**Gifts Expression**

**First Mennonite Church**

**April 22, 2018**

**Chimes call us to worship**  LuAnn Stuckey

**Welcome and announcements**  Kevin Nickel

**Introductions**

**Prelude** “Toccata in D” K. T. Kosche

**Call to Worship**

**\*Opening Hymn** “O thou, in whose presence” HWB 559

**\*Psalm 23 (read in unison)** New King James Version

The Lord *is* my shepherd;  
I shall not want.  
He makes me to lie down in green pastures;  
He leads me beside the still waters.  
He restores my soul;  
He leads me in the paths of righteousness  
For His name’s sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,  
I will fear no evil;  
For You *are* with me;  
Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;  
You anoint my head with oil;  
My cup runs over.  
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me  
All the days of my life;  
And I will dwell in the house of the Lord  
Forever.

**Special Music** “The God of Love My Shepherd Is”   Roy Hopp

Chancel Choir

**Conversation with Friends**

**Hymn**  “Christ is alive” (v. 1) STS 89

**Conversation** Rich Bucher

**Hymn** “Christ is alive” (v. 2) STS 89

**Special Music** “He’s got the Whole World”

*Jubilate and first, sixth, seventh and eighth grades*

**Community Prayer** Theda Good

**Scripture** I Peter 4:7-11 Emily Rush

**Sermon** “Preaching to the Choir” Wanda Stopher

**\*Hymn of Response** “God, whose giving” HWB 383

**Presenting Our Tithes and Offerings**

**Offertory** “Awake, My Heart” (I & II) arr. N. M. Raabe

**\*Hymn of Dedication** “Christ is alive! Let Christians sing!” (vs. 2) HWB 278

**\*Prayer of Dedication**

**\*Sending Hymn** “Forth in thy name” HWB 415

**Benediction**

**Postlude** “Awake, My Heart” (III) arr. N. M. Raabe

***\*Please stand (remain seated if that is more comfortable for you)***

***HWB – Hymnal: A Worship Book STS – Sing the Story***

# *Large print hymnals are available. Please ask an usher for assistance in locating one.*

# FIRST MENNONITE CHURCH

### 101 S. Jackson Street

### Bluffton, Ohio 45817

### Phone: 419-358-5766

### Website: fmcbluffton.org

Office Hours: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Monday-Friday

Pastor – Wanda – Monday-Thursday, 9-4, off Friday

Pastor – Theda – Tuesday-Friday, 9-4, off Monday

Director of Youth Ministries – Shannon -- Tuesday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.; Thursday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Custodian’s schedule: 7:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.; weekends as needed

**HOST:** Alice Ruth Ramseyer **GREETER:** Cheri Slotter

**NURSERY THIS WEEK: SS** – Melissa Friesen, Gerald Mast

**Worship** – Carrie Mast, Jason Diller, Jacob Biesecker-Mast

**NURSERY NEXT WEEK: SS** – Lori Nester, Shelby Cluts

**Worship** – Kevin and Alison King, Annalise Nisly

**SOUND SYSTEM**: Kevin Cluts **CHANCEL:** Amy Freeman

*The video of the most recent worship service may be viewed on the church’s homepage, www.fmcbluffton.org. Videos normally are posted on the Tuesday following the service. Previously recorded worship service videos may be found at tinyurl.com/fmc-videos*

### OUR STEWARDSHIP

Worship attendance last Sunday FMC-216, MC-7

Spending plan giving April 15, 2018 (includes e-giving) $5,207.00

Special fund giving April 15, 2018 (includes e-giving): *Pk-5-$5.61; Faith and Life-$14* $10,579.11

*Freudige-$40; Kitchen-$4.50; Deacons-$20; Memorials-$1,370*

*Flooring-$6,545; College scholarships-$2,580*

Total giving April 15, 2018 (includes e-giving) $15,786.11

Total spending plan receipts as of March 31, 2018 $105,385.07

Spending plan expenses as of March 31, 2018 $94,613.17

2018 spending plan $427,441.00

### CHURCH STAFF

Pastor Wanda Stopher – 419-551-1079 (cell) -- fmc.wanda@bluffton.edu

Pastor Theda Good – 419-549-2417 (cell) -- fmc.theda@bluffton.edu

Youth Ministry Director – Shannon Thiebeau – fmc.shannon@bluffton.edu

Director of Music – Mark Suderman – sudermanme@bluffton.edu

Administrative Assistant – Mary Pannabecker Steiner - fmc@bluffton.edu

Custodian – Mick Hardy

*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.*



**The 2018 Black Swamp Benefit** is June 15-16 at the Fulton County Fairgrounds, Wauseon. Your attendance and donations of quilts, wooden items, and homemade baked goods will benefit the work of MCC and Sunshine Homes. Please place donated items, with forms attached, in the quilt room. Contact John Rich for more information.

**Central District Conference** will hold a golf outing June 21 at 10:30 a.m. at Black Squirrel Golf Club in Goshen, IN. Proceeds benefit the Leadership Development Fund. Registration for the outing opens Tuesday, May 1. The LDF provides funding for resources for pastors. This fund has been used to help new pastors engage in MC USA’s Transitioning into Ministry program and for the Healthy Boundaries Training program. If you are not a golfer, but wish to contribute, do so at [https://www.mcusacdc.org/donate/](https://mennonite.us3.list-manage.com/track/click?u=16065d8372b1ee2e247906b0f&id=a402d4d479&e=de714b1860) and note LDF in your payment, or mail a check to Central District Conference, 1015 Division St, Goshen, IN 46528, with LDF in the memo line.

**PRAYERS AND GRATITUDE**

**We would like to thank** all those at First Mennonite Church for the love and support given us due to the loss of our wife, mother, and grandma, Esther Brauen. We felt it in the visitations, the cards, prayers, and memories shared, Wanda’s help as we faced this difficult time, as well as all the food and work done for both the visitation and the noon meal after the service. We especially want to thank Mick helping out with all the set-up and take-down and the cleaning after such a large family as ours, the Freudige Class for their extra work, and the kitchen helpers during both meals. We sincerely appreciate all of you and feel your love and caring.  *~ The Brauen Family*

**We thank our church community** for the caring, concern, prayers, cards and food during Marilyn’s health saga.  Medical intervention began February 2 and now has evolved to a defibrillator/pacemaker combo inserted April 13. Healing now continues at home. We appreciate and bless our church family. We have felt the love.

*~ Marilyn and Gary Bishop*

**Anna Ruth Reichenbach will celebrate** her 93rd birthday on Friday, April 27. The family is honoring her with a card shower. If you would like to join them, please drop a card in her FMC mailbox or mail to her home address: Anna R Reichenbach, 101 Sally Lane, Bluffton. *~ Mona, Bruce and family, Dale D II and family and Marsha and friend*

***Welcoming Statement***

*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.*

*Some primary Anabaptist convictions then and now are following Jesus Christ in service to others, rejection of violence and war, and joyful community life.*

**TODAY, April 22, 2018**

9:15 a.m. SS, coffee time

10:30 a.m. Worship, Wanda Stopher preaching

Noon Youth potluck, FH

2:30 p.m. Spring Fling concert, Yoder Recital Hall

## THIS WEEK

Monday (4-23) Et Cetera Board, 7 p.m., AR

Tuesday (4-24) Morning Prayers, 7 a.m.

Staff meeting, 9 a.m.

Academic Awards Forum, 11 a.m., Yoder Recital Hall

Swiss Historical Society, 7 p.m., AR

Wednesday (4-25) Cherubs, Adult bells, 6 p.m.

Jubilate, 6:30 p.m.

Chancel choir, Youth bells, 7 p.m.

Thursday (4-26) Pastor’s visit with Maple Crest residents, 2:30 p.m.

Deacons, parlor, 7 p.m.

## NEXT SUNDAY

## sUNDssSUNDAYSeptember 20

8:30 a.m. Youth choir

9:15 a.m. SS, Coffee time

10:30 a.m.Worship, Music Sunday

*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 watched over while you worship, our staff will care for them in the nursery downstairs. Worship activity bags for children are available.*

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**We welcome Emily Rush,** today’s scripture reader.Emily isfrom Quakertown, PA, and is a junior English education major at Bluffton University. She is involved in SERVE, Sustainability Club, Bridge, and Sunday Night Worship on campus. In May, she will complete her cross cultural study in Colombia with Dr. Gayle Trollinger and nine other students.

**Shannon Thiebeau, Director of Youth Ministry,** has announced her resignation effective August 19, 2018, to attend seminary full time. We are grateful for Shannon's passion for ministry and affirm her call to seminary. We are in the early stages of formulating a plan for after Shannon's departure. In conjunction with the current work being done by the Governance Task Force, we will be looking at the best plan for this position moving forward and we will share that plan with all of you as it starts taking shape. Please keep Shannon in your prayers as she wraps up her ministry here and pray for who will come and minister next among us with our youth. *~ Kendra Nickel*

**This Eastertide,** worship at FMC features special emphases such as Church College Relations, Music, and Youth Sundays. We will also focus on the 5 Priorities identified last year in our congregational discernment process. *~ Pastor Wanda*

04-29-18 Music Sunday

05-06-18 Priority: Worship

05-13-18 Youth Sunday

05-20-18 Priority: Nurturing Faith (Pentecost)

05-27-18 Priority: Connecting

**Mentor-Mentee pairs are** invited to attend a breakfast on Sunday, April 29, at 8:15 a.m. to fellowship together, share about the different activities they’ve been doing and discuss ideas for future gatherings. Food will be provided by the mentoring coordinators. Please come, even if your mentor partner cannot attend!

*~ Amber and Lisa Shelly, mentoring coordinators*

**The 2018 Central District Conference annual meeting** will meet at College Mennonite Church, Goshen, IN, June 21-23. The theme is “Come, walk with.” If you are willing to serve as a delegate for our congregation, please contact Kendra Nickel, moderator, at [kendrasmiley@yahoo.com](mailto:kendrasmiley@yahoo.com) or 419-302-5220 by Sunday, April 29. We are able to send at least eight delegates, plus a senior high youth delegate.

**Congregational/Pastoral Review**: Staff Relations Committee members and recruited helpers will interview the following groups this week and this coming Sunday:

*For anyone:* April 26 (Thursday) at 2:30 p.m., Maple Crest

*For Sunday school classes:* April 29 Sunday school hour: Sojourners, Sr. High, Jr. High

All comments, recorded in groups or submitted on signed and dated paper (to secured box in fellowship hall), will be summarized for inclusion in final review. No identifying information will be included or shared with pastor being reviewed. Please bring with you the green sheet that was in your mailbox on March 25. Extra copies are available on the literature rack in the fellowship hall.  *~ Ken Shenk, Staff Relations Committee*

**Black Swamp Benefit** is June 15-16 and we’re collecting coins for My Coins Count. Look for the jug in the fellowship hall for depositing coins for MCC water and food projects. *~ John Rich*

**Recycling:** For some individuals, climate change is not relevant to them, for others it seems too overwhelming, while still others ask what they can do. Gene Long has been collecting the recyclable steel and aluminum at FMC for several years. Ask him how much he earns for the Et Cetera Shop on a regular basis. What is needed is a group or individual to collect and recycle glass, plastics, and general paper. If you are interested, please contact one of the pastors.

**Camp Friedenswald scholarships:** Parents who wish to make use of our Camp Friedenswald scholarships should pay the full amount when registering a child. Print out your confirmation of payment and submit a copy to the church office. We will reimburse you for the church’s portion. Camperships this year are one-half of the cost for one camp per child. Costs this year are $300 ($150 campership) for high school, junior high, junior and pre-junior; $200 ($100 campership) for primary.

**Hygiene and relief kits:** Our kit collection for this year is down in numbers, so we will continue to collect them. Content lists and bags are on the table and bulletin board near the church library. We also need bag fabric and people to sew bags. Sewing directions are on the kit card in the kit collection area of fellowship hall. Some precut bags and cords are also there. **Relief kits:** *Relief kit lists are also on the bulletin board. Pack all items into a box, label it “Relief Kit” and place in the quilt room.*

**The Community Meal** at the Senior Citizen Center on Thursday, May 3, will be hosted by First Mennonite Church and the Mission Peace and Service Commission. All are welcome to attend. If anyone is willing to help with serving the meal or baking cookies, please contact Lynda Nyce at [lyndanyce@gmail.com](mailto:lyndanyce@gmail.com).