

**One More Parable
November 19, 2017
10:30 a.m.**

–GATHERING –

Chimes call us to worship		Deb Niswander
Welcome, Announcements, Introductions		Greg Ring
Prelude	“Waltz” <i>Ben Hartzler, violin</i>	Brahms
Call to worship		
*Opening Hymn	“There’s a wideness in God’s mercy”	HWB 145
*Responsive Reading		Psalm 123

L: To you I lift up my eyes, O you who are enthroned in the heavens!

C: As the eyes of servants look to the hand of their master, as the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look to the Lord our God, until he has mercy upon us.

L: Have mercy upon us, O Lord, have mercy upon us, for we have had more than enough of contempt.

All: Our soul has had more than its fill of the scorn of those who are at ease, of the contempt of the proud.

Special Music	“Shukuru” <i>Youth Choir</i>	Sudanese Worship Chorus
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– PRAISING –

Conversation with Friends		
Hymn	“With happy voices singing” (vs. 1)	HWB 83
Conversation		George O’Reilly
Hymn	“With happy voices singing” (vs. 3)	HWB 83

Special Music	“Let Your Mercy Be on Us” <i>Chancel Choir</i>	Marty Haugen
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Pastoral Prayer		George O’Reilly
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Scripture	Matthew 25:14-30	Lawrence Matthews
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Sermon	“Two Truths and a Lie”	Wanda Stopher
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*Hymn	“Lord, whose love in humble service”	HWB 369
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Presenting our Tithes and Offerings

Stewardship Testimony		Darryl Nester
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Offertory	“River in Judea” <i>Jubilate and Youth Choir</i>	
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Hymn	“Praise God from whom” (vs. A)	HWB 119
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– SENDING –

*Sending Hymn	“O breathe on me, O breath of God”	STJ 46
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***Benediction**

*Postlude	“Sent Forth by God’s Blessing”	arr. Douglas Wagner
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**Please stand (remain seated if that is more comfortable for you.)
HWB – Hymnal: A Worship Book STJ – Sing the Journey
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: 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.-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: Bev Simon

HOST: Ruth Naylor

NURSERY WORKERS TODAY: SS – Kathy Traucht, Monica Harnish

Worship – Amy Blount, Andrea Goings, Sunita Hooley

NURSERY WORKERS NEXT WEEK: SS – Anita and George Lehman

Worship – Kristen Niekamp, Sarah Phillips, Christopher Harnish

SOUND SYSTEM: Art Shelly

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	FMC-213, MC-9
Spending plan giving Nov. 12, 2017 (includes e-giving)	\$6,567.00
Special fund giving Nov. 12, 2017: <i>Grades K-5-\$7.41, Freudige-\$10</i>	<u>\$10,506.91</u>
<i>Faith and Life-\$13, Sojourners-\$15; Deacons-\$20, Menno subs-\$252</i>	
<i>Cap Camp Flooring-\$9,805, Kitchen-\$8.50, College schol-\$36</i>	
<i>Habitat-\$240, Syrian student-\$100</i>	
Total giving Nov. 12, 2017 (includes e-giving)	\$17,073.91
Total spending plan receipts as of October 31, 2017	\$312,066.11
Spending plan expenses as of October 31, 2017	\$335,390.00
2017 spending plan	\$421,146.00

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 – 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.



comforters were knotted in the two days. Twenty nine people contributed knots, five of whom came from Grace Mennonite and one from Salem Mennonite.

There are two current needs at the Lima Habitat for Humanity ReStore:

1. Once a month continuing commitment for 2-4 hours: This would involve 3-5 people organizing and tidying up the showroom floor. (If we would have four churches do this and each choose a different week of the month, the ReStore would always be kept in a pristine condition that encourages shoppers to more fully enjoy and support Habitat for Humanity through their purchases.)
2. One time commitment for 2-4 hours: This would involve any number of people or even a Sunday school class to organize and clean the back storage room. (The ReStore is preparing to refurbish its showroom floor in February and space is needed to store numerous items.)

Contact Mark Suderman, Volunteer Coordinator at mark@habitatlima.org or 419-230-5368.

GRATITUDE AND PRAYERS

A memorial service for Betty Sommer was held November 13 at FMC. We offer continuing prayers for Jen, Darby, Bodey and Barrett, and Matt and Emily.

Keith and Esther Brauen are thankful that although Keith experienced a TIA on November 13 and a short stay at St. Rita’s Medical Center, he is doing well, has received some new innovative medicines, and has returned home. They appreciate continued prayers.

Keith and Esther Brauen celebrated 70 years of marriage on November 6, 20017. An open house in their honor will be held at Ebenezer Mennonite Church on Friday, Nov. 24 from 2- 4 p.m. followed by a family celebration. No gifts please. They are the parents of Julie (John) Mackey and the grandparents of Laura (Greg) Hartzler and Amy Blount of our congregation.

To my First Mennonite Church family: Thank you so much for your thoughts and prayers, your understanding, your cards and hugs at the death of Bob on October 27.

-- Fran Core and family

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, NOVEMBER 19, 2017

8:15 a.m.	Youth choir
9:15 a.m.	Sunday school, coffee hour
10:30 a.m.	Worship, Wanda Stopher preaching
Noon	SHYF fundraiser lunch, FH

THIS WEEK

Tuesday (11-21)	Morning prayers, 7 a.m. Staff meeting, 9 a.m.
Wednesday (11-22)	Bulletin deadline, noon Menno-Life deadline, noon Adult bells, Cherubs, 6 p.m. Chancel choir, youth bells, 7 p.m.
Thursday (11-23)	THANKSGIVING, OFFICE CLOSED Thanksgiving dinner, noon, FH, all welcome
Friday (11-24)	Bixel family reunion, all day, FH
Saturday (11-25)	Schrock family Thanksgiving, all day, FH

NEXT SUNDAY

8:15 a.m.	Youth choir
9:15 a.m.	Sunday school, coffee hour
10:30 a.m.	Worship, Communion, Wanda Stopher preaching

Two Truths and a Lie:

- Four servants may be found in today’s text, Matthew 25:14-30.
- The rich get richer and the poor get poorer in God’s economy.
- It is truth that comes out of the mouth of the third servant.

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

The SHYF will hold a pasta bar fundraiser meal for their summer service trip after worship today. We hope to see you there!

Throughout November as part of worship we will hear Stewardship Testimonies from individuals in our congregation who give of themselves and their gifts in a whole variety of ways. We will end the month with Stewardship Sunday on November 26.

Early deadlines:

- 1.) Because of the holiday, the deadline to submit items for the Sunday, Nov. 26 bulletin is 3 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 22.
- 2.) The deadline to submit items for the December Menno-Life is noon on Wednesday, Nov. 22.

Communion November 26: Next Sunday, we will observe communion in our worship service. Preparing for communion is to take time to examine one's life and relationships with God and with our sisters and brothers, the body of Christ. It is an opportunity to tend our relationships with others. Unity within the body of Christ is one of the themes of communion. Another theme is the giving of alms. 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. There will be baskets at each of the doors next week.

Sunday, Dec. 10 - Potluck and time of thanks for Pastor George O'Reilly: Pastor George is nearing the end of his term with us as pastoral associate. He arrived in June of 2016 and concludes December 31, 2017. Let's celebrate his FMC pastoral work with a potluck and time of sharing. Please bring a food item and dinnerware. There will be an open mic time after the potluck. Feel free to do a skit, poem or reflection as a group or individual. Please inform Chris Moser of your plans for the event at moserbus@gmail.com.
-- Nurture Commission

Evening Song and Prayer is a contemplative service of worship at the end of the day, when we sing our prayers and pray our songs. With song and in silence we will intercede for the world, the church, our community, our loved ones and ourselves. The service lasts

about 45 minutes. Please join us for Evening Song and Prayer in the fellowship hall on November 29 at 8:15 p.m. See Pastor Wanda if you have questions.

The Stewardship Commission is excited to announce the kick-off of Flooring to Flourishing! This yearlong capital campaign will fund a plan for updating and improving our sanctuary space. The project features new flooring, redesigned steps at the front of the church, new hymnal racks to hold all of our singing resources, and patching and paint throughout our worship space. Our goals are twofold: to raise \$56,000 and to achieve 100 percent participation. With your help, at just \$1 a day for the next 365 days, we can reach our goal. As you contemplate your financial contributions to FMC for the remainder of 2017 and for the upcoming 2018 year, consider giving to both the capital campaign and the spending plan. Intent cards for consideration of your giving to the 2018 Spending Plan are in mailboxes. *There is also now a fund specification of Capital Campaign on our Vanco online giving site, listed in the "Miscellaneous" section.*

Flooring to Flourishing is an extension of the work of a committee which began meeting over a year ago. Their work was communicated on several occasions including Mike Edmiston's presentation of design drawings by daughter Jessica at a FIRST Night gathering in January, and was processed in various ways through Trustees, Stewardship and Church Council. You will find a letter and pledge card in your church mailbox with more details. Feel free to ask any Stewardship Commission member if you have questions.

To Styrofoam or not to Styrofoam? Because the EPA and the International Agency for Research on Cancer consider styrene* a possible human carcinogen, we are trying to eliminate all Styrofoam from the church kitchens. Can you help? Please don't donate any Styrofoam cups or plates to any church activities or leave any extra Styrofoam-ware in the kitchens for others to use. In the meantime, we still have a few Styrofoam items left in the kitchens from earlier times that we are slowly trying to use up. Thank you for your help with this.

The Kitchen Trio
(*Styrofoam is foamed polystyrene. Source: Wikipedia entry "Styrofoam.")

All are welcome to join with FMC family for a Thanksgiving meal. We will eat at noon on Thursday, Nov. 23 in the fellowship hall at FMC. Please contact Lori Nester to reserve a spot and sign up to bring something (nesterl@bluffton.edu or 419-358-9650.) Donations will be received to cover additional costs of the meal (turkey and misc.) with surplus funds being donated to the Deacons Benevolent Fund at FMC.

Thank you to all who helped with comforter knotting November 13-14. Most of the comforter tops knotted were created by Wanda Stopher as part of her 60 by 60 project (60 comforter tops created by age 60.) Even Wanda's parents joined us to help. A total of 13