

6th Sunday after the Epiphany

Stories from Palestine

February 11, 2024

Gathering

Welcome and announcements

Paul Neufeld Weaver

Prelude

In Christ There Is No East or West
LuAnn Stuckey

arr. J. Blersch

Invocation

*Opening Hymn

VT 715 *Longing for Light*

*Responsive Reading - selections from Psalm 50

One: The mighty one, God the Lord, speaks and summons the earth

Many: from the rising of the sun to its setting.

One: Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty,

Many: God shines forth.

One: God calls to the heavens above and to the earth,

Many: that the people may be judged:

One: "Gather to me my faithful ones,

Many: who made a covenant with me by sacrifice!"

All: The heavens declare God's righteousness, for God is judge.

Telling God's Story

Special Music

Sing A New Song
Chancel Choir, Mark Suderman (conductor),
Jan Wiebe (flute), Phil Yoder (string bass)

Schütz/Jennings

Conversation with Children

Pastor Phil

Hymn

VT 512 *Let the Children Come to Me*
(sing coming forward & going back to seats)

Community Prayer

Pastor Phil

Scripture

Isaiah 60: 1-6 and Matthew 25: 31-46

Gene Long

Message

Rise Mennonites with Song, Prayer and Action
Lydia Kutaab Brenneman

Living God's Story

*Hymn of Response

VT 412 *My Soul Cries Out*

Offering

Words of Invitation & Prayer

Offertory

There Is a Balm in Gilead

arr.J. Leavitt

Sending

*Hymn of Sending

VT 808 *Between Darkness and Light*

*Responsive reading

Back of Bulletin

*Benediction

Go, My Friends, in Peace
Chancel Choir

Joyce Elaine Eilers

**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
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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: Cheri Slotter
Worship: Mary Ina Hooley & Jonathan Spelman

Nursery Workers Next Week SS: Pat Sheidler
Worship: Sunita Hooley & Ray Person

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



Video: Ray Raeburn 1/28/24 - 2/4/24
Sound: Chris Moser Reported Volunteer hours: 24
Chancel: Wendy Chappell-Dick Attendance: 155
Online views - Live: 25 Recorded: 20 Total Viewing Hrs: 30

First Mennonite Church

February 11, 2024



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.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ken & Natalie Shenk are grateful for all of your encouraging cards and expressions of support. Ken will begin chemotherapy tomorrow, Monday, Feb. 12.

Lydia Kuttab Brenneman is a Palestinian Christian, born in Bethlehem, and grew up in Jerusalem. She is recently retired from 15 years of working as a chaplain at St Rita's Medical Center, now called BonSecureMercy Health. She is a member at Lima Mennonite church and is familiar to many of us. She will share the story of people in her family and others, who live out their faith in Jesus and have perseverance to live in the land of their forebearers. She will also challenge us to learn, pray and respond to the current crisis in Gaza by letting our lights shine.

TODAY: We will be hosting a day of **worship and events** around **stories from Palestine** and learning about the **history of the Israel/Palestine conflict**.

- Worship: Retired Chaplain & Palestinian American Lydia Kuttab Brenneman preaching
- 1 p.m.: Baklava-making w/ Lydia
- 3 p.m.: Watch Party for Documentary on the Israel/Palestine conflict
- 4 p.m.: Lion & Lamb Peace Arts Center Graduate Assistant Tareq Abuhailima sharing his story of growing up in Gaza

Continued Learning Elder Organization (CLEO) begins this week! J.P. Schumacher has organized a new series of courses for individuals who would like to continue learning past the traditional student age. C.L.E.O. will provide four weekly courses beginning Wednesday, Feb. 14 here at FMC. To register, pick up a form in the office, visit the church website, or use this QR code. Moderators are Tim Schumacher & Beth Boehr.



Join us this week, as we gather for an **Ash Wednesday service** on Feb. 14 at **8 p.m.** in the **Fellowship Hall**. This service of preparation for the journey of **Lent** will include an opportunity to receive ashes as we remember that “we are dust, and unto to dust we shall return.”

THURSDAY: You are invited to attend the sharing of the **2023 Financial Review** on **Thursday** evening, Feb. 15, at **7 p.m.** in Fellowship Hall. Please plan to attend.

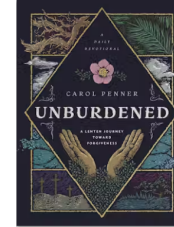
Next Sunday if you notice some empty pews, it might have something to do with **Family Winter Camp** at **Friedenswald, Friday, Feb. 16 - Sunday, Feb. 18**. A number of FMC folks are joining the fun in the Peaceful Woods. Prayers to all for safe travels and a restful weekend together.

Two Lenten Devotionals Available:

- Mennonite Education Agency offers "Lent at Home," a 2024 Lenten Worship Guide. The theme this year is "Christ among us" and is written by Talashia Keim Yoder and designed by Erin Ramer. Available in English and Spanish.



Free download: <https://www.mennoniteeducation.org/resources/lent-at-home/>.



- MennoMedia offers *Unburdened, A Lenten Journey Toward Forgiveness*, written by Carol Penner. It is available in ebook (\$14.99) or paperback (\$16.99). A special discount is available through Feb. 11. Order: <https://www.mennomedia.org/deal-of-the-week/>.

Bluffton University's Forum features **Dr. Jesse W. Jackson III**, CEO and managing partner, Best Man Company, sharing “How to Recognize, Resolve, and Start the Recovery Process from Personal Traumas,” at **11 a.m. on Tuesday**, Feb. 13 in Yoder Recital Hall. During the presentation, the school improvement coach and author will help students build resiliency while adapting to and recovering from trauma. This event is free and open to the public.

Mennonite Central Committee is looking ahead to summer 2024, when we invite young adults of color from across the U.S. to participate in Summer Service. This grant program lets the next generation of peacemakers gain spiritual direction, work experience and extra income while serving their churches or communities for 10 weeks. In turn, host churches benefit from fresh perspectives, seasonal assistance and the time-tested joy that comes with mentoring tomorrow's leaders. MCC covers 75% of costs associated with the program. We invite you to work with interested young adults to create a role that aligns church and community needs with their unique talents, goals and interests. Learn more and apply at mcc.org/summerservice. Or email Brooke Strayer at BrookeStrayer@mcc.org.



What to do on these dreary winter days? **Sew MCC kit bags!** Directions are on the bulletin board by the library and some cut fabric packages are there, too. Donated fabric is also available in a tub for you to cut, or use your own fabric. (We can add strings later, if that is difficult for you.) Hygiene and relief kit collection will begin mid-March.

Three volunteer opportunities at MHCO

1. Weekly grocery pick-up for Willow Ridge residents—this will include picking up groceries from Community Markets in town and delivering to Willow Ridge.
2. Friday night bingo callers—7:00pm every Friday night (except the 1st Friday of the month)
3. 1 on 1 time spent with a male resident at Maple Crest Assisted Living (playing cards, chatting, doing a puzzle, etc) possibly once a week or every other week

If you are interested in taking part in any of these positions, please contact **Aly Breece** at 419-358-1015, ext 265 or email her at abreece@mhcoliving.org

A prayer for the peace of Jerusalem, of Israel, and of Palestine

One: O God, source of all goodness and compassion, where people live with suspicion and fear, uncertainty and upheaval as their constant companions,

All: Grant that your holy and life-giving Spirit may move among us, breaking down walls that divide, giving light and courage to the refugee and the most vulnerable in society, and ushering in the day that all may live in safety and security.

One: God of hope, when hearts are discouraged and tired, where political prisoners are separated from their loved ones, when husbands and wives are not permitted to live together in Jerusalem because of unjust laws, when whole families despair because they have been forced out of their homes.

All: Grant that your love and life-sustaining power will flow, encouraging, energizing, freeing, uniting and protecting all your children who struggle to keep hope alive.

One: O God, our creator, where unemployment is staggeringly high, where many have difficult access to medical care and basic necessities, where land and water and other resources are taken illegally.

All: Reveal your justice and life-preserving grace to us, opening our eyes, inspiring leaders to work for the common good. Embolden advocates and activists to speak truth to power. Strengthen teachers, social workers, pastors and bishops, scientists and lawyers, farmers and laborers, and all who help in the delivery of humanitarian services to ensure that everyone may enjoy a fair portion of the abundance of the earth.

Happy
Birthday



February 11 - Karen McCullough

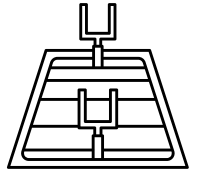
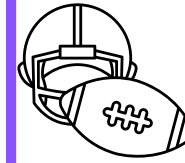
February 16 - Mona Reichenbach

February 17 - Rich Bucher

Megan Coffman

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, February 11, 2023

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.

Cherubs, 9:15 a.m. - 9:45 a.m. Children's Choir Room

Worship: Lydia Kuttub Brennehan preaching, 10:30 a.m. Sanctuary

Sojourners SS Class Potluck, noon Assembly Room

1 p.m. Baklava-making • 3 p.m. Watch Party for Documentary • 4 p.m. Tareq Abuhlima

This Week

Monday, February 12

Staff meeting, 9:30 a.m. Parlor

Tuesday, February 13

Morning prayers, 7 a.m. Sanctuary

Wednesday, February 14

CLEO: Radio shows, 10 a.m. Assembly room

Jubilate 3- 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. Assembly Room

Chancel Choir, 7 p.m. Sanctuary

Ash Wednesday Service, 8 p.m. Fellowship Hall

Thursday, February 15

CLEO: Watercolor, 10 a.m. Assembly room

2023 Financial Review, 7 p.m. Fellowship Hall

Friday - Sunday, February 16-18

Family Winter Camp at Friedenswald

Next Sunday, February 18 - Lent 1

Worship: Phil Yoder preaching

Lectionary: Genesis 9:8-17 , Psalm 25:1-10 , 1 Peter 3:18-22 , Mark 1:9-15

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.