

FIRST MENNONITE CHURCH

Weekly Announcements 1-6-2019

and January 2019 Menno-Life

First Mennonite Church, 101 S. Jackson Street, Bluffton, Ohio 45817
419-358-5766 | fmcbluffton.org | Office open 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Monday-Friday

- Pastor Wanda Stopher -- Monday-Thursday, 9-4, off Friday; 419-551-1079 (cell); fmc.wanda@bluffton.edu
- Pastor Theda Good -- Tuesday-Friday, 9-4, off Monday; 419-549-2417 (cell); fmc.theda@bluffton.edu
- Interim Children and Youth Ministry Director – Carrie Mast, M-F, 8-10 a.m., mastc@bluffton.edu
- Director of Music – Mark Suderman, 419-230-5368 (cell); sudermanme@bluffton.edu
- Administrative Assistant – Mary Pannabecker Steiner, M-F, 9-4, fmc@bluffton.edu

Calendar

Sunday, January 6, 2019

9:15 a.m. SS, coffee time
10:30 a.m. Worship, Tig Intagliata preaching
5:30 p.m. Learning circle, supper provided, FH

January 7-13, 2019

Tuesday (8-19) Morning prayers, 7 a.m.
Staff meeting, 9 a.m., parlor
Trustees, 7 p.m., parlor
Wednesday (9-19) Pastor at MMH, 2:30 p.m.
Adult bells, cherubs, 6 p.m.
Jubilate, 6:30 p.m.
Chancel choir, youth bells, 7 p.m.
Thursday (10-19) Caring Connections, 2 p.m., parlor
Church Relations, 4 p.m., parlor
Nurture, 7 p.m., parlor
Friday (11-19) JHYF, winter camp
Menno-Life deadline
Brian Moyer Suderman, concert, 7 p.m. sanctuary
Saturday (12-19) Brian Moyer Suderman, workshop, Grace, Pandora
Sunday (13-19) SS, coffee time, 9:15 a.m.
Worship, Wanda Stopher preaching, 10:30 a.m.
Learning circle, supper provided, FH, 5:30 p.m.

Mennonite Women: 100 years in story and song

Stories of our women's organization have been set to music in a review of 100 years of hymns and pop songs that trace our changing culture and evolving theology.

Wendy Chappell-Dick has put the stories to music and will lead a group of women vocalists in a unique presentation on Sunday, Jan. 13 at 3 p.m. in the sanctuary.

Men, women and children are invited to attend the celebration. Be prepared to sing along.

Refreshments will follow in the fellowship hall.

New learning circle to focus on *Journey Forward* curriculum

Senior high youth and delegates for MennoCon19 invite you to join a learning circle to study the *Journey Forward: Pathways* curriculum created and promoted by MCUSA following the convention in Orlando.

The circle will meet March 10, April 14, May 12, and June 9 in the SHY room from 1:30-2:30 p.m.

Pastoral concerns:

Mary Blosser died January 3 at the Mennonite Memorial Home. Funeral arrangements are forthcoming. Her family appreciates your prayers.

Burton Yost has been hospitalized at St. Rita's Medical Center with heart complications. Please remember him and Elnore in your prayers.

FMC team working with MDS in Florida

Seven members of FMC will volunteer with MDS in Marianna, FL, in early January to remove fallen trees from driveways and rooftops, caused by Hurricane Michael. Dennis and Pat Sheidler, Bill Suter, Mitch Kingsley and Wendell Miller will work from January 6-11. Lynn and Linda Miller are serving as project directors from January 2-27.

College-bound students: If you or your parents are Everence members and you'll be enrolled as an undergrad next fall, apply now for an Everence college scholarship of \$1,000 to \$3,000. **The deadline is February 28, 2019.** Visit everence.com/college-scholarships for more information.

Winter campers: Senior high youth attending winter camp this weekend include Jacob Biesecker Mast, Patrick Estell, Sophia Gott, Ana Neufeld Weaver, Ellie Nickel, Jacob Suter, and Eli Simones (from Cincinnati Mennonite.) Walt Paquin and Carrie Mast are the sponsors.

Reminders

For those interested in the workshop series, "Meaningful Presence: Support for Late Life Reorientation," a sign-up sheet is available on a table in the fellowship hall. The dates are January 11, 15 and 22. Brochures are available in the office. For more information call Jeff Boehr at 419.236.9150.



Governance Task Force asks you to save these dates: January 20, February 10 and April 7. We will meet from 4-7 p.m., with food and childcare provided.

Nurture Commission will hold a "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner" on Saturday, Feb. 9. Here's how it works. First you must decide if you prefer to host, be a guest, or either.

- Being a GUEST is simple. Sign up, (children are welcome) be willing to bring a side dish or dessert, work up an appetite and show up on time. Guests will be given directions to the host's home, what to bring and what time to arrive and an emergency-only contact number.
- HOSTING requires a little more effort. You agree to host a meal in your home for a set number of guests (your choice.) Hosts will be given the number of guests to expect. Hosts will prepare a soup, bread(s) and drinks for the meal that adheres to any food allergies or requests passed to you through Nurture. Then wait and see who shows up at the door. It's a great way to get to know others in our church family.
- Suggested reading/preparation before arriving: Week 23 from "We Make the Road..."
- Register as a GUEST, indicating the number in your party; or a HOST, indicating the number of people you plan to host) on the table outside the church office by Friday, Jan.18.

~ Thank you for participating, Nurture Commission



Elam (left) and Jacob Suter split wood during the youth work weekend at Camp Friedenswald.

Making the road together: New ways of thinking, acting, organizing

As a child I coveted the prize that came in Honeycomb cereal boxes, the “Around-A-Corner Viewer.” According to the article, *50 Greatest Cereal Box Prizes*, written by Mr. Breakfast, and which can be found at <https://www.mrbreakfast.com/list.asp?id=6>. If you ever wanted to spy around the corner on your neighbors, Honeycomb cereal had the answer in 1973. They gave away Around-A-Corner Viewers in select boxes. The viewers were small plastic periscopes that came in orange, blue or yellow. “Now, I can see sideways,” exclaimed a girl in a TV ad. Spy toys were all the rage in 1973. The Watergate scandal was in full gear and Roger Moore had just made his debut as James Bond in *Live And Let Die*.” The problem was, like most prizes that come out of a cereal box, it didn’t really work that well. Perhaps that’s why, in spite of my infatuation, the viewer is rated only #27 in the list!

In faith and in congregational life, we can rarely see clearly around the corner. So how do we prepare to live into a new year? I like to start by reviewing the past year. Looking back at the road we’ve traveled inevitably brings with it a sense of gratitude when I see the ways that God has walked with us, led us and provided for us. Reviewing the past year always includes the twin awareness of what has gone well and what needs to change. That leads to setting goals, some of which will continue the good that has been, and others that will require new ways of thinking, acting and organizing. There are some things we’ve identified that we need to do in the coming year: Governance Task Force is preparing to lead us in a congregation-wide process to identify new ways of structuring our congregational life that will empower us to live out our values and priorities.

I can’t see around the corner of the new year, but I’m certain that this will involve significant change. We’ve been aware for the past couple of years that not only have we begun to serve our structure instead of the structure serving us, but also our current budget and spending are not sustainable at the

current level of giving. We are fortunate to have reserves in this time that enable us to plan and create a new path together, but using reserves is obviously not sustainable long-term.

The changes that we anticipate are significant and will impact every aspect of our life together. We will “make the road by walking together.” We need one another on this new path, to participate in creating the path itself. We also need one another to encourage one another along the way. The new path will not be shaped by seeing around the corner, but instead, it will emerge from our conversations together. It must be rooted in our values and realign our life together to more fully express the priorities we’ve discerned together.

I don’t need to see around the corner to look forward with anticipation and excitement and even confidence. That’s because I believe God is trustworthy and that we are called to make this new path together. I’m looking forward to that, to walking together, listening to the Spirit among us, and embracing whatever it is God has for us around the corner in this new year!

~ Wanda Stopher



Getting to know our congregation

This is part of a series in which we briefly profile those among us, focusing on the work they do now or have done in the past. Jesus told us that all work is honorable if done honestly and well; it’s important to recognize that all of us work in different ways. We’ll touch all ages and all areas of work. In this case, we invited the Phillips family (Carrie, Steve, Claire and Simon) to respond. According to Carrie, they found it to be a fun breakfast activity.

← Carrie, Claire, Steve and Simon Phillips

Carrie:

Where do you work?

I am the Archives & Special Collections librarian at Bluffton University’s Musselman Library.

What do you like most about your job?

I like connecting people to history with stories, photographs, and artifacts in the archives, especially when those people are Bluffton University students!

What do you enjoy doing when you’re not at work (i.e. hobby, volunteer)?

Cooking (making a mess in the kitchen!) and eating great food, crafts, home improvement projects, and hanging out with friends. I’ve served on the Bluffton Public Library board for 9 years.

Who are your family members at FMC?

Mary Pannabecker Steiner and I are distant cousins; my great-great-grandfather was John H. Tschantz, who was from the Dalton, Ohio, area, but visited Bluffton and FMC often. His daughter, my great-great aunt, was Sylvia Tschantz Pannabecker, Mary's paternal grandmother, and whose quilt was recently displayed in the fellowship hall.

Steve:

Where do you work?

I am a third and fourth grade science teacher at Maplewood Elementary, Shawnee Schools.

What do you like most about your job?

I enjoy helping kids realize that science is about carefully observing life's surroundings and solving problems.

What do you enjoy doing when you're not at work (i.e. hobby, volunteer)?

I love a good home improvement or maintenance task. I also work on mowers/small engines. Nothing better than a slow Saturday morning listening to NPR and tinkering in the garage!

Who are your family members at FMC?

We have several sets of friends at FMC that we consider close as family, however outside of my immediate family – Carrie, Claire and Simon – I have no relatives at FMC.

Claire & Simon:

How old are you? What grade? What school?

Claire - Age 10, in 5th grade at Bluffton Elementary

Simon - Age 5, in kindergarten at Bluffton Elementary

What do you like most about school? Dislike?

Claire: I like math class and inside recess. I dislike taking long tests.

Simon: I like Daily Five and Centers. I dislike recess.

What kind of jobs do you have at home?

We have to do trash chores on Wednesday after school. Sometimes we help fold the laundry and clean out the dishwasher.

What do you do when you're not at school? Hobbies, music, read?

We both play ROBLOX - sometimes together - and we both love LEGOs. Claire plays piano and loves to read fiction books. Simon plays with SnapCircuits and loves mechanical toys. We both love to bake, and we love to watch the Kids Baking Championship on Food Network. We're all caught up and wish there were more episodes!

Who are your family members at FMC?

Just mom and dad.

Governance Task Force: A New Path Together



In October we made some reports and promises about the work of Governance Task Force – A New Path Together! The work of the September commissions retreat was evaluated and led to guiding questions that we sent to the commissions for their conversation. Each commission was asked to consider:

- What are you doing?
- What of your work is governance?
- What is ministry?
- What is discernment?
- Reflect on the alignment you see with the 5 Priorities.

We received commission reports and this has informed our ongoing work.

Back to the Future:

We are asking members of the congregation (everyone) to SAVE-THE-DATE(S) – January 20, February 10, and April 7 to attend congregation wide gatherings for Mapping, Making, and Moving our New Path Together, from 4-7 p.m. with meal and childcare provided.

These gatherings will engage the larger congregation and pick-up the work of the retreat, commissions, and Council as we map, make, and move our new way of living into the 5 Priorities. Over the course of the meetings, we will develop a prototype governance structure to be tested (anticipating 2020).

Participation at any of the gatherings will allow you to touch and shape our work.

~ GTF: Elizabeth Kelly, Greg Hartzler, Gerald Mast, Wanda Stopher

Moyer Suderman to perform January 11 at FMC

Itinerant Bible teacher and singer/songwriter, known especially for his “songs of faith for small and tall,” Bryan Moyer Suderman of Kitchener, Ontario, will perform a concert at 7 p.m. Friday, January 11 at First Mennonite.



He will also present “Reading the Bible with Jesus” workshop at Grace Mennonite Church, Pandora, Saturday, Jan. 12. Doors open at 8:30 a.m. and the first session at 9 a.m. Lunch and light refreshments will be provided throughout the day. On Sunday, Jan. 13, Moyer Suderman will lead an adult Sunday school session and preach during worship at Grace.

Over the last five years, he has worked through each of the canonical Gospels, exploring how they portray Jesus as interpreter of Scripture in addressing the challenges and debates of the day. As a result of this study – now the focus of his master’s thesis and itinerant Bible teaching ministry – he says “that Jesus’ approach to Scripture has much to teach us. In fact, it has the potential to transform the way we relate to Scripture and to each other.”

Sorting through stacks of photos during work camp at Camp Friedenswald gave our youth and their advisors a peek into history. Reorganizing photos are (from left) Ana Neufeld Weaver, Jan Wiebe, Sophia Gott and Grace Paquin.



Connections...

Bluffton Food Pantry continuing needs

The Food Pantry has been blessed with holiday giving. The pantry appreciates your continuing gifts of paper products, canned meats, canned fruits, canned soups, shelf milk, cereals, and lotion.

~ Thank you, Nancy Yeager

Comforter knotting Jan. 18 at Grace Mennonite

You are invited to join Grace Mennonite, Pandora, for their January comforter knotting, Friday, January 18, from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Plan to stay for the day and enjoy the lunch they provide.

Bluffton University

January 9 – “Unspeakable” by Sana Musasama, exhibit opens, Grace Albrecht Gallery, Sauder Art Center, displayed through February 15.

MC USA

Introducing the new monthly MC USA Faith Formation Network e-newsletter! Sign up to receive it at mennoniteusa.org/what-we-do/faith-formation.

The latest episode of the Holding it(,) Together podcast is out now, focusing on infertility, miscarriage and infant loss. Listen on Apple Podcasts, Stitcher or online at <https://themennonite.org/the-latest/holding-together-podcast/>.