

Palm/Passion Sunday
God, Humanity & an Alternative View
March 25, 2018

Chimes call us to worship Deb Niswander

Welcome and Announcements Lynn Miller

Prelude “Zacchaeus” Traditional
Cherub Choir

Invocation

***Call to worship**

L: Come, people of God, this is the day that the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it. This is the day Jesus enters Jerusalem.

C: Open the gates of righteousness so that we can enter and give thanks to the Lord.

L: The gates are open, come on in. Give thanks, for God is good!

-- PALM --

Special Music “Hosannah to the Son of David” G.F. Handel
Chancel Choir

Conversation with Friends

Hymn “Between Me and You” Insert

Conversation Amber Shelly

Palm Processional “Hosanna, loud hosanna” HWB 238

Hymn “Between Me and You” Insert

Presenting Our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory “Beneath the Cross of Jesus” arr. Mark Hayes

***Confession**

Jesus, Messiah. The crowds around you can be thrilling, or frightening. One moment they are clay in your hands, ready to be shaped. The next they are squeezing you, like putty in a clenched fist, demanding that you conform. Is that what we do? When we count the cost of your words for us, it hurts. We get it, why the masses turned and your disciples faded away. Do you? The time is ripe for change, then and now. Why can't you lead that change in a way we understand? How is it that you define success so differently? It scares us to question you. It's worse if we don't. Forgive us for holding in questions so long that we can't bear the answers. Forgive us for fearing the crowds, and the consequences. Open our eyes and hearts to receive your teaching. Show us again this new way of living. Help us to love like you.

***Words of assurance**

Jesus said, “Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me.”

Community Prayer Theda Good

-- PASSION --

Reading The Lord's Supper Mark 14:12-26
***Hymn** “When we are tempted” STS 81

Reading Gethsemane Mark 14:32-42
***Hymn** “Tis midnight, and on Olive's brow” HWB 241

Reading Jesus is arrested Mark 14:43-52
Special Music “Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley” arr. Anna Laura Page
Adult Bells

Reading Jesus before Pilate Mark 15:1-15, 16-20
***Hymn** “Ah, holy Jesus” HWB 254

Reading The crucifixion Mark 15:21-32
***Hymn** “So much wrong” STS 84

Reading Jesus' Death Mark 15:33-41

Communion

Reading Jesus' Burial Mark 15:42-47

Please depart in silence.

Readers: Don Pannabecker, Lois Wetherill, Lynn Miller, Wanda Stopher, Jacob Biesecker-Mast, Theda Good

***Please stand, or remain seated if that is more comfortable for you.**

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

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

Large print hymnals are available. Please ask an usher for assistance in locating one.

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

Pastor – Theda – Tuesday-Friday, 9-4, off Monday

Director of Youth Ministries – Shannon -- Tuesday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.; Thursday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

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

HOST: Vickie Laird

GREETER: Ruth Naylor

NURSERY TODAY: SS – Marilyn Bishop, Pat Sheidler

Worship – Mary Pannabecker Steiner, Julie Mackey, Grace Paquin

NURSERY NEXT WEEK: SS – No Sunday school

Worship –

SOUND SYSTEM: Kevin Cluts

CHANCEL: Amber Shelly

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	FMC-177, MC-3
Spending plan giving March 18, 2018 (includes e-giving)	\$8,315.00
Special fund giving March 18, 2018 (includes e-giving): K-5-\$7.01; SHYF-\$433.84	<u>\$2,568.11</u>
<i>Sojourners-\$3; Freudige-\$70; Faith and Life-\$14; Faithful Living-\$2; Deacons-\$218; Kitchen-\$11.26; Coll scholar-\$200; Dorothy Hoffman memorial-\$175; ISAF-\$100</i>	
<i>Capital campaign-\$1,045; Rejoice-\$224; MW relief-\$40; postage-\$25</i>	
Total giving March 18, 2018 (includes e-giving)	\$10,883.11
Total spending plan receipts as of January 31, 2017	\$42,545.67
Spending plan expenses as of January 31, 2017	\$26,805.89
2018 spending plan	\$427,441.00

CHURCH STAFF

- Pastor Wanda Stopher – 419-551-1079 (cell) -- fmc.wanda@bluffton.edu
- Pastor Theda Good – 419-549-2417 (cell) -- fmc.theda@bluffton.edu
- Youth Ministry Director – Shannon Thiebeau – fmc.shannon@bluffton.edu
- Director of Music – Mark Suderman – sudermanme@bluffton.edu
- Administrative Assistant – Mary Pannabecker Steiner - fmc@bluffton.edu
- Custodian – Mick Hardy

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.



Lima Area Habitat ReStore, 550 W. Elm St., is in need of additional volunteers. Jobs for volunteers include customer service, product preparation, cashier, donation pick-up, maintenance, and cleaning. One-time volunteers are very welcome, but regular volunteers are especially needed – even if it is for just a couple of hours one or two days a week. Please sign up at www.habitatlima.org/volunteer/ or call the Habitat office at 419-222-4937.

Dr. William J. Hawk '72, professor of philosophy and ethical reasoning in action at James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Va., will present “Getting Past ‘What Happens in the Ethics Classroom Stays in the Ethics Classroom’: A Strategy for Better Decision Making,” in Forum at 11 a.m. on March 27 in Yoder Recital Hall. Currently the chair of the Madison Collaborative at JMU, Hawk served as Bluffton’s vice president and dean of academic affairs from 1990-1994.

British Actor and playwright Michael Mears along with Maria Santelli and Jake Short, executive director and administrative and outreach coordinator respectively for the Center for Conscience and War, will give two presentations on April 3 at Bluffton University. At 11 a.m. in Yoder Recital Hall, Mears, Santelli and Short, a 2010 Bluffton graduate and former FMC attendee, will present “100 Years of Conscientious Objection to War: Conscience, Dissent, Resistance and Civil Liberties from World War I through Today.” The forum will explore the history of conscientious objection to war and its evolution since World War I. At 7 p.m. in Yoder Recital Hall, Mears will present “This Evil Thing,” a one-person play that delves into the experiences of conscientious objectors in Great Britain during World War I and explores the courage it took to be a pacifist.

MCC Alumni & Friends International Potluck: As alumni or interested friends of Mennonite Central Committee, you are invited to attend an MCC Alumni and Friends International Potluck at 6 p.m. on Sunday, April 8, at Central Mennonite Church, 21703 State Route 2, Archbold. Speakers will be Doug Hostetter, current director of the MCC United Nations Office, and Thien Tran, Vietnamese intern in the MCC U.N. office sharing about the past and present work of MCC in Vietnam. Please RSVP by April 4 at 574-534-4133 or to lmg@mcc.org.

PRAYERS AND GRATITUDE

Nancy Frey and Bruce Yoder of Mennonite Mission Network ask for prayer for peace in Burkina Faso. They write: “We feel safe, but are aware that periodic violence has become part of life. We try to be prepared for the unexpected.” Pray for the witness of Mennonite churches as they follow the Prince of Peace.

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, March 25, 2018

8:30 a.m.	Youth choir
9:15 a.m.	SS, Coffee time
10:30 a.m.	Worship, Communion, Palm/Passion readings

THIS WEEK

Monday (3-26)	Our Daily Bread, volunteers leave FMC, 9:45 a.m.
Tuesday (3-27)	Morning Prayers, 7 a.m. Staff meeting, 9 a.m., parlor
Wednesday (3-28)	Cherubs, Adult bells, 6 p.m. Jubilate, 6:30 p.m. Chancel choir, Youth bells, 7 p.m.
Thursday (3-29)	Maundy Thursday Evening Song and Prayer, 6:30 p.m. , FH
Friday (3-30)	Community cross walk, English Lutheran Church, 11:30 a.m.; worship, St. Mary’s Catholic Church, noon

EASTER SUNDAY

8:30 a.m.	Youth choir
9:15 a.m.	Easter brunch, no SS
10:30 a.m.	Worship, Wanda Stopher preaching
12:05 p.m.	Potluck for all interested, FH

Welcome to our worship service today. If you are a visitor, please sign one of our guest books located at the entrances to the sanctuary. 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

Today we will receive Communion together. Please note that all the bread is gluten free. As part of our receiving this meal together, we at FMC include the giving of alms. We do this by giving to the Deacons' Benevolent Fund. Almsgiving is a way of demonstrating how our life together is energized by the life and ministry of Jesus when he healed the sick, fed the hungry and brought relief to the poor. We seek to live faithfully by using our Deacons Benevolent Fund to assist those who have need within the church and in the community. Baskets are available at the doors.

Invitation: Welcome to the table of Jesus our Redeemer! Come to the table humbly, not because you have earned a place here, but because you know your need of mercy and help. Come because you love God and want to love God more. Come because Jesus first loved us, and gave himself for us. Come because you want to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Come, by the mystery of God's grace, One Spirit-filled people of God, the body of Christ present here and now.

Maundy Thursday Song and Prayer: You're invited to join the FMC faith community for this special Evening Song and Prayer on Thursday, March 29. The service will offer the opportunity to receive communion together. Following communion there will be other opportunities for celebrating our common life together, such as singing, candle lighting, anointing, foot washing, and prayer. Participants will be invited to engage one or all of these options. Planners have been especially mindful of offering ways children might participate in all aspects of this service. Childcare is also available. Please note that the time has changed from what was announced in the Lenten brochure. **The service will begin at 6:30 p.m. instead of 8 p.m.**

An invitation to a Congregational/Pastoral Review

Pastor Wanda is already halfway through her third year as our pastor. This means that it is time to conduct a pastoral/congregational review before her initial three-year term ends. More information about the review process and your participation is in the mailboxes. (See green sheet.) Thank you in advance for contributing to this important task of the church!

~ Staff Relations Committee

The SHYF would like to thank everyone who supported them during their pancake fundraiser. With your help, they raised \$292 for their summer service trip with MDS and the 2019 MCUSA Youth Convention. Thank you!

All are invited to attend the Easter Brunch at 9:15 a.m. Sunday, April 1, in the fellowship hall. Please bring food to share: breakfast casseroles, fruit, breads, coffee cakes, muffins, cookies, etc. Coffee, tea, and juice will be provided. Please bring your own table service. There will be no Sunday school that morning.

On Easter Sunday, April 1, the Chancel Choir will sing Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus." We invite anyone to join us in singing on that Sunday. So, if interested, just come to rehearsal on Wednesday, March 28, at 7:15 p.m. in the sanctuary. We will have music for you or bring your own copy.

~ Mark Suderman

All are invited to a potluck after church (12:05 p.m.) on Sunday, April 1, in the fellowship hall. Bring your favorite dish(es) to share as we eat and celebrate together. Contact Walt Paquin at 419-889-1516 if you have any questions.

You may have noticed "Pastoral Prayer" is out and "Community Prayer" is in. As Mennonites we believe in the priesthood of all believers. Simply said, we believe that everyone has access to God and we all bear the responsibility to use our gifts in the context of the church and community. Here at First Mennonite Church we have identified "Gifts Expression" as one of our five priorities.

Gifts Expression: We have a deep desire to engage the gifts we hold in service to God and others, in congregational life and in the world. We deliberately seek to discover new gifts, inviting people to lifelong development and expression of the fruit of the Spirit, natural abilities, skills, and training that constitute the gifts of the Spirit.

During our time of transition, we have had the privilege of using the gifts of the deacons and others who have ministry experience to lead us in our "Pastoral Prayer." We can argue that this indeed is a pastoral prayer with others using their pastoral gifts without the title of pastor. We would like to continue to offer this space for prayer to this gifted group of folks. In an effort to avoid confusion, we will be changing the name to "Community Prayers" to recognize that deacons and others are welcome to lead the prayer in addition to our pastors. We believe this is in line with our priorities of expressing the gifts of the congregation. Please note that we continue the practice of only publicly naming prayers of folks who have given us specific permission to name their concern.

~ Pastors Wanda and Theda