

3rd Sunday of Lent

Shaped by What We Thirst for... and What We Are Drowning in

March 12, 2023

Gathering

Call to Worship

Carrie Phillips

Prelude

When Morning Gilds the Skies
LuAnn Stuckey

arr. B. Culli

Invocation

*Opening Hymn

VT 101 *Sing Praise to God Who Reigns*

*Responsive Reading - based on Psalm 95

One: Come, let us bow down in worship.

Many: Let us kneel before the Lord our maker;

One: for the Lord is our God,

Many: we are the people of God's pasture,

All: we are the flock under God's care.

Telling God's Story

Conversation with Children

Teri Steinmetz

Hymn

VT 30 *Jesus Calls Us*

(v. 1 coming forward & v. 2 going back to seats)

Special Music

Come to the Water
Chancel Choir, Steve Harnish - recorder

John Foley

O let all who thirst, let them come to the water. And let all who have nothing, let them come to the Lord: without money, without price; why should you pay the price, except for the Lord?

And let all who seek, let them come to the water. And let all who have nothing, let them come to the Lord: without money, without strife; why should you spend your life, except for the Lord?

And let all who toil, let them come to the water. And let all who are weary, let them come to the Lord: all who labor, without rest; how can your soul find rest, except for the Lord?

And let all the poor, let them come to the water. Bring the ones who are laden, bring them all to the Lord. Bring the children, without might; easy the load and light - come to the Lord.

Isaiah 55:1-2; Matthew 11:28-30

Confession

One: Lord, we long for living water. We thirst for life. And yet...

Many: We have drunk deeply of resentment.

One: We have savored bitterness.

Many: We are drowning in self-centeredness.

One: Hear now our silent prayers of confession...

(silent prayer)

One: Today, O God, let us hear your voice.

All: Give us this living water so we may never thirst again. Amen.

Hymn

VT 740 *Spirit of the Living God*

Community Prayer

Carrie Mast

Scripture

John 4:5-42

Jax Gott

Message

What Do You Thirst For?

Phil Yoder

Living God's Story

*Hymn of Response

VT 536 *I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say*

Offering

Words of Invitation

Offertory

Andante

F. Liszt

Dedication Prayer

Sending

*Hymn of Sending

VT 703 *Rain Down*

*Benediction

*Postlude

**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

Director of Music Mark Suderman, 419-230-5368
sudermanme@bluffton.edu

Technology & Media Coordinator Ray Raeburn, 419-230-2769
ray@fmcbluffton.org

Caretaker Don Burris, 419-788-6157
caretaker@fmcbluffton.org

First Mennonite Church Office Hours

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

Video: Ray Raeburn

Sound: Melissa Friesen

Chancel: Bruce Steingass

2/26/23 - 3/5/23

Reported Volunteer hours:33

Attendance: 133

Online views: 24 Live; 15 Recorded

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

March 12, 2023



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mary Amstutz and the family of **Pete Amstutz** appreciate all the prayers and love we have received from the congregation and staff the past month. A beautiful service for Pete was on Monday at Eighth Street Mennonite Church in Goshen, IN. It means a lot to know that we have a congregation that cares. ~ Thank you, Mary Amstutz

The Boehr family is grateful for the expressions of care and prayers as we experienced the death of Corrinne; wife, mother, grandmother, great grandmother, and part of the First Mennonite Church faith family.

Don Burris's surgery went well. He is home recovering. Prayers for a full recovery are appreciated.

Senior High Youth: Meet in the Fellowship Hall on Wednesday evening anytime between 7:30 - 9 p.m. to work on our Conscientious Objector files.

Attention Junior High Youth!!!

WHAT: Mentoring, Martyrs, Minute To Win It, & Marshmallows

WHEN: Tuesday, March 14, 6:30-7:30 p.m.

WHERE: Fellowship Hall

RSVP: Helpful but not required!

We'll rotate 4 stations together, spending 15 minutes at each one.

1. Mentoring - Talk about the Mentoring program and look at church directories to see who might be a good mentor for you!

2. Martyrs - Gerald Mast will present the story of 1 martyr from the Martyr's Mirror and what we can learn from the martyrs.

3. Minute To Win It - We'll have teams compete in a variety of Minute To Win It challenges.

4. Marshmallows - We'll head to the kitchen to make some snacks together using marshmallows!

Next Sunday we will be **receiving new members** into the congregation. This group of 8 people have been meeting in membership classes over the last 6 weeks. Join us in welcoming them. Light refreshments will be served during a short reception following worship.

MCC has an urgent need for **relief supplies**. Our church will be collecting MCC hygiene kits and relief kits during March and April. Kit materials lists are on the bulletin board by the library or can be found online on the mcc.org website.

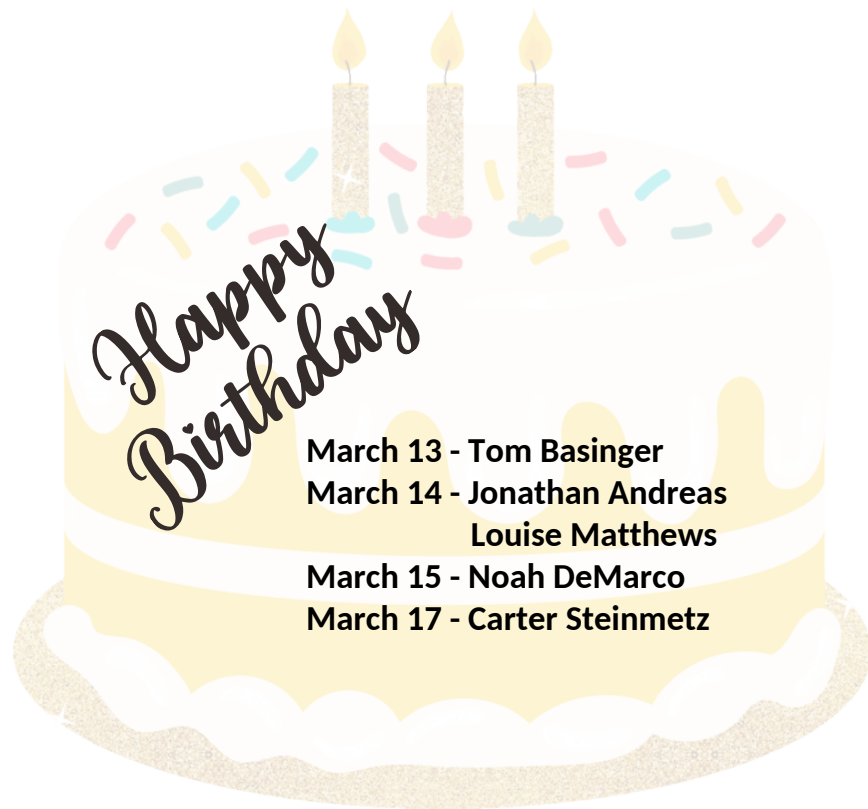
I have committed to serving with **MDS** in Red Lake, Minnesota during the **month of June**. Would you like to **join the effort** for a week or two? You need to get on the waiting list if you are interested. Work there is repairing houses on the reservation from a very destructive hailstorm. On the MDS website, navigate to the volunteer waiting list and add your name. In the comments section, mention to Alicia that you wish to serve in Red Lake and when you can come. She will respond soon. ~ Mitch Kingsley

This is a reminder to order your **Easter flowers** in honor or in memory of your loved ones. Order forms are available in the Fellowship Hall. **Deadline is Monday, March 20.**

FMC offers **50% camperships** for children and youth to attend **summer camp** at Camp Friedenswald. Turn in a receipt to the church office or email it to Carrie Mast (carrie@fmclubffton.org) to receive the discount.

March is **Women's History Month**. Join us in celebrating the courage, commitment and contributions of Mennonite women from 1868 to the present. Read more here: <https://www.mennoniteusa.org/mennonite-womens-history-timeline/>.

March is **Disability Awareness Month**. Join **Kathy Dickson** and guest speaker **Jeanne Davies** of Anabaptist Disabilities Network on March 26 during our Social Justice sermon and discussion series, *What Then Shall We Do?*, as we explore equity and justice around disability. Worship will be followed by a potluck lunch to continue the discussion.



March 13 - Tom Basinger
March 14 - Jonathan Andreas
 Louise Matthews
March 15 - Noah DeMarco
March 17 - Carter Steinmetz

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, March 12, 2023

Youth Choir, 8:30 a.m.

Coffee Time, 9 a.m.

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

Worship: Phil Yoder preaching, 10:30 a.m. Sanctuary

Sojourners SS Class potluck, noon Assembly Room

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

This Week

Tuesday, March 14

Morning prayers, 7 a.m. Sanctuary

Staff meeting, 9 a.m. Parlor

JHY, 6:30-7:30 p.m. Fellowship Hall

Wednesday, March 15

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

NOTE CHANGE: Cherub Choir 6-6:30 p.m., Jubilate 6:30-7 p.m.

Adult Bells, 6 p.m., Youth Bells, 7 p.m. Assembly Room

Chancel Choir, 7 p.m. Sanctuary

SHY, 7:30 p.m. Fellowship Hall

Next Sunday, March 19

Worship – Phil Yoder preaching

Receiving New Members

Lectionary: Exodus 17:1-7; Psalm 95; Romans 5:1-11; John 4:5-41

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

Welcome to our worship service today.

Visitors are invited to sign one of our guest sheets located at the entrances to the sanctuary.

Wireless hearing aids are available. **Worship bags** for children can be found hanging on wooden pegs at each sanctuary entrance. **Child care is available** during Sunday School and worship for young children in the nursery located in the basement.

The theme of our services during this season of Lent is “Shaped by...” I am sharing arrangements at the chancel and at the display case near the elevator and entrance to the Fellowship Hall. These arrangements feature objects which I have shaped from wood. Primarily I hope that everyone will freely see whatever these objects bring to mind for themselves. But it might also be interesting to hear some of the story behind these objects:

They come from fallen trees which grew in the woods just outside of Bluffton. For Ash Wednesday, bowls made from, yes, an ash tree. Killed by the tiny ash borer, which left its tracks on the surface of the wood where it had fed just under the bark. Once over 65 feet tall, and the trunk over 30 inches thick, one day it fell over, uprooted. Over several years the outer wood became darkened, soft, almost spongy on the outer few inches. But inside, especially at the center, very solid wood remained. The small turned bowls come from the enduring good heart. And these were used to dispense ashes on Ash Wednesday.

For the 1st Lent service- “Shaped by Risk... and Fear”, the chancel display was centered over a large piece of that ash trunk from higher in the tree, with a small third ash bowl next to it. That bowl reminds me of a mushroom, wild mushroom reward and risk, and love of the woods. The display mounted on this ash trunk was marked with a sign shaped in red oak, reading, you guessed it, Red Oak. The upright piece of firewood holding the sign was of course red oak.

Red can be a warning of risk or danger. It is the piece of firewood that my power splitter kicked back, hitting me in the head in December 2020, which definitely reshaped me. So, I chose to reshape this experience. The spoons on either side were shaped from the pieces of that tree which were on either side of the tree. This was healing for me. The small piece with the knot was part of the knot that caused the kickback; the rest, very hard to carve, was made into the bowl of a spoon, a thing of nurture and health.

2nd Lent service- Shaped by What We Believe... and What We Don't Know”. The large ash tree that fell over, broke off a smaller black walnut tree, which was hollow and rotting part way up. The shattered, rotting piece, itself shaped by ants (who, thankfully, did not attend the service) might have led one to believe there was not beauty in this log. But the sections ripped length ways reveal beautiful dark wood, with a surprising light outer layer. Spoons and spatulas and bowls come from this wonderful unexpected source. The whimsical spoon “coming out of the wood” and the dark bowl with the white on top are about being shaped by nature, and shaping we can agree to allow.

The trees come from Del and Susie Gratz's woods, and the beeswax treatment on the wood comes from Rodney and Marie Yoder Dyck's bees who gather over a wide area. Some of your flowering plants may be on these objects. Certainly, this endeavor is shaped by the wider community. These are only a few ways to see these things, I hope that you will enjoy your own impressions and ideas, and shape your experience of them as you are led.

Thank you,
Bruce Steingass