

FIRST MENNONITE CHURCH

Weekly Announcements 8-25-2019

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 (new address)
- 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 (new address)
- Custodian – Mick Hardy, M-F, weekends as needed

Sunday, August 25, 2019

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

August 26-September 1, 2019

Tuesday (Aug. 27) Morning prayers, 7 a.m.
Staff meeting, 9 a.m., parlor
MPS, 7 p.m., parlor
Swiss Hist. Society, 7 p.m., AR

**Thursday (Aug. 29) Deadline to submit bulletin info, 9 a.m.
Church staff retreat, office will be closed**

Sunday (Sept. 1) SS, coffee time, 9:15 a.m.
Worship, Wanda Stopher, 10:30 a.m.
FMC learning circle, 5:30 p.m.

Happy birthday!!

Jane Weaver – Aug. 26
Gary Wetherill – Aug. 27
Perry Bush – Aug. 28
Jerry Tripp – Aug. 28
Cassidy Bush – Aug. 29
Kerry Bush – Aug. 29

A sabbatical rest was recently enjoyed by Pastor Wanda and First Mennonite Church. We now have the opportunity to reflect on our rhythms of rest and work as individuals and as a congregation. Beginning September 8, we will devote five Sundays to exploring and understanding the practice of keeping Sabbath. Several books are available in the library for further study.

The church office will be closed on Thursday, Aug., 29, while the staff holds its annual retreat. The office will also be closed on Labor Day, Monday, Sept. 2.

Sunday school elective on the Bible and the environment

Humans construct their understanding of “nature” and “culture” and this is evident in how the Bible constructs its various views of the environment of ancient Israel. As a foundational literary text in Western civilization, the Bible’s construction of “nature” and “culture” influences contemporary understandings of environmental issues. This Sunday school elective will meet September 9-December 15 and will explore the relationship between the Bible and nature. There will be some readings for those who want to prepare before Sunday morning, but the readings are not required. Each class session will begin with a summary of the reading often in combination with the reading of a biblical passage and there will be some time for discussion. For planning purposes, please contact Ray Person at r-person@onu.edu if you’re interested in attending.

As we near the end of our journey with “We Make the Road by Walking” it is good to think about the things we’ll carry forward from this year of walking together. We’ve also begun to think about ways we might bless others on their collective faith journeys. Regarding the walking book, if you want to carry that along with you for further reflection, please do! However, if you’d like to share it, turn it in to the church office. We’ll offer them to other churches, Sunday school classes or small groups. See Pastor Wanda if you have questions.

There will be a congregational meeting on Sunday, Sept. 8, immediately following the worship service. The meeting will be held in the sanctuary and will include two agenda items: 1) approving the slate of new commission and council members, and 2) receiving a brief update on congregational finances.

Pastor Theda will be out of town August 30-September 6. She and Dawn will spend some time in Tucson, AZ, volunteering with Humane Borders and visiting some old friends.

Here are some recommendations from Elizabeth Nisly and Pastor Wanda to learn more about immigration. *Tell me How it Ends: An Essay in 40 Questions* by Valeria Luiselli; *The Death and Life of Aida Hernandez: A Border Story* by Aaron Bobrow-Strain; and *Border Patrol Nation: Dispatches from the Front Lines of Homeland Security* by Todd Miller.

REMINDERS

Sunday, Sept. 1 marks the first day of the fall quarter for SS. **Children** will gather in the ViP room and will remain there during the hour to sing and hear Warigia (Alice) Hinga, Joyce Hostetler's friend from Kenya, who operates Tumaini Brooks Centre, a children's center. FMC children's offering collected throughout the fall quarter will be sent to this children's center. **Youth** will return to their classrooms to begin studying MennoMedia's Shine and Generation Why curriculum.

Please consider joining one of our musical ensembles!

- Chancel Choir (**adults**) begins Wednesday, Sept. 4, 7-8 p.m., sanctuary, Mark Suderman, director
- Adult and Youth (**Grades 7-12**) Bells - both begin Wednesday, Sept. 4 at 6 p.m. and 7 p.m. respectively, assembly room, Ray Raeburn, director
- Cherub Choir (**ages 3-grade 1**) begins Wednesday, Sept. 11, 6-6:30 p.m., children's choir room. Parents of 3 year olds are encouraged to attend the first few rehearsals. Laura Hartzler, director
- Jubilate (**Grades 2 - 5**) begins Wednesday, Sept. 11, 6:30-7:15 p.m., children's choir room, Laura Hartzler, director
- Youth choir (**Grades 6-12**) begins Sunday, Sept. 15, 8:30-9:15 a.m. children's choir room, Laura Hartzler, director

Living Thoughtfully, Dying Well (Miller) will be used for a book study prior to the workshop November 16. Book study will meet weekly, beginning Tuesday, Sept. 10 at 6:30 p.m. Sign up for a book (cost is \$13) by September 3; a sign-up sheet is on the table outside the office. If you have questions, contact Judy Diller at 419-303-4341.

Beginning with our next issue of Menno-Life in October 2019, we will publish M-L every other month (October, December, February, April, June, August.) In the October issue, we'll examine the purpose of the Menno-Life and how we see its usefulness as a way to get to know each other, to learn who is doing what, and what/who the church is. Let's tell some stories! At the end of one year, we will evaluate this schedule. ***The deadline for submitting items for the October issue is Friday, Sept. 20.***

OUR CONNECTIONS

The service group of Mennonite Home Communities of Ohio will hold a silent auction at the Mennonite Memorial Home during the fall festival Saturday, Sept. 28. Donations of silent auction items, services and experiences are welcomed. The fall festival is one of the group's largest fundraising events and proceeds help fund projects and activities for MHCO and its elders. All donations are tax deductible. If you wish to donate an item, service or experience, contact Jessica Strahm, volunteer coordinator, 419-358-1015, ext. 248, or jstrahm@mhcoliving.org.

Bluffton University

Aug. 26 "A Visual Reflection on Fear and Connection" exhibit by Merrill Krabill opens, Grace Albrecht Gallery, Sauder Art Center, through Oct. 18

Aug. 27 Forum: "The Power of Relationships: How Connectivity Impacts Well-Being," Dr. Beth Taylor Mack, YMCA of the USA, 10:45 a.m., Sommer Center