

**Worship Preview:** : I like fruit. I think I could live on fruit. And even though I like most fruits, I do have favorites. And I would guess that most people do as well. It turns out that God seems to be fond of fruit too. Not only has God designed for there to be an abundance of fruit in the natural world He created, but God looks for Spiritual Fruit in the lives of His people.

But what exactly is the spiritual fruit God is looking for? In the immediate context of this all-important teaching, Jesus lists two things. They are **Love** and **Joy**, but not the kind of love and joy the world is familiar with. Jesus demonstrated this love and this joy in His own life, and tells His disciples that these come from the Father. And this channel is now open to His disciples, for this love and joy from God to flow into them. But the only way for that to happen is for them to stay connected to Jesus. They can never produce this kind of love or joy on their own. It comes only from God, and only through Jesus.

Okay, we probably understand the love part. We have read the stories of Jesus in the Bible, and we see love dripping from most of them. Most of us have even memorized John 3:16, "For God so loved the world..." We know that God is love. The Bible tells us, and we find God's love all throughout the stories of the Bible.

But joy? Why joy? How can Jesus talk about joy knowing that that very night one of His own would betray Him, another would disown Him, the next day the crowd would be screaming, "Crucify Him, Crucify Him," and that a Roman Cross now has Him clearly in its sights?

Does Jesus really expect us to be joyful when all of life turns upside down and we are left suffering in pain and misery? That is precisely why Jesus includes joy here. It is not a natural joy. Jesus is about to leave His disciples, and it was beginning to sink in, there will be no kingdom, no positions of importance that they were envisioning and dreaming about. Their dreams are quickly turning into nightmares. Their faith in Jesus was suddenly giving way to fear.

It is at this very point, Jesus points out to them, that the joy that comes from God is not tied to living the "good life" or to any circumstances. And there is nothing in this world that can take the Joy of God from Him or from them, because joy originates in God and flows into those who belong to God. That doesn't make suffering fun, and it won't take the pain and heartache out of life. But what does happen, is the joy that comes from God flows into God's people, and nothing in the world can take it away. God's people have a connection to God and to eternity that nothing in this world can separate.

Remember Jesus' point from this teaching? The branches never produce fruit, they merely hold the fruit that is produced by the vine. To put this in real terms, both love and joy are produced by Jesus (the vine), and they flow into the disciples of Jesus. And the only way for this fruit to be visible in the world, is for followers of Jesus to stay connected to Jesus.

~Pastor Phil

**Message:** Pastor Phil

**Title:** "God's Favorite Fruit!"

**Text:** John 15:8-17

**Worship Leader:** Linda Young

**Music:** Worship team

**Sunday Worship - 9:00a**

**Sunday School - 10:15a**

You can join in the live stream of Sunday sermons by clicking onto You Tube, then typing in FMC INDIANA in the search box. We begin at 9:00 am on Sunday mornings, but the livestream may not be fully available until 11 am.

## Happy March Birthdays

Ron Yoder	1
Mildred Ritchie	5
Virginia Hershberger	8
Gordon Kauffman	8
Vera Miller	10
<b>Ethon Tepen</b>	<b>14</b>
Jake Schwartz	23
Linda Miller	25
Bernie Miller	28
Joe Yoder	30

**First Mennonite Church**  
**PO Box 508**  
**Middlebury IN 46540**  
**574-825-5135**

*Our mission is to extend grace,  
build peace, and share love within  
& beyond our faith community*

### Office Hours

Pastor Phil  
Tuesday 9:30a—1:30p  
Thursday 1:00p—6:00p  
Pastor Tim by appointment  
Church Office: Linda Young  
Mon, Tues, Wed, Fri: 8 am—1 pm

### Our Congregational Care

**Coordinator Jean Shriner** can be contacted at (574) 596-3376 or email [jsshine@frontier.com](mailto:jsshine@frontier.com)

**Thought for the day: "God prefers spiritual fruit over religious nuts."**



#### Please pray for:

- ♥ The families that recently lost loved ones:
  - Sara Weaver** and family in the passing of Glenn who died on Thursday, March 7.
  - Kenneth Yoder's** family. Kenneth passed away on Monday Evening, March 11

#### Ongoing prayers for.... :

- **Friends with health issues:** Bill Johnson and Brad Miller (who are at the Laurel's), Gordon Kauffman who is in Hospice care at Hubbard Hill, Vera and Chris Miller, Evelyn who is Patty Yoder's mom, Mary Gingerich, Elsie Yoder's mother Ralph Burton (Martha Weirich's son-in-law—cancer) Tom Bontrager, Luke Schrock and his walk with Jesus, Gary & Ruth Denlinger our missionaries in Israel, Mei Sasaki at Seminary.

#### Praise for.....

- ☺ The response for the needs at **The Food Pantry, "The Bridge."**

## FMC HAPPENINGS

### March First Mennonite Women Project

#### Infant Care Kit for MCC

(New items only)

The kit should contain:

- 3—Gowns/sleepers
- 3—undershirts/onesies
- 1—receiving blanket
- 4—large, heavy duty safety pins
- 1—large bar mild soap (leave in wrapper)
- 1—pair of socks
- 1—cap

NOTE size 3-12 months. Items can either be purchased or hand-sewn

**\*\*\*INSTRUCTIONS:** Remove packaging material (except soap). Fold items into the receiving blanket. Fasten together with safety pins.

*Thanks to Jan Yoder for knitting caps for the babies!*

## UPCOMING IMPORTANT DATES

### Thursday, March 28—Maundy Thursday Service

- 6:00 Sharing Soup Together
- 6:45 Commemorative Communion & Feet Washing Service

### Sunday, March 31—Easter Sunday Morning

- 9:00—Carry In Breakfast
- 10:00—Celebratory Easter Church Service

From "The Lord's Laughter" from JoyfulNoiseletter.com

**The Youngsters in a Sunday School were each asked to memorize and to recite a different Bible verse for a church program. When it came time for a three-year-old girl to recite her verse- "Jesus Wept." - she stood up and shouted, "God Sweepee!"**

~Jess Totten Hammond, LA

## MYSTERY MENNO

This weeks Mystery Menno (MM) is a youngster at heart. Loves to go hiking, fishing and traveling with their family, in fact in the past several years, has been in several different countries. Also known to plan fun trips for friends. Has three children and a dog and of course their spouse. Notes that "they love their family." Grew up in a wonderful family with two siblings, one of each. Has a job that allows them to interact with many children. Summer is a wonderful time for them to work out in the yard. Smiles often. *Who is our Mystery Menno?*

**Last weeks Mystery Menno** "was born at a young age," and was married to her spouse for 57 years. She is semi retired but still loves to drive around and has been "Everywhere man... has been from the gulf coast to the Grand Canyon , to the mountains topped with snow! God Bless America, my home sweet home!" Her childhood was blessed with three siblings, went to church every weekend, and in between. Cousins played (and still do)a big part during her growing up years. Always liked the "Smells" of school starting "in September". ie new crayons, pencils "and the piece of oil cloth that was supposed to protect my desktop from my lunch." She is the parent of 4 children and grandparent of four grandchildren. Her family is scattered across the nation! *Our Mystery Menno is Jan Yoder*

Recipe of the week

### Mexican Street Corn Chicken

Submitted by Kris Rheinheimer

#### Ingredients

- \* 2 # boneless, skinless chicken breast(4-6 Thin chicken breasts)
- \* 3 cups sweet corn (2 cans drained)
- \* 1/4 cup mayonnaise
- \* 1/4 cup sour cream
- \* 1/2 Tblsp lime juice
- \* 1 1/2 tsp chili powder
- \* 1/2 tsp salt
- \* 1/2 tsp garlic powder
- \* 1/4 tsp cayenne pepper (optional)

(Continue in next column)



LENT 2024

"Jesus Last Night"

Listening to the conversation Jesus had with his Disciples the last night they were together

and

"Learning a New Way to Live"

Mar 17—**God's Favorite Fruit** John 15: 8-17

*Love & Joy*

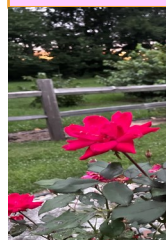
Mar 24—**Learning to Live in Joy** John 16:17-33

*Even in Tribulation*

Mar 31— **EASTER Sunday**

**A New Way to Live** John 17:1-26

*Trusting /Prayer*



When Life isn't a bed of roses, remember who wore the thorns!

(Continue from previous column)

#### Topping

- \* 1/4 cup queso fresco crumbled
- \* 1/4 cup cilantro chopped

#### Instructions

1. In a large bowl, combine the sweet corn, mayonnaise, sour cream, lime juice and chili powder and mix to combine.
2. In a casserole dish, lay the thin chicken breasts flat in the dish. Then season with salt, garlic powder, and cayenne pepper. Spread the corn mixture evenly over the top of the chicken.
3. Bake at 350°, uncovered for 30-40 minutes or until the chicken is cooked through. Then remove from the oven and garnish the top with crumbled queso fresco and chopped cilantro.

## Other FMC News & Announcements

**P**leasant Oaks Preschool is currently accepting pre-registrations for next year. Community Helpers will be visiting our KPREP class this month. Parent/Teacher Conferences will happen on March 21. Our Spring Fundraiser of selling Amish Fried Pies will begin on April 15. Volunteers are always welcome to read a book to our classes.

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**PUT THIS  
ON YOUR  
CALENDAR!**

**GENTLEMEN**  
**Saturday, April 6**  
**Men's retreat @**

8:45 am—7:00 pm

Location: 10273 Cottage Grove Dr, Middlebury

**Theme: "Core Issues Men Deal With"**

Quest for Significance

Finding My Purpose in Life

Living in Meaningful Relationships

Leaving a Legacy

**Resource Person: Bishop John Nissley**

(Taught at Winebrenner Seminary for 20 years, currently our Bishop, and a Man)

**Purpose:**

Deepen your fellowship with other men

Deepen your relationship with God

Deepen your understanding of what it means to be created a man

Deepen your self-respect as a unique creation of God

**Who is Invited to Attend?**

Men of all ages

Invite your fathers, sons, sons-in-law, grandfathers, grand sons, friends

**Cost:** 10 hours of your time on April 6, 2024

CLC is planning to have a church wide retreat this fall. Is there someone that you have heard speak or share their story that could enrich others? Contact Elnora Yoder.

## Other Events

**Saturday March 23rd**

**5-8 p.m.**

At Goshen First Church (214 S. 5th St, Goshen)

First Light Mission

Empty Bowl Project

Soup Supper

Donate \$20 and receive

A handmade bowl Filled with soup  
from the Goshen Clay Artists Guild



**FROM MENNONITE WORLD CONFERENCE**

Every two months, Anabaptist– Mennonites from around the world gather online to pray together on a Friday .... Deacon's and regional representatives facilitated the small group prayer in breakout rooms. They share concerns and joys from their region. You can join this group on **Friday, March 15 at 2:00 p.m.** at the following site:

**Oaklawn Crisis Center now open**

Oaklawn's new behavioral health crisis center, located at [420 N. Niles Ave., Suite 100](#), is now open from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday.

The center is open to anyone experiencing a mental health or substance use crisis and seeking treatment. For more information, visit [www.oaklawn.org](http://www.oaklawn.org) or call 574-533-1234, option 1.

See the brochure on the West Bulletin board for more information.

*Thank you!*

**I would like to thank everyone for the Prayers, gifts, Get well cards and visits while I have been under the physicians care for my heart. You are all appreciated!**  
~ Vera Miller