

FIRST MENNONITE CHURCH
Weekly Announcements 3-28-2021

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

419-358-5766 | fmcbluffton.org | Office closed due to Covid; staff working from home

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

Sunday, March 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>

Taste and See, Zoom, 9:15 a.m., <https://zoom.us/j/342273765>

SHY, 9:30 a.m.

Worship, Passion Reading, 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 29-April 3

Tuesday, March 29 Morning prayers, Zoom, 7 a.m.,

<https://zoom.us/j/93803392337>

Staff meeting, Zoom, 9 a.m.

Thursday, April 1 Maundy Thursday service, Zoom, 6:30

p.m., <https://zoom.us/j/94268295805>

Friday, April 2 Community Good Friday cross walk, outdoors,

starts at St. John's UCC, 11:30 am.

Saturday, April 3 Baptism, Novak's pond, 8 a.m. (see announcement for details)

Easter Sunday, April 4, 2021

Sojourners 9:15 a.m.; Faithful Living, 9:30 a.m.; Race and Ethnicity, 9:15 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.

We will gather for Easter worship by Zoom at 10:30 a.m.

Sunday, April 4. FMC's service will include highlights of the baptismal service held April 3, as well as live elements of worship on Easter morning. Together we will celebrate God's call to the mysteries of life abundant and new! Please join us in worship at <https://zoom.us/j/94268295805> or by phone at +1 646 558 8656.

Happy Birthday!

March 28 – Linda Suter

March 29 – Annette Heslep

March 31 – Paula Luginbill

April 2 - Rita Dietrich

April 4 – Lawrence Templin

This year, five catechism students are choosing to be baptized. They are Allison Diller, Ellie Nickel, Landon Novak, Andrew Raeburn, and Elam Suter. You, their church family, are invited to join in this service of worship and celebration on Saturday, April 3, at 8 a.m. The baptism will take place at Mark and Jeanne Novak's pond, 11261 Sugar Creek Rd., Harrod, OH. Please wear a mask and bring a lawn chair. We will distance appropriately, while gathering together warmly for this important event in the life of our congregation.

The FMC Reopening Taskforce met March 18 to discuss further developments and questions as we move toward in-person worship. We are working on developing protocols that will address the many issues of in-person worship. Details of the task force meeting were included in a document sent with the March 26 email of bulletin and announcements. ***Additionally, paper copies of the document, as well as the chart detailing our Covid-19 guidelines, are available in the fellowship hall.***

As part of its Learn, Pray, Join: Cost of War initiative, MC USA encourages us to pray a shared prayer on Palm Sunday, as a way to join with congregations across the broader church in highlighting Jesus' peaceful resistance to empire/colonialism. Follow this link to find the prayer: <https://www.mennoniteusa.org/menno-snapshots/praying-toward-creative-peacemaking/>. (*Paper copies of the prayer are also available in our fellowship hall.*) The prayer is written by Amy Yoder McGloughlin, pastor of Frazer (PA) Mennonite Church and a member of the steering committee of Christian Peacemaker Teams.

In an effort to help make communication by cell phone with Pastor Wanda and Pastor Jeff smoother and clearer, we suggest that FMC community persons put our phone numbers in your cell phone contacts with our names listed. When we call, you will see our names on your screen and know we are calling.

~ Pastor Wanda: 419-551-1079 Pastor Jeff: 419-236-9150

Read the March Reporter from Central District Conference at <https://mcusacdc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/CDC-Reporter-March-2021-color.pdf>. Some paper copies are also in the literature rack in the fellowship hall.

Church custodian wanted: First Mennonite Church is in search of a custodian. Duties include: routine cleaning of the building, light maintenance, set-up for events, outside lawn mowing and snow removal, other duties as agreed upon. Hourly wage, up to twenty hours per week. Contact FMC at fmc@fmcbluffton.org. Please provide your name, best contact information and a resume. ~ Staff Relations

Reminders

CDC gathering March 27: The CDC Board of Directors will hold a mid-year gathering via Zoom instead of the annual regional gathering **Saturday, March 27**, from 9:30-11:45 a.m. ET. All are invited to attend. See our FMC Scribe Project presented as one example of the way CDC churches are doing Christian formation right now. Open this link for the morning's schedule: <https://mcusacdc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/20210327-Reg-Gathering-Schedule.pdf>.

Plan to attend and participate in our Maundy Thursday service on April 1 at 6:30 p.m. This service will be held by Zoom and will include faith statements by youths who are participating in catechism and anticipating baptism. Connect to the service at <https://zoom.us/j/94268295805> or +1 646 558 8656. See Pastor Wanda if you have questions. **Note: We will be using *Voices Together* in this service. If you have not already done so, please check out a hymnal in the fellowship hall.**

The community Good Friday cross walk will take place outdoors and in socially distanced fashion. To participate, gather at St. John's United Church of Christ on Friday, April 2, at 11:30 a.m. There will be no indoor service to follow the cross walk, due to COVID. The cross walk is an ecumenical service of prayer and worship led by Bluffton Area Ministerial Association.

Our connections

To read the latest announcements about the MC USA convention scheduled July 6-10, 2021, in Cincinnati, follow this link: https://convention.mennoniteusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/MAR_2021_Newsletter.pdf. As of this writing, MennoCon 21 will be a hybrid event consisting of in-person programming as well as virtual programming. Additional details regarding virtual programming will be released in the coming months.

Bluffton University's spring choral concert featuring University Chorale and Camerata Singers will be streamed for viewing at www.bluffton.edu/mus at 2:30 p.m. on Sunday, March 28. At 2 p.m., the conductor will do a pre-concert talk with audience members via Zoom. Visit www.bluffton.edu/mus for more information and access to the meeting. Offerings for music scholarships may be made at www.bluffton.edu/givetomusic.

Senior artists and graphic designers from Bluffton University will showcase their work in an exhibit, *Uncovered Perspectives*. Berlin Fuqua, Ada; Autumn Graves, Mount Blanchard; and Sarah Heydinger, Tiro; will

have work on display. Since campus remains closed to visitors, off-campus guests may watch a pre-recorded artist talk and view the exhibit virtually at www.bluffton.edu/artgallery.

The Mennonite Education Agency is collecting demographic information about students – name, contact information, birth date, gender, race, and school information – to update its youth census. According to MEA, the purpose of the youth census is to “give Mennonite students of all ages access to the programs and activities of the church.” The information is then made available to Mennonite-related groups upon request. MEA says that “the information is not available to groups outside the Mennonite Church. The data is not used for fund-raising purposes and may not be posted online.” If you have children in school or are an adult currently enrolled in higher education, and wish to share such information with MEA, please contact Jo Helmuth, MEA data manager, at JoH@MennoniteEducation.org.