

FIRST MENNONITE CHURCH

Weekly Announcements 12-15-2019

First Mennonite Church, 101 S. Jackson Street, Bluffton, Ohio 45817
419-358-5766 | fmcbluffton.org | Office open 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Monday-Friday

- Pastor Wanda Stopher – Monday-Thursday, 9-4, off Friday, 419-551-1079; wanda@fmcbluffton.org
- Pastor Theda Good – Tuesday-Friday, 9-4, off Monday; 419-549-2417; theda@fmcbluffton.org
- Children and Youth Ministry Director – Carrie Mast, M-F, 8-11 a.m., mastc@bluffton.edu
- Director of Music – Mark Suderman, 419-230-5368 (cell); sudermanme@bluffton.edu
- Administrative Assistant – Mary Pannabecker Steiner, fmc@fmcbluffton.org
- Custodian – Mick Hardy, M-F, weekends as needed

Sunday, Dec.15, 2019

- 8:30-9:30 a.m. Pancake breakfast fundraiser, FH
9:15 a.m. SS, coffee time
9:45 a.m. Children's Christmas program, sanctuary
10:30 a.m. Worship, Wanda Stopher preaching
5:30 p.m. FMC learning circle, AR
6:30 p.m. Caroling, Mennonite Memorial Home, snacks afterward at FMC

Dec. 16-22

- Monday (Dec. 16) Et Cetera board, 7 p.m., AR
Tuesday (Dec. 17) Morning prayers, 7 a.m.
Staff meeting, 9 a.m., parlor
Wednesday (Dec. 18) Cherubs, Adult bells, 6 p.m.
Jubilate, 6:30 p.m.
Chancel choir, youth bells, 7 p.m.
Thursday (Dec. 19) Bulletin deadline, 9 a.m.
Evening prayers, 4:30 p.m., prayer room
Deacons, 7 p.m., parlor
Sunday (Dec. 22) SS, coffee time, 9:15 a.m.
Worship, Wanda Stopher preaching, 10:30 a.m.
FMC learning circle, 5:30 p.m.

Happy birthday!!

- 12-17 Ray Person
12-21 Bobbie Chappell
12-22 Gene Long

Christmas/New Year's brunch

The annual Christmas/NY brunch will be held Sunday, Dec. 29 at 9:15 a.m. in the fellowship hall. Please bring food to share: breakfast casseroles, fruit, breads, coffee cakes, muffins, cookies. Coffee, tea, and juice will be provided. **Please bring your own table service.** There will be no Sunday school that morning.

-- Nurture Commission

Save the date!

Hymnal celebration and fundraiser

- Sunday, Jan. 12 at 4 p.m. in the First Mennonite Church sanctuary
- Enjoy singing hymns from our present hymnal and supplements, as well as singing new hymns from the "Voices Together" hymnal that will be out in fall 2020
- Listen to many FMC musicians and ensembles
- Please consider offering a generous monetary gift to support this new purchase
- Childcare provided

Entering into December, the gap between our 2019 Spending Plan Receipts and our 2019 Spending Plan Expenses was almost \$42,000. Last week we closed a \$58,000 money market account. With \$25,000 from that account, we opened a new money market account through Everence, which will obtain a higher interest rate. The remaining \$33,000 will remain in our checking account to help bridge the \$42,000 gap between our Spending Plan receipts and expenses. Using our cash reserves is not sustainable, so as was shared at the Spending Plan meeting in October and again at the Congregational meeting in November, the 2020 Spending Plan was developed to help us align our Spending Plan and Non-spending Plan giving with hopes that less designated giving will mean an increase in Spending Plan giving and a viable way forward for meeting Spending Plan expenses in 2020. Your continued financial support is much appreciated. ~Stewardship

All are invited to a Lego SS time in the fellowship hall Sunday, Dec. 22 to will create Bible scenes related to Advent and the birth of Jesus.

“Waiting” is the general theme for this Advent season. When our worship planning team first gathered, I thought about the U2 song, “I Still Haven’t Found What I’m Looking For.” I mentioned this to the group, and Chris Gott introduced us to this video link of the song: <https://bit.ly/351GbPc>. Bono, the songwriter and lead vocalist, refers to this song as a gospel song for the restless spirit. Bono also talks about how the Psalms inspire his music writing. He discusses this in a 20-minute video conversation with Eugene Peterson, author of “The Message” translation of the Bible. I recommend this video link: <https://bit.ly/2DYTPXA>. ~ Ken Shenk

Lost books and materials: The church library is catching up and trying to find lost books and materials. If you find a notice in your mailboxes, please check at home and let the library know about the materials by returning or leaving a note on the library desk. Many thanks. ~ FMC library committee

REMINDERS

Join the FMC children and youth for an Advent doubleheader today! First, enjoy some pancakes and sausage hot off the griddle during the senior high youth Advent pancake fundraiser from 8:30-9:30 a.m. in the fellowship hall. Following that, the junior high and children's Christmas program will be held in the sanctuary at 9:45. See the nativity story unfold with beauty and comedy.

Enjoy a caroling and card party for all ages today. We’ll sing to the residents at Mennonite Memorial Home at 6:30 p.m. (meet in the MMH lobby.) Afterward, we’ll return to FMC for snacks and to make greeting cards and snowflakes to send to our neighbors in detention centers in Arizona. Please bring snacks to share!

Evening Prayers will meet on Thursdays during December, from 4:30-5 p.m. in the prayer room upstairs. See the December Menno-Life for more details.

OUR CONNECTIONS

Habitat for Humanity – Lima area: The most recent partner family moved into their new Habitat house in Elida just before Thanksgiving, thanks to the generosity of many people, businesses, and churches. The Habitat ReStore was transformed several times in recent months, as groups volunteered for a day. **Needed:** Regular volunteers at the ReStore or volunteer groups to work for a day; funds for a new build; monthly meal for 30 ReStore volunteers; affiliate sustaining/ongoing donations of \$10 a month. To volunteer or donate, call 419-222-4937, or e-mail habitatlima@habitatlima.org

From Pastor Elvin Villalobos at our sister church in Colonia Lopez, Honduras: Greetings to the church in Bluffton. Thanks for your prayers. We also pray for you. The church here in Colonia Lopez is well, thanks to God. And for you of the church in Bluffton, for its support in prayers and also for your offerings which have been of much blessing for the church here in Colonia Lopez, we pray that God blesses your lives, families, and everything you undertake. (To follow the church more closely, see its Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/695839677227716/>).