

FIRST MENNONITE CHURCH
Weekly Announcements 4-18-2021

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

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

- Pastor Wanda Stopher – Monday-Thursday, off Friday, 419-551-1079, wanda@fmclubffton.org
- Pastor Jeff Boehr – T, F; 419-236-9150, jeff@fmclubffton.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@fmclubffton.org

Sunday, April 18, 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, Natilee Grover preaching, 10:30 a.m.

Virtual fellowship hall conversation, Zoom, 11:30-12:15,

<https://zoom.us/j/93482279238>

Gifts Discovery ministry, Zoom, 4 p.m., see link on page 2

Learning circle, Zoom, 6 p.m., <https://zoom.us/j/4193585766>

April 19-24

Tuesday, April 21 Morning prayers, Zoom, 7 a.m.,

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

Staff meeting, Zoom, 9 a.m.

Thursday, April 24 **Deadline for announcements, 9 a.m.**

Sunday, April 25, 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, Music Sunday, 10:30 a.m.

Virtual FH conversation, 11:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m.

Learning circle, Zoom, 6 p.m.

Happy Birthday!

April 19 – Julie Mackey

April 20 – Carmen Ordonez Moser

April 21 – Becki Ahmed

April 22 – Margie Closson

Melinda Estell

April 24 – Ryan Niekamp

Eastertide 2021: Resurrection is a life-altering, transformational mystery! This reality is reflected in the important placement of resurrection in the church year. Resurrection is not the focus of only one day on Easter. Resurrection is the focus of the entire joyful season of worship in the 50 days of Eastertide. It is the extended celebration of the presence and power of the risen Christ in the life of the church and more broadly, the dawn of the new creation. In fact, our return to worship each week is also an act of resurrection celebration. Just as resurrection is celebrated repeatedly in the church year, it is a process that takes time. This year as we celebrate Eastertide stories in Acts and the Gospel of John, we will also be guided by the Epistle of I John, which emphasizes themes like community, love, incarnation, truth and release from sin, all of which are easily connected to resurrection transformation. May we be found transformed with Jesus this Eastertide, resurrected to a new life of love.

~ Pastor Wanda

We welcome Natilee Grover as our preacher today.

Natilee, a Bluffton University student from Dayton, OH, is interning at FMC through the end of April. As a Bible and Theology major with psychology and education studies minors, this practicum allows Natilee to integrate and apply what she's been learning. She is focusing on worship leading and vocational discernment with site supervision provided by Pastor Wanda.

Kathryn Jo (Kate) Gundy, 62, sister of Jeff Gundy, died unexpectedly at her home in Bluffton over the weekend. She was a first cousin to Beth Boehr and was also related to Ernie Porzelius, Joan LoBianco, and Janet (JP) Schumacher of our congregation. A memorial service is being planned in Bluffton, but arrangements are incomplete at this time.

The Gifts Discovery ministry will be meeting at 4 p.m. Sunday, April 18 by Zoom. Please join us at the following Zoom link if you are interested in participating in this ministry:

<https://us05web.zoom.us/j/85455302080?pwd=cmJkZ1BhZVlkbzFRZmk3bzgvWmowUT09>. Contact Greg Hartzler at gregphartzler@gmail.com for more information.

The Reopening Task Force continues to work on protocols for returning to worship based on our Reopening Guidelines. In the meantime, because COVID vaccines are safe and effective and will help us more quickly to return to in-person worship, the RTF is encouraging all ages 16 and older to get the vaccine. Allen County vaccine providers are listed on the Allen County Public Health website.

In the coming months, the Racial Justice Ministry will be presenting several opportunities for financial giving to reparative acts that pursue racial equity. Currently, Bluffton University is accepting donations for an urgent need fund for international students. The federal government is providing pandemic relief funds for domestic students this spring and again in the fall, but international students are excluded. An International Student Urgent Need Fund was established by Bluffton University for donors to contribute assistance, to be divided equally among the 20 international students. Checks may be made to FMC by April 25 with "IS Urgent Need" in the memo line, or may be sent directly to the university.

Reminders

Moving toward in-person worship: As vaccination rates climb, so do our hopes for returning to in-person worship. We have not yet identified a specific date to do so, but we are making adjustments toward that. Beginning May 2, we will move our worship service back to Sunday morning. At that time we plan to Zoom/live stream. We will not yet gather in person as a congregation, but this move will position us to simply add the congregation in person as soon as possible. The Reopening Task Force is working on protocols to do that safely. As in the past, a video recording of each service will be posted on the website.) If you have questions, contact Pastor Wanda or Rita Dietrich, chair of RTF.

MennoCon, the biennial gathering of Mennonite Church USA, is an exciting combination of learning, growing and fun with friends! The purpose of convention is to gather as MC USA for community, worship and faith formation. MennoCon21, scheduled for July 6-10 will be a hybrid event with in-person programming in Cincinnati, OH, and virtual programming. This year First Mennonite Church will be represented by two adult delegates and one youth delegate. The delegate session will be virtual on July 10 from 1-3:30 p.m. If you're interested in representing FMC at MennoCon21, please contact the church office by April 19. Find more information at <https://convention.mennoniteusa.org/>.

Virtual conversation with Anabaptist World leadership Tuesday, April 20, at 7 p.m.: As a board member of Anabaptist World, I invite you to join a conversation with leadership of the new digital and print publication that results from the merger of The Mennonite, Inc. and Mennonite World Review, Inc. Executive director, Danielle Klotz, and editor, Paul Schrag, will share their vision for AW as a source for Mennonite news and inspiring stories. We look forward to hearing your ideas as we shape the voice and impact of the publication. Join us at <https://zoom.us/j/91773533142> or call +1 646 558 8656. ~ Hans Houshower

Mark Suderman is a volunteer liaison between Ohioans To Stop Executions and Central District Conference congregations in Ohio. Two bills to repeal the Ohio death penalty have recently been introduced. Find current information at [Ohioans To Stop Executions](https://ohioans-tosstop-executions.org/), as well as options for taking action. Help pass SB 103, Abolishing the Death Penalty in Ohio, by placing calls to your senator and/or committee members. Contact Mark at sudermanme@bluffton.edu for more information.

Our connections

Former FMC member Kay Fransen Weidner will observe her 80th birthday on April 22. Her family invites you to join their surprise card shower by sending a card or note to Kay at 1949 Rachael Drive, Lancaster, PA, 17601.

The MHCO Service Group will hold a BBQ chicken dinner on Saturday, April 24, from 4-6 p.m. The \$8 dinner includes ½ chicken, mac and cheese, green beans and a roll. Buy tickets from service group members, from Gloria Bucher at gloriaferdin1992@gmail.com, at 419-429-2621, or at [facebook.com/mhcoohio](https://www.facebook.com/mhcoohio) (additional fee applies.) Meals will be delivered curbside at 158 N. Jackson at Bubba C. BBQ. Profits will help purchase a gently used transport van for MHCO.

Join MCC's webinar on the response to hurricanes Eta & Iota April 21 & 22 at 8 p.m. EST. MCC will share the people and stories of this work. MCC partner organizations and church partners in Honduras and Nicaragua will share about MCC's disaster response as well as how climate change impacts migration and poverty in Central America. Register at mcc.org/hurricanes-webinar.

The Ohio MCC Comforter Bash originally scheduled for April 2021 has been postponed for one year. In the meantime, all are encouraged to continue making comforters, as well as comforter tops and backs (60" x 80"), and they will be collected at the Material Resources Center in Kidron for the Ohio MCC Comforter Bash in April 2022. Contact Sarah Geiser at SarahGeiser@mcc.org or (330) 201-4515 for more information.