

Lent 5 - Making Way For Mercy

April 6, 2025

Gathering

Music calls us to worship

Welcome and announcements

Prelude Prelude no. 8 in C# Minor Robert Vandall

Invocation

*Opening Hymn *Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling* VT 544

*Responsive Reading - selections from Psalm 126

One: When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like those who dream.

Many: Then our mouths were filled with laughter and our tongues with shouts of joy;

One: then it was said among the nations, "The Lord has done great things for them."

Many: Restore our fortunes, O Lord, like the watercourses in the Negeb.

One: May those who sow in tears reap with shouts of joy.

**All: Those who go out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing,
shall come home with shouts of joy.**

Telling God's Story

Special Music 🌿 *Praise Prince God* music by Dolly Parton
Adam Phillips, guitar; Tim Byers, percussion
Wendy Chappell-Dick, voice

Conversation with Children 🌿 *You're Not Alone* VT 779

Confession

One: God, we confess that like Jonah of old, we have bought tickets to Tarshish, and we're sitting in the boat, while the storm rages.

Many: We can't see our way clear to thinking kind thoughts about our enemies – we only want their destruction.

One: Only you can turn this boat around.

Many: Your grace is greater than the mighty rolling sea.

One: If we need to be overthrown to hear your message of mercy, overthrow us.

All: We want to be swallowed up in you.

Celebrating and Letting Go
Community Prayer
The Lord's Prayer

James W. Bixel
back cover of HWB

Scripture John 12:1-8

Message *It's a Process*

Living God's Story

*Hymn of Response *You Are Salt for the Earth* VT 297

Offering Invitation *This is My Father's World* arr. Lori Line
Offertory
Dedication Prayer

Sending

*Hymn of Sending *Put Peace into Each Other's Hands, v. 1, 2, 4* VT 485

*Benediction

*Postlude

**Please rise in body or in spirit - VT: Voices Together (Purple Bound Book)*

🌿 : *Anabaptist Heritage Music*

Preaching

Carrie Mast

Children's Time

Louise Matthews
& Rachel Skilliter

Worship Leader

Gerald Mast

Community Prayer

Phil Yoder

Pianist/Organist

Laura Hartzler

Scripture Reader

Judy Steiner

*Parents of young children: God put the wiggle in children, so no need to suppress those wiggles.
Sitting closer to the front makes it easier for your little ones to engage.
Also, children learn their behavior by mimicking you. Sing the hymns, pray, and voice the responses.
Feel free to leave the sanctuary with your child, but you're welcome to come back.
As Jesus said, "Let the children come to me."*

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: *Mary Edmiston*

Nursery Workers Next Week SS: --
Worship: *Sunita Hooley & Jonathan Spelman*

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



Last Sunday - 3/30/2025

Attendance last Sunday: 166
Reported Volunteer hours: 37.5
Online views: Live: 20 Recorded: 30
Total Viewing Hrs: 31

This Sunday - 4/6/2025

Video: Ray Raeburn
Sound: Chris Moser/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.



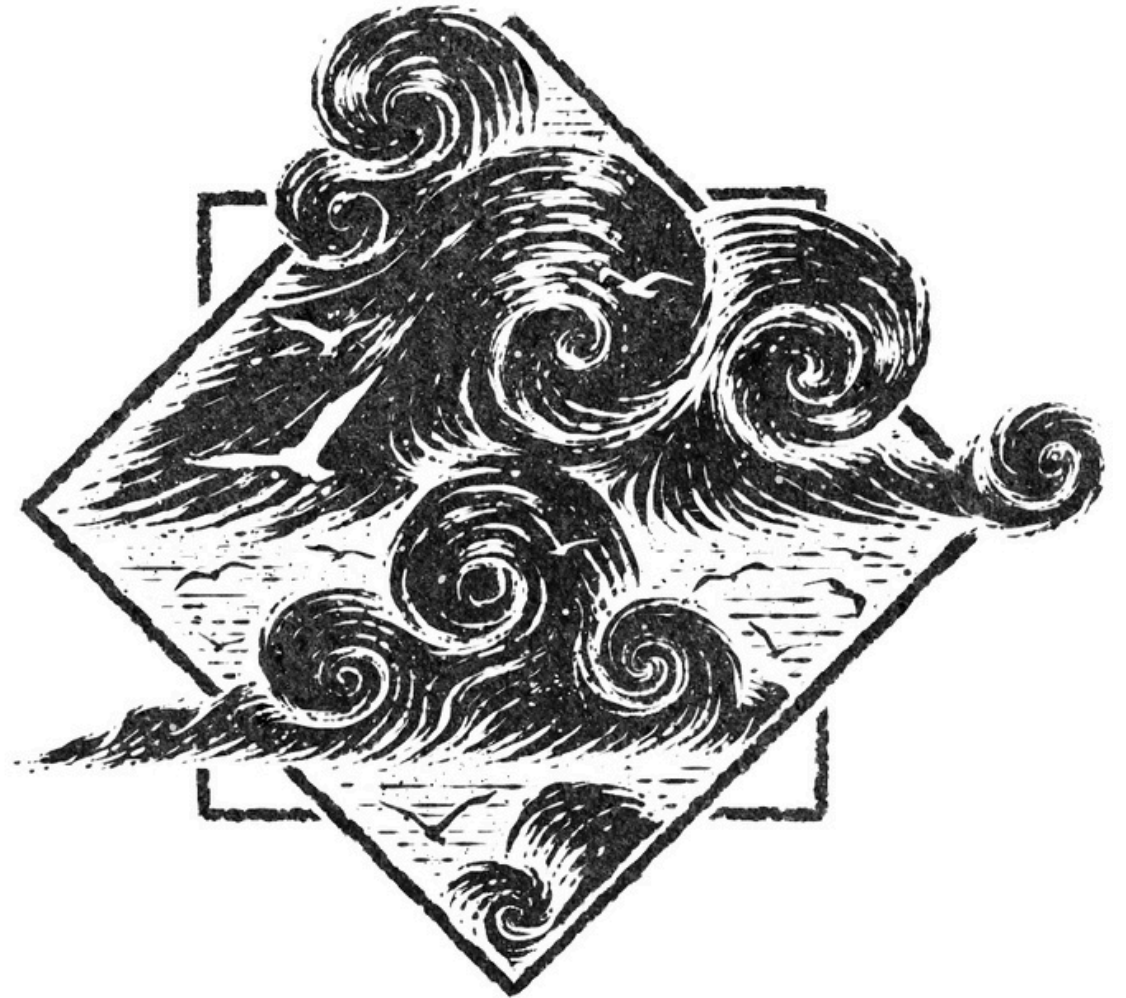
First Mennonite Church is affiliated with the Central District Conference of Mennonite Church USA. The Mennonites are named after Menno Simons, one of our early church leaders, and are rooted historically in the "Anabaptist" movement, which began in 1525, with origins in Switzerland, Germany, and the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

APRIL 6, 2025

UNBURDENED



Art from Unburdened: A Lenten Journey toward Forgiveness.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Maurice Kaufmann passed away Tuesday, Apr. 1 with his family by his side. Please keep his family in your prayers. Information about his memorial service will be shared when available.

David and Natalie Hooley welcomed their daughter, **June Graber Hooley**, Friday, Mar. 21 at 8:02 am, at the Goshen, IN hospital. She weighed 6 lb 5 oz and was 19.5" in length. Both parents are doing well. Grandparents, Don and Mary Ina, Aunt Sunita and Uncle Robert are thrilled she is here.

Update on Katie & Beth Kuntz-Wineland: After an 11-day hospitalization for an infection, Katie is staying with her parents and is midway through her at-home IV treatments. She continues on her healing path. To complicate her path, however, on Monday night, Beth was taken to the hospital by ambulance when she began having seizures. Beth will be unable to drive until at least early May. Katie & Beth are grateful for our care, support, and prayers as they navigate these life challenges.

Children's time hymn leaders are the **Skilliter family**.

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.

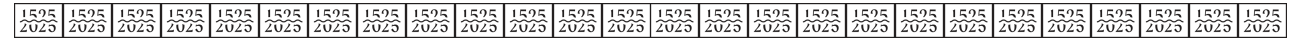
Praise Prince God is from the musical "*Grace to You and Peace: Voices of the Dutch Anabaptists*" by Wendy Chappell-Dick, scheduled for performance on Oct. 26 as part of our Anabaptism at 500 celebration. Music is by Dolly Parton and lyrics are by Early Dutch Anabaptists.

Holy Week activities begin Apr. 13 with **Palm Sunday**. The morning opens with Elective SS Classes studying the *Unburdened* devotional & *Drawing Near* devotional & concludes with worship.

- **Maundy Thursday Service**, Apr. 17, at 6:30 p.m.
- **Annual Cross Walk** on Good Friday, Apr. 18. The walk will begin at the English Lutheran Church at 11:30 a.m. and end at St. Mary's Catholic Church. FMC is the 4th stop on the route.
- **Easter Sunday**, Apr. 20: 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. A potluck lunch will follow after worship. During the Easter worship service all are invited to sing Handel's "*Hallelujah*" from Messiah. You can rehearse with the Chancel Choir on Wednesday, Apr. 16 at 7:30 p.m. or Easter Sunday morning at 10 a.m. in the sanctuary.

No plans for **Easter Lunch**? Join us for a potluck (30 minutes after the service). Bring your "favorite" Easter/Spring dish to share and enjoy good food and company. No RSVP needed. There is a food sign up in the Fellowship Hall. Contact/Questions **Walt Paquin 419.889.1516**.

The MCC Hygiene and Relief Kit collection has begun and will 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.



Anabaptism at 500: Upcoming Activities

** This year, 2025, marks 500 years of Anabaptism.**

Spring Anabaptist Choral Concert
"Five Centuries of Anabaptist Singing -
a Musical Odyssey"

Tuesday Rehearsals, Apr. 8, 15 & 22

- from 7-9 p.m.

Meet in the Gilliom Room of Mosiman Hall.

Sunday Concert, Apr. 27

- 2:30 p.m.

FMC Director of Music Camille Lively will conduct the choral concert in Yoder Recital Hall. Contact Camille at camille@fmcbluffton.org with questions and to participate.



Sunday, Apr. 13

- at 2:30 p.m.

Reader's Theatre

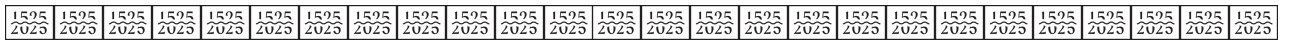
Bluffton University will host,

"I Have Not Forsaken the Word of God"

in College Hall's Ramseyer Auditorium. The production is directed by Dr. Melissa Friesen, Mary Nord Ignat and Joseph Ignat professor of theatre and communication, and is based on testimony of Jacques d'Auchy from *Martyrs Mirror*.

*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



Bluffton University presents the Civic Engagement Day Forum on Tuesday, Apr. 8 at 11 a.m. Dr. Lamar Nisly, professor of English, will offer "*Faith and Memory in Challenging Times*" in Yoder Recital Hall. Nisly will draw on church history, Bluffton University's story, literature, and personal experience to explore how by looking back we can find our way forward.

Bluffton University Theatre presents *Popcorn Falls* today, Apr. 6 at 2:30 p.m. in Ramseyer Auditorium in College Hall. Tickets are \$8 - adults and \$6 - senior citizens. Reserve tickets at www.bluffton.edu/tickets.

The Western Ohio Unit of Mennonite Disaster Service is holding an open meeting on Saturday, Apr. 12, at Bethel Mennonite Church in West Liberty. Rod Hager, Chair of the Unit, will share updates on two ongoing Western Ohio projects in Springfield and Alvordton. Other sharing will include MDS's ongoing responses to recent disasters. Light refreshments are available at 9:30 a.m. with the program beginning at 10 a.m. and ending at noon. Contact Lawrence Matthews at 419.303.8056 or lawrence.matthews@myyahoo.com for more information, including car-pooling and lunch options at the conclusion of the meeting.

Crime Victim Services needs volunteer facilitators to mediate dialogues between victims and offenders. Meeting together offers victims of crime the opportunity to meet with offenders in a safe, structured setting to ask questions, express their feelings, and seek closure. In the process offenders take responsibility for their actions, understand the impact they have had, and do what they can to make things right. Learn more about victim offender dialogues at:

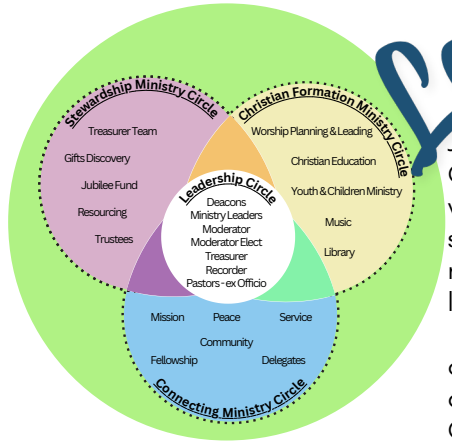
www.crimevictimservices.org/victimoffenderdialogue. To volunteer or receive more information contact David Orr, dorr@crimevictimservices.org, 419-222-8666.

FMC Pictorial Directory. The deadline to submit your photos is May 4.

CELEBRATING!

FMC was governed by 7 nine-member commissions and a church council across several decades, and it served FMC well. With this governance, there were many ways for folks to be involved in the decision-making and leadership of the church. The commissions created a sense of community and connection, and a structure created opportunities.

In the last 2 decades, capital "C" Church has changed. With more activities and ways to be involved in the broader community, and the demands of capitalism and work, Sunday morning attendance for many has decreased. Having several weekly evening meetings became harder to commit to, and it grew more difficult to fill vacancies on commissions.



Letting Go...

By August 2014, FMC was undergoing a pastoral transition when Pastor Louise Wideman resigned, and took the opportunity to form a Vision Task Force. This group met for several years guiding congregational gatherings and input sessions. This group concluded their work and the Congregational Discernment Team formed in the fall of 2016. They described their process with this byline:

"Remember Our Past, Explore Our Possibilities, Live Our Journey." In November 2017, at the recommendation of the Congregational Discernment Team, the Governance Task Force was created to lead us in a process of examination of our current structure for accomplishing our vision, purpose and priorities. This recommendation came with the observation that our structure no longer served us as a congregation.

The new governance structure proposed under the leadership of the Governance Task Force would have the flexibility to start and end ministries as interest and passion would rise and decline. Church participants would be empowered by the "circle leaders," "pastors," "gifts discernment and ministry participation," to listen to the spirit and develop emerging ministries (like the FUN Committee, Racial Justice Committee, or the LGBTQ Allies Ministry). It had new rules like, "if there is not a need to meet, then do not have a meeting!"

While there are new gifts that come with a new governance structure, there are new pitfalls and losses. We are still getting into a rhythm, and some of us miss the familiar ways of working together. So today, we recognize the gifts of the previous structure, we celebrate it, and let it go.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

APRIL 6 - Mike Edmiston
8 - JP Schumacher

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.



Hello April

Today, Sunday, April 6, 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, Prayer Room, 9:15 a.m.
Worship: Carrie Mast preaching, 10:30 a.m. Sanctuary

This Week

Monday, April 7

Staff meeting, 9:30 a.m. Parlor
Gifts Discernment & Ministry Participation, 6:30 p.m. Parlor

Tuesday, April 8

Morning prayers, 7 a.m. Sanctuary

Wednesday, April 9

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

Palm Sunday, April 13

Worship: Phil Yoder preaching
Lectionary: Liturgy of the Palms: Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29; Luke 19:28-40
Liturgy of the Passion: Isaiah 50:4-9a
Psalm 31:9-16; Philippians 2:5-11; Luke 23:1-49



WELCOME Spring



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.