

**FIRST MENNONITE CHURCH**  
**Weekly Announcements 2-28-2021**

First Mennonite Church, 101 S. Jackson Street, Bluffton, Ohio 45817

419-358-5766 | [fmclubluffton.org](http://fmclubluffton.org) | Office closed due to Covid; staff working from home

- Pastor Wanda Stopher – Monday-Thursday, off Friday, 419-551-1079, [wanda@fmclubluffton.org](mailto:wanda@fmclubluffton.org)
- Pastor Jeff Boehr – T, F; 419-236-9150, [jeff@fmclubluffton.org](mailto:jeff@fmclubluffton.org)
- Children and Youth Ministry Director – Carrie Mast, 419-230-1568, [mastc@bluffton.edu](mailto:mastc@bluffton.edu)
- Director of Music – Mark Suderman, 419-230-5368 (cell), [sudermanme@bluffton.edu](mailto:sudermanme@bluffton.edu)
- Administrative Assistant – Mary Pannabecker Steiner, 419-358-5766, [fmc@fmclubluffton.org](mailto:fmc@fmclubluffton.org)

**Sunday, Feb. 28, 2021**

Children's Zoom, 9 a.m., <https://zoom.us/j/93359681335>  
Sojourners, Zoom, 9:15 a.m., <https://zoom.us/j/4193583208>  
Faithful Living, Zoom, 9:30 a.m., <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85741872049?pwd=NG1UcWlyOVJ6RUg4TUdHTE5Wa0lKZz09>  
Race and Ethnicity, Zoom, 9:15 a.m.,  
<https://zoom.us/j/92632252996>  
Taste and See, Zoom, 9:15 a.m., <https://zoom.us/j/342273765>  
SHY, Zoom, 9:30 a.m.  
Worship, Wanda Stopher preaching, 10:30 a.m.  
Virtual fellowship hall conversation, Zoom, 11:30-12:15,  
<https://zoom.us/j/93482279238>  
Learning circle, Zoom, 6 p.m., <https://zoom.us/j/4193585766>

**March 1-6**

Tuesday, March 2 Morning prayers, Zoom, 7 a.m.,  
<https://zoom.us/j/93803392337>  
Staff meeting, Zoom, 9 a.m.  
Wednesday, March 3, JHY, Zoom, 7 p.m.  
Thursday, March 4 Deadline to submit items for the weekly  
announcements, 9 a.m.

**Sunday, March 7, 2021**

Children's Zoom, 9 a.m.; Sojourners 9:15 a.m.; Faithful  
Living, 9:30 a.m.; Race and Ethnicity, 9:15 a.m.; SHY, 9:30  
a.m.; Taste and See, 9:15 a.m.  
Worship, Wanda Stopher preaching, 10:30 a.m.  
Virtual FH conversation, 11:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m.  
Learning circle, Zoom, 6 p.m.

**Happy Birthday!**

Feb. 28 - Ethan Blount  
March 1 – LuAnn Stuckey  
March 6 – Dave Moser

**Please note** that we will not be taking orders for Easter flowers this year. We do plan to have palms for Palm Sunday and will distribute those to the homes of children in the congregation.

**The Racial Justice Ministry** will hold its next gathering on Monday, March 8 at 7 p.m. Doug Luginbill will report on what other Central District churches have been doing to study and address questions of racial justice. One of the more unique actions is *A Reparative Act* developed by Shalom Community Church, Ann Arbor. Trevor Bechtel, Shalom pastor, will join us to describe the history of this intriguing response both to church history and to often noted patterns of decision making control when white and black/brown Christians are working on programs to increase racial justice. There is a new Zoom link for this meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/96516134635>.

**Thank you to Carolyn Rich** for creating our unique Lent bulletin covers. In her words: *Colors are the best visual tool to portray our emotions, both positive and negative. The cool teal on the bulletin covers bleeds into the warmer purple, inviting us to deeper introspection.*

## Gratitude

**Thank you all for the wonderful support** you have shown me and my family prior to and following the death of my wife, Jo. Your words, thoughts, prayers, cards, and memorials are much appreciated. I so value the First Mennonite community.

~ Bill Croft

**Especially for kids:** Each week's Conversation with Friends can be viewed on a private YouTube channel especially for FMC kids. Check them out here:

[https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL8GP3BoW44SIRI\\_VMRsBOh8\\_szrfmDska](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL8GP3BoW44SIRI_VMRsBOh8_szrfmDska).

## Reminders

**Worship at First Mennonite Church** is both the result of careful planning and preparation, and a participatory act of all those who engage in the service. A Worship Planning ministry is now being formed to plan worship in collaboration with the Pastor of Christian Formation and the Music Director. Special attention in this ministry will be given to the task of inviting and including the diversity of people and gifts in the congregation. See Pastor Wanda for more information or to express interest in joining this ministry.

**The community meal** is one way we at FMC have connected with others in the Bluffton community for many years. These meals are currently continuing at the Senior Center as take-out only. About (50) meals are being prepared at local churches and served to those who drive up and pick up meals behind the Senior Center. If you are willing to coordinate a meal on April 8, or if you have questions, please contact Pastor Wanda by March 1.

**Available now!** Mennonite Church USA's 2021 Lent at Home guide for home-based worship provides daily and weekly scripture readings, prayers and rituals for individuals and families observing Lent (Feb. 17 to April 4.) [View and download.](#)

**The Central District Conference** Board of Directors will hold two gatherings via Zoom instead of the annual regional gatherings. These meetings will be held March 6 and March 27, from 9:30-11:45 a.m. Eastern time. You are invited to attend your preferred date. [Register here for the March 6 meeting](#) or [here for the March 27 meeting](#). After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

## Our connections

**CDC Annual Meeting 2021** – The Central District Board of Directors has decided to hold the annual meeting online again this year due to continued uncertainty surrounding the Covid-19 pandemic. It will be held June 26. More information will be available later this spring.

**After receiving a negotiated order** of supervision on February 18, Edith was able to return home. While her order of deportation has not been removed, this order of supervision will allow her to safely live at home with her family as she periodically checks in with ICE. **From Edith:** *I want to thank everyone for their support. I am so happy to be home. We need to keep fighting, and pushing for my case and for more sanctuary leaders.*

**Bluffton University's winter instrumental concert** featuring ensembles will be streamed for viewing at [www.bluffton.edu/mus](http://www.bluffton.edu/mus) at 2:30 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 28. At 2 p.m., the conductor will do a pre-concert talk with audience members via Zoom. Visit [www.bluffton.edu/mus](http://www.bluffton.edu/mus) for more information and access to the Zoom meeting. Offerings for music scholarships may be made at [www.bluffton.edu/givetomusic](http://www.bluffton.edu/givetomusic).

**You're invited to join MCC Great Lakes** for two virtual MCC Alumni & Friends gatherings, which will feature first-hand stories from current and recently returned MCCers.

- **Wednesday, March 10 at 7:30 p.m. EST** Andrew and Katie Geddert, former MCC reps for Ukraine, will share stories from MCC's work in Ukraine. More information and registration at: [mcc.org/gl-ukraine-webinar](http://mcc.org/gl-ukraine-webinar).
- **Sunday, March 21 at 2 p.m. EST** Vurayayi Pugini and Thelma Sadzamari, MCC area directors for Southern and Central Africa and Nigeria, will share stories about MCC's work there. More information and registration at: [mcc.org/gl-africa-webinar](http://mcc.org/gl-africa-webinar).