

FIRST MENNONITE CHURCH
Weekly Announcements 4-11-2021

First Mennonite Church, 101 S. Jackson Street, Bluffton, Ohio 45817

419-358-5766 | fmcbluffton.org | Office closed due to Covid; staff working from home

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

Sunday, April 11, 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>
Taste and See, Zoom, 9:15 a.m., <https://zoom.us/j/342273765>
SHY, 9:30 a.m.
Worship, Jeff Gundy preaching, 10:30 a.m.
Virtual FH conversation, 11:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m.
Learning circle, Zoom, 6 p.m., <https://zoom.us/j/4193585766>

April 12-17

Tuesday, April 13 Morning prayers, Zoom, 7 a.m.,
<https://zoom.us/j/93803392337>
Staff meeting, Zoom, 9 a.m.

Sunday, April 18, 2021

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.; Taste and See, 9:15 a.m.
Worship, Natilee Grover preaching, 10:30 a.m.
Virtual FH conversation, 11:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m.
Learning circle, Zoom, 6 p.m.

Happy Birthday!

April 13 – George Lehman
Kendra Nickel
April 14 – Sarah Basinger
Jorian Mast
April 15 – Basilda Rockhold
April 16 – Jen Benroth
Carla Richard

We welcome Jeff Gundy as our preacher today. He has taught at Bluffton University for many years, and is shifting to a new role as Distinguished Poet in Residence. He has published fair numbers of poems and essays, and belatedly revived his youthful dream of becoming a fabulously successful singer-songwriter.

Eastertide 2021: Resurrection is a life-altering, transformational mystery! This reality is reflected in the important placement of resurrection in the church year. Resurrection is not the focus of only one day on Easter. Resurrection is the focus of the entire joyful season of worship in the 50 days of Eastertide. It is the extended celebration of the presence and power of the risen Christ in the life of the church and more broadly, the dawn of the new creation. In fact, our return to worship each week is also an act of resurrection celebration. Just as resurrection is celebrated repeatedly in the church year, it is a process that takes time. This year as we celebrate Eastertide stories in Acts and the Gospel of John, we will also be guided by the Epistle of I John, which emphasizes themes like community, love, incarnation, truth and release from sin, all of which are easily connected to resurrection transformation. May we be found transformed with Jesus this Eastertide, resurrected to a new life of love. ~ Pastor Wanda

MennoCon is the biennial gathering of Mennonite Church USA. It is an exciting combination of learning, growing and fun with friends! The purpose of convention is to gather as MC USA for community, worship and faith formation. MennoCon21, scheduled for July 6-10 will be a hybrid convention including in-person programming in Cincinnati, OH, and virtual programming. This year First Mennonite Church will be represented by two adult delegates and one youth delegate. The delegate session will be virtual and will take place July 10 from 1--3:30 p.m. If you have interest in representing FMC at MennoCon21, please contact the church office by April 19. Much more information is available at <https://convention.mennoniteusa.org/>.

Virtual conversation with Anabaptist World leadership Tuesday, April 20, at 7 p.m.: As a board member of Anabaptist World, I invite you to join a conversation with leadership of the new digital and print publication that results from the merger of The Mennonite, Inc. and Mennonite World Review, Inc. Executive director, Danielle Klotz, and editor, Paul Schrag, will share their vision for AW as a source for Mennonite news and inspiring stories. We look forward to hearing your ideas as we shape the voice and impact of the publication. Join us at <https://zoom.us/j/91773533142> or call +1 646 558 8656. ~ Hans Houshower

Thank you to all who led or planned worship during Lent this year. Thanks to Carolyn Rich for her work with visuals and incorporating the scribe projects, to Elizabeth Kelly for leading worship, to Mark Suderman and all the musicians, to all the storytellers and all the Bible scribes! Worship is indeed the work of the people. Our Lenten worship led us deeper into the mysteries of faith.

Please keep in prayer the families of Doug and Paula Luginbill and Gary and Becky Luginbill. Doug will become a kidney donor for his brother, Gary. The transplant surgery is scheduled for Friday, May 14, at Wexner Medical Center in Columbus.

Thank you for the many cards sent in celebration of Corrinne Boehr's 90th birthday. They have been joyfully enjoyed. ~ With gratitude from Dick, Corrinne and the Boehr family

Reminders

Moving toward in-person worship: As vaccination rates climb, so do our hopes for returning to in-person worship. We have not yet identified a specific date to do so, but we are making adjustments toward that. Invitations to lead worship have been issued through the end of April, so we will continue recording services on Wednesday evenings through April. Beginning the first Sunday of May, we will move our worship service back to Sunday morning. At that time we plan to regularly Zoom/live stream. A video recording will be available on the website as in the past. We will not yet gather in person as a congregation, but this move will position us well to simply add the congregation in person as soon as possible. The Reopening Task Force is working on protocols to do that safely. If you have questions or concerns please contact Pastor Wanda or Rita Dietrich, chair of RTF.

Mark Suderman serves as a volunteer liaison between Ohioans To Stop Executions and Central District Conference congregations in Ohio. FMC has a long history calling for the repeal of the death penalty and bringing its injustices to light. Mark will share updates, information, and opportunities for action. (For more information, contact Mark at sudermanme@bluffton.edu.) Two bills to repeal the Ohio death penalty have recently been introduced. Find current information at Ohioans To Stop Executions, as well as options for taking action. You can help pass SB 103, Abolishing the Death Penalty in Ohio, by placing calls to your senator and/or committee members. The first hearing for SB 103 took place March 31. This is just the beginning of the bill's long journey to the governor's desk. Here's what you can do to ensure it gets there:

1. [Find your OH Senator](#) and/or the [Senate Judiciary Committee members](#)
2. Call their office and tell the aide:
 - a. Your name and where you live.
 - b. There was sponsor testimony March 31 in the Senate Judiciary Committee on SB 103, a bill to abolish the death penalty.
 - c. Why you are opposed to the death penalty.
 - d. Ask: Does the senator support this bill? If the aide doesn't know, provide a call back phone number or email for the aide to follow up with you.
 - e. Record what you find out in [this Google Form](#). This is necessary for the campaign to know who to target, how, and when.

Here are answers to questions an aide might ask you:

- SB 103 has bipartisan sponsorship; its primary sponsors are Nickie Antonio (D) and Steve Huffman (R)
- There is companion legislation in the House (HB 183); primary sponsors are Jean Schmidt (R) and Adam Miller (D)

At the recent CDC Gathering, FMC shared a congregational story showing how we are working at formation during these days of being apart. See our story at <https://youtu.be/aIVguD7BF6Y>.

Our connections

The MHCOS Service Group is sponsoring a BBQ chicken dinner on Saturday, April 24, from 4-6 p.m. The \$8 dinner includes ½ chicken, mac and cheese, green beans and a roll. Tickets are available from any service group member, by email at gloriaferdin1992@gmail.com, by phone/text at 419-429-2621, or on Facebook at facebook.com/mhcoho (additional fee

applies.) Meals will be delivered curbside at 158 N. Jackson at Bubba C. BBQ. Money raised will help purchase a gently used transport van for MHCO.