

FIRST MENNONITE CHURCH

Weekly Announcements 12-22-2019

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; 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, M-F, 8-11 a.m., mastc@bluffton.edu
- Director of Music – Mark Suderman, 419-230-5368 (cell); sudermanme@bluffton.edu
- Administrative Assistant – Mary Pannabecker Steiner, fmc@fmcbluffton.org
- Custodian – Mick Hardy, M-F, weekends as needed

Sunday, Dec.22, 2019

9:15 a.m. Intergenerational LEGO SS, coffee time, FH
10:30 a.m. Worship, Wanda Stopher preaching
5:30 p.m. FMC learning circle, AR

Dec. 23-28

Tuesday (Dec. 24) Morning prayers, 7 a.m.
Church office closing at noon
Christmas Eve service, 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday (Dec. 25) Christmas Day
Church office closed
All choir rehearsals cancelled

Thursday (Dec. 26) Bulletin deadline, 9 a.m.
Evening prayers cancelled

Sunday (Dec. 29) No SS
Holiday brunch, 9:15 a.m., FH
Worship, Theda Good preaching, 10:30 a.m.
FMC learning circle, 5:30 p.m.

Happy birthday!!

Dec. 23 Terry Chappell
Dec. 23 Sally Roth
Dec. 24 Keith Brauen
Dec. 27 Micah Hartzler
Dec. 27 Linda Houshower
Dec. 28 Hans Houshower
Dec. 28 Joe Werling
Dec. 29 Barrett Benroth
Dec. 29 Ann Shumaker

You, your friends, and your family are invited to attend our Christmas Eve service, Tuesday, Dec. 24, at 6:30 p.m. in the sanctuary. The service will include a dramatization of the nativity story, carol singing and candle lighting. The offering will benefit the Deacons Benevolent fund.

“What Sweeter Music” by John Rutter

(text for today's chancel choir anthem)

What sweeter music can we bring than a carol, for to sing the birth of this our heavenly King? Awake the voice!
Awake the string!

Dark and dull night, fly hence away, and give the honor to this day, that sees December turned to May.
Why does the chilling winter's morn smile, like a field beset with corn? Or smell like a meadow newly-shorn,
thus, on the sudden? Come and see the cause, why things thus fragrant be: 'Tis He is born, whose quickening
birth gives life and luster, public mirth, to heaven, and the under-earth.

We see him come, and know him ours, who, with his sunshine and his showers, turns all the patient ground to
flowers. The darling of the world is come, and fit it is, we find a room to welcome him. The nobler part of all the
house here, is the heart.

Which we will give him; and bequeath this holly, and this ivy wreath, To do him honour, who's our King, and Lord
of all this reveling. What sweeter music can we bring, than a carol for to sing the birth of this our heavenly King?

The pastors will be taking time off over the holidays. For pastoral care needs from Dec. 21-26, contact Pastor Wanda, from Dec. 27- Jan. 5, contact Pastor Theda.

Beginning January 5, Faith and Life Sunday school class will discuss "Faith Talk: a spiritual memoir inviting reflection & dialogue" by Ruth Naylor. All are welcome to join the discussions led by Ruth. The class meets in the parlor at 9:15 a.m.

We are moving forward in planning a trip to the borderlands of South Texas. Our hope is that we will learn, bear witness to the human story at the US/Mexico Border and assist those who are meeting the needs of migrants where possible. The dates are Tuesday, March 3 through Sunday, March 8. The potential cost including airfare, lodging, and vehicle rental is estimated between \$550-700 plus meals. **To add your name to the list of travelers please e-mail Danielle Novak at daniellenovak@me.com by Thursday, Jan. 2.** For more information, contact Laurel Neufeld-Weaver at weaverl@bluffton.edu.

~ Planning Team: Danielle Novak, Jan Wiebe, Laurel Neufeld Weaver, Lynda Nyce, Theda Good

New items in the literature rack: Check the literature rack for new information, such as the December "Focus" from Central District Conference, and Mennonite Mission Network's "Beyond."

REMINDERS

The Christmas/NY brunch will be held Sunday, Dec. 29 at 9:15 a.m. in the fellowship hall. Please bring food to share: casseroles, fruit, breads, coffee cakes, muffins, cookies. Coffee, tea, and juice will be provided.

Please bring your own table service. There will be no Sunday school that morning. ~ Nurture Commission

Lost books and materials: The church library is catching up and trying to find lost books and materials. If you find a notice in your mailboxes, please check at home and let the library know about the materials by returning or leaving a note on the library desk. Many thanks. ~ Library committee

Save the date: Hymnal celebration and fundraiser

- Sunday, Jan. 12 at 4 p.m. in the First Mennonite Church sanctuary
- Sing hymns from our present hymnal and supplements, as well as from the "Voices Together" hymnal that will be released in fall 2020
- Listen to FMC musicians and ensembles
- Consider offering a monetary gift to support our purchase of new hymnals
- Childcare provided

OUR CONNECTIONS

Habitat for Humanity – Lima area: The most recent partner family moved into their new Habitat house in Elida just before Thanksgiving, thanks to the generosity of many people, businesses, and churches. The Habitat ReStore was transformed several times in recent months, as groups volunteered for a day. **Needed:** Regular volunteers at the ReStore or volunteer groups to work for a day; funds for a new build; monthly meal for 30 ReStore volunteers; affiliate sustaining/ongoing donations of \$10 a month. To volunteer or donate, call 419-222-4937, or e-mail habitatlima@habitatlima.org

Mennonite Arts Weekend will be held Feb. 7-9 at Pleasant Ridge Presbyterian Church, Cincinnati. Kat Luginbuhl is one of the featured artists this year! The event includes artists' presentations, keynote address, art gallery, a hymn sing and performances. There will be artwork for sale and the weekend ends with a Sunday morning worship service. See more information at <https://mennoniteartsweekend.org/>.