

**FIRST MENNONITE CHURCH**  
**Weekly Announcements 5-2-2021**

**First Mennonite Church, 101 S. Jackson Street, Bluffton, Ohio 45817**  
**419-358-5766 | [fmcbluffton.org](http://fmcbluffton.org) | Staff working from home**

- **Pastor Wanda Stopher – Monday-Thursday, off Friday, 419-551-1079, [wanda@fmcbluffton.org](mailto:wanda@fmcbluffton.org)**
- **Pastor Jeff Boehr – T, F; 419-236-9150, [jeff@fmcbluffton.org](mailto:jeff@fmcbluffton.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@fmcbluffton.org](mailto:fmc@fmcbluffton.org)**

**Sunday, May 2, 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, Laurel Neufeld Weaver preaching, livestream via Zoom, 10:30 a.m.  
Learning circle, Zoom, 6 p.m., <https://zoom.us/j/4193585766>

**May 3-8**

Monday, May 3 RJM mtg., Zoom, 7 p.m. (see announcement)  
Tuesday, May 4 Morning prayers, Zoom, 7 a.m.,  
<https://zoom.us/j/93803392337>  
Staff meeting, Zoom, 9 a.m.

Saturday, May 8 SHY, campfire, Larry/Judy Diller's, 9-11 p.m.

**Sunday, May 9, 2021**

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

**Today, Sunday, May 2, we take a step forward as we move to livestreaming our worship service by Zoom. Please join us at <https://zoom.us/j/94268295805> or by calling: +1 646 558 8656. Although we will not yet gather in person as a congregation, this move positions us add the congregation in person as soon as possible. As in the past, a video recording of each service will be posted on the website.**

**Happy Birthday!**

**May 4 – Ray Raeburn**

**May 6 – Jacob Biesecker-Mast  
Patrick Estell**

**May 7 – Pat Sheidler  
Justin Paul**

**May 8 – Alice Lora  
Victoria Woods-Yee**

**May 9 – Simon Phillips**

**Central District requests welcoming messages for new congregation**

Along with the other CDC churches, we're invited to send messages of welcome to a new incoming church, Grand Rapids (MI) Mennonite Fellowship. Each of us is encouraged to write a message of welcome -- a poem, a prayer, a work of visual art or a sentence of good wishes.

Welcome messages may be placed in Pastor Jeff's mailbox or contact him to pick it up by May 26. Thank you for being a part of this broader act of hospitality!

Anabaptist World recently published an article about Grand Rapids Mennonite Fellowship. [Read it here.](#)

***Note:** Two members of the new Grand Rapids Fellowship regularly watch our Sunday worship services and have communicated their appreciation to the First Mennonite congregation.*

**Today we say goodbye to Natilee Grover**, who has served a brief internship this spring as part of her studies at Bluffton University. It has been a joy to learn to know Natilee and to receive her gifts of leadership in worship. We wish her God's continued guidance and presence in the days and years ahead.

**Racial Justice Ministry update:** The Jubilee Fund committee approved a \$1,000 Jubilee Fund contribution to the Ann Arbor (MI) Shalom Community Church Reparative Act. The Reparative Act fund, which has already received donations in the \$100,000 range, is designed to make a grant to a group led by longtime leader within the Mennonite Church, John Powell, to use as it sees fit. The fund was intentionally designed to allow African-Americans to determine the use of the funds rather than having a primarily white group of donors specify uses of the money. Anyone who wishes to add to First Mennonite's gift may make a contribution through the church fund, labeled "Reparative Act." Gifts should be made by May 15. **Additionally**, the Racial Justice Ministry will have two meetings during the month of May. Mark Suderman will talk about his role as a volunteer liaison between *Ohioans To Stop Executions* and Central District Conference congregations in Ohio. Mark will share updates, information, and opportunities for action with FMC on May 3 at 7 p.m. On May 17, Gary Wetherill will talk about what is known about the native peoples who lived in or close to Bluffton prior to white settlements in the region, and will talk about the small remnants of tribes in Ohio who were not forced to move west in what is often called "the second trail of tears." This meeting is also at 7 p.m. Both meetings will use this link: <https://zoom.us/j/96516134635>. All are welcome to join either or both of these sessions.

**Larry & Judy Diller will host the SHY** for a campfire Saturday, May 8 from 9-11 p.m. S'mores kits will be provided to each youth. Friends welcome!

**Youth Sunday** is slated for May 23, Pentecost. Join the SHY and the Spirit as music, scriptures, and stories are shared, and seniors are honored. May we welcome the gifts of the youth as the fire and breath of the Spirit inspire their worship leading.

**A group of SHY** travel to Cincinnati July 6-10 for MennoCon21. Theo Andreas, Kendra Gott, Ben Hartzler, Ellie Nickel, Ethan Nickel, and John-Paul Yoder will be attending the Youth Convention, along with sponsors Chris Gott and Carrie Mast.

### **Prayer requests**

**LuAnn Stuckey** had surgery on April 30 at the Cleveland Clinic to remove a benign (noncancerous) nodule from one of her salivary glands. She anticipated a one-night stay in the hospital followed by several days of recovery at home. Your prayers are appreciated.

**A memorial service** for Kathryn Jo Gundy, sister of Jeff, will be held at First Mennonite Church on Sunday, May 2 at 2 p.m. The service will be limited to close family, but may be viewed at <https://zoom.us/j/98881340254>.

### **Reminders**

**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. If you have questions, please contact Pastor Wanda or Rita Dietrich, RTF chair.

### **Our connections**

**The Bluffton University art department's** 53rd Juried Student Exhibition may be viewed virtually through May 9 at [www.bluffton.edu/artgallery](http://www.bluffton.edu/artgallery). The exhibition will showcase work created this academic year by students in university art classes or supervised independent studies.

**The 2021 Climate Ride** will pass through Bluffton July 17 and would like to connect with local persons. The ride is part of an effort to engage Anabaptist congregations in conversations about climate change. If you'd like to help arrange a local overnight stay, contact Joanna Friesen at [joanna.friesen@emu.edu](mailto:joanna.friesen@emu.edu).

**When God calls someone to leadership**, a journey begins. Central District Conference invites you to join Journey: A Missional Leadership Development Program. This program is for lay leaders, pastors, church planters, and other emerging leaders who are called without specific training for ministry or who are exploring a call to ministry. The early registration deadline to apply for fall 2021 is July 13; final registration deadline is August 10. For more information, visit [www.ambs.edu/journey](http://www.ambs.edu/journey) or contact Doug Luginbill at [confmin@mcusacdc.org](mailto:confmin@mcusacdc.org) or [574-534-1485](tel:574-534-1485).