

FIRST MENNONITE CHURCH
Weekly Announcements 5-3-2020

First Mennonite Church, 101 S. Jackson Street, Bluffton, Ohio 45817

419-358-5766 | fmcbluffton.org | Staff working from home

- Pastor Wanda Stopher – Monday-Thursday, 9-4, off Friday, 419-551-1079; wanda@fmcbluffton.org
- Pastor Theda Good – Tuesday-Friday, 9-4, off Monday; 419-549-2417; theda@fmcbluffton.org
- Children and Youth Ministry Director – Carrie Mast, 419-230-1568, mastc@bluffton.edu
- Director of Music – Mark Suderman, 419-230-5368 (cell); sudermanme@bluffton.edu
- Administrative Assistant – Mary Pannabecker Steiner, fmc@fmcbluffton.org , 419-358-5766

Sunday, May 3, 2020

Taste and See SS, Zoom, 9:15 a.m., Imaginative Prayer with the Gospels, <https://zoom.us/j/342273765>

Sojourners SS, Zoom, 9:15 a.m., Zephaniah 3:14-20, A Vision of Restoration, <https://zoom.us/j/4193583208>

Worship, Wanda Stopher preaching, 10:30 a.m.

Learning circle, Zoom, 6 p.m., <https://zoom.us/j/4193585766>, contact Carrie Mast for password

May 4-9

Tuesday (May 5) Morning prayers, Zoom, 7 a.m.,

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/3794797132>

Staff meeting, Zoom, 9 a.m.

Wednesday (May 6) Coffee & tea social hour, Zoom, 3 p.m.,

<https://zoom.us/j/110200533>

Thursday (May 7) Bulletin deadline, 9 a.m.

Midday prayers, Zoom, noon,

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/3794797132>

Vespers, Zoom, 4 p.m.

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/3794797132>

Sunday (May 10)

Sojourners SS, Zoom, 9:15 a.m.

Taste and See, Zoom, 9:15 a.m.

Worship, Wanda Stopher preaching, 10:30 a.m.

Learning circle, Zoom, 6 p.m.

Happy birthday

May 4 – Ray Raeburn

May 6 – Jacob Biesecker-Mast
Patrick Estell

May 7 – Pat Sheidler
Justin Paul

May 8 – Alice Lora
Victoria Woods-Yee

May 9 – Simon Phillips

Midday Prayer is now offered on Thursdays from Noon to 12:15 by Zoom. This is in addition to Morning Prayer and Vespers. The format for Midday Prayer is shortened and meant to be a pause to remember God's loving presence in the midst of our days. This link is used for all three prayer times.

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/3794797132>

Due to the uncertainty of COVID-19, Black Swamp Benefit and Ohio Mennonite Relief Sale have canceled their physical events.

To make a donation to continue the support Black Swamp provides to MCC and Sunshine Communities, send a check to: Black Swamp Benefit, 201 Ditto Street, PO Box 183, Archbold, OH 43502. Those who have made an item for the auction may save it for next year or donate to another benefit.

The Ohio Mennonite Relief Sale will, however, hold an online auction this year. To give quilters, crafters and craftsmen additional time, they have rescheduled the event to September 26-October 3. In addition, there will be "Buy It Now" items available from September 14 to 24.

Virtual, Drive-In VBS?

Social distancing and children don't go hand-in-hand, but summer and VBS do! Planners are exploring how to offer fun and activities while keeping children and volunteers safe and healthy through a blend of the virtual plus pre-packaged supplies for hands-on activities.

Stay tuned for details of how this year's Bluffton Community VBS will roll out this summer.

Encouraging Generosity and Connection There are many good ways to express our care and generosity in our giving to a more equitable and just distribution of resources. In addition to local organizations that we know, we also commend the following specifically as they are devoted to serving immigrants, asylum-seekers, and our faith family of color both in the US and in the world who have been disproportionately impacted by the coronavirus.

Global Church Sharing Fund was established in 1997 at the Mennonite World Conference assembly in Calcutta, inspired by the biblical teaching of "Jubilee." MWC member and associate member churches in Africa, Asia, and Latin America/Caribbean receive Global Church Sharing funds for ministries that advance the life and mission of their churches.

<https://mwc-cmm.org/article/global-church-sharing-fund>

COVID-19 Congregational Sharing Fund was recently launched by a joint effort of Mennonite Disaster Service, Everence, and Mennonite Central Committee. The fund is to aid churches facing financial crisis due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Seeded with \$550,000 the grants will prioritize racially and ethnically diverse churches serving in historically under-resourced communities, i.e. communities and households that are underbanked, underinsured and/or uninsured. Contributions may be made through the websites of any of the three agencies.

<https://mds.mennonite.net/>

<https://www.everence.com/>

<https://mcc.org/>

Additional giving options:

The FMC group that visited the US/Mexico Border shared this list of organizations assisting immigrants.

- Catholic Charities of RGV <http://sacredheartchurch-mcallen.org/immigrant-assistance/donate-now/>
- ProBar https://www.americanbar.org/groups/departments_offices/FJE/donate/com-imm-probar/
- Team Brownsville <https://www.teambrownsville.org/donate>
- National Butterfly Center <https://nationalbutterflycenter.org/> https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gpWc-0II7_s
- World Central Kitchen <https://wck.org/>
- HOLA Ohio: <http://holatoday.org/donate/>
- Ohio Immigrant Alliance: <https://ohioimmigrant.org/fundraising-donate/>

Prayer concern: JP Schumacher has been diagnosed with rectal cancer. She will undergo surgery and treatments in the days and weeks ahead. Let us surround JP, Tim, and their family with our thoughts, prayers, and kind gestures.

Summer Psalms 2020: The Psalter has been described as humanity's words to God and at the same time, God's words to humanity. In other words, the Psalms speak both to us and for us in our life with God. The conversation ranges from profound praise to utter desperation and doubt. This summer in worship we will devote ourselves to the Psalms, of which there are 150. This is where you come in. You are invited to request a Psalm that you'd like for us to consider as the focus of worship during this block we're calling Summer Psalms. Please submit your Psalm request along with your name to Pastor Wanda before May 10.

Reminders

Musicians of all ages and types: We hope many of you will offer your musical gifts during worship services this summer (June-August.) There are two ways that you can do this:

1. Video record your musical selection at home and send it to Ray Raeburn to add to our worship video.
2. Come to the church at 11 a.m. on the Wednesday before the Sunday service and be part of the taping of the service. We are working hard to make sure that all who come to each taping session are safe and stay at a good distance from each other.

Opportunities include playing for the service, including opening music, prelude, offertory, and postlude, or providing special music during the service, vocally or instrumentally, as a soloist or in an ensemble.

Please contact Director of Music Mark Suderman at 419.230.5368 or sudermanme@bluffton.edu. Let him know if there are specific dates on which you could participate.

If you would like to receive electronic versions of items you often find in the literature rack, please email Mary Steiner at fmc@fmclubffton.edu. Some of these include:

- MEA – *Prayers for Faith and Learning*
- MMN – *Prayer Vine*
- MCC – *A Common Place, Intersections*
- MDS' Behind the Hammer may be found at <https://mds.mennonite.net/stay-connected/>

Habitat for Humanity-Lima Area is participating in the Giving Tuesday Now campaign happening on May 5. This national campaign is a unified response from non-profits to needs that have occurred due to the coronavirus. If you wish to participate, please follow this link to find out how you might get involved: <https://now.firespring.com/nonprofits/habitat-for-humanity-lima-area-inc>. There are more ways to participate beyond just a monetary donation. Thank you for your support.

If you're an older adult or disabled, the Area Agency on Aging may have services that can help you. Home-delivered meals, transportation to medical appointments, a friendly phone call to chat, and free telephone assessments for other services someone may need. Volunteer opportunities available as well. Call the Community Resource Center at (419) 222-7723.