

# Rooted Faith: Proving Ground

March 3, 2024

## Gathering

Welcome and announcements

Shelby Cluts

Prelude

*Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence (VT 65)*  
Anne Marie Spelman

arr. Michael Larking

Invocation

\*Opening Hymn

VT 197 *God's Glory Fills the Heavens*

\*Responsive Reading - based on Psalm 19

**All: *May the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts be pleasing to you, O God.***

One: We speak because you spoke first, bringing voice to the brightness of the sun and singing the airy darkness of the sky. You spoke this earth from end to end, and speaking must have given you pleasure, for you said, "It was good."

**All: *May the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts be pleasing to you, O God.***

One: Year after year you have poured forth speech: passing stories and statutes down through hands and lips. From you we learned to speak, and speaking, we spoke to you—singing songs of consolation that would become your psalms to us; writing poems our children's children would hear as the voice of God.

**All: *May the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts be pleasing to you, O God.***

One: Your law, O Lord, is beautiful. Your Word is the one that endures. We seek the grammar of your justice in the words that you spoke before. Speak here once more.

**All: *May the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts be pleasing to you, O God.***

Special Music

*How Lovely are the Messengers*

Felix Mendelssohn

Chancel Choir, Mark Suderman (conductor), LuAnn Stuckey (piano)

How lovely are the messengers that preach us the gospel of peace!

To all the nations is gone forth the sound of their words, throughout all the lands their glad tidings.

Conversation with Children

Jen Benroth/Judy Steiner

Hymn

VT 777 Seeds

(sing coming forward & going back to seats)

## Telling God's Story

Prayer of Confession - based on Psalm 19

One: We often miss the beauty in your work, God.

**Many: Forgive our distracted hearts.**

One: When we put our trust in other things,

**Many: remind us of your love and care.**

**All: *Bring joy to us once again.***

One: May the meditations of our hearts

**All: *be pleasing on your sight, O God***

Community Prayer

Pastor Carrie

Scripture

Exodus 20:1-17; John 2:13-22

LOGOS

Message

Giving Up "Giving Up"

Pastor Phil

## Living God's Story

\*Hymn of Response

VT 592 *How Firm a Foundation*

Offering

Words of Invitation

Offertory

*Fantasia*

Georg Philipp Telemann

Dedication Prayer

## Sending

\*Hymn of Sending

VT 287 *Jesus Christ is Waiting*

\*Benediction

\*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)

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**Director of Music** Mark Suderman, 419-230-5368  
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**Technology Coordinator** Ray Raeburn, 419-230-2769  
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**Custodian** Shawna Yoder  
[shawna@fmcbluffton.org](mailto: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:** Mary Edmiston  
**Worship:** Jonathan Spelman

**Nursery Workers Next Week SS:** Carmen Ordonez  
**Worship:** Mary Ina Hooley

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



**Video:** Ray Raeburn 2/18/24 - 2/25/24  
**Sound:** Chris Moser Reported Volunteer hours: 21  
**Chancel:** Pastor Carrie Attendance: 145  
Online views - Live: 32 Recorded: 20 Total Viewing Hrs: 27

*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 3, 2024**



**T.R Steiner**

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## ANNOUNCEMENTS

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**Judy Steiner's** mother, **Rosie Dosh** has transitioned into Hospice Care. Pray for comfort for her as well as for her family.

**Marty Hostetler** remains in St Rita's for a heart condition. Both Marty & Lowell welcome prayers.

**Miev Chan** remains in the hospital undergoing more heart tests and monitoring. A surgery date has not been determined yet. Prayers for strength and healing.

We were so thankful for all the cards, prayers, words, and more that were offered to us during this time of grieving for my mother, Alice. We both felt the congregation's support and presence with us as we traveled back and forth to Kansas, and celebrated her life with family and friends.

~Mark & Elaine Suderman

Throughout Lent, Scripture is being shared through **LOGOS**, the FMC reader's theater group. This week's readers include **Bodey Benroth, Mary Ina Hooley, Jori Mast, Sarah Phillips, JP Schumacher**, and **Trusty Schumacher**.

**On Sunday March 24** (Palm Sunday), our Guest Speaker will be Sarah Augustine. Sarah will teach an **Elective Sunday School** Class that morning in the Sanctuary. All classes are welcome to join. Sarah is the co-founder of the Coalition to Dismantle the **Doctrine of Discovery** (The philosophical and legal framework dating to the 15th century that gave Christian governments moral and legal rights to invade and seize indigenous lands and dominate Indigenous Peoples).

Three members of **Jubilate** are participating in the **Mennonite Youth Choir Festival** this weekend in Berne, IN. **Anna Hartzler, Madelyn King, and Junia Spelman** memorized music for the event which includes a daylong rehearsal Saturday and an afternoon performance on Sunday. Children's Choir Director **Laura Hartzler** is attending, also.

Due to Children & Youth Choir Director Laura Hartzler attending the Mennonite Youth Choir Festival this weekend, **Youth Choir** and **Cherub Choir rehearsals are rescheduled** from Sunday morning. Youth Choir will meet Sunday evening from 7-8 p.m., and Cherub Choir will meet Wednesday evening from 7-8 p.m.



A reminder to fill out your **Easter flower** forms. The deadline to submit your form is Monday, Mar. 4 at 4 p.m. Extra forms are available on the literature table outside the church office in the Fellowship Hall.

**Leadership Circle** will meet on **Monday**, Mar. 4 at 7 p.m. in the Parlor.

**Pastors Phil & Carrie** will attend the monthly **CDC Pastor Peer** gathering on **Wednesday**, Mar. 6 at Salem Mennonite in Elida from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

This **Friday**, the **Freudige SS Class** is offering leadership to hosting a soup lunch for the Bluffton Schools' teachers and staff as an act of appreciation by FMC. Many hands make work light, and this meal is no exception. Thank you to the bread and cookie bakers, soup and deviled egg makers, and everyone else who is supporting this event in any way. A special shout-out to **Shelby Cluts, Mary Edmiston, and Louise Matthews** for being onsite to serve and clean-up.

**If you already have your ticket: Et Cetera Shop's** style show, "Celebrating 50 Years of Fashion" is at 2 p.m. Sunday, Mar. 10, at the Bluffton Middle School cafetorium. The show is one of the events planned during 2024 in celebration of the 50th anniversary of Et Cetera Shop, Inc. **Tickets are SOLD OUT!**

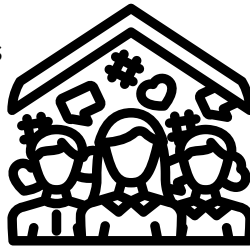
A **brief congregational meeting** is slated for **Mar. 17** immediately following worship in the sanctuary to consider two items Leadership Circle is bringing: 1. Gifts Discernment's recommendation to elect Judy Diller to the role of leader-elect of the Gifts Discernment & Ministry Participation Team, a role which was still vacant at the November Annual Congregational Meeting; 2. Treasurer Team's recommendation for the 2023 Spending Plan surplus distribution.

**Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS)** Have you ever volunteered with MDS after a natural disaster, or wondered how to become involved? Whether you have served a day, week, month, or never, there continue to be opportunities locally and throughout the US. Volunteers are needed to serve on projects or 'behind-the-scenes' as support with the local Western Ohio MDS Unit. For MDS to respond to restoring hope for people after a disaster, skills and gifts of all kinds are needed and welcome: cooking, office management, organization and administration, construction, etc. Where can you serve and how do you become involved? Talk with **Lawrence Matthews**, who serves as MDS's Church Contact Person for FMC. Lawrence also recently started employment as the full-time Region 2 Volunteer Development Coordinator. Lawrence works from home with expected travel of approximately 35%. Region 2 includes states west of the Appalachian Mountains and east of the Mississippi River; from WI/MI in the north to the states of AL/MS/LA in the south. If you would like to discuss and explore opportunities for volunteering with MDS, he would be very happy to talk with you by phone or in-person. You can reach him at [lawrence.matthews@myyahoo.com](mailto:lawrence.matthews@myyahoo.com) or call **419.303.8056**.

# Ministry Minute!



Providing affordable facility use to community groups and members of FMC's faith family is one way FMC is living into our five priorities. We continue to offer low fees and waived fees for 22 community groups. Did you know that one of the benefits of attending FMC is that you can reserve space in the church to hold family get-togethers and other gatherings at no cost? As evidence of the way we're living into this facility ministry, the FMC building is a hopping place this week. Bluffton Lion's Club is holding their banquet in the Fellowship Hall on Tuesday evening; the Freudige SS Class is leading the charge in providing a meal for the Bluffton Schools' teachers and staff; the Et Cetera shop is rehearsing for their style show; Girl Scouts troops are meeting; BAMA is gathering; CLEO is meeting; and if Bluffton University weren't on break, Karl's Club tutoring program would be meeting twice. All of this is in addition to our usual list of weekly activities including choirs, morning prayers, and Noodle Night!



*Happy Anniversary!*

**March 5**  
**Annette & Nathan Heslep**  
**30 years**

*Happy Birthday!*

**6 - Kathy Dickson**  
**Dave Moser**  
**7 - Tate Steinmetz**  
**9 - Shelby Cluts**  
**Ana Hartzler**

*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.*

**Today, Sunday, March 3, 2024**

Coffee Time, 9 a.m. & Sunday School for all ages, 9:15 a.m.  
 Pastor Phil preaching, 10:30 a.m. Sanctuary  
 Sermon Discussion Circle, meal, 5:30 p.m.; discussion 6-7 p.m.  
 Youth Choir, 7 - 8 p.m. Children's Choir Room

**This Week**

**Monday, March 4**  
 Staff meeting, 9:30 a.m. Parlor  
 Leadership Circle, 7 p.m. Parlor

**Tuesday, March 5**  
 Morning prayers, 7 a.m. Sanctuary  
 Lions Charter Banquet, 3 - 9 p.m. Fellowship Hall

**Wednesday, March 6**  
 CDC Pastor-Peer Gathering, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Salem Mennonite, Elida  
 CLEO: History of Radio, 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, Cherub Choir, 7 p.m. Children's Choir Room  
 SHY, 7:30 - 8:30 p.m.

**Thursday, March 7**  
 BAMA, 9:30 - 11 a.m. Parlor  
 CLEO: Watercolor Painting, 10 a.m. Assembly room

**Friday, March 8**  
 Bluffton School Teachers Lunch, 10:30 a.m. - 2 p.m. Fellowship Hall  
 Et Cetera Shop Style Show Rehearsal, 2 - 4 p.m. Fellowship Hall

**Next Sunday, March 10**  
 Worship: Pastor Phil preaching  
 Lectionary: Numbers 21:4-9 , Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22 , Ephesians 2:1-10 , John 3:14-21  
 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.