

Congregational Discernment: Explore Our Possibilities
February 12, 2017
10:30 a.m.

— **GATHERING** —

Chimes call us to worship Lucia Unrau

Welcome, Announcements, Introductions Chris Moser, Worship Leader

Prelude “Darwall's 148th” arr. Barbara Harbach

***Call to Worship**

***Invocation**

— **PRAISING** —

***Opening Hymn** “Christ is our cornerstone” HWB 43

Testimony Justin Berg

Special Music “O, Be Careful” Traditional
Cherub Choir

Time with Children

Hymn “Vision, Healing and Hope” (*Sing once for coming up*) Back of hymnal

Conversation Shannon Thiebeau

Hymn “Vision, Healing and Hope” (*Sing once for returning*) Back of hymnal

Mentor Recognition

Benjamin Hartzler and Gary Wetherill
Carol Welty, mentor coordinator

Pastoral Prayer

George O'Reilly

— **PROCLAIMING** —

Scripture Deut. 30:15-20; Matt. 5:21-37 Gloria Hernandez Bucher

Sermon “Choose life” Wanda Stopher

***Hymn** “Love the Lord your God” STS 55

— **RESPONDING** —

Presenting Our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory “Give Me Jesus” arr. Anna Laura Page
Adult Bells

***Hymn of Dedication** “Lord, thou dost love” (verse 1) HWB 387

***Prayer of Dedication**

— **SENDING** —

***Hymn** “I heard the voice of Jesus say” HWB 493

***Benediction**

***Postlude**

**Please stand (remain seated if that is more comfortable for you)*
HWB – Hymnal: A Worship Book STS – Sing the Story
Large-print hymnals and bulletins are available on the cabinet next to the parlor.

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: Rich Bucher, Shelby Cluts

HOST: Gloria Bucher

NURSERY WORKERS TODAY: SS – Elaine Suderman, Kathy Traucht, Monica Harnish

Worship – Tom and Sue Schaaf, Mary Ina Hooley

NURSERY WORKERS NEXT WEEK: SS – Lori Nester, Marilyn Bishop, Mitch Kingsley

Worship – Amy Blount, Kevin Cluts, Christopher Harnish

SOUND SYSTEM: Melissa Friesen

CHANCEL: Bev Simon

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	235
Worship attendance at Maple Crest last Sunday	10
Sunday school attendance last Sunday	79
Spending plan giving February 5, 2016	\$10,500.00
2017 spending plan	\$421,146.00

The offering Feb. 5 totaled \$11,232. Money was received for these special funds, K-5th - \$4.25, Faith and Life - \$8, Sojourners - \$29, Freudige - \$29, Connections - \$65, Deacons Benevolent - \$287, Kitchen service - \$14.75, Habitat - \$20, FIRST Night - \$8, College scholarships - \$136, Postage - \$10, Building improvements - \$100.

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

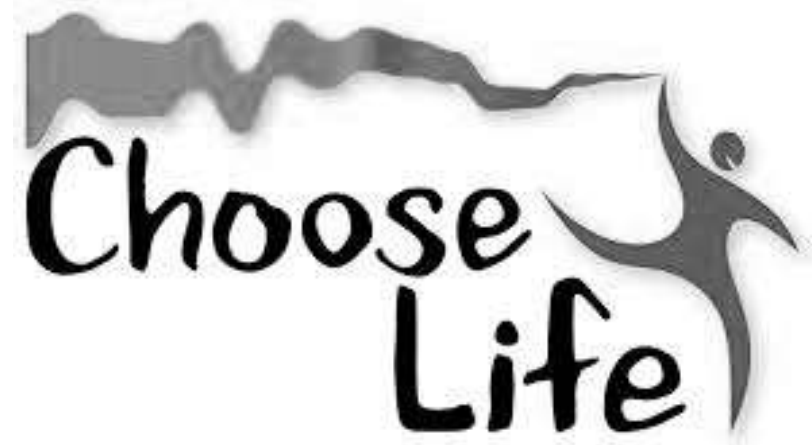
Youth Ministry Director – Shannon Thiebeau – fmc.shannon@bluffton.edu

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.



Detroit project held a closing ceremony on January 26. A story about the celebration and summarizing the flood response work can be found at www.mds.mennonite.net.

Sonic Escape, a Celtic-inspired duo will perform at Bluffton University Thursday, Feb. 16 at 7:30 p.m. Sonic Escape includes Julliard graduates Shawn Wyckoff and Maria Millar, who will be joined by guest cellist Rachel Pinkney. Tickets are available at <http://tickets.bluffton.edu> or Marbeck Center.

Bluffton University's Concert Band will present its winter instrumental concert at 2:30 p.m., Sunday, Feb. 19 in Yoder Recital Hall. The band's performance will include – among other pieces -- “Songs of Paradise” a series of hymns by the African-American composer Charles Albert Tindley, known as the father of African-American hymnody; “Kiwanisca” a march by Stephen Bulla; “Acrostic Song” by David del Tredici.

Mennonite Home Communities of Ohio is accepting applications for the Barbara Fleming Memorial Nursing Scholarship. The scholarship promotes the career of nursing and is available to anyone pursuing a degree as a licensed practical nurse, a registered nurse, or a bachelor of science in nursing. Applications are available at www.mhcoliving.org and clicking on “What’s Happening,” or by contacting Mennonite Memorial Home, 410 W. Elm St., Bluffton, OH 45817; 419-358-1015. Applications must be postmarked and/or returned to the above address by March 31.

Seminary Preview Day: Friday, March 3. Is there someone you’d like to encourage to pursue seminary study? Encourage them to check out **Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary’s Preview Day** or schedule a visit on another date. Visiting our campus in Elkhart, Indiana, is the ideal way to get first-hand information on academic programs, financial aid and scholarships, and to experience life in our learning community. ambs.edu/visit

GRATITUDE AND PRAYERS

Happy Birthday to Treva Stratton, 86, February 19.

Ernie Porzelius was released from the hospital and is now at the Mennonite Memorial Home for rehabilitation. He is in room 205.

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.

TODAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2017

8:30 a.m.	Youth Choir
9:15 a.m.	Sunday school, coffee time
10:30 a.m.	Worship Service, Wanda Stopher preaching
Noon	Sojourners/Freudige

THIS WEEK

Monday (2-13)	Mennonite Women, 7 p.m., parlor
Tuesday (2-14)	Morning prayers, 7 a.m. Staff meeting, 9 a.m., parlor Education, 6:30 p.m., parlor
Wednesday (2-15)	Cherub Choir, Adult Bells, 6 p.m. Jubilate, 6:45 p.m. Youth Bells, Chancel Choir, 7 p.m.
Thursday (2-16)	Congregational Discernment Team, 5 p.m., parlor Community meal, 6 p.m., Senior center Council, 6 p.m., parlor
Friday (2-17)	Menno-Life deadline

NEXT WEEK

8:30 a.m.	Youth choir
9:15 a.m.	Sunday school, coffee time
10:30 a.m.	Worship Service, George O’Reilly preaching

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

Today we will recognize a new mentor/mentee pair in First Mennonite's mentoring program. Gary Wetherill will be the mentor to Benjamin Hartzler, who is in fifth grade. Carol Welty is the mentor coordinator.

Mennonite Women will meet Monday, Feb. 13, at 7 p.m. in the fellowship hall for a program on "Shrinking from Challenge." In preparation, consider asking yourself, "What is our experience with daunting challenges?" Presenter for the evening will be Pastor Wanda Stopher with devotions led by Monica Harnish. Refreshments will be provided by Rhonda Winstead and Fran Core.

FIRST Night will be held Tuesday, Feb. 28. Those attending should bring their own table service. The menu for February 28 will include baked potato bar: choice of white or sweet potato with various toppings, tossed salad, dessert/fruit. Participants of the Women's March on Washington will speak during the program. **A registration table will be set up in the fellowship hall after worship February 19 and 26. Registrations must be paid by noon on the Monday prior to the event.**

-- Susie Gratz, *FIRST Night chair*

We are extending the call for FMC delegates to both Central District Conference and MCUSA. We are seeking eight delegates to attend CDC in Bluffton June 22-24, and we are seeking three delegates to attend MCUSA in Orlando, FL, July 4-8. A small subsidy is available for delegates to MCUSA. If you are interested in being considered as a delegate for either or both conferences, please contact Gerald Mast, moderator-elect, or Kendra Nickel, moderator, by Wednesday, Feb. 15. Church Council will approve the final list of delegates for both conferences on February 16. -- Kendra Nickel

Sometimes we think of giving up something for Lent. At other times we add a practice in order to help us focus on the themes of the season. This year, you are invited to participate with others in a creative venture called Lent Practice. Each Monday, February 20-April 3, in preparation for upcoming Lenten worship, all are invited to gather and share something you've created in response to the prompt each week. We will think about how these creations might be shared in worship during Lent. Please come to Lent Practice Monday, Feb. 20, from

7-8:30 p.m. in fellowship hall. Our theme is "Restore us, O God! We hunger" and Psalm 32. After reading the Psalm, take the ideas, words, images, and feelings and create something that reflects these themes in some way. Write a story, poem, mini-play, song or a piece of music. Draw, sculpt, whittle, paint, sew, knit, crochet, or weld. Use wood, yarn, cloth, clay, rock, marbles, metal, instruments, paper, string, etc...just create! Entering this space of awe and beauty is an act of creativity. So please come, even if you do not have something to share. All are welcome. *See Victoria Woods-Yee or Wanda Stopher if you have questions.*

This is one of a series of "Did You Know" announcements from the Congregational Discernment Team, as we explore the history and live into the future of FMC.

Did You Know...

...100 youth and adults attended the second congregational discernment event on 02-05-17?

...childcare was provided for 12 children?

...64 people attended both the first and second events?

...a total of 129 youth and adults have participated in at least one event so far?

...that our third event will be held following a SHYF fundraiser meal on 02-26-17? *(The soup supper will be held from 5-6 p.m., with the CDT meeting to begin at 6 p.m.)*

SHYF/JHYF: Sunday, February 19 -- Apocalypse When? In this session for both SHYF and JHYF, we will have a special guest, Jackie Wyse-Rhodes. Assistant professor of religion at Bluffton University, Wyse-Rhodes will explain some of the mysteries of apocalyptic scripture. -- Shannon Thiebeau, *director of youth ministries*

Plan to attend the CDC regional gathering March 11 at First Mennonite Church, Wadsworth. The morning will explore the theme of Abounding in Love. . .Abiding in Grace, with input from Open Table Mennonite Fellowship, a story and tour from the host congregation and reporting on MC USA events. After lunch, participants will hear a historical vignette from Camp Friedenswald and discuss faith formation experiences. The Wadsworth church will provide lunch (donations are suggested.) **To help with lunch plans, please notify our church office at 419.358.5766 or fmc@bluffton.edu by Friday, Feb. 24.**

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mennonite Disaster Service – Lynn and Linda Miller will serve with MDS for four weeks in Cleveland, MS through March 3. In March 2016 heavy rain caused serious flooding in this community, about one hour south of Memphis, TN. Lynn will serve as project director and Linda as office manager. The project is coordinated by Region 2 of MDS. Dwight Kauffman continues to serve as the Region 2 Board Chair for MDS. The