

Congregational Discernment: Explore Our Possibilities
February 26, 2017
10:30 a.m.

— GATHERING —

Chimes call us to worship Lucia Unrau

Welcome, Announcements, Introductions Laura Hartzler, Worship Leader

Prelude “Praise to the Lord, the Almighty” arr. Paul Manz

***Call to Worship**

***Invocation**

— PRAISING —

***Opening Hymn** “Praise to the Lord, the Almighty” HWB 37
(*Sing last verse in unison*)

Testimony Doug Luginbill

Special Music “O Beautiful Star of Bethlehem” STS 32
Youth Choir and Jubilate

Time with Children

Hymn “Vision, Healing and Hope” (*Sing once for coming up*) Back of hymnal

Conversation Wendy Chappell-Dick

Hymn “Vision, Healing and Hope” (*Sing once for returning*) Back of hymnal

Pastoral Prayer

George O'Reilly

Special Music “Laud and Magnify His Glorious Name” Edwin Earle Ferguson
Chancel Choir

— PROCLAIMING —

Scripture Matthew 17:1-9

Sermon “Metamorphosed” Wanda Stopher

***Hymn** “Christ upon the mountain peak” HWB 232

— RESPONDING —

Presenting Our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory Intermezzo on “Meirionydd” arr. Gilbert M. Martin

***Hymn of Dedication** “Lord, thou dost love” (verse 1) HWB 387

***Prayer of Dedication**

— SENDING —

***Hymn** “All glory be to God on high” HWB 122

***Benediction**

***Postlude**

**Please stand (remain seated if that is more comfortable for you)*

HWB – Hymnal: A Worship Book STS – Sing the Story

Large-print hymnals and bulletins are available on the cabinet next to the parlor.

FIRST MENNONITE CHURCH**101 S. Jackson Street****Bluffton, Ohio 45817****Phone: 419-358-5766****Website: fmcbluffton.org**

Office Hours: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Monday-Friday

Pastor – Wanda – Monday-Thursday, 9-4, off Friday

Pastoral Associate – George – Tuesday-Friday, 9-4, off Monday

Director of Youth Ministries – Shannon -- Tuesday, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.; Friday, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Custodian's schedule: 7:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.; weekends as needed

GREETERS: Shelby Cluts**HOST:** Mary Amstutz**NURSERY WORKERS TODAY:** SS – Melinda, Patrick and Rebecca Estell

Worship – Kendra and Ellie Nickel, Rachel Diller

NURSERY WORKERS NEXT WEEK: SS – Carmen Ordóñez-Moser, Melissa Friesen, Mary Ann Ring

Worship – Andrea and Tyson Goings, Anna Biesecker-Mast, Grace Paquin

SOUND SYSTEM: Peter Terry **CHANCEL:** Anita Lehman*The video of the most recent worship service may be viewed on the church's homepage,**www.fmcbluffton.org. Videos normally are posted on the Tuesday following the service.**Previously recorded worship service videos may be found at tinyurl.com/fmc-videos***OUR STEWARDSHIP**

Worship attendance last Sunday	221
Worship attendance at Maple Crest last Sunday	10
Sunday school attendance last Sunday	116
Spending plan giving February 19, 2017	\$5,673.50
Spending plan receipts as of January 31	\$31,968.12
Spending plan expenses as of January 31	\$33,618.81
2017 spending plan	\$421,146.00

The offering Feb. 19 totaled \$7,311.46. Money was received for these special funds, K-5th - \$5.61, Sojourners - \$23, SHYF - \$220, Deacons Benevolent - \$20, Kitchen service - \$132.35, FIRST Night - \$8, Mennonite Women - \$179, MDS - \$50, MCC - \$1,000.

CHURCH STAFFPastor – Wanda Stopher – 419-551-1079 (cell) -- fmc.wanda@bluffton.eduPastoral Associate – George O'Reilly – 402-619-7099 (cell) – fmc.george@bluffton.eduYouth Ministry Director – Shannon Thiebeau – fmc.shannon@bluffton.edu

Director of Music – Mark Suderman Organist Coordinator – Lucia Unrau

Custodian – Mick Hardy

Administrative Assistant – Mary Pannabecker - fmc@bluffton.edu

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.



part of the day. We also have a quilt in a frame and would love to have help on this quilt that will go to the relief sale in August. So that we may plan for enough food, please email Cindy Luginbill at lucg@watchtv.net if you plan to come.

GRATITUDE AND PRAYERS

Happy Birthday to Ruth Unrau, 95, February 28; Darrel Yoder, 94, March 5; and Burton Yost, 89, March 5

Corrinne Boehr has returned to her home, following a period of rehab at the Mennonite Memorial Home. She and Dick appreciate your prayers.

Royce Engle has entered hospice at Mennonite Memorial Home.

Brazo en Brazo: Brazo en Brazo, along with the worship service that meets on Sunday afternoons at Lima Mennonite Church, held two celebrations over the holidays. There was a Christmas celebration on Christmas with a traditional Mexican posole soup after the service as well as a King's Day celebration on January 8 with roscón and hot chocolate. We have been busy helping families from Lima, Ada, Elida and Kenton decide whether or not to renew the DACA applications for their students. Pray with us that a long term solution will be found for students who may lose their temporary permits due to the changes of administration. Brazo and Brazo appreciates your financial support and covets your prayers as we seek to help our Hispanic neighbors.

-- Marti Meza

We at Mennonite Central Committee, along with our partners in over 50 countries around the world, are blessed by your continuing support for the work of MCC. We want to thank our friends at First Mennonite for the many ways you contribute to the work of MCC. In addition to the energy and time you give at relief sales, thrift shops, meat canning and material resources, your congregation contributed **\$4,527.92** in 2016. We are especially grateful for your prayer support for MCC's work of relief, development and peace in the name of Christ. Whether in Syria, Haiti, Vietnam, Nigeria, Colombia or Appalachia, your support shares God's love and compassion with vulnerable people. Thank you! -- Les Gustafson-Zook, MCC Great Lakes

Thank you, First Mennonite, for giving \$22,880 to Mennonite Mission Network in 2016! Your donations, prayers, participation and enthusiasm for mission play a vital role in our global church. Thank you for doing your part. -- Karla Minter, MMN church relations representative

Welcoming Statement

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, FEBRUARY 26, 2017

8:30 a.m.	Youth Choir
9:15 a.m.	Sunday school, coffee time
10:30 a.m.	Worship Service, Wanda Stopher preaching
Noon	Faithbuilders potluck, FH
Noon	Catechism (will eat with Faithbuilders)
5 p.m.	SHYF soup fundraiser, FH
6 p.m.	Congregational Discernment meeting, all invited , FH, childcare provided

THIS WEEK

Monday (2-27)	Lent Practice, 7 p.m., FH, childcare will be provided
Tuesday (2-28)	Morning prayers, 7 a.m.
Wednesday (3-1)	Staff meeting, 9 a.m., parlor
	First Night, 6 p.m., FH
	Cherub Choir, Adult Bells, 6 p.m.
	Jubilate, 6:45 p.m.
	Youth Bells, Chancel Choir, 7 p.m.
Thursday (3-2)	Ash Wednesday service, 8 p.m., FH
	Congregational Discernment Team, 5 p.m., parlor
	Worship, 7 p.m., parlor

NEXT WEEK, FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT

8:30 a.m.	Youth choir
9:15 a.m.	Sunday school, coffee time
10:30 a.m.	Worship Service, George O'Reilly preaching
Noon	Connections class potluck ; Catechism (will eat with Connections)

Welcome to our worship service today. Please sign and pass the friendship pads in the pews. Wireless hearing aids are available. If you would like your children watched over while you worship, our staff will care for them in the nursery downstairs. Worship activity bags for children are available.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SHYF will hold a soup fundraiser today from 5-6 p.m. in the fellowship hall. The menu will include several soup options, salad, bread and dessert. **The third Congregational Discernment meeting** will follow at 6 p.m., also in the fellowship hall. Childcare will be available during the CD meeting.

FIRST Night will be held Tuesday, Feb. 28. Those attending should bring their own table service. The menu for February 28 will include baked potato bar: choice of white or sweet potato with various toppings, tossed salad, dessert/fruit. Participants of the Women's March on Washington will speak during the program. **A registration table will be set up in the fellowship hall after worship today. Registrations must be paid by noon Monday.**

-- Susie Gratz, FIRST Night chair

Lent Practice continues Monday, Feb. 28, from 7-8:30 p.m. in the fellowship hall. **Our prompt this week is "Restore us, o God! We wonder" and Psalm 121; John 3:1-17.** After reading the texts, take the ideas, words, images and feelings and create something that reflects the themes. Write a story, poem, mini-play, song or a piece of music. Draw, sculpt, whittle, paint, sew, knit, crochet or weld. Use wood, yarn, cloth, clay, rock, marbles, metal, instruments, paper, string, etc. Please come even if you do not have something to share. All are welcome at one or all of the practices. (Children are welcome and childcare will be provided.) See Victoria Woods-Yee or Wanda Stopher if you have questions.

We invite you to enter into this Lenten journey of the new life, beginning this week with Ash Wednesday, March 1. This is not a journey of perfection, but one where we face both the limits of our humanity and our need for divine transformation. Restore us, O God! In this service we will be invited to receive the ashes on our foreheads and with them the words from Genesis 3:19, "Remember you are dust, and unto dust you shall return."

A change has been made to the March 13 Mennonite Women meeting. Instead of the regular meeting, you are invited to join the Lent Practice scheduled for all members. Don't feel limited to attend Lent Practice only on March 13. You are invited to attend as many as you wish.

This is one of a series of "Did You Know" announcements from the Congregational Discernment Team, as we explore the history and live into the future of FMC.

Did you know...

...that videos of worship services are available to view each week on our website?

...that the average number of views per Sunday in 2016 was 25?

...that the highest viewed Sunday morning worship service was Positive ID: A Musical Drama, our children's musical viewed 134 times?

Hygiene Kits: MCC has made an urgent call for hygiene kits! Hygiene kit contents include the following (NEW items, in original packaging):

- 1 adult-size toothbrush – (individually wrapped)
- 1 large bar bath soap
- 1 fingernail clipper (good quality)
- 1 hand towel (dark color)

Bags and content lists are located on the table and bulletin board near the church office. We also need bag fabric and people to sew bags. Sewing directions are on the kit card in the kit collection area. Some precut bags and cords are also there. (If making your own bags, please note that the bag size has changed over the years, so fabric is now cut 12 ½ x 38 in.)

Mennonite Disaster Service team workers sought: Lynn Miller introduced Kevin and Abigail Von Seggern to the congregation in December. This young couple runs the MDS unit at Community Christian Fellowship in Detroit. The work there is now focused on repairs or maintenance of CCF member homes. Mitch Kingsley is organizing a team from First Mennonite for March 6-9 (Monday morning through Thursday afternoon). Contact Mitch for details as soon as possible if you are interested in serving: cell 419.236.7106 / email kingsleym@bluffton.edu.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bluffton University's Masterworks performance will be held at 2:30 p.m. today in Yoder Recital Hall. The concert will feature "Gloria" by Antonio Vivaldi. The chorus is comprised of members from the Bluffton University Chorale and the Bluffton Choral Society, and the orchestra includes students and community members. A free-will offering will be taken.

Grace Mennonite will have a comforter knotting day on Thursday, March 2 from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Lunch will be provided at noon and we invite anyone that may be interested to join us for all or