



First Mennonite Church • Bluffton, Ohio • Vol. 67, No. 8 • October 2020

## Sunday dinner: A metaphor for worship

Unbeknown to me at the time, I realize now that I have been profoundly shaped in my understanding of worship by three women who were my professors at seminary and who later wrote a book together titled *Preparing Sunday Dinner: A Collaborative Approach to Worship and Preaching*. In this book, June Alliman Yoder, Marlene Kropf and Rebecca Slough lay out a rich feast exploring the idea of eating together as a metaphor for worship. The feast includes pages that could be understood as recipes, but reading the book one is quickly aware that worship, like a good meal, is a rather complex arrangement of various recipes and requires attention to table setting, ritual, congregational culture and familial practice. The metaphor serves well to underscore that worship in all its components and stages requires a deep attentiveness to Word and Spirit, and to what God is doing in this particular place at this particular time.

Closing the first chapter titled *Why Eat?*, the authors write, “Just as we eat to live, so we worship to keep our souls alive. Yet Christian worship is about more than survival. Worship is meant to make our souls flourish: it keeps us strong and vibrant and empowers us to be faithful signs of God’s reign in the world.”

Our Sunday dinner currently includes three significant realities: 1. we’re in a worldwide pandemic, 2. we’re in the midst of structural changes to our organization of congregational governance, and 3. we’re anticipating the arrival of a brand new hymnal, *Voices Together*. It’s a perfect time to think intentionally and deeply together about our worship! In this special moment in God’s story, and in our story together, I’m wondering if there are some aspiring chefs among us. If you’re interested in learning more about worship as Sunday dinner, please join me in a book study. We’ll discuss the book I mentioned, *Preparing Sunday Dinner: A Collaborative Approach to Worship and Preaching*. The time will be determined by those expressing interest, but we’ll meet weekly and explore the metaphor together. There will also be lab opportunities for those interested in an experiential component! Looking forward to a bustling kitchen!

~ Pastor Wanda



## Faithful Living together again

The Faithful Living Sunday school class, led by Greg Ring, met via Zoom September 13 for the first time since the Covid-19 shutdown in March. It's a different format but they're happy to be together again. According to Alison King, the first session was "just catching up, sharing blessings and challenges from the past 6

months," but they plan to follow the Adult Bible Study series this fall. All are welcome to join them. For the logon credentials, contact Greg Ring at [gring@marathonpetroleum.com](mailto:gring@marathonpetroleum.com) or 419-379-5310.

## Butterfly table provides haven of normalcy in a topsy-turvy world

By Joanne Niswander

Life as we knew it six plus months ago has changed for all of us in a multiplicity of ways. But there is one spot in the Maple Crest lobby where life goes on as usual. The butterfly table is a haven of normalcy in an otherwise somewhat topsy-turvy world.

Although visitors are no longer allowed to come in and check out our display table, residents and staff in Maple Crest's independent living have enjoyed watching our caterpillars grow and turn into monarch butterflies as they have every summer for the past 14 summers. Ever since July 7 (when we found our first caterpillar of the season) until almost the last day of September (when we will release our last butterfly of the season) life for us caterpillar-watchers has been a normal summer.

The only thing different from previous years is that we caretakers, and viewers, are now wearing masks. (We have not required that of our caterpillars!)

And we've broken another record this year. We expect, by the end of the season,

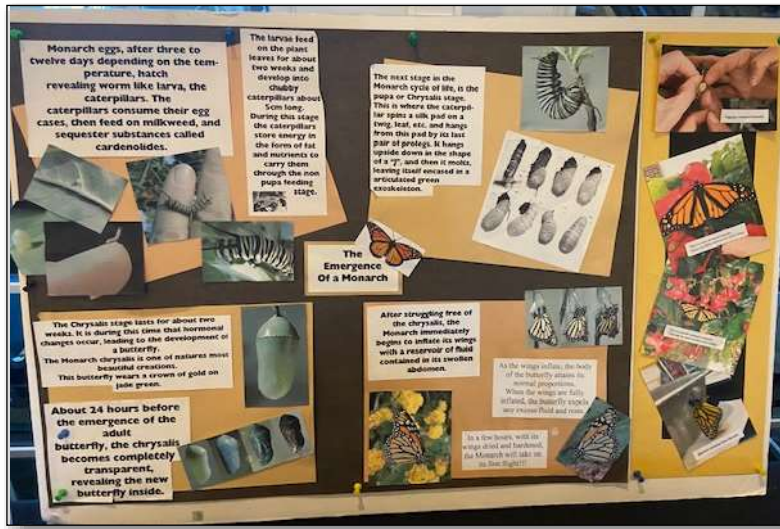


to rear and release 140 of the beautiful butterflies to join their compatriots on their long journey to wintering grounds in Mexico. Most of these butterflies will have, attached to a wing, a tiny "Monarch Watch" tag identifying each as to where it originated. I say "most of these butterflies" because we ran out of identifying tags before we ran out of butterflies this year.

For those of you who are not familiar with this ongoing project at Maple Crest, it started in the summer of 2007, when then-MMH administrator Lynn Thompson brought a glass with three milkweed leaves and three caterpillars into the Maple Crest office. I volunteered to tend those

monarchs and set up a small display.

Each year the display grew, along with the number of caterpillars. But the numbers did not really mushroom until recent years. In 2017 we released 33 butterflies, doubled that to 73 in 2018, released a total of 117 last summer and expect a whopping 140 this year! Now it takes two of us - myself and Hazel Rodabaugh - to tend our summer menagerie.



Do we make a difference? We

really don't know. Natural rearing, although fraught with dangers, is still ideal. But the educational value, as well as the aesthetic value, that this project has brought to our residents and (during other summers) to our many visitors - that is valuable, too.

And for this strange coronavirus summer, it has definitely made a difference for our residents -- it has been a haven of normalcy in a topsy-turvy world.

## Get to know Linda Miller

### From Ohio to California to Botswana to Illinois and back to Ohio

#### By Ruth Naylor

I was born at home on a cold January 29, 1940, the first child and only daughter of Russell and Kathryn Pine. Two brothers joined us, one in 1942 and one in 1947. We lived on a small farm at the edge of Columbiana, Ohio, but in Mahoning County, where we raised goats and chickens, sometimes a pig or two. We roamed the woods and creek nearby on a regular basis. There was always a big garden and many quarts of fruit and vegetables in the fruit cellar for the winter.

I completed 12 years of school at the local Columbiana schools -- I don't remember loving school, but it was part of life. My social life was usually with my church, Zion Hill Church of the Brethren. We had an active youth group and summer camp was a highlight. During some of the youth meetings, I was encouraged to do a year of voluntary service so after graduation, I joined Brethren Volunteer service. Another girl named Linda and I went to a remote valley in

Tennessee and they called us the "missionary girls." There was a church but no pastor, so we visited, taught Sunday school and helped with the service when a pastor came once a month.

I liked Tennessee so I attended Milligan College for a year and could go back to the valley to visit. At that time, most of the women were going to be teachers but I was not thinking of teaching as a career. My cousin was a nurse and I thought I was better suited to that so studied nursing for three years at Mount Sinai Hospital, Cleveland, where I was named best all-round student in my graduating class.

In the meantime, I had been dating a fine young man but had also connected with a young man from my home community. He was in the Peace Corp and was going to be getting out the next year. I took a job close to home so I could live at home and wait for him. Sadly, he died in an automobile crash before returning home.

My job was okay but I needed a change so the next summer I worked at a Jewish camp in New York state, then moved to Long Beach, CA, with a friend. I worked at Long Beach Memorial Hospital and met Lynn Miller, a Navy man who lived in my friend's apartment building. After we married, our next move was to Pacific Beach, WA. Lynn had a Navy position on shore, I had a part-time nursing job and Lori (Nester) was born, arriving six weeks early at 4 pounds, 3 ounces.

Lynn finished his Navy tour and we moved to Seattle so he could attend college. I worked, Lori grew, and Liana (Gott) was born. After a time, there was a student strike and it was difficult for Lynn to continue so we moved again, eventually to Wilmington College where I worked and Lynn earned a degree in farm management. The last quarter involved a job on a cattle farm in Gallipolis.

After about a year there we took an assignment with MCC in Botswana. Lynn was an agricultural officer with the government. I did not have an assignment which was great. We had done a year with Brethren volunteer service after a tornado in Mississippi and I found it hard to have a full assignment and have two small children. I did have the opportunity to use my nursing skills to work at the Rhodesian Railway clinic while the nurse was on vacation – an interesting experience.

After MCC, we spent 3 years raising hogs in Illinois. Lynn was doing volunteer work at the prison in Pontiac and needed some training to be a chaplain. We moved to Elkhart so he could attend AMBS. I returned to work and the girls were in junior and senior high. Instead of working in a prison, Lynn took a position as pastor at South Union Church in West Liberty. During our time there he was asked to do a study in stewardship, and out of that came his first book, *FIRSTFRUITS LIVING*. He was asked to speak at conferences and churches, so he resigned from pastoring and hit the road -- 247 churches and conferences in all. He then spent time in Chicago with VS to take a break from all the travelling, and at a conference in Palm Springs, was asked





to work as Stewardship Theologian for Mennonite Mutual Aid, which he did for nine years until he retired.

We moved to Bluffton in 1998 because Lori and Darryl were here and our first grandson was born. We couldn't find a house in Bluffton we liked, but Lynn spotted a barn out on Phillips Road that was built with hand hewn oak beams, and over the next few years we turned it into our home and we are still here.

### **Coronavirus requires adjustments to wedding plans**

The Covid-19 pandemic has impacted many events, not the least of which have been weddings. But Logan Steingass says although he and his fiancé (now wife) Francinny Oliveira had to make a few adjustments to their wedding, they were fortunate theirs was a small event.

The couple was married in an outdoor ceremony September 6<sup>th</sup> in Lewis Center, OH. Greg Ring was the wedding officiant. Among their attendants were Logan's twin sister, Halle, as well as Lucas Harnish, David Moser, David Hooley, and Matthew Suderman. Logan's parents are Bruce and Amy Steingass and Fran's are Ana Oliveira and Vanias Carnauba, Bluffton.

"We heard from about 10 guests who had RSVPd to attend the wedding that they would not attend, primarily due to COVID-19 concerns. The wedding played out somewhat differently than we originally planned but still maintained all the aspects hoped for. Our adjustments included providing masks and increasing distance between rows during the ceremony, opening all of the outside doors at the venue to increase airflow, and requiring guests to wear masks while ordering drinks and getting food."

"We felt fortunate our wedding size was small – I think we would have needed to make more changes otherwise. As far as the honeymoon, we had purchased everything for Banff, Canada – tickets, rental car, housing – because we assumed Covid would be much more under control by September," said Logan." Our second choice for a honeymoon destination needed to be a state with a Covid infection rate under 15%, both for our safety and for Fran to return to work without a quarantine period." So, instead of Canada, they traveled around the state of Oregon. Logan and Fran reside in Columbus.



## **FMC chefs step up with quarantine recipes**

Spending all of this time at home means we're all eating more meals at home, so it's no surprise that we've been trying new recipes and rediscovering old favorites – especially those that bring us comfort. We can't have our usual potlucks but we can share recipes!

### ***From Mary Ann Ring***

*During the Covid-19 period when there were both meat eaters and vegetarians at our table, this recipe pleased both tastes and it has been in our recipe circulation for years! It originally came from Martha Stewart years ago. Feta cheese makes everything good!*

#### **One-Pot Wonder**

##### **Ingredients:**

- 4 c. water**
- 2 tbsp. olive oil**
- 12 oz. fettuccine**
- 8 oz. frozen chopped spinach**
- 28 oz. can petite diced tomatoes**
- 1 medium onion**
- 4 cloves garlic**
- 1/2 tbsp. dried basil**
- 1/2 tbsp. dried oregano**
- 1/4 tsp. crushed red pepper flakes salt and pepper to taste**

##### **Garnish – feta cheese**

##### **Instructions:**

1. Add 4 cups of water to a large pot. Break the fettuccine in half to make stirring easier later, and then add it to the pot. Also add the canned tomatoes (undrained), Olive oil, frozen spinach, onion, garlic, basil, oregano, red pepper and the salt and pepper.
2. Make sure the ingredients are submerged under the liquid, place a lid on top of the pot and turn the heat on to high. Allow the pot to come to a full, rolling boil over high heat. Remove the lid and turn the heat down to medium.
3. Allow the pot to simmer over medium heat without a lid for 10-15 minutes or until the pasta is cooked and most of the liquid has been absorbed. Stir the pot every few minutes as it cooks to prevent the pasta from sticking to the bottom. Don't over stir or your pasta will be sticky and mushy.
4. Serve in bowls and top with crumbled feta cheese.

### **From Carrie Phillips**

*I discovered during stay-at-home time that refrigerator tube pizza dough is a great way to use up leftovers in a creative way. I have a perforated pizza pan and I bake the crust uncovered for about 7-8 minutes first. Then top with whatever leftovers are in the fridge that would make a good pizza, sprinkle on a little cheese (or none) and bake again until the crust is done, the toppings are heated through, and the cheese is melty.*

**From Mark and Elaine Suderman**

For those who eat gluten free and love chocolate or just LOVE chocolate! This recipe is originally from Elaine's niece, Tracey Sawatzky, who with her husband, Dave, and their daughter, Mikayla, formerly attended FMC and now live in Canada.

**FLOURLESS CHOCOLATE CAKE WITH GANACHE**

**Cake:**

**8-12 oz. semi-sweet chocolate chips**

**1 c. butter**

**1¼ c. sugar**

**6 eggs**

**1 c. unsweetened cocoa powder**

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Grease a 9-in. springform pan, then line the bottom with a circle of parchment paper. Grease the paper as well and set pan aside.

Melt chocolate chips and butter in the microwave. Whisk until smooth. Add sugar and mix well. Add eggs one at a time, whisking well after each addition. Sift in cocoa and stir until just blended.

Pour batter into prepared pan and bake for 26-28 minutes or until cake has risen. The cake should be a bit soft in the center when done. Cool for 10 minutes, run a knife around the edge, then invert onto plate, removing sides of springform pan. Remove and discard parchment paper and set aside to cool completely.

**Raspberry Layer:**

**½ c. seedless raspberry jam or 1/3 c. raspberry on half and top with raspberries**

**OR**

**1/3 c. peanut butter on half and top with peanut butter chips**

**Ganache:**

**½ c. whipping cream**

**2/3 c. chocolate chips**

Heat cream with chocolate in the microwave. Do not let boil. Whisk until very smooth. Spread over top and sides of the cake. Leave on the counter until cool. Refrigerate.

***From Sarah Ahmed, daughter of Mustaq and Becky Ahmed; FMC member living in Lexington, KY.***

*This is an almond flour banana bread that I found on the Columbus Crew website. I doctored it up with some dark chocolate chunks, and it was pretty delicious and would be great for anyone with a gluten intolerance!*

**ALMOND FLOUR BANANA BREAD**

**Ingredients:**

**Cooking spray for the pan**

**3 large eggs**

**3 large very ripe bananas**

**1 tbsp. vanilla extract**

**2 tbsp. honey**  
**2 c. almond flour**  
**1 tbsp. ground cinnamon**  
**1/4 tsp. salt**  
**1 tsp. baking soda**

**Directions:**

Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit. Lightly spray small bread loaf pan with oil. In a medium bowl, mash the three bananas. Mix bananas together with eggs, vanilla and honey. Gradually mix in the almond flour, cinnamon, salt and finally the baking soda. Mix until smooth. Using a rubber spatula, pour the batter to the prepared pan. Gently tap the pan on the countertop to evenly distribute the batter. Bake the banana bread until browned and set, and a toothpick inserted in the center comes out dry, 40-50 minutes. Let rest for 10-15 minutes before removing the banana bread from the pan and set it on a wire rack to completely cool, ~2 hours.

**From Linda Suter**

*Linda didn't let the coronavirus stop her from making a longtime family favorite -- chocolate dumplings -- during an outside family dinner with their children and grandchildren. Linda took her electric skillet outside to make the dumplings. Linda shared the story of where she first had the dumplings. "When I was in Vancouver studying at UBC, I had a small apartment with Mrs. Hinden, who also became my good friend. Sometimes when I came home, she would stop me before I went upstairs and say she had a snack for me. It would be a warm chocolate dumpling. How nice!"*

**Dumplings:**

**1 c. flour**  
**2 tsp. baking powder**  
**½ tsp salt**  
**½ c. sugar**  
**2 tbsp. cocoa**  
**3 tbsp. butter**  
**1 egg, slightly beaten**  
**1/3 c. milk**  
**1 tsp. vanilla**

**Sauce:**

**¾ c. brown sugar**  
**¼ c. cocoa**  
**1 tbsp. cornstarch**  
**Dash of salt**  
**2 c. water**  
**2 tbsp. butter**

**Preparation:**

Mix dumpling ingredients as you would a cake. Mix sauce ingredients in an electric frying pan. Bring the sauce to a boil. Drop in dumpling prep in approximately 1/3 cup quantities, cover, and



simmer the dumplings in this sauce for 20 minutes. In our family gatherings this has been done during the main portion of the meal. Served with vanilla ice cream (or a little milk.)

***From Beth Boehr***

*Jeff & I love this with a little quinoa risotto! Quick, easy & so yummy!*

**Quick Chicken Piccata**

**Ingredients:**

**4 skinless, boneless chicken breast halves**

**Cayenne pepper to taste**

**Salt and ground black pepper to taste**

**All-purpose flour for dredging**

**2 tbsp. olive oil**

**1 tbsp. capers, drained**

**½ c. white wine**

**¼ c. fresh lemon juice**

**¼ c. water**

**3 tbsp. cold unsalted butter, cut in 1/4-inch slices**

**2 tbsp. fresh Italian parsley, chopped**

**Directions**

Place chicken breasts between 2 layers of plastic wrap and pound to about 1/2-inch thick. Season both sides of chicken breasts with cayenne, salt, and black pepper; dredge lightly in flour and shake off any excess. Heat olive oil in a skillet over medium-high heat. Place chicken in the pan, reduce heat to medium, and cook until browned and cooked through, about 5 minutes per side; remove to a plate.

Cook capers in reserved oil, smashing them lightly to release brine, until warmed though, about 30 seconds. Pour white wine into skillet. Scrape any browned bits from the bottom of the pan with a wooden spoon. Cook until reduced by half, about 2 minutes. Stir lemon juice, water, and butter into the reduced wine mixture; cook and stir continuously to form a thick sauce, about 2 minutes. Reduce heat to low and stir parsley through the sauce. Return chicken breasts to the pan cook until heated through, 1 to 2 minutes. Serve with sauce spooned over the top.

