

**FIRST MENNONITE CHURCH**  
**Weekly Announcements 1-3-2021**

**First Mennonite Church, 101 S. Jackson Street, Bluffton, Ohio 45817**  
**419-358-5766 | [fmcbluffton.org](http://fmcbluffton.org) | Staff working from home**

- **Pastor Wanda Stopher – Monday-Thursday, off Friday, 419-551-1079, [wanda@fmcbluffton.org](mailto:wanda@fmcbluffton.org)**
- **Pastor Jeff Boehr – T, F; 419-236-9150, [jeff@fmcbluffton.org](mailto:jeff@fmcbluffton.org)**
- **Children and Youth Ministry Director – Carrie Mast, 419-230-1568, [mastc@bluffton.edu](mailto:mastc@bluffton.edu)**
- **Director of Music – Mark Suderman, 419-230-5368 (cell), [sudermanme@bluffton.edu](mailto:sudermanme@bluffton.edu)**
- **Administrative Assistant – Mary Pannabecker Steiner, 419-358-5766, [fmc@fmcbluffton.org](mailto:fmc@fmcbluffton.org)**

**Sunday, Jan. 3, 2021**

Children's Zoom, 9 a.m., <https://zoom.us/j/93359681335>

Sojourners, Zoom, 9:15 a.m., <https://zoom.us/j/4193583208>

Faithful Living, Zoom, 9:30 a.m., <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85741872049?pwd=NG1UcWlyOVJ6RUg4TUdHTE5Wa0lKZz09>

Race and Ethnicity, Zoom, 9:15 a.m.,  
<https://zoom.us/j/92632252996>

SHY, Zoom, 9:30 a.m.

Worship, Wanda Stopher preaching, 10:30 a.m.

Virtual fellowship hall conversation, Zoom, 11:30-12:15,  
<https://zoom.us/j/93482279238>

Learning circle, Zoom, 6 p.m., <https://zoom.us/j/4193585766>

**Jan. 4-9**

Tuesday, Jan. 5 Morning prayers, Zoom, 7 a.m.,  
<https://zoom.us/j/93803392337>

Staff meeting, 9 a.m., Zoom

Wednesday, Jan. 7 JHY, Zoom, 7 p.m.

**Sunday, Jan. 10, 2020**

Children's Zoom, 9 a.m.; Sojourners 9:15 a.m.; Faithful Living, 9:30 a.m.; Race and Ethnicity, 9:15 a.m.; SHY, 9:30 a.m.

Worship, David Boshart (AMBS) preaching, 10:30 a.m.

Virtual FH conversation, 11:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m.

Congregational meeting, Zoom, 1 p.m.

Learning circle, Zoom, 6 p.m.

**Happy Birthday!**

Jan. 5 – Larry Diller

Rhonda Winstead

Jan. 6 – Jim Benner

Bret Stopher

Jan. 8 – Gloria Bucher

Jan. 10 – Milena King

**2020 has been a year** of uncertainty and opportunity. Covid 19 has struck with incredible force locally and globally. You and the larger church have generously responded in many ways. Together Everence, MDS, and MCC made \$500,000 available to churches and their communities. The possibility that we might get another stimulus check gives each of us the opportunity to think about what we might do with it. One option is to give to the FMC deacons' benevolent fund to serve needs in our church and community. You may do so through FMC's e-giving site or by writing "deacons' benevolent fund" on your contribution envelope. To share more broadly, you may give directly to the COVID-19 Congregational Relief Fund at <https://www.everence.com/resource/s/covid19-congregational-relief-fund>. We encourage you to inform pastors Wanda and Jeff of needs in Bluffton and the surrounding communities. Contact John Rich or Rich Bucher if you have questions or comments.

**Bulletin cover:** Carolyn Rich submitted this colored pencil drawing of light and colors bursting forth from a single vanishing point of brightness -- a wonderful visual representation of Epiphany. Carolyn writes of the contrast between light and dark: "Black and dark colors have a bad reputation. Old movies showed the good guy wearing white and the villain in black... [However, we know that] light colors appear much brighter when contrasted with the dark. Could we really appreciate a sunny day if we didn't have cloudy, dismal days for comparison? I'm glad Advent comes at the darkest time of the year. It makes us reach toward the glorious light announcing God in a new form."

### **More new news**

**Thank you to all those** who led, facilitated, recorded, edited videos of worship, read scripture, or in any other way made worship possible this Advent. 2020 Advent worship planners were Walt Paquin, Carrie Phillips, Anne Marie Spelman, Mark Suderman, Gary Wetherill, and Wanda Stopher.

**Did you know that Grace Paquin** received \$1,000 as an Everence College Scholarship recipient for the 2020-2021 academic year? Congratulations Grace! Applications for 2021-2022 school year are due on March 10, 2021. For further information, contact Rich Bucher, FMC's Everence Advocate.

**The Racial Justice Ministry** will have an open conversation on Monday, Jan. 11 at 7 p.m., to hear about experiences Black university students have had in Bluffton. Tyson Goings, BU director of residence life and Quincy Salcido, admissions counselor, will participate. All are welcome. The meeting link is <https://zoom.us/j/96516134635>. If you have questions, call George Lehman at 419-230-0952 or Jan Wiebe at 419-909-0826.

**Spend MLK Day** learning about justice issues at a statewide conference on bail reform being held via Zoom on Monday, Jan. 18, hosted by ACLU Ohio. The Racial Justice Ministry is working with a Lima group exploring pre-trial justice with a goal of reducing wealth-based detention. Registration must be completed by January 4 at: <https://action.aclu.org/webform/oh-bail-reform-now-statewide-conference-2021-0118>.

### **Reminders**

**A brief congregational meeting** will be held via Zoom on Sunday, Jan. 10, at 1 p.m. to approve the following motion to amend the constitution: *Amend Bylaw IA1 to allow Associate Members to serve in Leadership Circle and as delegates to conference and denominational meetings as follows. In Bylaw I, section A, number 2, strike the following clause from the second sentence: "except they may not become members of Leadership Circle nor represent the church as delegates to Central District Conference or Mennonite Church USA."* Join the meeting at <https://zoom.us/j/96805375586> or by phone at +1 646 558 8656.

**Race and Ethnicity in Ohio: a Brief History:** Led by Perry Bush, this new Sunday school class will meet from 9:15-10:15 a.m. Sunday, beginning January 3 and will run at least five weeks. Perry will outline the history of African Americans and Latinos/Latinas in Ohio, with a focus on their arrival in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and then developments in these communities since then. He will share insights from his research and writing in these areas, including the African American history of Lima and the development of the Latino farmworker struggle in rural northwest Ohio. The subject matter should serve to prod as grist for theological and spiritual discussion by class members, which is the central goal of the class. Join at <https://zoom.us/j/92632252996> or call +1-646-558-8656.

**2021 contribution envelopes:** Contribution envelopes for 2021 are on order but have not yet arrived. Until we receive the new envelopes, you may take a few from the box of envelopes located on the table in front of the Camp Friedenswald pillar in the fellowship hall. Dates and numbers have been blacked out on these envelopes. **Note:** The new envelopes for 2021 will differ in that they are not dated, allowing us to order in bulk and to use for multiple years. Please contact the church office at [fmc@fmclubluffton.org](mailto:fmc@fmclubluffton.org) or 419.358.5766 and let us know how many envelopes you would like for 2021.

**Looking for contact information** of someone listed in our directory? We regularly update the directory, which is accessible from the church website. It is password protected so if you don't have the password, request it from the church office. We can provide it verbally or by text to your phone. If you are unable to access the online directory, we can provide a print copy.

### **Our connections**

**Camp Friedenswald** has announced new Winter Getaway dates. Camp will provide a cozy cabin, hiking trails, winter activities, hot meals delivered to your door, and your own campfire. Learn more at <https://friedenswald.org/camp-getaways/>.