

“Restore us, O God! We thirst”

March 19, 2017

10:30 a.m.

— GATHERING —

Chimes call us to worship

LuAnn Stuckey

Welcome, Announcements

Ruth Naylor, Worship Leader

*** Call to Worship (based on Psalm 95:1-7)**

L: Come, let’s sing to the Lord with joy.

C: Let’s come before him with thanks!

L: The Lord is a great God, the great king over all others gods. He is the rock of our salvation.

C: The earth’s depths and the mountain heights belong to him.

L: The sea, which he made, is his along with the dry ground, which his own hands formed.

C: Let’s worship with hearts bowed before the Lord, our maker.

L: He is our God.

C: And we are his people.

All: Let’s listen for his voice right now and in all the days ahead!

***Invocation**

— PRAISING —

***Opening Hymn**

“O come, loud anthems let us sing”

HWB 68

***Confession and Reconciling**

Confession (based on Exodus 17: 1-7)

L: O God, *you* are the living Water. You restore us to life. We confess that in the desert moments of our lives we forget your faithfulness. Our bodies grow tired; our hearts dry up. Our minds become clouded and we do not remember that you are our deliverer.

C: When we see the dryness behind and before us, we quarrel among ourselves and burden one another. We cry out: “Is the Lord even among us?”

L: Forgive us, O Lord, for in the harshness of life’s desert journey we quickly focus on ourselves. We forget that you have been, you are, and you will forever be our deliverer.

C: Restore in us a remembering spirit, that we may hope in you again. Renew our hearts, O Lord. Make us generous in our praise, that we may worship you anew!

(Pause for silent confession)

L: God, our living Water,

All: restore us.

L: Let all who thirst, come. Come and drink from the living Water. Let all who have nothing, come to the Lord. Come without money or price. Come and draw freely from the well of our Lord, which will never run dry.

***Confessing Response**

“Save us, O Lord” (*refrain/v. 1/refrain*)

STS 6

Pastoral Prayer

Gloria Bucher

— PROCLAIMING —

Special Music

“Unexpected and Mysterious”

Jeannette M. Lindholm

Jubilate

Time with Children

Hymn

“Come to me, come to us” (*vs. 1 for coming forward*) STS 60

Conversation

Shelby and Kevin Cluts

Hymn

“Come to me, come to us” (*vs. 2 for returning*) STS 60

Gospel Reading

John 4:5-42 (selected verses)

Annalise Nisly

George O’Reilly

Reflection

“The Other Woman at the Well”

Joanne Niswander

Sermon

“Wadis, Water, Wells, and Fountains”

George O’Reilly

— RESPONDING —

***Hymn**

“Jesus, Rock of ages” (sing twice)

HWB 515

Presenting Our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory

“My Shepherd Will Supply My Need”

A.L. Page

***Hymn of Dedication**

“Take my life” (*vs. 4*)

HWB 389

— SENDING —

***Hymn**

“Lord, I am fondly, earnestly”

HWB 514

***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: Senior High Sunday school

HOST: Senior High Sunday school

NURSERY WORKERS TODAY: SS – Shelby Cluts, Kathy Traucht, Mary Pannabecker Steiner

Worship – Bruce Steingass, Amy Freeman, Sunita Hooley

NURSERY WORKERS NEXT WEEK: SS – John and Julie Mackey, Tig Intagliata

Worship – Kristen Niekamp, Kevin Cluts, Mary Ina Hooley

SOUND SYSTEM: Melissa Friesen

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	150
Worship attendance at Maple Crest last Sunday	4
Sunday school attendance last Sunday	42
Spending plan giving March 12, 2017	\$10,648.00
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 March 12 totaled \$11,102.43. Money was received for these special funds, K-5th - \$5.78, Sojourners - \$33, Faith and Life - \$8, Deacons Benevolent - \$20, Kitchen service - \$5.35, FIRST Night - \$8, Habitat - \$50, Rejoice - \$32, SHYF Fundraiser - \$1,140, Memorials - \$165, Easter flowers - \$52, College scholarships - \$36, Community class - \$1, Transitions - \$18.30.

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.



adjunct professor of music and staff accompanist, will accompany the choir on both piano and organ. A number of student instrumentalists will also perform on some of the pieces. These instruments will include a trumpet, saxophone and flute. Camerata will also perform at various locations during the group's two mini-tours in March and April.

An exhibit titled "Viewer Discretion Advised," featuring works by senior art students at Bluffton University is on display through March 24 in Sauder Visual Arts Center. An artists' reception will be held from 1-3 p.m. today. **Justin Neufeld-Weaver, a member of FMC, is one of the artists with work in the display.** The others include Tracy Cook, Defiance; Anna Hairston, Mansfield; Mackenzie Hoeckley, Santa Barbara, Calif.; Courtney Rettig, Bluffton; Aaron Ward, Toledo.

Do you enjoy mentoring young adults and living in community? Service Adventure is looking for unit leaders for the Colorado Springs, Colorado, and Jackson, Mississippi, units. The two-year term begins late July. If you are interested, please contact Susan Nisly at SusanN@MennoniteMission.net or visit us at www.MennoniteMission.net.

GRATITUDE AND PRAYERS

Happy birthday to Corrinne Boehr, March 23, and Linda Suter, March 28.

Happy anniversary to Sharon and Carlin Carpenter, 56th, March 23.

Ann Shumaker was admitted to St. Rita's Medical Center on Monday in the cardiac care unit. She is recovering well and appreciates prayers for continued healing.

Phyllis Bixel died March 4 in Freeman, S.D. Phyllis and her husband, James, lived in Bluffton and were members of First Mennonite from 1960-90, when they moved to Freeman to be near their daughters, Sara Schrag and Mary Waltner. An obituary is available at <http://www.blufftonicon.com/news/2017/03/14/former-bluffton-resident-phyllis-bixel-was-94>.

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 19, 2017

8:30 a.m.	Youth Choir
9:15 a.m.	Sunday school, coffee time
10:30 a.m.	Worship Service, George O'Reilly preaching
Noon	Community class potluck
	Catechism
4:30 p.m.	Harry Potter mystery dinner, FH (reservations required)

THIS WEEK

Monday (3-20)	Lent Practice, 7 p.m., FH, childcare will be provided Et Cetera Board, 7 p.m., AR
Tuesday (3-21)	Morning prayers, 7 a.m. Staff meeting, 9 a.m., parlor Adriel, 9:30 a.m., library CDC, 2-4 p.m., parlor
Wednesday (3-22)	Cherub Choir, Adult Bells, 6 p.m. Jubilate, 6:45 p.m. Youth Bells, Chancel Choir, 7 p.m.
Thursday (3-23)	Maple Crest meeting with pastor, 2:30 p.m., MC Congregational Discernment Team, 5 p.m., parlor Deacons, 7:30 p.m., parlor

NEXT WEEK

8:30 a.m.	Youth choir
9:15 a.m.	Sunday school, coffee time
10:30 a.m.	Worship Service, Wanda Stopher 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

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

Thank you to Carolyn Rich, who created today's bulletin cover and offers this commentary: "The Samaritan woman at the well is a story about breaking boundaries ... boundaries of race, sex, religion and morality. The bitter rivalry between Judah and the area around Samaria was fierce, leading to war. Prejudices developed that kept the Jews in constant tension with Samaritans because of race, religion and intermarriage. Bishop John Spong suggests that the woman is not real, but a symbol of Samaria itself, referring to the gods served by the five resettled nations. 'Living water' is a synonym for the Spirit that binds human life together. Water can break through rock over time to release flowing streams and waterfalls. Different streams of water merge and cannot be isolated, but flow together in harmony. As it falls, it reaches out in concentric circles. Like water, Christ's Spirit flows through us to the world."

Church Council is pleased to announce the formation of the new pastoral search committee. The committee's members are: Shelby Cluts (Chair), Isaac Andreas, Jean Miller, Brent Schroeder, Mary Anne Moser, Kevin King and Melissa Friesen. Remember them often in your prayers as they begin the work of calling our new associate pastor.

Lent Practice: All are invited to join in a creative venture called Lent Practice. Each Monday through April 3, we'll gather and share something we've each created in response to the prompt each week. The prompts for Monday, March 20 are: "Restore us, O God! We breathe." Psalm 130; John 11:1-45. All creations are welcome. Entering this space of awe and beauty with us is an act of creativity in itself. Come to one or come to all! Get creative! (Please come even if you do not have something to share.)

- Write a song, piece of music, story or poem
- Draw, sculpt, whittle, paint, sew, knit, crochet or weld
- Use wood, yarn, cloth, clay, marbles, metal, paper or string

See the display case in the entrance stairway for some of the creative work of Lent Practice 2017. This display changes each week in conjunction with the scriptures and theme of worship.

Final call to order Easter flowers: If you wish to order flowers in memory or honor of a loved one, please complete the order insert and submit to the church office with your payment. **The deadline to submit your order is Monday, March 20.**

Photo op! A pictorial directory can greatly enhance fellowship by helping us know each other. We need 2-3 volunteers to help with a greatly simplified process to produce an updated directory. If curious, please call or text Pastor George at 402-619-7099.

Youth Auction: SHYF will hold an auction in late April to raise funds for the 2017 Orlando Youth Convention. We are asking you to donate goods, services, or experiences to be auctioned off. Examples of items from past youth auctions have included instrument lessons, a home-cooked gourmet meal, an afternoon of yard work, baked goods, custom art work and an airplane ride. More details about the auction to come soon.

FIRST Night will be held Tuesday, March 28 at 6 p.m. Carol Welty and participants in the mentor program will provide pizza, tossed salad, chips, cookies/bars and soft drinks. Those attending should bring their own table service. A registration table will be set up in the fellowship hall March 19 and 26. **Registrations must be paid by noon Monday March 27.** This will be the final FIRST Night for this church year.

Hygiene Kits -- MCC has made an urgent call for hygiene kits! We presently have 44 kits. Can we get 200 kits? (We are planning on ending this drive by the end of April.)

Hygiene Kit Contents - NEW items, in original packaging

- 1 adult-size toothbrush (individually wrapped)
- 1 large bar bath soap
- 1 fingernail clipper (good quality)
- 1 hand towel (dark color)

Content lists, bags, and fabric and directions for sewing bags are presently on the table and bulletin board by the library.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bluffton University's Camerata Singers will perform at 7:30 p.m. today at Bluffton University's Yoder Recital Hall. "Hymns and Songs of the Church" is the theme of the program, conducted by Dr. Mark J. Suderman, professor of music and director of choral activities at Bluffton. The program will feature sacred choral music from the Renaissance period to the present, including music from a variety of styles and genres: gospel music, choruses from major works, spirituals, hymn arrangements and more. Ana Yoder Coulter,