

# Rooted Faith: Enriching Ground

March 17, 2024

## Gathering

Welcome and announcements

Shelby Cluts

Prelude

*Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley*  
Adult Bells, Ray Raeburn (director)

arr. Anna L. Page

Invocation

\*Opening Hymn

VT 377 *New Earth, Heavens New*

\*Responsive Reading - based on Jeremiah 31:31-34; John 12:20-33

One: "The days are coming," declares the Lord, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel. No longer will they teach their neighbors, or say to one another, 'Know the Lord!' because they will all know me, from the least to the greatest."

**Many: This new covenant is being offered to us.**

One: "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Very truly I tell you, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds."

**Many: Death must come before resurrection. A seed fallen to the soil and broken open can become life for many.**

**All: This new covenant is being offered to us: to lay down our life and follow.**

One: The life-giving ways of God placed within our minds and written on our hearts, where we are forgiven and our sins remembered no more, where we are God's people and God is our God.

## Telling God's Story

Children's Time

Jen Benroth

Hymn

VT 777 *Seeds*

(sing coming forward & going back to seats)

Special Music

*Yesu Kwetu Ni Rafiki* arr. Mark Burrows  
Jubilate, Laura Hartzler (director), Anne Marie Spelman (piano)

Prayer of Confession

One: O God, we gather before you, hear us, we pray. We confess that at times we prefer

**Many: Our ways over your ways.**

One: Our comfort over care for others

**Many: Our wealth over generosity towards others**

One: Our safety over hospitality towards others

**Many: Holding on to hatred over loving others**

One: Give us the courage to lose our lives

**Many: so we may find eternal life.**

Community Prayer

Pastor Carrie

Scripture

Jeremiah 31:31-34 & John 12:20-33

LOGOS

Message

Composting and Preserving

Pastor Phil

## Living God's Story

\*Hymn of Response

VT 302 *Unless a Grain of Wheat*

Offering

Words of Invitation

Offertory

*Be Thou my Vision*

Irish Traditional

Ellie Hartzler & Clare Phillips (violin), Laura Hartzler (piano)

Dedication Prayer

## Sending

\*Hymn of Sending

VT 636 *Spirit, Open My Heart*

\*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)

**First Mennonite Church**

**March 17, 2024**

**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 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 a.m. - 4 p.m.**

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

**Nursery Workers Today SS:** Pat Sheidler  
**Worship:** Sunita Hooley

**Nursery Workers Next Week SS:** Judy Steiner  
**Worship:** Victoria Woods-Yee

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

**Video:** Ray Raeburn 3/3/24 - 3/10/24  
**Sound:** Melissa Friesen/Jonah Sheets Reported Volunteer hours: 37  
**Chancel:** Carrie Mast Attendance: 143  
Online views - Live: 20 Recorded: 15 Total Viewing Hrs: 32



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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**Miev Chan** and **Marty Hostetler** remain in the hospital. **Miev** continues to make progress at OSU Ross Heart Hospital as she regains her strength and as her heart adjusts to the new valve. **Marty** remains at St. Rita's as they continue to treat her heart and pneumonia. We offer prayers of gratitude for healing and medical care.

A memorial service for **Rosie Dosh**, mother of **Judy Steiner**, was held here at FMC yesterday, Mar. 16. We offer prayers of comfort for **Judy & TR** and their family as they adjust to the loss of Rosie.

Throughout Lent, Scripture is being shared through LOGOS, the FMC reader's theater group. This week's readers include **Barrett Benroth, Mary Ina Hooley, Leah Niekamp, and Cheri Slotter**.

**TODAY:** A brief congregational meeting will begin 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.

**TUESDAY:** If you plan to volunteer at **Our Daily Bread** this week, contact **John or Carolyn Rich** at 419.358.5405. We leave at 10:45 a.m.

**The Director of Music Search Committee** is in full swing. The committee placed ads in *Anabaptist World* and in the *Bluffton Icon* which ran throughout February. Currently, the committee is meeting and talking with candidates.

**A New Members'** Sunday School Class will begin meeting in April. If there is any last second interest in the class, contact Pastor Phil.

**LAST CALL:** Ten Thousand Villages (TTV) is offering a deal for supporting churches: Fair Trade Coffee at a 44% discount, after farmers have been paid in full. All coffee is organic and comes in cases of 6. The cost for a case of regular is \$50 and decaf is \$55. **Orders from the church are due Monday, Mar. 18**, and coffee can be picked up from TTV and paid for at the store after Monday, Mar. 25.

### Bluffton University presents:

- **Mar. 19 Spiritual Life Week Forum:** Alumnae Lindsay Horn '19, associate director of social mission, Bellarmine Chapel, Cincinnati, Ohio will share "Contemplation for Spiritual Peace and Wellness,"
- **Mar. 21-24 Theatre Event:** Directed by Dr. Melissa Friesen, "Pride and Prejudice," the play based on the novel by Jane Austen, will be performed Thursday-Saturday at 7:30 p.m., Sunday at 2:30 p.m., Ramseyer Auditorium, College Hall. Tickets are \$6-8 tickets at [www.bluffton.edu/tickets](http://www.bluffton.edu/tickets)



### Holy Week activities begin next week:

- **Palm Sunday Elective SS Class & Worship**, Mar. 24: Special guest speaker **Sarah Augustine** will facilitate an elective SS class in the sanctuary, as well as share the message during worship. Sarah is the co-founder of the Coalition to Dismantle the Doctrine of Discovery,
- **Palm Sunday Evening Service** co-hosted by Salem Mennonite & Lima Mennonite, **6:30 p.m. at Lima Mennonite:** Sarah Augustine will share about the Doctrine of Discovery.
- **Maundy Thursday Service**, Mar. 28, at 6:30 p.m.: Optional practices will include singing, footwashing, candle lighting, and communion.
- **Annual Cross Walk on Good Friday**, Mar. 29: The walk will begin at St. Mary's Catholic Church at 11:30 a.m. and end at St. John's UCC. FMC is the 3rd stop on the route.
- **Easter Sunday, Mar. 31:** We will be celebrating with a **brunch** during the Sunday School hour beginning at 9:15 a.m. All are invited to bring a breakfast item to share. Beverages will be provided. You are encouraged to bring your own table service though paper products will be available.
- **Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus"** during the Easter worship service: All are invited to sing. You can rehearse with the Chancel Choir on Wednesday, Mar. 27 at 7:30 p.m. or Easter Sunday morning at 10 a.m. in the sanctuary.

In addition to hearing **Sarah Augustine** on Palm Sunday, she will be sharing at the **Lion & Lamb Peace Arts Center** on Monday, Mar. 25 at 7 p.m. and on Tuesday, Mar. 26 at 11 a.m. during Bluffton University's **Forum** in Yoder Recital Hall. During each speaking engagement, Sarah will be sharing a unique message based on the Doctrine of Discovery and her new book co-authored with Bluffton Alum & Pastor Sheri Hostetler, *So We & Our Children May Live*.

**Plans are underway for an FMC intergenerational Civil Rights Tour May 28 - Jun. 5, 2024**, led by Mennonite Mission Network (MMN). Stops include Atlanta, Birmingham, Memphis, and other cities to engage with individuals directly involved in the civil rights movement, explore museums, and visit iconic sites such as the Pettis Bridge. MMN will plan the trip to meet the needs and interests of the participants. A portion of the trip's \$800 cost will be covered by church budget allocations. We don't want cost to be a barrier. To sign up or learn more, contact **George Lehman** ([lehman@bluffton.edu](mailto:lehman@bluffton.edu)) or **Jan Wiebe** ([wiebe.jan@gmail.com](mailto:wiebe.jan@gmail.com)).



Volunteers Needed  
in April & May  
Throughout the spring we will  
serve over 1,000 area school  
children as part of our Outdoor Education  
program, and we need help feeding them!  
We are seeking volunteers to help with food  
preparation, meal service, and dishes in April and  
May. If you are interested, please contact Kenda  
at [kenda@friedenswald.org](mailto:kenda@friedenswald.org) or call 269-476-9744  
for more information. Housing and meals  
provided.

*Happy Anniversary!*

March 22  
Nancy & Jerry Tripp

*Celebrating*  
— 10 YEARS —

March 17 - Carter Steinmetz

March 19 - Xavier Diller

Elizabeth Kelly

Mitch Kingsley

March 21 - Mike Edmiston

March 23 - Ben Hartzler

# Ministry Minute!



On Friday, Mar. 8, more than 75  
teachers and staff from Bluffton  
Schools enjoyed a complimentary  
soup lunch offered by FMC and  
organized by members of the  
Freudige SS Class. Many others from  
the congregation made soup, bread,  
deviled eggs, and cookies for the  
thank you lunch. It was so successful,  
plans are already being made to host  
the event again next year!

*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 17, 2024**

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



Congregational Meeting immediately following worship, Sanctuary  
Sermon Discussion Circle, meal, 5:30 p.m.; discussion 6-7 p.m.

**This Week**

**Monday, March 18**

Staff meeting, 9:30 a.m. Parlor

Deacons Meeting, 6 p.m. Parlor

**Tuesday, March 19**

Morning prayers, 7 a.m. Sanctuary

Our Daily Bread, depart at 10:45 a.m.

Search Committee Meeting, 4:30-8 p.m. Parlor

**Wednesday, March 20**

Maple Crest Bible Study, 2 p.m.

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. Bell Choir Room

Chancel Choir, 7 p.m. Sanctuary

SHY, 7:30 p.m.

**Saturday, March 23**

Elizabeth Raid funeral streaming, noon Fellowship Hall

**Next Week: Palm Sunday, March 24**

Elective SS Class w/ Sarah Augustine

Worship: Sarah Augustine preaching

Special Holy Week Service w/ Sarah Augustine, 6:30 p.m. Lima Mennonite Church

Lectionary: Judges 4:1-7; Psalm 123; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11; Matthew 25:14-30

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.