois Wetherill)

Reflecting on “Mennonite Women: 100 Years in Story and Song”



Marlyce Gundy



Wendy Chappell Dick, above left, and Ana Neufeld Weaver

Hours of research, songwriting, and rehearsals culminated in a delightful review and celebration of 100 years of Mennonite Women on January 13 in the First Mennonite sanctuary. If you missed the musical revue created by Wendy Chappell-Dick and Joanne Niswander, accompanied by a group of vocalists, you'll find a link to it on the home page of the church website or at http://fmdbluffton.org/sermon_post/mennonite-women-100-years-in-story-and-song/.

The group of vocalists with Joanne and Wendy included Wanda Stopher, Jan Wiebe, Ana Neufeld Weaver, Beth Boehr, Lauren Neufeld Weaver, Sara Brenner, and Marlyce Gundy.

Many thanks to Tyler J. Klassen, Goshen, IN, for photographing the event.

Reflections from Researcher, Archivist and Narrator Joanne Niswander

It began as a request to do a little research. With another anniversary coming up - that of 100 years for our church's women's organizations - it's time to celebrate another milestone.

The college archives has a treasure-trove of material from our church's history, and part of that is an extensive chronicle of what the various women's groups did during the past 100 years...box after box of meeting minutes and records. One hundred years of "mite boxes" and counting tax stamps, Christmas bundles and wrapping bandages, missionary boxes and school kits.

Sorting through a century of records tells a story of changing times, changing needs: Famine in India, displaced Mennonites in Europe and South America, Russian immigrants in Canada, Mennonite Memorial Home and Bible School for migrants, Camp Friedenswald and Chicago Learning Center.

Through it all, Mennonite Women continue to meet and serve.

**Reflections from Writer and Arranger
Wendy Chappell-Dick**

Hymns, like our understanding of mission and theology, are not made in a vacuum, but are part of the great arc of history.

These songs take us through the decades as a poignant guide. Each hymn verse has been chosen carefully for the message of inspiration the lyrics have for us, and undoubtedly held for the women of that decade.

The music serves as a reflection of waves of cultural and social events that shook, challenged and sometimes strengthened Mennonite Women's understanding of the church, and their role in the world.

The founders of our women's organizations dared to claim a role specific to women at First Mennonite, and honor its importance. Our Mennonite Women group has come through years when their work sometimes felt futile, exuberant decades of high turnout, and times of self-reflection and even doubt, to emerge victorious and vibrant 100 years later.

All the Menno ladies – put your quilts up! We're ready for the next 100 years.

(The above reflections are from the program for the Mennonite Women event. Copies of the program are available in the literature rack in the fellowship hall.)



Wendy Chappell-Dick and Beth Boehr

FMC members volunteer at MDS site in Florida



Seven FMC members volunteered with Mennonite Disaster Service in Florida last month, working on damage caused by recent hurricanes. Lynn and Linda Miller (second row, at left) directed the site during January. Other members included Dennis and Pat Sheidler (back row,) Wendell Miller, Bill Suter, and Mitch Kingsley (front row.)

Mennonite Women's panel to discuss Lent preparation

Mennonite Women will meet Monday, Feb. 11, at 7 p.m. in the fellowship hall for a panel discussion on "Time for Worship, Rituals Before Lent." Wanda Stopher will lead devotions. Joyce Hostetler and Monica Harnish will provide refreshments.

2019 CDC regional gatherings include one at Bluffton FMC

Consider attending one of Central District's Regional Gatherings. All meet from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. and include updates about CDC and provide opportunities to get acquainted. Host congregations provide lunch.

- **Jan. 26, 2019**, CDC Central, Open Table Mennonite Fellowship, Assembly Mennonite Church, 1201 S. 11th St., Goshen, IN
- **Feb. 9, 2019**, CDC West, Chicago Community Mennonite, 425 S. Central Park Blvd., Chicago, IL
- **March 9, 2019**, CDC East, First Mennonite Church, Bluffton. Child care will be available for all ages. Contact Carrie Mast at mastc@bluffton.edu or 419.230.1568 to sign up children to ensure we have age appropriate activities for all who come.

Connections

Camp Friedenswald Spring Creativity weekend March 8-10

Art Retreat: Led by Judith Wenig-Horswell, print-making, you'll develop your skills no matter what level, in the warm company of others in the peaceful woods of Camp Friedenswald. You'll learning print making using the gelatin print process, which results in monotypes (single image prints), and exploring the beauty of the woods.

Crafting Retreat: Whether you scrapbook, sew, quilt or craft, you'll enjoy a relaxing weekend filled with good food and fellowship. Come alone or bring friends or family.

Cost: \$160; register at friedenswald.org/retreats

Bluffton University

Feb. 5 "Mayan mathematics and different numeration systems" First Tuesday in the Library Forum presentation by Jarod Siekman '20, Bluffton mathematics major, 11 a.m., Musselman Library Reading Room

Feb. 5 "Time the Unspeakable," Forum presentation by Sana Masanama, associate adjunct professor in studio art, Hunter College, 11 a.m., Yoder Recital Hall

Feb. 5-7 Celebrate the Library Week, "Celebrating Student Research and Creativity"

Feb. 6 Health and wellness expo (Library Week event), 10 a.m.-1 p.m., Musselman Library, student scholars in dietetics, nutrition and wellness will share informative displays, practical advice and free food samples on the relationship between pigments in food and disease prevention

Feb. 7 Research fair (Library Week event), 1-4:30 p.m., Musselman Library, showcases the work of Bluffton University students; presentations exemplify student research in a broad sense, including traditional research presentations, projects, internships and creative work, faculty nominated the presenters

Feb. 8 "We Want to Become Saviors and Helpers of our Fatherland: Catholic Girls in Nazi Germany," Friday Colloquium presentation by Dr. Martina Cucchiara, 4 p.m., Stutzman Lecture Hall, Centennial Hall

University to showcase "Voices of Conscience" exhibit

Bluffton University will host the traveling exhibit "Voices of Conscience" Feb. 17-March 31, in Musselman Library.

This dramatic exhibit remembers the witness of peace-minded people against the First World War from 1914-18 and immerses visitors in the historical experience of witnessing for peace during "total war." The exhibit was developed and produced at Kauffman Museum, North Newton, Kan., and underwritten for Bluffton University by Jacob T. and Lola Friesen in memory of Jacob L. and Helena Friesen and Jacob J. and Eva Friesen.

Also to be included is a related exhibit, "Of Bronze and Bravery: Local Voices of Conscience," of works by John P. Klassen, with documents and artifacts illustrating the Bluffton College experience in the war.

Library hours are 8:30 a.m.-10 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Friday. Weekend hours are 1-4 p.m. on Saturday and 4-10 p.m. on Sunday.