

The Messenger

April 2019



Sisters and brothers in Christ Jesus at Grace Mennonite Church in the name of our Lord and Savior, greetings!

As we move through this season of Lent, it's time to start looking ahead to Holy Week. Holy Week is the week between Palm Sunday and Easter. Special days include Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday.

This year we will once again be hosting a Maundy Thursday evening service in the Fellowship Hall at Grace. "Maundy" has its Latin root in the word for "mandate" or "commandment." Maundy Thursday is the day in Christian tradition when we commemorate Jesus' last supper with his disciples before his betrayal and death. What we sometimes fail to notice in the Gospel accounts of the Last Supper is that Jesus, a Jewish Rabbi, is celebrating the Jewish festival of *Passover* with his disciples. That's right; the first Last Supper is in fact a *Passover Seder meal*! If we read carefully, we discover that the Gospel accounts of the Last Supper make this connection clear. The connections between the Passover – a festival commemorating God's liberating the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, or the Exodus – and Jesus' own death and resurrection are many and rich in meaning.

My favorite Maundy Thursday celebrations have always woven together the significance of Israel's Exodus and Jesus' Last Supper with his disciples. This year's Maundy Thursday dinner at Grace will be similar to a service I grew up with at my home church in Harrisonburg, VA. Singles, couples, and families with children of all ages are encouraged to attend. Together we read a liturgy based on the Jewish Seder meal. This first part of the service guides us through an exploration of the symbolic meaning of some of the foods of a traditional Seder meal. Children have an important part in this service; theirs is the role of asking questions, prompting a recital of the history of God's saving acts from parents and adult friends. At the mid-point of the service we pause for a simple meal of soup and bread. Afterward we carry on with the account of the Last Supper from the Gospel of John.

(Cont. on page 2)

Vision: Healing & Hope

God calls us to be followers of Jesus Christ and, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to grow as communities of grace, joy and peace, so that God's healing and hope flow through us to the world.

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Pastor Matthew Yoder

In John's Gospel, Jesus gives his disciples a "new commandment," or "mandate" (hence, Maundy Thursday) that they love on another as he has given them an example to do. John also gives an account of Jesus washing his disciples' feet as an example of this love. It is for this reason that some Christian traditions practice foot-washing on Maundy Thursday. Our service at Grace will not include foot-washing this year, but we will have a hand-washing ritual as a remembrance of the poignant moment shared between Jesus and his disciples. Our Maundy Thursday service will culminate in communion shared by all baptized believers present. This, again, is an opportunity for the children present to witness these things in anticipation of one day participating as a baptized adult believer.

Our Maundy Thursday service will begin at 6:00 PM on Thursday, April 19. I hope to see you there!

Pastor Matthew



April 2019

Sunday, April 7

Blessed Hunger, Holy Feast Series
Lent 5

"God Makes A Way"
Pastor Matthew Yoder
Scripture: John 12:1-8

Sunday, April 14

Blessed Hunger, Holy Feast Series
Palm Sunday

"God's Steadfast Love Endures Forever"
Pastor Matthew Yoder
Scripture: Luke 19:28-40

Sunday, April 21

Blessed Hunger, Holy Feast Series
Easter Sunday!

"Christ is Risen, Indeed!"
Pastor Matthew Yoder
Scripture: Luke 24:1-12

Sunday, April 28

Easter 2

"Second Chances"
Pastor Matthew Yoder
Scripture: John 20:19-31



Bake Sale

Saturday, April 20, 2019
9:30 am—11:00 am
Hilty Home entrance

All proceeds go to The Service Group

Cinnamon Rolls – Homemade Noodles – Angel food Cakes

Thank you for your support

Mennonite Home Communities of Ohio



Maundy Thursday service will be held at 6:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall on Thursday, April 18. The Passover story will be woven together with Jesus' last supper with his disciples through liturgy, food and song. All are welcome! Mark your calendar and plan to attend this special evening!

Community Good Friday worship service will be held at the Missionary Church in Pandora on Friday, April 19 at 7:00 pm. Mark your calendar and plan to attend!



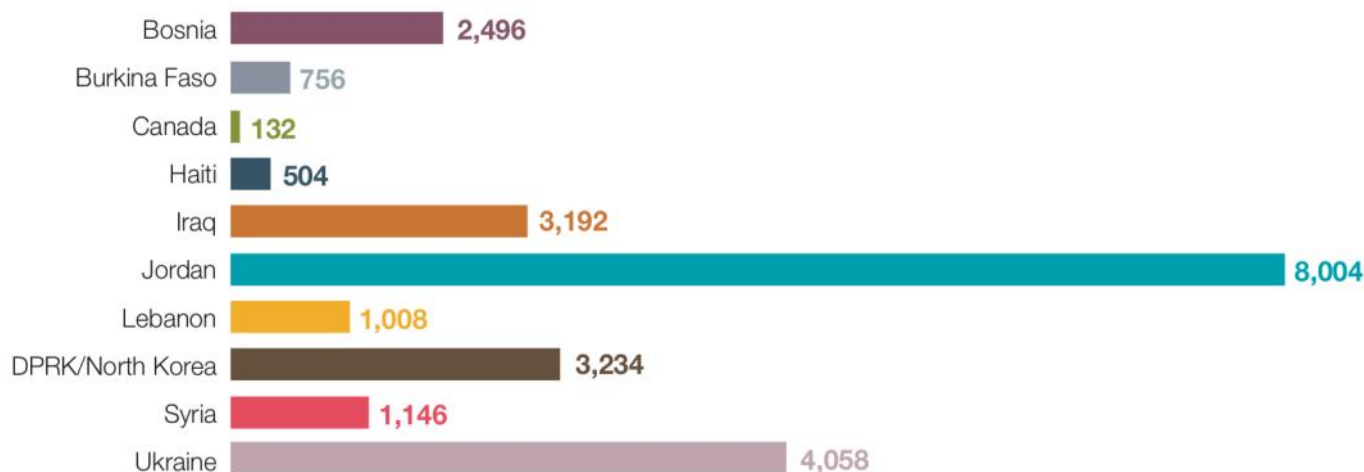
Noisy Offering this quarter is for The Wheelhouse, a Christian Bicycle ministry. The Wheelhouse is a build-a-bike ministry where volunteers work with you to repair a donated bicycle. The ministry is designed to provide bicycles for transportation to those in financial need. For more information call The Wheelhouse at 419-909-0919.



Relief kits provide valuable supplies to families whose lives have been disrupted by war or disaster. Here is where MCC sent relief kits to last year.

Countries receiving MCC relief kits

Shipped between April 1, 2017 — March 31, 2018



Pictures of Grace

Pictures below are from recent events held at Grace. MYF Pizza & Game Night, Threads of Grace Work Day and MYF Auction.



MYF would like to thank our congregation for your generous support with the **auction** last weekend! From auction item donations to attending the event, helping out at the event and with the meal and giving generously when bidding on items - we greatly appreciate it! Karen Byers, MYF coordinator stated that just under \$6000 was raised and there will be enough funds for convention this summer! Thank you!

"News Among Our Members & Friends"

HAPPENINGS IN AND AROUND GRACE.....BY SHIRLEY SOMMER

Sunday, March 3rd – This is the Sunday before **Ash Wednesday**, the start of **Lent**. Also, the season or time of the Christian Church year from "**Epiphany**" feast day to Mardi Gras. Guest speaker was **Rudi Kauffman**, a member of our church and a former professor at Bluffton University. His sermon title was "Who is Epiphany? The meaning I found from different dictionaries stated: a great revelation that usually changes you in some way. Scripture was Luke 9:28-43. The main line from the scripture, I felt, was when a voice from a cloud spoke to the disciples saying, "This is my **Son**, listen to him." The little children's choir, 10 of them, sang a song by **Bryan Moyer Suderman** titled, "God's love is for everyone." As always, they did a very nice job and were easy to understand. Thank you, children!

Ash Wednesday, March 6th – A group of Bluffton area pastors offered "**Ashes to Go**", a new approach to centuries old Christian tradition. It was done between 7 a.m. – 9 a.m. on the corner of Main and Cherry St, across from the Coffee Shop in Bluffton. Pedestrians as well as drivers and passengers were invited. It was directed by the **Presbyterian pastor, Rev. Karol Farris**.

Sunday, March 10th – Sunday bulletins are printed on purple paper – color of **Lent**. First Sunday of **Lent** with the sermon title, "**God's Hand Delivers**" by **Pastor Matthew**. Scripture was Luke 4:1-13. It was the story of the temptation of **Jesus**. As you remember he was in the desert for 40 days and the devil tried tempting him in different ways. Finally the devil gave up and left. Our Communion table at church has different changes unfold on it. This Sunday a Bible was placed in a basket instead of bread. A reminder we hunger for spiritual food and don't live by bread alone. **Pastor** left us with a question, "Have you started a new thing for **Lent**? If so, what was it like?"

Micah Ryan Kauffman, son of **Ross and Anna** and brother to his sister, **Nora**, was dedicated by **Pastor Matthew**. God's blessing to the family.

Sunday, March 17th – Second Sunday of **Lent**, with the sermon title, "**God our Shelter**." Scripture was Luke 13:31-35. **Pastor Matthew** stated that we get **God's** trust and belief as our shelter. The **Pharisees** told him to leave because **Herod** wants to kill him. He replied, "No, I'm getting rid of demons and heal people. **Jesus** mentioned he would like to protect us like a hen does her chicks under her wings. The **Lord's** shelter is trust and belief. On the Communion table was the warm light of the **Christ candle** as an invitation to receive the warmth of **God's** abundant love.

Noon – a potluck meal was enjoyed by a crowd and welcomed the University students for the last time this school year to join us. A large assortment of food as always was there.

4 p.m. at Yoder's Hall, a variety show was co-organized by **Dr. Crystal Battle**, professor of music at the University and **Wendy Chappell-Dick**, put the words to different songs at the time of 1st World War Era. The show was titled, "**Songs of Conscience and Peace Music of the Great War Era**." It was a very powerful and emotional music program with readings, and songs expressing the feelings and reasons why people during this time did what they did. **Carolyn McDaniel**, led the choir; **Brian Tempe** and **Meghan Gibson-Martin** sang solos and were in the choir too. (Just sharing this now, I can again hear some of the songs and see some of the parts acted out. Tears just would appear out of no where!)

Sunday, March 24th – The third Sunday of **Lent**. Sermon title was "Lifewater." Scripture was Luke 13:1-19. (Keith and I weren't at church today, so I can't really share anything about the sermon or what happened in church today.) But the reading from the **Bible** was the parable of the fig tree that didn't have any fruit for three years and was spared for one more year to see if any fruit would come with special care. If not, it would then be cut down.

In the announcements, **Pastor Matthew** mentioned he was starting a membership class for those interested in baptism or membership at Grace.

The membership class will be 10 sessions long and meet during the Sunday School hour. If interested, contact **Pastor Matthew** at his office.

4:30 p.m. MYF held an Auction to help pay for their trip to Conference this summer. About 80 items or so (I was told) were donated and received about \$6000 or less from the sale.

A big **“Thank you”** was given to everyone who helped with the event and bought. (The thank you was printed on the Grace Church bulletin email by Gail, church secretary, because it arrived too late for the bulletin on Sunday.)

OTHER NEWS ITEMS INVOLVING OUR CHURCH FAMILIES:

--New address for **Nick & Becca Peckinpugh**.....80 W. Third Street, Ft. Jennings, Ohio 45844.

--**Threads of Grace** had an all day comfort knotting on Thursday, March 14th. They did 12 comforters and had a great time of fellowship with each other, eating and knotting.

--**Greta & Sophia Kauffman** sang in the Mennonite Children's Choir in Goshen, IN. March 3rd. It was a nice program as usual and this year one could watch it on the computer live. (Boy, we sure are getting up-to-date with all of the electronic programs. Ha!)

--**Eddie Martin and Meghan Gibson Martin** will be giving their Senior recitals in music on April 13th (**Eddie**) and April 14th (**Meghan**) at Yoder Hall. They will begin at 2:30 p.m. I'm sure both will have a great recital and would appreciate your presence. (**Meghan** is the daughter of **Sarah Sprunger**.)

--Next fall, **Meghan Gibson-Martin** has been accepted at the New York University Master's Program of music and theater. **Eddie**, her husband, will be looking for a job in a school in the area teaching music. Remember them in your prayers and congratulations to **Meghan** for being accepted.

--**Laura (Fish) Rucki** will be finishing with her schooling in a “special therapy” (I can't remember what) after 7 years. Congratulations to **Laura** and wishing her the best, looking for a job. Her and husband, **Robbie** live in Columbus, Ohio.

--**Caitlyn Renner**, a senior at Bath H.S., won “Youth of the Year” and a \$100 Scholarship because she wrote about “being a catalyst or having a positive impact in/on your community.” She'll go to Dayton's Exchange Club and with others might have a chance to receive another scholarship. Her folks are **Chris & Angie Renner**; grandparents, **Ron & Carolyn McDaniel**. **Congratulations, Caitlyn!**

--We have had several other church members and friends that have been added to our prayer concerns. They are **Rachel Schutz** who fell at home and now recovering at her home; and **Phil Birkey's** mother who is receiving chemo treatments.



Have you checked out our church webpage? You can watch previous sermons, view Bulletins, Parish Notes, and our newsletter, *The Messenger*! You can also see what events are coming up by clicking on Calendar on the left side of the page. You can find it here: <https://www.gracepandora.org/>

Follow and Like us on Facebook where you can view Pastor Matthew's “Text Tuesdays” and much more! Find it here: <https://www.facebook.com/gracemennonitepandora/>



Tuesday, April 2 Council Meeting 7:00 pm

Friday, April 5 Threads of Grace Work Day 9:00 am-3:00 pm

Thursday, April 18 Maundy Thursday Service 6:00 pm Fellowship Hall

Friday, April 19 Community Good Friday Service Missionary Church Pandora 7:00 pm

Sunday, April 21 Easter Sunday-Sonrise Service 8:30 am & Easter Brunch 9:15 am

Worship 10:30 am

Thursday, April 23 Shepherding Team meeting 7:00 pm

Happy Anniversary

Ron & Mary Suter	April 4, 1969 50 years
Jon & Jill Hilty	April 14, 1973
Mark & Sue Schutz	April 16, 1988
Josh & Amy Sprunger	April 19, 2008



April Birthdays

Jodi Diller	April 1	Ava Lugibihl	April 14
Betty Augsburg	April 2	Jeff Lugibihl	April 14
Molly Byers	April 2	Briell Lugibihl	April 17
Claire Watson	April 3	Brynn Lugibihl	April 17
Amy Byers	April 8	Laura Rucki	April 19
Lexi Renner	April 8	Lydia Lugibihl	April 20
Emily Augsburg	April 10	Gene Augsburg	April 21
Emily Kempf	April 10	Jill Hilty	April 21
Diane Huber	April 11	Mary Anne Lugibill	April 21
Deborah Nisly	April 11	Keith Suter	April 21
Hannah Watson	April 11	Ted H. Diller	April 23
Jamie Archer	April 12	Abram Sprunger	April 24
Kendra Lugibihl	April 12	Cecilia Suter	April 29
Jett Diller	April 13	Tessa Kempf	April 30

Deadline for the next Messenger is April 29, 2019