

**Fasting: Making Room
First Mennonite Church
July 22, 2018**

Music calls us to worship

Jackie Wyse Rhodes

Welcome and announcements

Introductions

Prelude

Call to Worship

***Opening Hymns**

Jackie Wyse Rhodes

***Responsive Reading**

Psalm 69:10-16 (NRSV)

L: When I humbled my soul with fasting, they insulted me for doing so. When I made sackcloth my clothing, I became a byword to them.

C: I am the subject of gossip for those who sit in the gate, and the drunkards make songs about me. But as for me, my prayer is to you, O Lord.

L: At an acceptable time, O God, in the abundance of your steadfast love, answer me. With your faithful help rescue me from sinking in the mire; let me be delivered from my enemies and from the deep waters.

C: Do not let the flood sweep over me, or the deep swallow me up, or the Pit close its mouth over me.

ALL: Answer me, O Lord, for your steadfast love is good; according to your abundant mercy, turn to me.

Conversation with Friends

“Come and see” (v. 1)

HWB 20

Conversation

Shelby Cluts

“Come and see” (v. 2)

HWB 20

Community Prayer

Theda Good

Scripture

Joel 2:12-14

Sermon

“Return to Me”

Wanda Stopher

***Hymn**

“In the bulb there is a flower”

HWB 614

Presenting our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory

Jackie Wyse Rhodes

***Hymn**

“God, whose giving” – verse 1

HWB 383

***Prayer of Dedication**

***Hymn**

“Thou true Vine, that heals”

HWB 373

Benediction

Postlude

**Please rise in body or in spirit.*

HWB – Hymnal: A Worship Book 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
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

GREETER: Ann Kingsley
NURSERY THIS WEEK: Rachel Diller, Pat Sheidler
Worship – Bruce Steingass and Amy Freeman, Seth Andreas
NURSERY NEXT WEEK: SS – Monica Harnish, Gerald Mast
Worship – Kurt and Sabrina Longworth, Anna Neufeld Weaver
SOUND SYSTEM: Melissa Friesen

OUR STEWARDSHIP

Worship attendance last Sunday	FMC-117, MC-7
Spending plan giving July 15, 2018 (includes e-giving)	\$3,992.00
Special fund giving July 15, 2018 (includes e-giving): K-5-\$3.73; Freudige-\$20	\$2,232.73
Kitchen service-\$4; Flooring-\$155; MVS (Jonatan Moser)-\$50; ISAF-\$2,000	
Total giving July 15, 2018 (includes e-giving)	\$6,224.73
Total spending plan receipts as of June 30, 2018	\$189,473.39
Spending plan expenses as of June 30, 2018	\$198,232.79
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.



Flower Fund at the Mennonite Memorial Home in her name. We find consolation in knowing that one so precious to us was loved by many. ~ Ruth's family

The International Student Assistance Fund assists international students attending Bluffton University with financial needs. Donations may be made to First Mennonite Church and designated for ISAF. There will be a larger number of international students this fall and specific needs have already emerged. Thanks for your support. For more information contact Paul Neufeld Weaver, Lori Nester, or Ivan Friesen.

~ Paul Neufeld Weaver

Ted & Company will perform Boots, Buckets & Barrows Sunday, July 29 at 6:30 p.m. Lockport Mennonite Church, 9269 Co Rd 21 N, Stryker. The event is part theater/part auction, and will raise awareness, funds, and volunteers for Mennonite Disaster Service. Consider bidding on auction items or make a donation. The performance is supported by Lockport Mennonite Church and the Schowalter Foundation, ensuring that all funds raised will benefit the work of MDS.

Join MCC Great Lakes and Center for Community Justice for a week-long Pipeline to Prison learning tour on August 5-10. Based in Goshen, Ind., the tour will focus on the challenges and complexities of the U.S. criminal justice system and include day trips to Elkhart, Peru and Kokomo. Participants will journey from the local community level through the criminal justice system, learning about law enforcement, sentencing, incarceration and re-entry. All who are interested in learning about disparities in the justice system, including those working in or seeking to develop a prison/re-entry ministry, are welcome. For more information and registration visit mcc.org/gl-pipeline-to-prison or contact Cyneatha Millsaps at CyneathaMillsaps@mcc.org or 574-534-4133.

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.

CALENDAR

Today, July 22, 2018

9:15 a.m. SS, coffee time
10:30 a.m. Worship, Wanda Stopher preaching, Middle School cafeteria
6-8 p.m. VBS, First United Methodist Church (today through Thursday)

July 23-28

Tuesday (7-24) Morning Prayers, 7 a.m. (prayer room upstairs)
Staff meeting, 9 a.m.
Thursday (7-26) Deacons, 7 p.m.

Next Sunday, July 29

9:15 a.m. SS, Coffee time
10:30 a.m. Worship, Theda Good preaching
Noon Fundraising meal for Jonatan Moser/voluntary service term with MVS

Reminders:

- Check the new hanging literature racks in the fellowship hall for new items.
- Left-behind kitchen items (i.e. Tupperware containers, bowls, plates, cups) are in the lost and found tub outside the fellowship hall kitchen. Please check now for items that belong to you.

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.

Announcements

You've seen the invitation to sign up for the book we'll be using to guide our life together in various ways as a congregation this coming year, "We Make the Road by Walking" by Brian D. McLaren. Perhaps you've peeked inside, even become curious about ways that you might use the book. On Wednesday, August 1, at 7 p.m. we will hold an organizational meeting for those who want to explore leading a walking circle. This is an exploratory meeting! Come walk with us! Share your ideas and encouragement with others and receive some as well. See Pastors Theda or Wanda for more information.

We have distributed 90 copies of "We Make the Road by Walking." **You may still request your own free copy!** Sign-up sheets are at the back of the middle school cafetorium and in the fellowship hall or you may request one at fmc@bluffton.edu. Information about using the book is available on the literature rack in the fellowship hall.

Sunday morning drivers needed: FMC needs 2-3 additional drivers and helpers for the MHCO bus on Sunday mornings. The bus transports members from Mennonite Memorial Home, Maple Crest and Willow Ridge to the church and back after church. The helper assists passengers on and off the bus. Interested individuals should call or text Mona Reichenbach at 419-230-9187 or call 419-358-6016 or e-mail monalou@roadrunner.com.

Mission happens when congregations fully align themselves with God's purposes. As the missional church movement matures, Anabaptists offer a robust theological tradition, a contemporary spiritual vitality and practical stories of witness to the conversation. We have some copies of "Fully Engaged: Missional Church in an Anabaptist Voice." If you would like a copy, please notify the church office by Monday, July 23, at fmc@bluffton.edu or 419.358.5766.

Vacation Bible School begins today and continues through Thursday, July 26. All money raised this week benefits Abilities Field of Dreams, located on the west end of the campus of University of Northwestern Ohio in Lima. Rachael Staley, a Bluffton University graduate and an early intervention specialist with the Allen County Board of Developmental Disabilities, founded the Disabilities Baseball League in 2003.

In response to local immigration actions, the Mission Peace and Service Commission invites all to consider bringing donations to worship on Sunday, Aug. 5. The most urgent need is for food (rice, dried beans, tortillas and other non-perishables,) laundry detergent, sanitary napkins, toothpaste, shampoo, body soap, and larger diapers (size 4-6.) Items will be distributed through local organizations to families of those who remain in detention or have been deported.

We plan to create a photo history of the sanctuary renovation process. Leah Schroeder is our official photographer, but others may send photos to fmc@bluffton.edu.

Sanctuary renovation schedule:

- Sanctuary painting is complete!
- Ongoing: Pew and chair cleaning and renewal
- July 16: Construction of steps and railings began
- August 6-19: Hardwood flooring put in (front of sanctuary floor and stage area), sanding and clear coating of wood floor under and in balcony
- August 20-25 or 31: Carpet installed and new rubber stairs by Church St. door

Jonatan Moser and friends will host a fundraising meal July 29 in the assembly room to support his work with Mennonite Voluntary Service. Jonatan will serve with MVS in Alamosa, CO, from August 2018–August 2019 as an immigrant assistant case worker and English teacher at the local Immigrant Resource Center. Alamosa's MVS unit is located in the San Luis Valley, a high-altitude, high-poverty rural area in southern Colorado. The population is a blend of traditional Latino and Anglo settlers, plus newer immigrants from Mexico and Guatemala. If you are unable to attend the meal and/or would like to make a contribution you may do so to FMC, designated "MVS–Jonatan" or go to <https://mmngiving.formstack.com/forms/VoluntaryService> (MVS-write in Jonatan Moser) or you can contact Chris Moser or Carmen Ordonez about supporting Jonatan's fundraising goal of an additional \$1,500 for MDS. Jonatan is thankful for direct support already received from FMC and others. We are thankful for your prayers and support in the coming year! ~ *The Moser family*

Central District annual meeting report: A summary of actions taken at the 2018 Annual Meeting is posted on the CDC website at <https://www.mcusacdc.org/annual-meeting-2018/>. Audio files will be posted when they become available.

The family of Ruth Unrau Flick thanks all of those who attended her Celebration of Life (either physically or in spirit) and for the generous contributions made to the