

Bathsheba: Considering Power

Advent 4

December 18th, 2022

Gathering

Call to Worship Gerald Mast

Prelude *On the day Earth Shall ring* Traditional
Wendy Chappell-Dick, Jan Wiebe, Anne Marie Spelman, Monica Harnish, Phil Yoder

Invocation

*Opening hymn VT 217 *Hark! the Glad Sound!*

Candle lighting liturgy based on Luke 1:30-35

Leader: We gather in holy space to hear holy words:

All: Do not be afraid.

Leader: We gather in holy time to hear a holy promise:

All: Mary's son will reign forever.

Leader: We gather in this holy moment to sense the holy in our midst:

All: Let the Holy Spirit come upon us.

Let the power of the Most high overshadow us.

Leader: Let us worship the Holy One with anticipation and joy..

Scripture and Litany of Power

*Hymn VT 546 *There is a Line of Women, v. 2*

Confession

Leader: God of shadows and light, our thoughts are not your thoughts.
Our ways are not your ways.

All: Hear our confession, heal our hearts, forgive our sins.

(silence)

Leader: In Jesus you reveal your power-

**All: a power with and for the vulnerable;
a power held in mercy and grace.**

Leader: In the light of the Christ child, in the shadow of the Most High,
we make our confession and receive your forgiveness.

All: Amen.

Telling God's Story

Special Music *Hark the Herald Angels Sing* Arr. Pentatonix
Youth Choir

Conversation with Children Laurel Neufeld Weaver, Phil Yoder
Hymn VT 241 *O Come, All Ye Faithful*
(sing refrain coming forward & going back to seats)

Offering
Words of Invitation
Offertory Carol of the Birds Traditional
Dedication Prayer

Special Music *In the Bleak Midwinter* Harold Darke
Chancel Choir

In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan. Earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone. Snow had fallen snow on snow, in the bleak midwinter long ago. Our God, Heav'n cannot hold Him, nor earth sustain. Heav'n and earth shall flee away, when He comes to reign. In the bleak midwinter, a stable place sufficed, the Lord God Almighty Jesus Christ. Enough for Him, whom cherubim, worship night and day. A breast full of milk, and a mangerful of hay. Enough for Him, whom angels, fall down before, the ox and ass and camel, which adore. What can I give Him, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb. If I were a wiseman, I would do my part. Yet what I can I give Him, give my heart.

Scripture 1 Kings 1:11-18, 29-31 Kendra & Ethan Nickel

Message Ellie Nickel

Living God's Story

*Hymn of Response VT 787 *O Day of Peace*

Community Prayer Kathy Dickson

Sending

*Hymn of Sending VT 267 *What Child Is This* & 268 *Helpless and Hungry*

*Benediction

*Postlude Ken Graber

**Please rise in body or in spirit.*

VT - Voices Together (Purple Bound Book)

First Mennonite Church
101 S. Jackson St, Bluffton OH
419-358-5766 | fmcbluffton.org

Lead Pastor	Phil Yoder, 717-869-7624 phil@fmcbluffton.org
Interim Pastor of Christian Education & Administration	Carrie Mast, 419-230-1568 carrie@fmcbluffton.org
Communication Coordinator	Trustworthy Schumacher, 419-358-5766 fmc@fmcbluffton.org
Caretaker	Don Burris, 419-788-6157 caretaker@fmcbluffton.org
Director of Music	Mark Suderman, 419-230-5368 sudermanme@bluffton.edu
Technology Coordinator	Ray Raeburn, 419-230-2769 rayraeburn@gmail.com

First Mennonite Church Office Hours

- Monday - Friday 9:00 a.m.- 4:00 p.m.
- Phil's day off - Monday
- Carrie's day off - Thursday

Video: Ray Raeburn

Sound: Chris Gott

Chancel: Lois Wetherill

12/4/2022 - 12/11/2022
Reported Volunteer hours: 17
Attendance: 190
Online viewers: 48

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.

First Mennonite Church
December 18, 2022



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mary Yoder passed away on Wednesday December 14, 2022 at the Mennonite Memorial Home. Prayers for the family as they navigate these trying times.

Marilyn Diller's surgery went well on Thursday. She is now in recovery. Many thanks for all your prayers.

TODAY! Join us at **9:45 a.m.** in the sanctuary for a raucous trip to Bethlehem! Youth and children will present their interpretation of the Nativity story in this year's rendition of the **Children's Christmas Program**. Children and youth should meet in the ViP Room at 9 a.m. to costume up!

Tuesday, Dec. 20, is the next volunteer opportunity at **Our Daily Bread in Lima**. Please leave a message for John & Carolyn at 419-358-5405 if you can help.

Almost Solstice Taizé Service: Tuesday evening, December 20th at **7 p.m.** There will be an intergenerational Taizé service in the Fellowship Hall. All ages are welcome to come and sing, pray, light candles, participate in interactive stations, and play with...Legos?

Saturday night, December 24, all are invited to gather for our traditional **Christmas Eve Service** at **6:30**. Join us for the retelling of the Nativity story, singing carols, and candle lighting. Masks are encouraged.

Christmas Coffee and New Year's Brunch: Next Sunday, December 25, all are welcome to join Coffee Time in the Fellowship Hall. Legos will be available for all ages, as well. We will gather for our churchwide brunch during the SS hour on January 1st.

Children's choirs will meet and **Noodle Night will gather** this **Wednesday** night and take a break the following week on December 28.

Church directories are in your mailboxes! Additionally, the photo portion of the directory is accessible online in the password protected area.

Mark your Calendars: **Pie Night is back!** Join this welcome back to Bluffton event for college students on Sunday, **January 22, 2023**. If you wish to make a pie, please contact the church office

Heidrun Awad brings **Canadian Greetings** from former FMC Pastor **Louise Wideman!**

Thank you to **Judy Diller** for helping sanitize the toys in the nursery this week! Volunteers are needed to help with this ongoing project during this very viral time. Contact the church office if you are able to help one time or on a more routine basis.

\$\$\$ Spending Plan Update: Good news! As of last Sunday, our receipts were \$426,000 and our expenses were \$425,000. Our expenses include over **\$55,000 in giving** through our Missions, Peace, & Service tithing, including Central District Conference, Mennonite Mission Network, MCC, Camp Friedenswald, and MCUSA Executive Board. For a complete list, refer to the 2022 Annual Report. We still have payroll and some other anticipated expenses, so continued strong giving is encouraged as we close the year.

1000 faith leaders call for a Christmas truce in Ukraine: Inspired by the miraculous Christmas truce of 1914, leaders are petitioning the Biden administration to push for negotiations. A diverse and quickly growing coalition of nearly 1000 faith leaders in the United States – representing a massive number of believers from every major tradition, **including Mennonite Church USA** – have signed onto a Christmas Truce statement demanding a temporary ceasefire in the War in Ukraine. Click here to see the list of signers: <https://forusa.org/ukraine/>. Spiritual leaders from across the spectrum of faith communities and a diversity of ideological perspectives have become signatories in recognition of the fact that the way out of the war in Ukraine will not be a military solution. They have signed on with the belief that a temporary ceasefire offers an opportunity for moral clarity that could be the first step toward a negotiated peace.

Happy Anniversary!

December 23 - Bob & Linda Suter



Happy Birthday!

December 21 - Bobbie Chappell

December 22 - Gene Long

December 23 - Terry Chappell

Sally Roth

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.

follow us



Today, Sunday, December 18, 2022

Coffee Time, 9 a.m.

Sunday School for all ages, 9:15 a.m.

Youth & Children's Christmas Program, 9:45 a.m.

Worship: Ellie Nickel preaching, 10:30 a.m. Sanctuary

Sermon Discussion Circle, meal, 5:30 p.m.; discussion 6-7 p.m.

This Week

Tuesday, December 20

Morning prayers, 7 a.m. Sanctuary

Staff meeting, 9 a.m. Parlor

Our Daily Bread Soup Kitchen, 10:45 a.m.

Almost Solstice Taizé Service, 7 p.m. Fellowship Hall

Wednesday, December 21

Jubilate, 3:15 - 4 p.m. Cherub Choir, 4:45 - 5:15 p.m.

Noodle Night, come and go 4:45-6 p.m. Fellowship Hall

NO BELL CHOIRS OR ADULT CHOIR

Saturday, December 24

Christmas Eve Service, 6:30 p.m.

Next Sunday

Sunday, December 25

Worship – Carrie Mast preaching, Luke 2:1-20

Lectionary: Joel 2:23-32; Psalm 65; 2 Timothy 4:6-8, 16-18; Luke 18:9-14

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. Worship bags and nursery space are available for young children during worship. Bags can be found hanging on wooden pegs at each sanctuary entrance, and parents are invited to stay in the nursery with their children.