

Lead Pastor Phil Yoder | 717.869.7624 | phil@fmcbluffton.org
Associate Pastor Carrie Mast | 419.230.1568 | carrie@fmcbluffton.org
Communication Coordinator Trusty Schumacher | 419.358.5766 | fmc@fmcbluffton.org
Director of Music Camille Lively | camille@fmcbluffton.org
Technology Coordinator Ray Raeburn | 419.230.2769 | ray@fmcbluffton.org
Custodians Zack Crawford, Ethan Blount, Ollie Combs, Calvin Derstine

Office Hours: Monday - Friday 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Phil's day off - Friday Carrie's day off - Thursday Camille's day in - Monday

Nursery Workers Today SS: --
Worship: *Jonathan Spelman*

Nursery Workers Next Week SS: --
Worship: *Chaska Yoder*

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



Last Sunday - 3/16/2025

Attendance last Sunday: 159
Reported Volunteer hours: 40
Online views: Live: 20 Recorded: 18
Total Viewing Hrs: 25

This Sunday - 3/23/2025

Video: Ray Raeburn
Sound: Adam Phillips/Jonah Sheets
Chancel: Lois Wetherill

Leadership Circle

Moderator *Laurel Neufeld Weaver*
Moderator-Elect *Jonathan Spelman*
Stewardship Ministry Circle Leader *Kevin Nickel*
Connecting Ministry Circle Leader *Ken Shenk*
Christian Formation Circle Leader *Shelby Cluts*
Deacon *Victoria Woods-Yee*
Deacon *Kathy Dickson*
Deacon *Isaac Schumacher*
Treasurer *Monica Harnish*
Recorder *Carrie Phillips*

No checks or cash in your pocket?
Consider online giving.



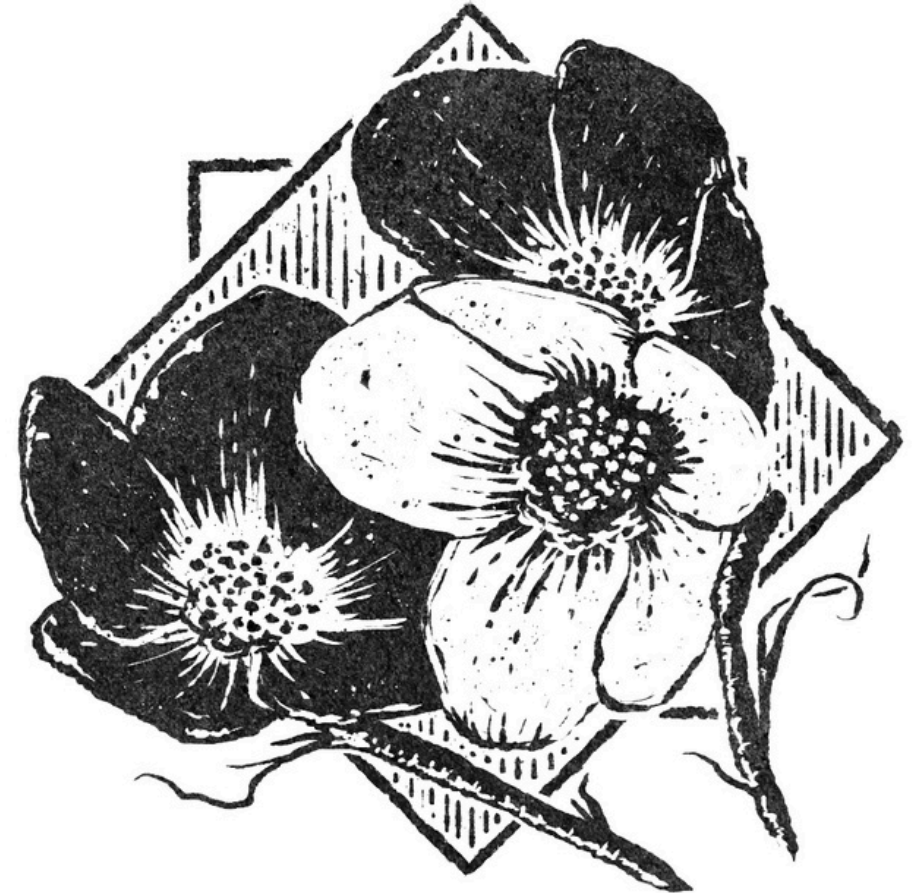
First Mennonite Church is affiliated with the Central District Conference of Mennonite Church USA. The Mennonites are named after Menno Simons, one of our early church leaders, and are rooted historically in the "Anabaptist" movement, which began in 1525, with origins in Switzerland, Germany, and the 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 23, 2025

UNBURDENED



Art from Unburdened: A Lenten Journey toward Forgiveness.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Elfrieda Ramseyer passed away on Jan. 24 at Mennonite Memorial Home with her husband, Dick, by her side. A memorial service to celebrate Elfrieda's life will be Saturday, Mar. 29 at 11 a.m. Visitation begins at 10 a.m.

Our guest speaker today is **Stan Shantz**. Stan was the lead pastor at James Street Mennonite Church in Lancaster, PA from 2004-2024 and will begin his role as interim pastor at Covenant Mennonite Fellowship in Sarasota, FL this April (another CDC Congregation). James Street is the church where Pastor Phil grew up and later worked as a Youth and Worship Minister. We welcome Stan as Pastor Phil's mentor and friend on this Ordination Sunday as we celebrate Pastor Phil.

Today's children's time hymn leaders are the **Skilliter family**.

All are invited to a light **reception** following worship today to **celebrate with Pastor Phil** on his Ordination.

Especially for Kids: In the spirit of one Lenten theme, "letting go," children are invited to find Olaf the snowman in the bulletin each week. Olaf is from Disney's movie *Frozen* featuring the hit song "Let It Go."

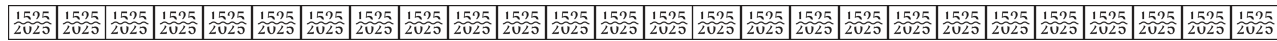
Congratulations to all of our Cake Picnic winners, **Kevin Nickel** (Best Look), **Quin & Junia Spelman** (tied for Best taste), **Milena King** (Best Original recipe), **Simon Phillips & Carter Steinmetz** (Most Creative), and **Isaac & Tim Schumacher** (People's Choice). Thank you to all that participated and those that came out to enjoy cake. It was a SWEET time.

The **MCC Hygiene and Relief Kit** collections begin today and run through May 11. Kit lists are on the bulletin board by the library, or find the lists at MCC.org/kits. (There are boxes of combs on the collection carts that you can use, or buy your own. The website shows which combs are needed.)

Comforter Knotting: We'll be knotting comforters on **Mar. 30** during the Sunday School hour, on **Mar. 31 from 6-9 p.m.**, and on **Apr. 1 from 9 a.m. to noon**. Light snacks and drinks will be provided. We have lots of comforters and need many hands to knot. Please join us.

donations The Youth Auction will be **Saturday, Apr. 5 from 3-5 p.m.** Drop off donations in the church office. If more items are donated than we can auction in 2 hours, we'll have a "Buy It Now" table where you can just pay for items. Check out the growing collection of items in the Fellowship Hall. Kids' items will be available and priced for kids' budgets, too!

The **Lenten devotional book *Unburdened*** is the basis for worship planning throughout Lent and is also being used for an elective SS Class led by Rachel Skilliter in the adult choir room. You can purchase copies online or contact the church office if you need assistance ordering a book.



Anabaptism at 500: Upcoming Activities
This year, 2025, marks 500 years of Anabaptism.



Sunday, Mar. 23
– at 4 p.m.

Book Celebration at Musselman Library for Drawing Near w/ editor John D. Roth, poets Jeff Gundy, Ruth Naylor, Shannon McKeegan, Sheri Hostetler & others

Monday-Friday thru Mar. 23
– Mon-Thur: 9 a.m.-7 p.m. & Fri 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Exhibit: *Early Anabaptist Bibles in the Musselman Library Historical Collections.* Curated by Carrie Phillips.

Tuesday, Mar. 25
– at 11 a.m.

Forum: *Bound to Remember: 500 Years of Anabaptist Critique* by Maxwell Kennel in Yoder Recital Hall at Bluffton University.

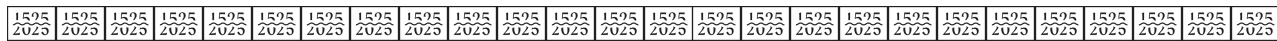
Spring Anabaptist Choral Concert Opportunity:

Director of Music Camille Lively will conduct the choral concert "Five Centuries of Anabaptist Singing - a Musical Odyssey" on **Sunday, Apr. 27**, in Yoder Recital Hall. FMC singers are invited to participate in the choir. Rehearsals will be from 7-9 p.m. on **Mar. 25, Apr. 1, Apr. 8, Apr. 15 & Apr. 22** in the Gilliom Room of Mosiman Hall. Contact Camille at camille@fmcbluffton.org with questions and to participate.

Friday, Mar. 28
– at 4 p.m.

Faculty Colloquium: *The Mennonite and the Quantum Physicist: An Early Slice of Bluffton College History* by Steve Harnish in Stutzman Lecture Hall at Bluffton University.

Bluffton University Anabaptism at 500 events are free and open to the public. These events are made possible with the generous support of Lowell and Marty Hostetler. A full list of Activities can be found at www.bluffton.edu/anabaptism500



St. John and St. Rose Parishes of Lima will present "The Great Commandment and the Great Commission: How Can the Church Show Up for Immigrant Neighbors?" with Christy Staats as a **Facebook Live** program on **Thursday, Mar. 27 at 7 p.m.** Staats is Assistant Vice President of Field and Constituencies for the National Immigration Forum. This program is interdenominational, free, and open to all. To access the event, simply go to their Facebook page a little before 7 p.m. on Mar. 27 or use the QR code.



Basic **garden tools** are being collected by the Newcomer Coalition in Lima for distribution to immigrant families. Gently used round-headed shovels, garden rakes, and hand trowels are needed. Tools can be dropped off in the downstairs kitchen at FMC by Apr. 13.

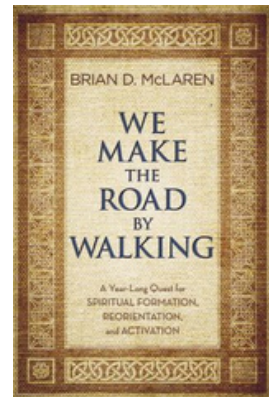
The MMH Service Group BBQ Fundraiser, April 12, 4:30-6:00 pm, Bubba C BBQ. Gloria Bucher will have tickets available for \$10 in the church office today and next Sunday after worship, or by calling 419.429.2621. Tickets are also available at Maple Crest and Mennonite Memorial Home through Apr. 2.

The **Bluffton Community VBS** is hosting *Egypt: Joseph's Journey from Prison to Palace* with set-up similar to last year's *Hometown Nazareth*. There are several ways to help: bake 2 dozen cookies, be a shopkeeper, be an Assistant Leader, or help prepare the items the shopkeepers will sell in the marketplace. Join the team with Pastor Carrie from **July 13-17 at the Bluffton YMCA**.

A reminder to send in your pictures for the pictorial directory

CELEBRATING!

From Sept. 2018–Aug. 2019, the FMC congregation embarked on a journey led by both Pastor Wanda Stopher and Pastor Theda Good. For that year, FMC made its way through Bryan McLaren’s book *We Make the Road by Walking*. The book was used as a worship planning tool, sermon seed starter, and weekly devotional. A sheet of ideas offered ways to study the book. A number of discussion circles formed who met regularly, some weekly, to review the chapter of the week.



Letting Go...

The sheet of ideas included a sermon discussion circle and Walt Paquin’s long-time desire to hold a sermon discussion was realized. For over 6 years the weekly bulletin schedule included: Sermon Discussion Circle, meal, 5:30 p.m.; discussion 6–7 p.m. Many FMC members floated in and out of the group, some as regular attenders, and others who held lingering questions from the sermon and joined the discussion periodically. A month ago, as Anabaptism at 500 Sunday events were ramping up and attendance was wavering from week to week, the group discussed taking a break.

You’re invited! Plan now to join FMC as “We Make the Road by Walking.” If you’ve not yet done so, check your mailbox for details:

- Brochure introduction and invitation
- Sept. 2018–Aug. 2019 Worship schedule with scripture texts
- Sheet of ideas for using “We Make the Road...”

Note: One copy (paper or digital) of the book will be made available to each family. To reserve your copy: Sign up in fellowship hall outside the office door OR email the church office at fmc@bluffton.edu.



March

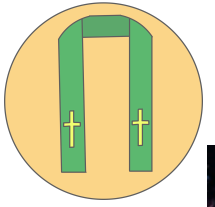
- 23 - Ben Hartzler
- 24 - James Dillman
Evan Skilliter
- 25 - Micah DeMarco
- 28 - Linda Suter
- 29 - Annette Heslep



In response to God’s unconditional love for all people, we 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, Ordination Sunday, March 23, 2025



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.
Drawing Near Elective SS Class, Assembly Room, 9:15 a.m.
Unburdened SS Class, Adult Choir Room, 9:15 a.m.
 Worship: Stan Shantz preaching, 10:30 a.m. Sanctuary
 Light Reception for Ordained Pastor Phil, noon Fellowship Hall
Drawing Near Book Celebration, 4 p.m. Musselman Library

This Week

Monday, March 24

Staff meeting, 9:30 a.m. Parlor

Tuesday, March 25

Morning prayers, 7 a.m. Sanctuary
 Caring Connections, 9 a.m. Parlor

Wednesday, March 26

Jubilate, 3:15–4 p.m., Cherub Choir, 4–4:30 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. Fellowship Hall

Thursday, March 27

Leadership Circle, 7 p.m. Parlor

Saturday, March 29

Memorial service for Elfrieda Ramseyer, 11 a.m.
 Visitation begins at 10 a.m.

Next Sunday, March 30

Worship: Phil Yoder preaching
 Freudige SS Class potluck, noon Fellowship Hall

Lectionary: Joshua 5:9–12; Psalm 32 ;2 Corinthians 5:16–21; Luke 15:1–3, 11b–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.

Ordination of Philip T. Yoder
March 23, 2025
First Mennonite Church, Bluffton, OH

Introductory Comments
Doug Luginbill
Conference Minister of Central District Conference.

Examination questions

Congregational Responsive Reading

Doug: First Mennonite Church family of faith, do you accept your role in supporting and affirming Phil for ministry?

Congregation: By God's grace, we will. (please stand)

Doug: Will you honor his calling and your own?

Congregation: By God's grace, we will.

Doug: Will you search the scriptures and pray with and for him?

Congregation: By God's grace, we will.

Doug: Will you support Phil in keeping a healthy balance between church and personal commitments?

Congregation: By God's grace, we will.

Doug: Will you speak the truth in love and join him in proclaiming and being God's mission and dream for our world?

Congregation: By God's grace, we will.

Anointing with Oil

Declaration of Ordination

Placing of Stole

This stole was created by Tess Eger

Prayer of Ordination and Laying on of Hands;
All are Invited forward to place hands

The Giving of Gifts and Phil's Response

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The Giving of Gifts and Phil's Response

Today's Songs

The songs in the service today mark different points of my life and journey towards ministry. I decided to provide a short background to each song so you might see how they have nurtured my faith over the last 30 years. – Pastor Phil

***Shine Jesus, Shine* - by Graham Kendrick**

I learned this song at Camp Hebron when I was really young, and then sang it at my church, too. I remember feeling alive and filled with joy when singing about Jesus, and have fond memories of singing this within the comfort of my family.

***Still* - by Ola Gjeilo**

As Chaska and I went through infertility. Ola Gjeilo's piano album, *Night*, held us through the uncertain journey toward parenthood. The spaces between the notes in *Still* make each note feel like an exhale in a time where breathing felt difficult.

***Here in This Place* - by Marty Haugen**

A staple in the Blue Hymnal, *Here in this Place*, was a common song of gathering in my childhood. It was different from the other hymns with lyrics that talked about "light years." Here in this Place is not about belonging, but how God gathers together those who don't belong. This hymn was later played at Chaska and my wedding.

***MLK* - by Bono, arr. Bob Chilcott**

As a junior in High School, my high school choir sang *MLK*. When I hear it now, I remember the sense of connection I felt with my fellow choir members as we grieved the death of a high school friend. For me, *MLK* captures hope, grief, and my spirituality as a teenager.

***Ulysses* - by Josh Garrels**

As a college student, my faith and world-view were being challenged by new ideas, new people, and new places. *Ulysses* names the disorientation I experienced as a college student, my search for meaning, and the beginning of a more nuanced faith.

***Listen in the Silence* - by Linnea Good**

The repetitious style of *Listen in the Silence* creates a powerful space of meditation and and names the importance of silence. Holding silence is my most meaningful prayer practice as it holds both spacious for God, and God's absence.

***Total Praise* - by Richard Smallwood.**

In 2017, I was the Minister of Worship at James Street Mennonite Church. I learned *Total Praise* at a retreat and was blown away by the "amens" at the end. The lyrics, Psalm 121, to name our longing for peace in hard times, and you can feel the longing in the music.

***See the Love* - by The Brilliance**

This song captures my time in seminary. *See the Love* names the hope for connection amidst difference. As Thomas Merton said, "There is no way of telling people that they are all walking around shining like the sun." I wonder what the world would be like if we all embraced the light within us.

***Kirisuto no heiwa ga (May the Peace of Christ)* - by Izumi Shiota**

May of the Peace of Christ represents my life right now. Every night that it's my turn to put Flora to bed, I rock her as we sing this song together. It is a beautiful blessing and lullaby. Parenting Flora has been a spiritually transformative experience – one I will be learning from for the rest of my life!

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