

FIRST MENNONITE CHURCH
Weekly Announcements 4-4-2021

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

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

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

Easter Sunday, April 4, 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>

Worship, Wanda Stopher preaching, 10:30 a.m.

***Please stay on the Zoom call to greet one another following worship (this replaces the usual virtual FH)**

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

April 5-10

Monday, April 6 Easter Monday, FMC office closed

SHY, 1 p.m., SHY room (see details pg. 2)

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

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

Staff meeting, Zoom, 9 a.m.

Wednesday, April 8 JHY, 6:30 p.m., game night

Sunday, April 11, 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, Jeff Gundy 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!

April 4 – Lawrence Templin

April 5 – Kendra Gott

April 6 – Mike Edmiston

April 8 – JP Schumacher

April 10 – Jim Harder

Moving toward in-person worship

As vaccination rates climb, so do our hopes for returning to in-person worship at FMC.

Although we have not yet identified a specific date to do so, adjustments are being made now to move toward that day.

Because many of the invitations to lead worship have already been issued through the end of April, we will continue recording our services on Wednesday evenings through the end of this month. Easter is the exception and will be Zoomed/live streamed on Easter morning.

Beginning the first Sunday of May, we will we move our worship service back to Sunday morning. At that time we plan to regularly Zoom/live stream. A video recording will be available on the website as has been done for many years.

We will not yet gather in person as a congregation, but this move will position us well to simply add the congregation in person as soon as possible.

Reopening Task Force is working on creating protocols to do that safely. If you have questions or concerns please contact Pastor Wanda or Rita Dietrich, chair of RTF.

Mark Suderman recently agreed to serve as a volunteer liaison between Ohioans To Stop Executions and Central District Conference congregations located in Ohio. In this role, Mark will pass along updates, information, and opportunities for action. Our church has a long history calling for the repeal of the death penalty and bringing its injustices to light. Two bills to repeal the Ohio death penalty have recently been introduced. You can find current information at [Ohioans To Stop Executions](#) including options for taking action now. For more information, contact Mark at sudermanme@bluffton.edu.

Call Instructions for help in passing SB 103 – Abolishing the Death Penalty in Ohio

The first hearing for SB 103 took place on March 31. During this hearing in front of the Senate Judiciary committee, the sponsors of the bill will explain the bill's purpose and why they have proposed this legislation. Legislators on the committee will be given their first opportunity to ask the sponsors questions about the bill. This is just the beginning of the bill's long journey to the governor's desk. Here's what YOU can do to make sure it gets there (paper copies of these instructions are available in the fellowship hall):

1. [Find your OH Senator](#) and/or the [Senate Judiciary Committee members](#)
2. Call their office and tell the aide:
 - a. Your name and where you live.
 - b. There is/was sponsor testimony Wednesday, March 31 (at 3:30) in the Senate Judiciary Committee on SB 103, a bill to abolish the death penalty.
 - c. Why you are opposed to the death penalty.
 - d. Ask: Does the senator support this bill? If the aide doesn't know, provide a call back phone number or email for the aide to follow up with you.

If you missed the Maundy Thursday service and/or would like to watch/rewatch it, it is now listed under "Videos of Recent Worship Services" on our website or click here:

http://fmcbluffton.org/sermon_post/maundy-thursday-zoom-service/.

No SHY SS on Easter morning. Instead, meet on Easter Monday at 1 p.m. in the SHY room to view the Bluffton University Forum recording of Drew Hart's recent presentation during Spiritual Life Week. Drew Hart is the author of the book we have been studying all year together. Haven't read the book? No problem! Hart is such an engaging speaker, his talk and Q&A promise to speak to all of us, wherever we are.

First Mennonite Church was asked to share a congregational story at the recent CDC Gathering. The story prompt was to share about how we are working at formation during these days of being separated. You will find the story at <https://youtu.be/aIVguD7BF6Y>.

You're invited to stop by the church and see the Lent scribe projects displayed in the sanctuary. There are passages from John that have not yet been scribed! See the bulletin board in the fellowship hall or sign up online [here](#). After Tuesday, you will find them in the notebook by the Bible Scribe bulletin board in the fellowship hall.

Ernie Porzelius has moved to Betty House, Willow Ridge. His new address is 103 Willow Ridge, Betty House, Bluffton, OH 45817. He welcomes cards and visits.

Marilyn Diller has moved to Maple Crest. Her new address is 700 Maple Crest Court, Apt. W133, Bluffton, OH 45817. Her new phone number is 419-233-2212 and she welcomes calls!

Are you interested in serving as a delegate for the Central District Conference annual meeting June 26, from 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. This meeting will again be held by Zoom. Please contact the church office at fmc@fmcbluffton.org by Friday, April 9 to express interest in serving. Cost of registration for delegates is covered by the church. Delegates will be approved and notified by April 15.

Reminders

To ease communication by cell phone with Pastor Wanda and Pastor Jeff, we suggest that you 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're calling. ~ Pastor Wanda: 419-551-1079, Pastor Jeff: 419-236-9150

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.***

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

Our connections

The MHCO Service Group is sponsoring 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. Tickets are available from any service group member, by email at gloriaferdin1992@gmail.com, by phone/text at 419-429-2621, or on Facebook 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. Money raised will help purchase a gently used transport van for MHCO.

To see details about the MC USA convention July 6-10 in Cincinnati, click here:

https://convention.mennoniteusa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/MAR_2021_Newsletter.pdf. As of this writing, MennoCon 21 will be a hybrid event of in-person programming as well as virtual programming. Additional details regarding virtual programming will be released in the coming months.

The Mennonite Education Agency is collecting demographic information about students to update its youth census. MEA says the purpose 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 wish to share this information, contact Jo Helmuth, MEA data manager, at JoH@MennoniteEducation.org.

Habitat for Humanity plans to begin the Pastor Dave Howell Memorial Build in Delphos, where he was instrumental in the initial years of Habitat and often worked behind the scenes to help secure funding for builds. This will be a home for the partner family of Sarah Hurler and her three children, who live in Delphos. The address is 712 N Washington Street in Delphos. Join the build by signing up at [Build Day Sign-up](#) or by making a monetary donation at [Donate Today](#) in honor of Pastor Howell or to help continue the work of providing safe secure shelters. To learn more about volunteering, call (254) 644-4470.

Drew Hart of Messiah University spoke at Bluffton University's Spiritual Life Week Forum. In his talk, he traced the history of white supremacy from “Christian” supremacy back to Constantine. He described the corruption of theology and Christian life as a result of such supremacy and illustrated these deformations with his own personal experiences as a college student. View his talk at <https://youtu.be/wAC7vmzzFOE>.