

Second Sunday of Advent ~ Sensing the Season: TOUCH

Twelfth Sunday of the Social Justice Series

What Then Shall We Do? Justice For Children

December 10, 2023

Gathering

Wind Chimes Savannah Werling

Call to Worship Emily Hilty

Prelude *O Come, O Come, Immanuel* John Mason Neale
Laura Hartzler

Christmas Program

*Opening Hymn VT 240 *Joy to the World*

Centering

*Responsive Reading & Candle Lighting Hannah DeMarco & Emily Hilty

Two: Advent is a time to lean into our questions: We wonder, we wander,

All: We wait together

Two: For the Messiah, the Christ Child, the light.

All: How will we know it is you?

Two: Help us to perceive your presence: To smell your fragrance,

All: To meet your embrace,

Two: To taste your feast, To feel your love,

To hear your song, To see your beauty,

All: To prepare a way for you in a chaotic world.

Two: We light this candle of Peace, anticipating your embodied presence among us.

Evan, Rachel, & Lena Skilliter (candle lighters)

Telling God's Story

Special Music *Bells are Ringing* Susan Nipp
Jubilate, Laura Hartzler (conductor)

Conversation with Children Junia Spelman & Carrie Mast

Hymn VT 237 *Now the Heavens Start to Whisper*
(v. 1 coming forward & v. 3 going back to seats)

Scripture Isaiah 40:1-11 Chris Gott

Pastoral Prayer Pastor Phil

Scripture Mark 10:13-16 Micah Hartzler

Message *Active Hope and Comfort: Let the Children Come*

Laurel Neufeld Weaver

Living God's Story

*Hymn of Response VT 751 *There Is in Every Person*

Noisy Offering

Words of Invitation

Offertory

Dedication Prayer

Children's Medley

arr. Marilyn Hamm

Sending

*Hymn of Sending VT 239 *He Came Down*

*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

Lead Pastor	Phil Yoder, 717-869-7624 phil@fmcbluffton.org
Associate Pastor	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 Coordinator	Ray Raeburn, 419-230-2769 ray@fmcbluffton.org
Custodian	Shawna Yoder shawna@fmcbluffton.org

First Mennonite Church Office Hours

Monday - Friday 9 a.m.- 4 p.m.

~ Phil's day off - Friday ~ Carrie's day off - Thursday

Nursery Workers Today SS: *Judy Diller*
Worship: *Sunita Hooley/Tess Eger*

Nursery Workers Next Week SS: *Gerald Mast*
Worship: *Mary Edmiston/Walt Paquin*

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



Video: Ray Raeburn	11/26/23 - 12-03-23
Sound: Melissa Friesen	Reported Volunteer hours: 23
Chancel: Mary Ann Suter/Sara Brenner	Attendance: 172
	Online views - Live: 28 Recorded: 15 Total Viewing Hrs:37

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 10, 2023

Sensing The Season



Advent 2

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Music Survey and QR Code: Thank you for your participation in the cinnamon roll potluck and conversation about the future of FMC music. We really appreciate your feedback. We are reviewing the surveys and organizing the data. If you were not able to be there, you can either use this QR code to the left, find the link on the church website front page, or get a paper copy from the office.

TODAY is the twelfth and final Sunday of our Social Justice Series, ***What Then Shall We Do? Justice for Children***. **Laurel Neufeld Weaver** will open our discussion with her sermon. Laurel holds her MSW and LISW-S credentials, has a counseling practice in Bluffton, and also works full time as Assistant Professor of Social Work and Field Director at Bluffton University. Laurel is a member of FMC, is married to Paul, and has 3 adult children, Erin, Justin, and Ana, and 2 grandchildren, Logan and Zoey. All are invited to a potluck lunch following worship to continue the conversation around tables. Bring your own tableservice. Paper products will be available.

Today's service is an **intergenerational** one. You'll notice greater involvement of children throughout our worship together, including the **Children & Youth Christmas Program**. Please note that in addition to passing the offering plates, children will collect a **noisy offering** to support MCC's water project: **My Coins Count**. Be sure to bring your change to make some noise!



FMC is hosting **Pie Night TONIGHT**, Sunday, Dec. 10, beginning at **8 p.m.** We invite you to **come and spend time** getting to know and supporting Bluffton University students at this event. Final exams begin the next day. We also encourage you to make/bring a pie. A sign-up sheet is in the Fellowship Hall. Pies can be dropped off Sunday morning or that evening. Questions can be directed to Walt Paquin: paquinw@bluffton.edu.

On Tuesday, **Dec. 19**, hundreds of Mennonites across the US and Canada will hold **peaceful demonstrations** at their representatives' offices calling for a **ceasefire** in Gaza. **Mennonite Action** is helping to pull together a group to meet in Columbus and is working with Ohio Mennonite Churches to make this happen. If you have interest in attending or being part of planning this event, contact Phil at phil@fmclubuffton.org.

Interested in **Mennonite Action**? 2nd virtual organizing call | Tuesday, Dec. 12, 8 p.m. EST/5 p.m. EST on Zoom | Register here: <https://www.mennoniteaction.org/call>. See the recording of the first meeting: <https://vimeo.com/889909176>.

TODAY: Bluffton University will present its **129th performance of Handel's "Messiah" at 4 p.m.** today, Sunday, Dec. 10, in Yoder Recital Hall. While tickets are free, space needs to be reserved at www.bluffton.edu/tickets. Dr. Bo Young Kang, director of choral activities, will conduct the oratorio. Soloists along with the Bluffton Choral Society including students, faculty, staff and community members will be accompanied by an orchestra. A free-will offering will be taken for music scholarships.

New Members Class: Have you been attending FMC and are interested in becoming a member? There will be a New Members Sunday School class meeting for 5 weeks starting in February (We already have 4 folks and would love to have more). Let Pastor Phil know if you have interest.

Trusty Schumacher's family leave is extended to Jan. 15. Over the next 5 weeks, office coverage will be spotty. Contact the office (419.358.5766) before stopping in to make sure someone will be available to help you.

First Mennonite Church has a long history with **Lima Habitat For Humanity**, starting with **Dick and Margret Weaver's** help in its beginning over 30 years ago and Claude Boyer and Royce Engle who gave many hours to its development. Since then many of our members have supported Habitat by volunteering as workers in the ReStore, helping construct the homes they have built, and donating funds. This year Habitat built two houses in Delphos, and in 2024 there are plans to build two more in Lima. At last Tuesday's annual Volunteer Banquet the executive director, Bruce Hilty, mentioned FMC's involvement several times and gave his Director's Choice award to two of our members, **Lynn and Linda Miller** who work at the Restore on Monday mornings, and would be glad to take several more ReStore volunteers with them. Please consider supporting this worthy cause by volunteering your time, offering your construction skills, or donating the money they need at www.habitatlima.org/donate.

Winter Camps at Friedenswald! Registration is now open for winter youth and family camps.

- Jan 5-7 - High School Camp Join us for a weekend of rest, play, and
- Jan 12-14 - Jr High Camp exploring the theme "Only in Darkness the
- Feb 16-18 - Family Camp Light." Hope to see you this winter!

Camp Friedenswald is now hiring summer staff. Encourage a young person you know would be a great part of staff to apply. Questions? Contact Jane Litwiller, program director. Apply here: <https://friedenswald.campbrainstaff.com/>.

Due to the way Sundays and holidays fall on the calendar this year, **Dec. 24** is the **last giving Sunday** to give to the 2023 Spending Plan in the offering plate and online. If you give after this date, and you wish your contribution to appear on your 2023 contribution statement, you will need to notify the church office.

WINTER BIBLE SCHOOL

READING PAUL IN THE AGE OF MASS INCARCERATION

ALL AGES

Ministry Minute!

On **Saturday, Jan. 27**, FMC & Grace Mennonite will be hosting an all new **Winter Bible School** from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. **Dr. Ryan Schellenberg**, a Mennonite scholar of the apostle Paul from Methodist Theological Seminary of Ohio, will be sharing his expertise on Paul's experience in prisons and how that may relate to issues of mass incarceration today. Saturday will feature a meal, music, and discussion. and children's programming at The Lion & Lamb, as well. Sunday will include an elective Sunday School class, and a sermon from Ryan. Save the date, invite community friends, and stay tuned for more details. Pastor Phil says, "If you are frustrated with or don't know what to do with Paul's letters, this Winter Bible School will provide great new ways to engage the text. It will be Fantastic!"



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 10, 2023

Youth Choir, 8:30 - 9:15 a.m. Children's Choir Room
 Coffee Time, 9 a.m. & Sunday School for adults, 9:15 a.m.
 Children & Youth Christmas Program Rehearsal, 9 a.m. Sanctuary
 Social Justice Sunday #12: What Then Shall We Do? Justice for Children
 Worship: Laurel Neufeld Weaver, preaching 10:30 a.m. Sanctuary
 Children & Youth Christmas Program, during worship
 Noisy offering, during worship
 Social Justice Potluck & Discussion, noon Fellowship Hall
 The Messiah, 4 p.m. Yoder Recital Hall
 Pie Night, 8 p.m. Fellowship Hall

This Week

Monday, December 11
 Staff meeting, 9:30 a.m. Parlor

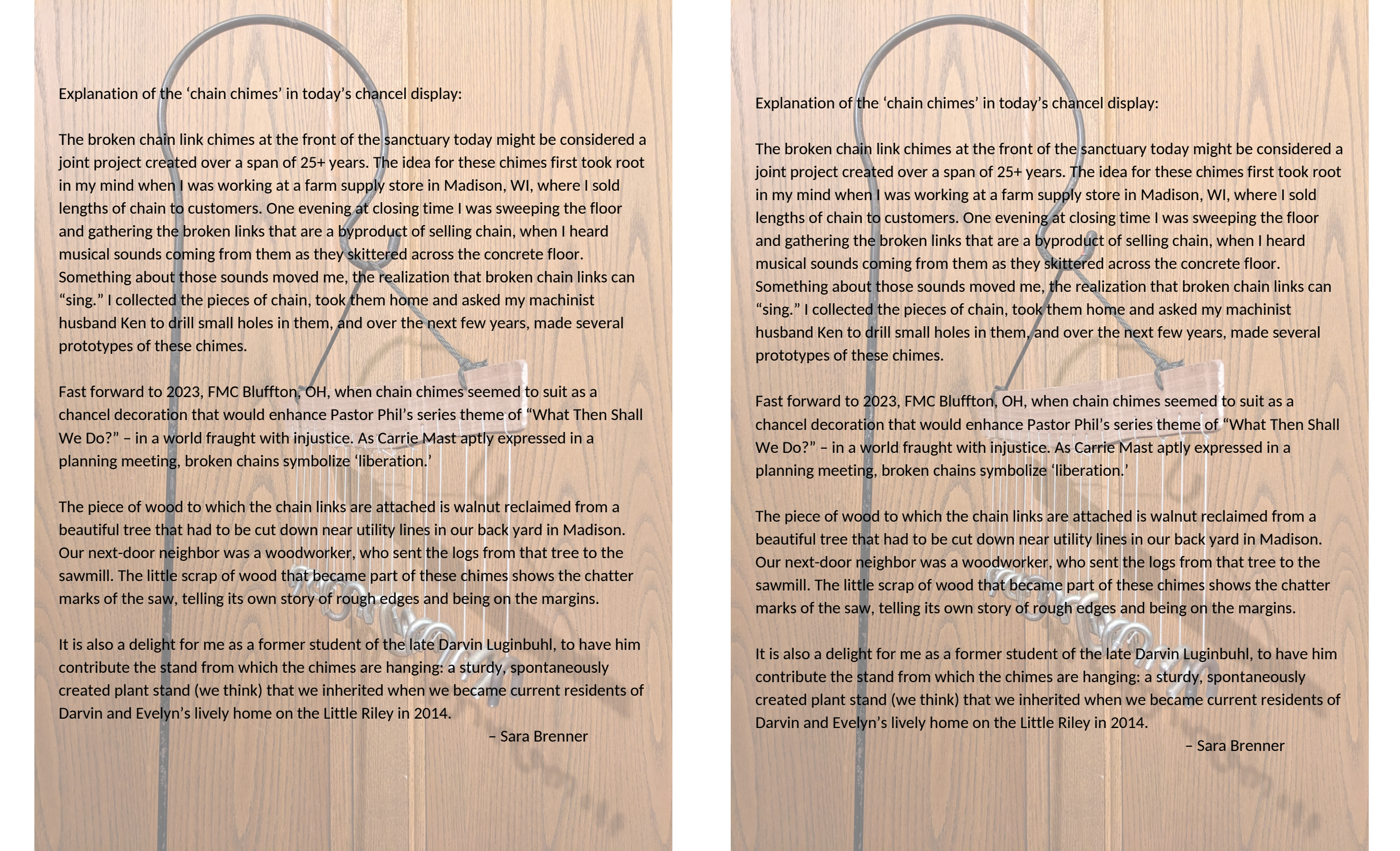
Tuesday, December 12
 Morning prayers, 7 a.m. Sanctuary

Wednesday, December 13
 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. Assembly Room
 Chancel Choir, 7 p.m. Sanctuary
 SHY, 7:30-8:30 p.m. Fellowship Hall

Next Sunday, December 17
 Third Sunday of Advent ~ Sensing the Season: TASTE
 Worship: Phil Yoder, preaching
 Freudige SS Class Potluck, noon Fellowship Hall
 Sermon Discussion Circle, meal, 5:30 p.m.; discussion 6-7 p.m.
 Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11; Psalm 126; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24; John 1:6-8, 19-28

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.



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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