

God, Humanity & New Covenant
Lent Five
March 18, 2018

Chimes call us to worship Jackie Wyse-Rhodes

Welcome and Announcements Lois Wetherill

Prelude Jackie Wyse-Rhodes

***Call to worship**

L: I see you, familiar faces, visitors, and guests. What brings you here?

C: We want to see Jesus.

L: I see you, all who are here for the first time, and all who have returned. What brings you here?

C: We want to see Jesus.

L: I see you and know that each one of you has been invited by God to this house of worship. Thank you for coming. Open your eyes and your hearts, for together we are here with Jesus. Praise the Lord.

***Invocation**

***Opening Hymn** “This is a day of new beginnings” HWB 640

***Confession**

Beloved Protector and Teacher, we need guidance, and sometimes we remember to ask for it. But even as we reach for your hand, we rush off in our own direction. We barely listen to the rules we break. We like to remind ourselves, wherever we are, that you are with us. We forget the proper response: that to serve you, we must follow you. We put conditions on your love, because we don’t want to go to the uncomfortable places where we see ourselves in the other. Forgive us. Hold us close and teach us again to truly live as you love.

***Words of assurance**

Thus says the Lord God, “I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.”

Old Testament Reading Jeremiah 31:31-34 Lois Wetherill

Conversation with Friends
Hymn “Between Me and You” Insert
Conversation Amber Shelly
Hymn “Between Me and You” Insert

(Accompaniment by Harnish family)

Community Prayer (see insert for explanation) Wanda Stopher

Special Music “God So Loved the World” John Stainer
Chancel Choir

Gospel Reading John 12:20-33 Landon Cluts

Sermon “Paying a price” Theda Good

***Hymn of Response** “O Jesus, I have promised” HWB 447

Presenting Our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory Jackie Wyse-Rhodes

***Hymn of Dedication** “We give thee but thine own” (vs. 1&2) HWB 384

***Prayer of Dedication**

***Hymn of Sending** “A charge to keep I have” HWB 393

***Benediction**

Postlude Jackie Wyse-Rhodes

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

**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: fmclubluffton.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: Vickie Laird

GREETER: Ruth Naylor

NURSERY TODAY: SS – Anita and George Lehman

Worship – Amy Blount, Kendra and Ellie Nickel

NURSERY NEXT WEEK: SS – Marilyn Bishop, Pat Sheidler

Worship – Mary Pannabecker Steiner, Julie Mackey, Grace Paquin

SOUND SYSTEM: Art Shelly

CHANCEL: Amber Shelly

The video of the most recent worship service may be viewed on the church’s homepage, www.fmclubluffton.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-177, MC-5
Spending plan giving March 11, 2018 (includes e-giving)	\$8,070.39
Special fund giving March 11, 2018 (includes e-giving): K-5-\$5.21, 6-8-\$3; SHYF-\$200	<u>\$2,222.46</u>
<i>Sojourners-\$34; Freudige-\$130; Faith and Life-\$7; Faithful Living-\$2; Community-\$10</i>	
<i>Kitchen-\$10; Deacons-\$50; Health kits-\$50; Coll scholar-\$60; Capital campaign-\$785</i>	
<i>Easter flowers-\$206.25; Relief kits-\$150; International student asst. -\$500; Habitat-\$20;</i>	
Total giving March 11, 2018 (includes e-giving)	\$10,292.85
Total spending plan receipts as of January 31, 2017	\$42,545.67
Spending plan expenses as of January 31, 2017	\$26,805.89
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.

You are invited to a showing of “Semillas de Paz/Seeds of Peace: The Story of SEMILLA, the Latin American Anabaptist Seminary” followed by a discussion with seminary president Willi Hugo Perez, of Guatemala, Wednesday, March 21 from 7-8 p.m. in Stutzman Lecture Hall at Bluffton University.

Tickets are still available for the barbecue chicken dinner fundraiser for Rally Point, an afterschool ministry for youth in Lima. The dinner will be held Sunday, March 25, from 11:15 a.m.-1:30 p.m. at St. John Mennonite Church, 15988 Road 4, Pandora. Tickets cost \$8 per meal with the options to dine in or carry out. Contact Louise Matthews for tickets.

Dr. Steven M. Nolt will present the 2018 C. Henry Smith Peace Lecture in Bluffton University’s Stutzman Lecture Hall at 11 a.m. Tuesday, March 20. Nolt, senior scholar at the Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies and professor of history and Anabaptist studies at Elizabethtown (PA) College, will discuss military service and conscientious objection in Virginia’s Tidewater area -- home to a concentration of military bases and contractors. Nolt is the author or coauthor of 14 books on Amish, Mennonite, and Pennsylvania German history and contemporary life.

Aaron Williams, founder of Unbound Holdings and CEO of EkoMovers, will present the Forum, “The True Price of Entrepreneurship,” at 11 a.m. March 20 in Yoder Recital Hall. The Cincinnati business owner, real estate investor and BU alumnus will discuss how business ownership impacts communities and the world by creating jobs and opportunities.

PRAYERS AND GRATITUDE

Marilyn Kern, former FMC pastor, died Thursday morning at Willow Ridge. A memorial service will be held today at 2 p.m. at FMC, with refreshments to follow. Her children and their families appreciate your prayers.

Anne Buller was transferred to Blanchard Valley Hospital in Findlay this week for further evaluation. Together, let us hold her in prayer. She appreciates your cards, as well.

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, March 18, 2018

8:30 a.m.	Youth choir
9:15 a.m.	SS, Coffee time
10:30 a.m.	Worship, Theda Good preaching
Noon	Community class potluck

THIS WEEK

Monday (3-19)	Et Cetera board, 7 p.m., parlor
Tuesday (3-20)	Morning Prayers, 7 a.m. Staff meeting, 9 a.m., parlor
Wednesday (3-21)	Cherubs, Adult bells, 6 p.m. Jubilate, 6:30 p.m. Chancel choir, Youth bells, 7 p.m.
Thursday (3-22)	Pastor visit with Maple Crest residents, 2:30 p.m. Deacons, 7 p.m.
Friday (3-23)	Menno-Life deadline

PALM/PASSION SUNDAY

8:30 a.m.	Youth choir
9:15 a.m.	SS, Coffee time
10:30 a.m.	Worship, Communion, Passion reading

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

Communion March 25 and March 29: There are two upcoming opportunities to share communion with others at FMC -- next Sunday, March 25, when we observe Palm/Passion Sunday and on Maundy Thursday, March 29. On Palm/Passion Sunday we will hear the stories of Jesus' final week and of his death. On Maundy Thursday, the service will be in the format of Evening Song and Prayer. Sharing communion together will be an integral part of both services, remembering Jesus' life and death and the ways that Jesus lives among us, the Body of Christ, today. Preparation for communion, especially during this season of Lent, is to take time to examine our life with God and our relationships with one another, and to take action to reconcile wherever that is indicated.

Giving Alms is another aspect of our communion experience. This is done at FMC by giving to the Deacons Benevolent Fund. Almsgiving is a 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. There will be baskets for alms at the entrances to the sanctuary on Palm/Passion Sunday.

Maundy Thursday Song and Prayer: You're invited to join the FMC faith community for this special Evening Song and Prayer on Thursday, March 29. The service will offer the opportunity to receive communion together as a community of faith. Following communion there will be other opportunities for celebrating our common life together, such as singing, candle lighting, anointing, foot washing, and prayer. Participants will be invited to engage one or all of these options. Planners have been especially mindful of offering ways children might participate in all aspects of this service. Childcare is also available. Please note that the time has changed from what was announced in the Lenten brochure. The service **will begin at 6:30 p.m.** instead of 8 p.m.

All are invited to attend the Easter Brunch at 9:15 a.m. Sunday, April 1, in the fellowship hall. Please bring food to share: breakfast casseroles, fruit, breads, coffee cakes, muffins, cookies, etc. Coffee, tea, and juice will be provided. Please bring your own table service. There will be no Sunday school that morning.

The service group of the Mennonite Home Communities of Ohio will hold an Easter bake sale on Saturday, March 24, from 9 a.m.-noon. The bake sale features a variety of home-made goods including cinnamon rolls, cakes, pies, noodles and breads. The event will be held in the Mennonite Memorial Home lobby. Please sign up in the fellowship hall to donate items to the bake sale and/or to make a monetary donation.

On Easter Sunday, April 1, the Chancel Choir will sing Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus." We invite anyone to join us in singing on that Sunday. So, if interested, just come to rehearsal on Wednesday, March 28, at 7:15 p.m. in the sanctuary. We will have music for you or bring your own copy. -- Mark Suderman

Unsigned notes: Periodically the church office and/or a staff member receives unsigned notes commenting on a concern or problem here at First Mennonite. When we don't know who's delivering a message, we are unable to ask questions or to follow up. Therefore, please understand that we will not act on anonymous notes. We do appreciate your concerns in writing with your signature or shared in person. -- FMC Staff

Pastors' Office Hours and contact information:

Wanda -- Monday-Thursday, 9-4, off Friday; fmc.wanda@bluffton.edu; 419-551-1079

Theda -- Tuesday-Friday, 9-4, off Monday; fmc.theda@bluffton.edu; 419-549-2417

Please contact a pastor by e-mail or phone to schedule an appointment. Calling ahead is strongly encouraged. **Wanda** takes Friday as a Sabbath rest from work -- including emails. She responds only in emergencies on Friday. **Theda** takes Monday as a Sabbath rest from work -- including emails. She responds only in emergencies on Monday.

The Senior Concerns Committee has decided that since its purpose is caring for many and not only seniors, it would be appropriate to change the name to "Caring Connections." This emphasizes the goal of caring for others and making connections which is one of our "Five Priorities" as a congregation.

Lima Area Habitat ReStore, 550 W. Elm St., is in need of additional volunteers. Jobs for volunteers include customer service, product preparation, cashier, donation pick-up, maintenance, and cleaning. One-time volunteers are very welcome, but regular volunteers are especially needed -- even if it is for just a couple of hours one or two days a week. Please sign up at www.habitatlima.org/volunteer/ or call the Habitat office at 419-222-4937.

Bluffton University Chorale and Camerata Singers will perform "March Madrigal Madness," a concert at 2:30 p.m. today in Yoder Recital Hall. This concert of secular music will trace the history of the madrigal and will feature compositions by Hans Leo Hassler, Thomas Morley, Orlando di Lasso and John Dowland.