

**Ninth Sunday of the Social Justice Series**  
**September 24, 2023**  
**“What Then Shall We Do?” US Legal System**

***Gathering***

Wind Chimes Jackson & Leah Niekamp

Welcome and announcements Paul Neufeld Weaver

Prelude *Prelude III in C# Major* J.S. Bach  
Anne Marie Spelman

Invocation

\*Opening Hymn VT 791 *Let Justice Flow Down*

\*Responsive Reading - selections from Psalm 105

One: O give thanks to the Lord; call on God's name;

**Many: make known God's deeds among the peoples.**

One: Sing to God, sing praises to God;

**Many: tell of all God's wonderful works.**

One: Glory in God's holy name;

**Many: let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice.**

**All: Seek the Lord and God's strength; seek God's presence continually.**

***Telling God's Story***

Conversation with Children Anne Marie Spelman

Hymn VT 516 *Jesus Loves Me*

(sing coming forward & going back to seats)

Community Prayer Pastor Phil

Special Music *Beauty for Brokenness* Graham Kendrick  
Rebecca Estell (voice) & Jan Wiebe (guitar, voice)

Scripture Luke 4:14-30 Theo Andreas

Message *Jesus' Mission Statement: Free the Oppressed* Jan Wiebe

***Living God's Story***

\*Hymn of Response VT 800 *Honja sorironeum (With My Voice Alone)*  
Theo Andreas (violin)

Offering

Words of Invitation

Offertory

Dedication Prayer

*Prelude in C# Major*

Chilly Gonzales

***Sending***

\*Hymn of Sending VT 392 *The Church of Christ Cannot Be Bound*

\*Benediction

Wind Chimes

\*Postlude

*\*Please rise in body or in spirit.*

*~ VT - Voices Together (Purple Bound Book)*

*To parents of young children: If you're feeling anxious about having them in church, God put the wiggle in children. Don't feel like you have to suppress those wiggles. Consider sitting closer to the front, where it's easier for your little ones to engage. Quietly explain the parts of worship and actions of the worship leader, musicians, pastor, and others who are involved in the service. Sing the hymns, pray, and voice the responses. Children learn their behavior by mimicking you. If you have to leave the sanctuary with your child, please feel free to do so, but please come back. As Jesus said, "Let the children come to me."*

**First Mennonite Church**  
101 S. Jackson St, Bluffton OH  
419-358-5766 | [fmcbluffton.org](http://fmcbluffton.org)

**First Mennonite Church**  
September 24, 2023

**Lead Pastor** Phil Yoder, 717-869-7624  
[phil@fmcbluffton.org](mailto:phil@fmcbluffton.org)

**Associate Pastor** Carrie Mast, 419-230-1568  
[carrie@fmcbluffton.org](mailto:carrie@fmcbluffton.org)

**Communication Coordinator** Trustworthy Schumacher, 419-358-5766  
[fmc@fmcbluffton.org](mailto:fmc@fmcbluffton.org)

**Director of Music** Mark Suderman, 419-230-5368  
[sudermanme@bluffton.edu](mailto:sudermanme@bluffton.edu)

**Technology & Media Coordinator** Ray Raeburn, 419-230-2769  
[ray@fmcbluffton.org](mailto:ray@fmcbluffton.org)

**Custodian** Shawna Yoder  
[shawna@fmcbluffton.org](mailto:shawna@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 - Thursday

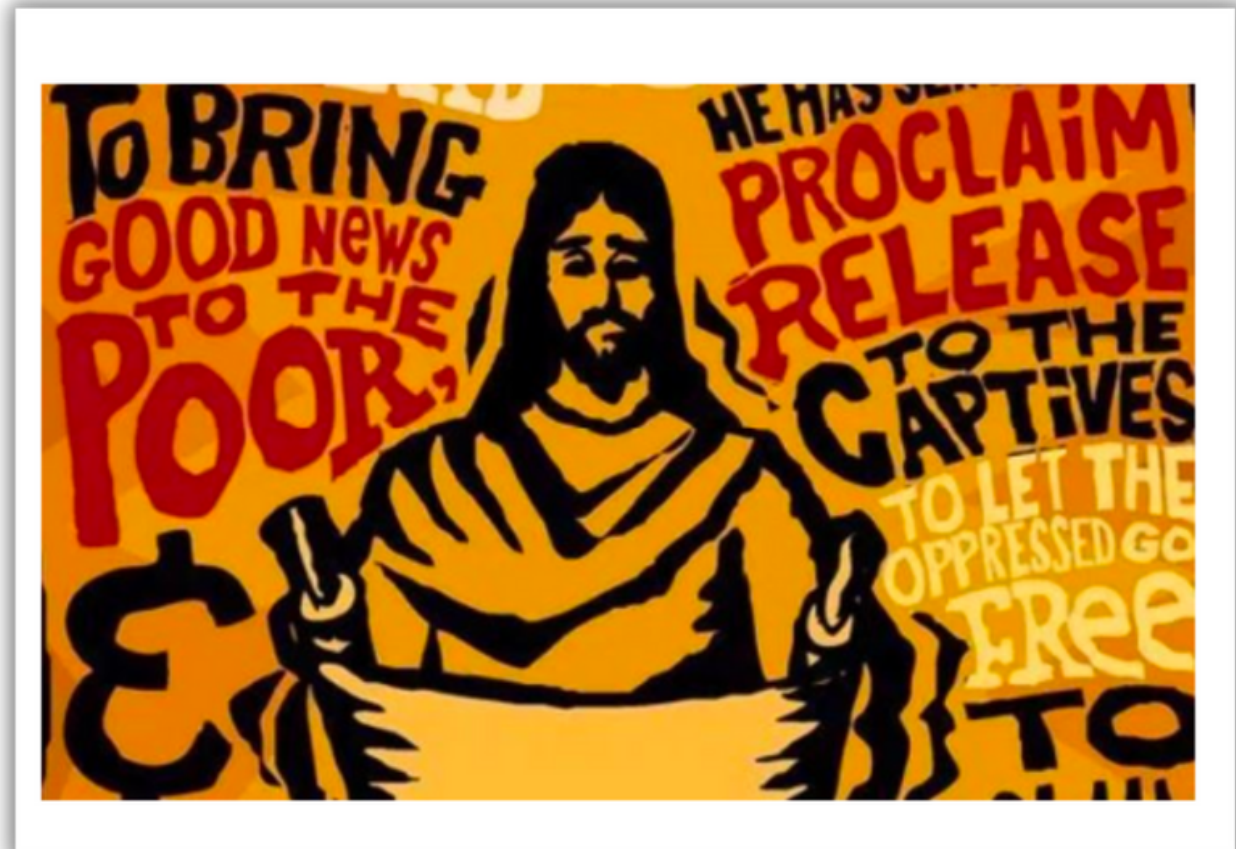
**Nursery Workers Today SS:** *Monica Harnish/Gerald Mast*  
**Worship:** *Victoria Woods-Yee/Melissa Friesen*

**Nursery Workers Next Week SS:**  
**Worship:** *Rebecca Estell*

Nursery sign-up here: <http://fmcbluffton.org/nursery-volunteers>



<b>Video:</b> Ray Raeburn	8/20/23 - 8/27/23
<b>Sound:</b> Chris Moser	Reported Volunteer hours: 37
<b>Chancel:</b> Sara Brenner	Attendance: 140
	Online views - Live: 22   Recorded: 18



*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.*

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

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**TODAY** is the ninth Sunday of our **Social Justice Series, What Then Shall We do? Jan Wiebe** will open discussion on the US Legal System during the sermon. All are invited to a **potluck lunch** following worship to continue the conversation around tables. Bring your own table service. Paper products will be available.

**Today's bulletin cover** is from Rush United Methodist Church:

<https://breakingyokes.org/2022/01/18/anointed-to-bring-good-news/>

From **Anne Marie Spelman**, today's accompanist:

I keep thinking about these two preludes in C# major, one released in 1722 and the other in 2018. Both composers built on the work of those who came before them. Both reached forward to do something new. Bach's work is a masterpiece, as usual. But I find it intriguing that Gonzales' prelude draws from a richness of musical possibilities available to him that Bach could never have dreamed of. It seems we continue to face the same problems in human history century after century. But I find hope in the idea that if we can continue to try new things and develop new expressions in art and music, we can also find new solutions and ways of being as a society.

Today concludes **Pastor Phil's first year of ministry** at FMC! Thank you for wearing your name tags this past year as he was getting to know us. There is a box next to the mailboxes where you can place your name tags and lanyards.

**MONDAY:** The office will open shortly after 1 p.m. when the annual Staff Retreat concludes.

We are updating the **Shared Items list** on the website. If you currently have items on the list, check to make sure you still have the items noted. If there are changes that need to be made, contact the church office.

If you might be interested in participating in a **CPR training** hosted by FMC sometime in October, contact the church office. Cost will be \$25 per person. Once interest is determined, a date will be set.

**Rehearsals** for Bluffton University's 129th performance of **Handel's "Messiah"** will be held from 7-8:30 p.m. on Tuesdays each week starting Oct. 3 in the Gilliom Room of Mosiman Hall on campus. There are a total of nine rehearsals, as well as the dress rehearsal on **Saturday, Dec. 9 and concert on Sunday, Dec. 10**. Anyone interested in singing, from high school students to adults, is invited to join the chorus, which includes Bluffton students, faculty, staff and community members. There is no cost to participate. Rehearsals will lead to the traditional Advent-season performance in **Yoder Recital Hall at 4 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 10**. Dr. Bo Young Kang, director of choral activities, will conduct the performance, also featuring regional soloists and an orchestra. For more information, contact Dr. Kang at [kangb@bluffton.edu](mailto:kangb@bluffton.edu) or the music department office at 419-358-3347.

### NEXT SUNDAY...

**...is World Communion Sunday** when churches connect across denominational and national boundaries around the world through a service of sharing the cup and bread. The day serves as a reminder of our connectedness with one another, joined together through the body of Christ. An opportunity for giving alms will be available and will support our friends and neighbors through the Mutual Aid Fund.

**...all are invited** to join a reception in the Fellowship Hall immediately following worship on October 1, 2023 to celebrate **Carrie Mast's** installation as Associate Pastor here at FMC.

**...is the Brazo en Brazo Fiesta Familiar** from 4-6 p.m. This annual celebration (paused during COVID) has activities for all ages including a pinata, games, music, and great food! Join friends old and new at Lima Mennonite Church, 1318 N. Main St., Lima for a time to support this ministry of 4 area Mennonite churches to provide services for Latino immigrants in the greater Lima area. Donations to offset the cost of the meal will be accepted.

**MCC Plain Community Liaison:** MCC seeks someone to serve as the primary liaison to large segments of Anabaptists in the U.S. that self-identify as Plain Anabaptists. In collaboration with MCC colleagues, this position develops, analyzes, implements and evaluates engagement with Plain communities. This position sets broad goals for building relationships with key representatives in Plain communities and demonstrates MCC's commitment to engaging the full range of Anabaptist churches and beyond. For more information contact Marilyn Peters at [MarilynPeters@mcc.org](mailto:MarilynPeters@mcc.org) or apply online by October 23 at [mcc.org/plain-community-liaison](https://mcc.org/plain-community-liaison).

# Ministry Minute!

## Racial Justice Ministry

A major project last year involved raising funds for the establishment of a barber shop/hair salon on the Bluffton University campus that would be able to meet the needs of any student, while having particular skills in a range of black hair styles.

During the spring and summer, Racial Justice Ministry leaders **Jan Wiebe** and **George Lehman** have been visiting court proceedings in Lima as part of a broader effort sponsored, in part, by the ACLU. This initiative aims to gain a better understanding of the county-by-county workings of the criminal justice system, especially regarding issues such as bail bond patterns and sentencing decisions. One thing that is becoming clear is that non-public processes like plea bargaining and provisions of adequate representation for those accused of crimes often set the stage for later outcomes that are troublesome.

Members of the Racial Justice Ministry were active in collecting petition signatures to ensure that a women's reproductive rights ballot initiative would appear on the November ballot, despite efforts by some legislators to change the ballot initiative rules midway through the process by placing Issue 1 on an August ballot.

We are in the early stage of exploring a one week trip to significant historical Civil Rights locations. This trip would be similar in emphasis to the Bluffton University cross-cultural trip that took place this past May, but would be shorter in duration. The trip would be open to participants of all ages.



## Happy Birthday!



**August 24** - Jackie Frey  
**August 27** - Jo Clemens  
**August 28** - Greg Ring  
**August 29** - Del Gratz  
**August 30** - Liana Gott



follow us



## Today, Sunday, September 24, 2023

~~CANCELED: Youth Choir, 8:30 - 9:15 a.m. Children's Choir Room~~  
Coffee Time, 9 a.m.

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

~~CANCELED: Cherubs 9:15 a.m. - 9:45 a.m. Children's Choir Room~~  
Worship: Jan Wiebe preaching, 10:30 a.m. Sanctuary  
Social Justice Potluck & Discussion, noon Fellowship Hall

## This Week

### Monday, September 25

Staff Retreat, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

C.L.E.O, 10:15 a.m. & 1:15 p.m. Parlor

### Tuesday, September 26

Morning prayers, 7 a.m. Sanctuary

### Wednesday, September 27

Jubilate 3:00 - 3:45 p.m. Children's Choir Room

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

Adult Bells, 6 p.m. Youth Bells, 7 p.m. Room #113

Chancel Choir, 7 p.m. Sanctuary

SHY, 7:30 - 9 p.m. Fellowship Hall

## Next Sunday, October 1

World Communion Sunday

Worship: Doug Luginbill preaching

Fiesta Familiar by Brazo en Brazo, 4 - 6:30 p.m. Lima Mennonite

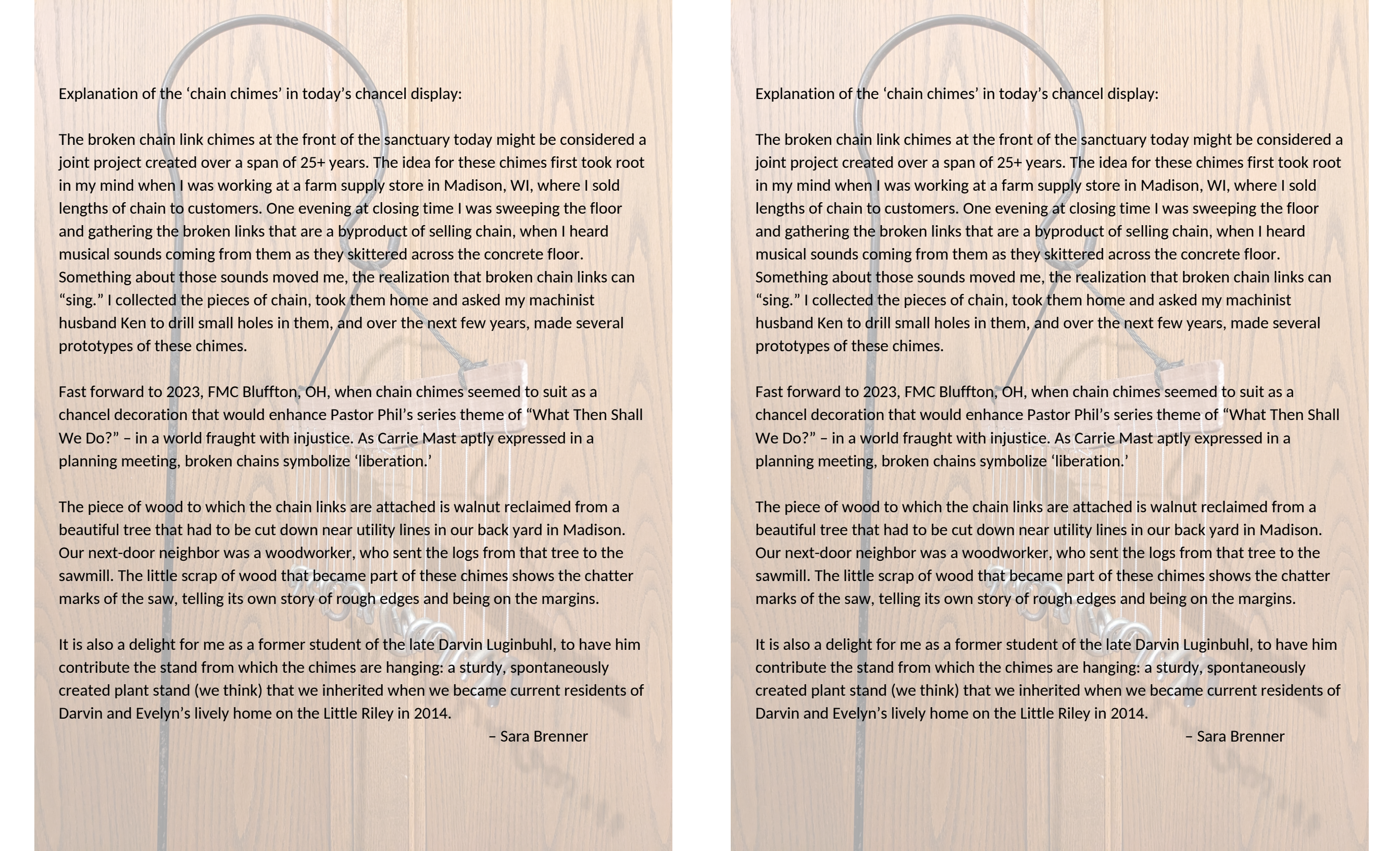
Lectionary: Exodus 17:1-7 and Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16;

Philippians 2:1-13; Matthew 21:23-32

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.

A pair of chain chimes hanging from a wooden stand against a wood-grain background. The chimes consist of a circular metal ring at the top, a wooden handle in the middle, and several metal chain links of varying lengths hanging from the handle. The background is a light-colored wood grain.

Explanation of the 'chain chimes' in today's chancel display:

The broken chain link chimes at the front of the sanctuary today might be considered a joint project created over a span of 25+ years. The idea for these chimes first took root in my mind when I was working at a farm supply store in Madison, WI, where I sold lengths of chain to customers. One evening at closing time I was sweeping the floor and gathering the broken links that are a byproduct of selling chain, when I heard musical sounds coming from them as they skittered across the concrete floor. Something about those sounds moved me, the realization that broken chain links can "sing." I collected the pieces of chain, took them home and asked my machinist husband Ken to drill small holes in them, and over the next few years, made several prototypes of these chimes.

Fast forward to 2023, FMC Bluffton, OH, when chain chimes seemed to suit as a chancel decoration that would enhance Pastor Phil's series theme of "What Then Shall We Do?" – in a world fraught with injustice. As Carrie Mast aptly expressed in a planning meeting, broken chains symbolize 'liberation.'

The piece of wood to which the chain links are attached is walnut reclaimed from a beautiful tree that had to be cut down near utility lines in our back yard in Madison. Our next-door neighbor was a woodworker, who sent the logs from that tree to the sawmill. The little scrap of wood that became part of these chimes shows the chatter marks of the saw, telling its own story of rough edges and being on the margins.

It is also a delight for me as a former student of the late Darvin Luginbuhl, to have him contribute the stand from which the chimes are hanging: a sturdy, spontaneously created plant stand (we think) that we inherited when we became current residents of Darvin and Evelyn's lively home on the Little Riley in 2014.

– Sara Brenner

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