

Palm/Passion Sunday
Restore us, O God! We hope.
April 9, 2017 10:30 a.m.

Chimes call us to worship

Lucia Unrau

Welcome

Victoria Woods-Yee

Invocation

***Call to Worship (based on Psalm 31:9-16)**

L: Merciful, Lord. You are merciful to me when I am in distress.

C: You wipe away my tears when they pour from my eyes like a monsoon flood, rising higher with my grief, anguish, and afflictions.

L: I find Your arms holding me tenderly when friends and neighbors flee from me on the street; acting as though I am the rocks that stub their toes.

C: When I am the broken dishes, You glue me back together with Your golden touch...transforming me into work of art.

All: Your very face shines on us and we forget the bleakness. Days are held within Your mighty hands. Not a second are we without your unfailing Love. We are held close within Your arms. We are saved.

-- PALM --

Time with Children

Hymn "All glory, laud, and honor" (*Sing vs.1*) HWB 237

Conversation Wanda Stopher

Hymn "All glory, laud, and honor" (*Sing vs.3-5*) HWB 237

Special Music "Sing Hosanna" arr. Page and Shefferman
Cherub Choir

Presenting Our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory "What Wondrous Love Is This" arr. Paul Manz

***Hymn of Dedication** "Take my life" (sing v.6) HWB 389

***Confession (based on Matthew 26:14-22)**

L: Thirty pieces of silver, glinting in the night of my soul.

Women: Sorrowfully, I offer to hand over the Christ to the chief priests.

Men: Betrayal was in me as I dipped my hand into the Bowl with Jesus at Passover.

L: I flee now from the Light.

All: I wish I had not been born. It is done.

***Reconciling:**

L: And yet it was prophesied, spoken about in the scriptures.

Women: Prophets wrote it there, wondering as the ink dried.

Men: The Spirit whispered it on the breezes that it might come to be.

All: Burning in our ears, we hear it again, as Jesus bids us drink the fruit of grapes and eat the bread He broke in remembrance of His sacrifice for us. Christ became the scapegoat for our sins. The Messiah offers us hope, new lives as children of God and a home full of Love. Salvation is our gift to receive.

Pastoral Prayer

George O'Reilly

-- PASSION --

Readings

Last Supper

Matthew 26:14-30

***Hymn**

"Go to dark Gethsemane"

HWB 240

Readings

Gethsemane

Matthew 26:31-46

Special Music

"When Jesus wept"

William Billings

Wendy Chappell-Dick

Readings

Jesus Arrested

Matthew 26:47-56

***Hymn**

"Gentle God, when we are driven"

STS 71

Readings

Jesus before Pilate

Matthew 27: 1-2, 11b-26

***Hymn**

"O sacred head, now wounded (vs. 1-4)"

HWB 252

Readings

Crucifixion

Matthew 27:32-44

Special Music

"Drop, Drop, Slow Tears"

Taylor Davis

Chancel Choir

Readings

Jesus' Death

Matthew 27:45-56

Communion

Readings

Burial

Matthew 27:57-61

Please depart in silence.

Readers: Judy Buller, Chris Gott, George O'Reilly, Gayle Trollinger

**Please stand, or remain seated if that is more comfortable for you.*

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

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

Pastoral Associate – George – Tuesday-Friday, 9-4, off Monday

Director of Youth Ministries – Shannon -- Tuesday, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.; Friday, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

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

GREETERS: Ruth Naylor, Bill and Mary Ann Suter

HOST: Joyce Hostetler

NURSERY WORKERS TODAY: SS – Judy Diller, Carmen Moser, Cheri Slotter

Worship – Mary Ina Hooley, Sarah Phillips, Anna Neufeld-Weaver

NURSERY WORKERS NEXT WEEK: SS – No nursery during Easter potluck

Worship – Tom and Sue Schaaf, Andrea Goings, Kathy Traucht

SOUND SYSTEM: Peter Terry

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	195
Worship attendance at Maple Crest last Sunday	7
Sunday school attendance last Sunday	90
Spending plan giving April 2, 2017	\$5,645.00
Spending plan receipts as of February 28	\$67,481.59
Spending plan expenses as of February 28	\$65,777.69
2017 spending plan	\$421,146.00
The offering April 2 totaled \$7,496.70. Money was received for these special funds, K-5 th - \$8.65, Faith and Life - \$10, Young Adults - \$5.00, Sojourners - \$8, Deacons Benevolent - \$170, Kitchen service - \$30, FIRST Night - \$520, Rejoice - \$32, SHYF - \$1,034, Easter flowers - \$33.05.	

CHURCH STAFF

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

Pastoral Associate – George O'Reilly – 402-619-7099 (cell) – fmc.george@bluffton.edu

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

Director of Music – Mark Suderman Organist Coordinator – Lucia Unrau

Custodian – Mick Hardy

Administrative Assistant – Mary Pannabecker - fmc@bluffton.edu

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.



COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Lion and Lamb Peace Arts Center of Bluffton University, founded by Dr. Libby Hostetler in 1987, is celebrating 30 years of promoting peace and justice. You are invited to the open house and reception at the center on Thursday, April 20, from 3-6 p.m. A brief program of music and reflection is planned at 4 p.m. and will be held in the Honda Outdoor Sculpture Garden if weather permits. Enjoy light refreshments as you browse and visit. This event is free and open to the public. Visit the website at www.bluffton.edu/lionlamb/.

Consider participating in Volunteer Day at Camp Friedenswald on Saturday, May 13, from 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Help with the move back in to the renewed facilities and to make final preparations for summer. A variety of tasks will require a range of skills. Please call 269-476-9744 or email Camp@Friedenswald.org to confirm your attendance.

Dr. James Logan, professor of African and African American studies and professor of religion at Earlham College will present the Bluffton University Keeney Peace Lecture at 11 a.m. Tuesday, April 11 in Yoder Recital Hall. Logan's topic is "The Art of Hip Hop Religion and Culture in Civil Society."

GRATITUDE AND PRAYERS

Happy anniversary to LaVonne Klassen, 94, April 14.

Please pray for Perry Bush and his family, as Perry's father, Frederic Bush, passed away with his family present, April 6 in Carlsbad, CA.

Congratulations to Jean and Wendell Miller on the birth of their grandson, Emerson James Miller, born March 31 to Nathan and Jenelle Miller.

Several of FMC's members are recuperating from surgeries and illness. Among them are Mona Reichenbach home after foot surgery, Esther Brauen doing therapy at MMH, and Ann Shumaker, home after time in Lima Memorial. Continue to remember Corrinne Boehr at home with therapy as she recovers. We offer prayers for them, as well as others.

We would like to thank you all for the kind words, cards, and notes we received when mom passed away. We appreciate the support shown during this difficult time. It is so wonderful to have such a caring church family.

-- Shelby, Kevin, Jordan, Ashton and Landon Cluts

Many thanks for the beautiful expressions of sympathy and support across the miles. Your love was felt and appreciated at the time of my dad's death and beyond. My prayers for you as a congregation continuing to be an expression of God's salt and light in Bluffton.

-- Louise Wideman

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.

Palm/Passion Sunday, April 9, 2017

8:30 a.m.	Youth Choir
9:15 a.m.	Sunday school, coffee hour
10:30 a.m.	Palm/Passion Worship Service, Communion
Noon	Sojourners/Freudige class potlucks
2 p.m.	Quilt set-up, Mennonite Women, FH
6 p.m.	SHYF/JHYF

THIS WEEK

Monday (4-10)	Mennonite Women, project night, 7 p.m., parlor
Tuesday (4-11)	Morning prayers, 7 a.m. Staff meeting, 9 a.m., parlor Mennonite Women, comforter knotting, 9 a.m., FH Education, 6:30 p.m., parlor Trustees, 7 p.m., AR
Wednesday (4-12)	Cherub Choir, Adult Bells, 6 p.m. Jubilate, 6:45 p.m. Youth Bells, Chancel Choir, 7 p.m. Stewardship, 7 p.m., AR
Thursday (4-13)	Maundy Thursday service, faith statements, 7 p.m., FH
Friday (4-14)	Good Friday Cross Walk, 11:30 a.m.; Service, noon

Easter Sunday

8:30 a.m.	Youth choir
9:15 a.m.	Easter Brunch, FH; No SS or coffee hour
10:30 a.m.	Easter Sunday Worship, George O'Reilly preaching
Noon	Easter potluck, all are welcome, FH

Welcome to our worship service today. Please sign and pass the friendship pads in the pews. 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

As Jesus' path during this Lenten journey moves from light and promise toward darkness, our Lenten visuals mirror that progression.

Today's bulletin cover is a painting created by Victoria Woods-Yee for Lent Practice.

See the display case in the entrance stairway for some of the creative work of Lent Practice 2017. **Thank you, Lois and Gary Wetherill** for arranging this display each week.

Communion April 9: Today we will observe communion in our worship service. Please note that all of the bread used in today's service is gluten-free. In addition, there are baskets at the doors for contributions to the Deacons Benevolent Fund. Almsgiving when we celebrate communion has been one way of demonstrating how our life together is energized by the life and ministry of Jesus when he healed the sick, fed the hungry and brought relief to the poor. We seek to live faithfully by using our Deacons Benevolent Fund to assist those who have need within the church and in the community.

SHYF/JHYF: The combined SHYF and JHYF will meet at 6 p.m. today to discuss "Revelation When?" The meeting is in the SHYF room.

April is project month for Mennonite Women. Comforters for knotting will be set up in the fellowship hall Monday, April 10, at 7 p.m., and Tuesday, April 11, 9 a.m.-noon. Supplies for MCC hygiene kits have been purchased and will be set out for assembly and bagging. Monday evening our devotional focus will be "Receiving Guidance" led by Alice Lora. Refreshments that evening will be prepared by Dottie Long and Julie Mackey. Following comforter knotting on Tuesday, all are invited to stay for lunch. If you are able, bring a salad or dessert and table service. Sandwiches and beverages will be provided. Please consider helping with frame loading on Sunday, April 9, at 2 p.m.

Easter Sunday brunch will be held Sunday, April 16, at 9:15 a.m. in the fellowship hall. Please bring food to share: breakfast casseroles, fruit, muffins, or pastries. Coffee and juice will be provided. To save on use of paper products, please bring your own table service. There will be no Sunday school that morning.

Bound copies of bulletins available in FH: After careful consideration of how best to archive congregational records as provided by Carrie Phillips, CDC Archives custodian, we have decided to retain one set of bound bulletins and the Menno-Life in the church library. A second set of each is stored in the CDC archives at Musselman Library, Bluffton University. Bulletins and the Menno-Life are also available on our website at <http://fmcbluffton.org/>. Our bound bulletins date back to 1959 and Menno-Lifes back to 1977. We now store these records electronically (backed up regularly), and at the Musselman Library. Therefore, we are sharing our additional bound copies with you; you'll find the bound copies on tables in the fellowship hall. Please help yourselves.

We are delighted to share that nine students have completed catechism and have chosen to be baptized! Please pray for Seth Andreas, Anna Biesecker-Mast, Jacob Biesecker-Mast, Patrick Estell, Sophia Gott, Annalise Nisly, Danielle Novak, Grace Paquin, and Ana Neufeld-Weaver as they look forward to this important step of faith. Come to hear them share their faith statements on Maundy Thursday. After careful discernment, some of them have chosen to be baptized on Easter in the worship service. Others, also following careful discernment, have chosen to be baptized on another date either by immersion or by pouring in an outdoor setting. Details of that service will be forthcoming.
-- *Pastor Wanda, Shannon, and Pastor George*

Thanks to all who have offered auction items for our youth fundraising auction. We are still accepting items. The format for this fundraiser has been changed to a silent auction. We will not be holding a formal auction event, but you will have opportunities to register your bids in the auction display in the fellowship hall beginning on April 30. Please let Shannon Thiebeau (fmc.shannon@bluffton.edu) know by April 23 if you have auction items to be included.

The ecumenical Cross Walk ending in the community observance of Good Friday is a Bluffton tradition. All are welcome to join us this year on Friday, April 14, as we remember Jesus' steps to the cross, his crucifixion and death. The Cross Walk begins this year at 11:30 a.m. at English Lutheran Church, and proceeds to St. John's United Church of Christ, Bluffton Presbyterian Church, St. Mary's Catholic Church, First United Methodist Church, and ends at First Mennonite Church. The service of worship following the walk begins at noon at FMC.

All are invited to a potluck after church (12:05 p.m.) on Easter Sunday in the fellowship hall. Bring your favorite dish(es) to share as we eat and celebrate together. Contact Walt Paquin, 419-889-1516, if you have any questions.

FMC students attending Mennonite schools and seminaries are eligible for a \$1,000 scholarship for the 2017-18 school year. Apply by contacting FMC Church College Committee members Mark Weidner or Louise Matthews.