

## ON THE JOURNEY

### **Choices, Choices, Choices**

*God has endowed us with the ability and with the responsibility to make choices. We all make choices, and we make them constantly, even without thinking about them. We make big choices, like who we marry, our occupation, where we live, will I go to college, will I seek and obey God, will faith be an important part of my life. And our lives are shaped by those choices we make. Certainly not every decision we make is a life or death decision. We make small choices; will I put ketchup on my fries? Well, for some of us, that is a reflex, and is no longer much of a choice. We choose what color to wear today, should I wear a sweater or take a jacket, should I be a blonde or a brunette next month, do I put sugar in my coffee, white bread or wheat, scrambled or over easy, bacon or sausage, and on and on all day long. We make choices that in the long run really don't matter much, they just reflect our preferences. Will we buy a blue or grey car, Shell or Marathon, Coke or Pepsi, vanilla or chocolate, Crest or Colgate, cheer for the Bears or the Colts. We make so many choices every day, and much of the time we don't even think about it that we are even making them.*

*Sometimes, people don't want to take responsibility for choices they have made because they didn't turn out so good, so they blame others for their poor choices that have ended with bad consequences. "But it's not my fault" is a phrase all too commonly heard from someone who has made a bad choice and ends up regretting it.*

*To have the ability to make choices is a very great power, and it is carries with it great responsibility. Our choices are crucial, and they have consequences, good or bad. They determine not only our course in life, and at least some of what we experience in life, but ultimately, choices we make determine our eternal destiny.*

*We don't really have a choice; we have to make choices. In the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve had to make a choice whether to obey God or to disobey. And everybody since them has had to make that same choice. Adam and Eve chose to disobey and then blame someone else for their decision. That pattern has been common ever since, but it did not excuse them, nor will it excuse anyone else from the decisions they have made nor from the consequences that follow.*

*As we are enter into the season of Lent, our worship themes will focus on the last week of Jesus' earthly life. The narrative is not just about the choices Jesus made and what happened to him as a result of his choices, the narrative itself confronts us with choices, very important choices that we too need to make. Woven into the narrative of Holy Week are a series of choices that people surrounding Jesus made, and they represent choices that every human being must also make. Ignoring those important decisions doesn't make them go away. And failing to actively make a choice always defaults to a choice, and sometimes one that brings deep regrets. We cannot escape our responsibility to choose by ignoring it.*

*This year during Lent, we will carefully explore the narrative of Jesus' last week to discover from that narrative some big choices, life-altering choices, that still confront us today.*

*Submitted by Pastor Phil Yoder*



CALENDAR		
<b>Wed 3/4</b>	9:00 am	Moms In Prayer
	5:30 pm	Wednesday Evening Meal
	6:00 pm	Music Practice
	6:30 pm	Discipling Commission
<b>Thur 3/5</b>	6:30 pm	Board
<b>Fri 3/6</b>	6:00 pm	Ladies Night In
<b>Sun 3/8</b>	9:00 am	Phil Preaching
	5:00 pm	MYF/Snacks & Friends
<b>Mon 3/9</b>		Health Department
	5:00 pm	POPS Advisory Board
	6:00 pm	Ladies Exercise
<b>Tue 3/10</b>	6:00 pm	Community Life Commission
<b>Wed 3/11</b>	9:00 am	Moms In Prayer
	6:00 pm	Music Practice
	6:30 pm	Food Pantry Advisory Board
<b>Thur 3/12</b>	9:00 am	First Mennonite Women
<b>Sun 3/15</b>	9:00 am	Phil Preaching
<b>Mon 3/16</b>	1:00 pm	Fellowship Hall Reserved
	6:00 pm	Ladies Exercise
<b>Wed 3/18</b>	9:00 am	Moms In Prayer
	6:00 pm	Music Practice
	6:30 pm	Administration Commission

**Administrative Assistant Office Hours:**

**Monday-Thursday 9:00 AM-2:00 PM**

**Closed Friday**

**Phil Yoder Office Hours:**

**Monday 12:00-4:00 PM,**

**Wed. 9:00 AM-12:00 PM, Thursday 1:00-6:00 PM**

- **All newsletter submissions need to be in to Maribeth by noon on Tuesday.**

**March Birthdays**

Mildred Ritchie – 5  
 Eva Kurtz – 6  
 Vera Miller – 6  
 Virginia Hershberger – 8  
 Gordon Kauffman – 8  
 Selena Kurtz – 10  
 Ruby Bontreger – 15  
 Tim Keller – 20  
 Jake Schwartz – 23  
 Linda Miller – 25  
 Bernie Miller – 28

**WORSHIP**

**Focus statement:** In the Passion Narrative of Jesus, there are two washings, two basins. In the one, John tells us that Jesus washed his disciple's feet. It was an act of humility and servanthood, and it led to a discussion about Jesus washing his Disciples and making them clean. And in the other basin, Pilate washed his hands after condemning an innocent man to death. Pilate knew he did this, and he know he was doing wrong when he did it. He chose to do the politically expedient thing rather than to do the right thing. Pilate knew he had blood on his hands, and he tried to wash them in a basin of water. The question that confronts us is, "What makes a person clean?"

**Background scriptures:** John 13:1-17, Matthew 27:1-31

**Coffee Prep Volunteers**

This Sunday: Ward and Pam Bingaman

Next Sunday: Kris Rheinheimer

**Welcome Center**

This Sunday: Carolyn Miller

Next Sunday: Karen Pletcher

**Looking Ahead:**

March 4 – Wednesday Evening Meal 5:30 PM

**March 8** – Sermon: "Which Basin Are You Washing In?"

**March 15** – Sermon: "Which King Will You Bow To?"

**March 22** – Sermon: "Which Road Are You Following Jesus On?"

**March 29** – Sermon: "Which Tree Will You Hang From?"

**April 5** – (Palm Sunday) Guest Speaker Tim Eash

April 9 – Maundy Thursday "Which Supper Are You Eating?"

April 10 – Community Good Friday Service at First Mennonite

**April 12** – (Easter) Sermon: "Which Day Are You Celebrating?"

**April 19** – Sermon: "Which Way Are You Walking?"

**April 26** – Sermon: "Who Is Rolling Your Stone?"

May 13 – Spring Business Meeting 7:00 PM

**ADMINISTRATION**

**Stewardship Report for March 1:**

Money Given to Budget \$3,837.00

Amount Needed Weekly for Budget \$5,343.12

Year-to-date Money Given to Budget \$139,523.99

Amount Needed Year-to-Date for Budget \$144,264.24

**Reminder:** Daylight Saving Time begins this weekend. Please remember to “Spring Forward”.

**Would you like to know more about LMC** and our connection to the conference? What they have to offer? Where are they going? LMC is having a two day assembly April 3-4, 2020 entitled Welcoming Rain at Petra Church in New Holland, PA. It is an LMC celebration of Church Life. Bishop Glenn Kauffman pastor will be the Speaker. He will be sharing stories of the Spirit at work in the lives of everyday people!

- Friday, April 3, 9:00 am - 4:30 pm: Leadership Assembly (all invited) receiving new congregations, recognizing leaders.
- Friday, April 3, 7:00 pm: Celebration of Church Life, worship, teaching and ice cream.
- Saturday, April 4 9:00 am - 4:30 pm: Celebration of church life, worship, speakers, seminars, lunch, LMC Moderator Address.

There is a brochure on the Church Board’s bulletin board in the hallway. Pastor Phil will be attending this event and if you have other questions, he can be a resource to you. There is no charge for this celebration.

**From the Board:** Invite everyone to check out the bulletin board for information on “Welcoming Rain.” We discussed the sound booth and hope to get things started soon. We are looking into having Elders. We need to define this role and its expectations. Continuing the search for an assistant pastor. Jerry and Ruth Beasley along with Pastor Phil will be our point people for this. Any suggestions or ideas please let one of them know. The Spring Business Meeting will be May 13th.

## COMMUNITY LIFE

**Wednesday Evening Meal Hosts:**

**Tonight:** Searchers

**Apr. 1:** Please Volunteer

**May 6:** Open Circle/Friendship

**May 13:** Spring Business Meeting/Please Volunteer

**Thank you all so much** for the goodie box. I share it with my buddies. I still think of FMC as my church family.

-Kristopher Troyer

## DISCIPLING

**The Goshen College Conference on Religion and Science** will take place March 6-8 at Goshen College, with keynote speaker Dr. Michael Spezio, associate professor of neuroscience and psychology at Scripps College. The theme is “In Whose Image? Perspectives from Intersections of Brain Science and Abrahamic Mindfulness.” Spezio will present two public lectures in the Church-Chapel on Friday, March 6 at 7:30 p.m., and Saturday, March 7 at 10:30 a.m. A third lecture on Sunday, March 8 will be for registered guests only, along with discussions and other activities. Learn more at [goshen.edu/religionscience](http://goshen.edu/religionscience).

**Musical Tickets:** Bethany Christian High School will perform Children of Eden on Thursday-Sunday, March 5-8, 2020. This two-act musical follows the Biblical stories of creation and Noah’s ark while exploring the universal themes of family, relationships and love. Tickets are \$9 for adults and \$7 for students. Tickets may be purchased online at [bethanycs.net/tickets](http://bethanycs.net/tickets). Performances are at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Friday, and Saturday and 3 p.m. Sunday.

**Donkey Basketball at Bethany:** The Bethany Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) is proud to bring Buckeye Donkey Ball to Bethany on March 13 at 7 p.m. in the HS gym. You won’t want to miss this exciting evening as teams of students, faculty and local pastors compete. Advance tickets are available at [bethanycs.net/tickets](http://bethanycs.net/tickets). The PTO will also be selling a pulled pork sandwich dinner that will be served beginning at 5 p.m. in the HS gym lobby for \$6

**Tickets** are now on sale for the Goshen College International Student Club (ISC) Coffeehouse on Saturday, March 21. The evening will begin at 5 p.m. with a student-catered international meal held in the College Mennonite Church Fellowship Hall. A show featuring international music and dance will follow at 7:30 p.m. in the Music Center’s Sauder Concert Hall. Tickets are \$20 for adults and \$14 for students and children.

**Paintings by Emma Schrock**, a popular artist who painted her experience as a member of the Old Order Mennonite community in western Elkhart County, will be on display in the Good Library Gallery at Goshen College from March 1 through May 31, with a public reception on March 8 from 2-4 p.m. The exhibit and reception are free and open to the public.

## OUTREACH

**First Mennonite Women's** next project is children's care packs for Christian Aid Ministries. Items to include: (for a girl) 1 5x7 notepad; 1 pencil and 1 pen; 1 jump rope; 1 pair of socks (colorful and warm); 1 hairbrush; (for a boy) 1 5x7 notepad; 1 pencil and 1 pen; 3 tennis balls; 1 comb; 1 matchbox size car or truck.

**Ten Thousand Villages** in downtown Goshen is looking for volunteers! We are a not-for-profit, fair trade retailer and are powered by a strong team of volunteers. Our team is a diverse group of individuals who interface with the public to promote the fair trade model. You will be directly improving the lives of creative business people around the world, many of whom are women seeking self-autonomy. We will be hosting a brief orientation to volunteering at our store on Thursday, March 19, 7:00 - 8:30 PM. Please RSVP by phone (574-533-8491), email ([goshen@tenthousandvillages.com](mailto:goshen@tenthousandvillages.com)), or in person at 206 S Main St, Goshen. We are especially looking for volunteers to assist as sales associates on Friday afternoons and Saturdays, but have many other ways you can help. Please come and let us know how you want to get involved!

**Mark your calendars!** Make plans now to join MCC as we celebrate 100 years of relief, development and peace in the name of Christ.

•Saturday, July 25 at 3:30 p.m.

Swords to Plowshares Children's Musical  
College Mennonite Church sanctuary in Goshen

•Saturday, July 25 at 4:30 p.m. (picnic at 5:00 p.m.)

Centennial Celebration Potluck Picnic  
Goshen College (lawn north of Rec-Fitness Center)

Bring your favorite dish from More with Less cookbook or a favorite picnic food for a potluck. (Table service and

drinks will be provided.) Fun for the whole family with musical entertainment, kids' activities and ice cream.

•Sunday, July 26 at 6:30 p.m.

Centennial Service of Celebration

Prairie Street Mennonite Church in Elkhart