



March 4, 2018

Leader: The peace we have denied,
People: The love of God we buried,
Leader: The bodies and souls whom we have ignored.
All: These we lay down.

(Silence)

Leader: Of those around in whom we greet the face of God,
People: We ask their pardon and we grant them ours,
All: That every contradiction to Christ's peace might be laid down.
Amen.

-adapted from STS 172 & 173

Contemplation

Sermon Third of the Big Three: Moral-Influence Theory Pastor Renee Kanagy

Song of Response Amazing Grace HWB 143
vs. 1, 2, 3, 6

Sharing of Joys, Sorrows, Sermon Response, and Introduction of Guests

Prayers of the Community

Releasing

Sending Song Go now in peace HWB 429

Words of Assurance
*The God of mercy,
who is well acquainted with grief
will bless us with gentle comfort
and healing for our sorrows.*

-STS 175

Music Key: HWB = Hymnal: A Worship Book (blue hard cover book)
STJ = Sing The Journey (green soft cover book)
STS= Sing The Story (purple soft cover book)

We warmly welcome all who are visiting with us today! We hope you will join us for fellowship time after the service and give us an opportunity to get to know you. Please fill out a visitor card from the pew rack and place it in the offering basket. **Listening assistance devices are available** through the sound technician at the rear of the sanctuary.

Children are welcome in worship and community life. We also offer the following activities for children during worship: **A supervised nursery for newborns through age 3**, located next to the main entrance; **Children's Circle for children ages 3 through 7**, which meets in the basement during the second half of the worship service.

Announcements

*Please send your announcements to the office **before 11:00am-Friday** to be printed in the bulletin.*

.....TODAY

Sunday, March 4

Third Sunday of Lent

Mentoring Group Gathering (12-2pm, CMF Lower Level)

.....THIS WEEK

.....NEXT WEEK

Sunday, March 11

Fourth Sunday of Lent

Daylight Saving Time Begins

Tuesday, March 13

Community Meal (5-7pm, CMF Lower Level)

Ten Thousand Villages Board Meeting (7pm, Peace House)

Thursday, March 15

Council Meeting (6:30pm, Peace House)

.....COMING UP

Sunday, March 18

Consensus Building Work (during worship service)

*Check out the **EVENTS** page on our website for more calendar information.*

CMF Welcome Statement

Cincinnati Mennonite Fellowship is a Christ-centered, welcoming and inclusive church community committed to peace and justice. We acknowledge and affirm the image of God in persons of every race, ability, class, gender, ethnicity and sexual orientation. We celebrate an open communion in which all who seek a closer journey with God are welcome to participate. We invite all who covenant with us to join in the full life of the congregation.

CMF Vision Statement

As a Mennonite community,
seeking to follow Jesus Christ
and empowered by the Holy Spirit,
we will be embracing, engaging, growing.

Notes

Please pray for Greta Lindecrantz, her family, and her community. Greta a member of Beloved Community Mennonite Church in Englewood, Colorado and a defense investigator. She is currently being jailed in the Arapahoe County Detention Center for refusing to testify on behalf of the prosecution in a death penalty appeal; she worked as an investigator on behalf of the defense. Greta could be held for up to six months for being in contempt of court. Greta is the sole earner in her household, due to her spouse's health. A GoFundMe campaign has been set up to support Greta and her partner during her imprisonment; they have a mortgage, monthly bills, and medical bills to pay, and because Greta is an hourly worker, they will have no income until her release.

Adult Forum next week will continue work on advanced planning for funerals and memorial services. Advanced planning ranges from scripture selection, to having a while service planned, to outlining an obituary. A guide for planning will be provided. If you have experienced funeral planning when some measure of the plans were done by the deceased and are willing to share a bit about that experience, please contact Pastor Renee.

Free desk. Pastor Renee is ready for the desk in the pastor's study to find a new home, as the height is not conducive to healthy posture while typing. If you are interested in the desk, please contact the CMF office by March 13.

Stations of the Cross display are up around the church! During the season of Lent, art work depicting the stations of the cross will be on display throughout the upper level of the CMF building. Most of the stations made their way into the Gathering Area last Sunday, and more are up today. The stations are presented in a variety of forms, including painting, poetry, and mixed media projects; some are even interactive! Some of the stations were created specifically for this event by members of the CMF community, while others were generously loaned to us. We hope this project helps you engage with the season of Lent this spring.

Ten Thousand Villages O'Bryonville invites you to shop during our new expanded hours on **Sundays from noon to 5pm**. Help provide a meaningful life and improved economic stability for the artisans around the world who share their culture and skills through their handmade products.

From Mennonite Disaster Service:

MDS has many urgent volunteer needs and several job opportunities. Please pray for those considering service with MDS and for the volunteers as they travel to and from locations, handle tools, repair and build homes and bring hope to disaster survivors..

From Mennonite Mission Network:

Pastors and their spouses who minister in Ukraine's militarized zone look forward to a retreat this month. Mary Raber of Mennonite Mission Network, serving as a resource person, requests prayer for a restful gathering for those who have given their all to congregations for several stress-filled years.

Artist Statement

My Thoughts About Life Events that led me Through this Project

Entering this Lenten season, this year, I had been thinking a lot about the cycle of life. During Advent, Bill's brother Bob died. There were a couple of funerals at the Presbyterian church for people Bill and I had been involved with. There were several people who died from my home community, Hartville, Ohio who had been significant in my life. And then, my uncle Willis Sommers died last month.

I'd also been thinking about making kites, something I've been wanting to do for quite some time now, dying my own cloth and getting it all up in the air. This led me on searches of ripstop nylon, (could it easily be dyed?) and into the wonderland of hammocks and hammock chairs.

Bill wrote a funeral meditation on in which he described "*a way to look at death and what lies beyond - to get a glimpse of eternal life - by looking at an experience we all share. That common experience is birth.....in our mother's womb....a bit of transparent jelly smaller than a grain of sand. Still, the body, mind and spirit, the emotions - all the vast potential of life - lay hidden there.*

Cells began to multiply. We were being formed into a baby.

As a fetus we were secure in that world, perfectly adapted for that environment. The prospect of birth would have seemed terrifying..... to be born out of the womb - the only world we knew - would certainly seem like death.

Suppose this world is a womb preparing us as did our mother's womb, preparing us for something beyond. Suppose this world fashions us for another world - another life - as different from this one as this one is different from our mother's body." [Funeral Meditation for Ralph Laird, Jr. - Bill Love January, 2018]

When my uncle Willis died, the funeral was held in the community he'd lived in since his marriage to Mabel Beachy in 1955. His burial was probably the most comforting I had ever witnessed. Uncle Willis was a farmer. He loved the land. He would walk his fields most every evening. He was a joyful man. He was buried in the traditional Amish-Mennonite way with family and friends covering him with that beautiful, dark earth he had loved and worked most of his adult life. Now he was returned to it - planted you might say - lovingly put to rest by those who loved him most.

Anthony De Mello, in his book "Awareness, The Perils and Opportunities of Reality", in a chapter titled "Dead Ahead" asks the reader to meditate on dying. He says, "*I've often said to people that the way to really live is to die. The passport to living is to imagine yourself in your grave. Imagine you're lying in your coffin.....So imagine you're lying flat and you're dead. Now look at your problems from that viewpoint. Changes everything, doesn't it?*

What a lovely, lovely meditation. Do it every day if you have time. It's unbelievable, but you'll become alive.....People don't live, most of you don't live, you're just keeping the body alive. That's not life. You're not living until it doesn't matter a tinker's damn to you whether you live or die. At that point you live. When you're ready to lose your life, you live it. But if you're protecting your life, you're dead.....people mistakenly think that living is keeping the body alive. So love the thought of death, love it. Think of the loveliness of that corpse, of that skeleton, of those bone crumbling till there's only a hand full of dust"

We still have Bob's ashes in our living room where we can see the box they are in, every day. It is a good exercise, I think to contemplate this cycle of life, death and ashes. I love this life, this reality I'm living now. And I still give "a tinker's damn" if I leave it. But I think it is a good meditation to remember that we in this body, really are dust and to dust we shall return, that there is a new reality awaiting, most likely not what we are expecting. We may have some hints given to us in Scripture as well as accounts of people having died or had near-death experiences. But, we don't really know.

So, here is this, what I think is really, quite ugly, seed, seedpod, up-side-down uterus (?). I invite you, if you weigh less than 350 pounds to sit inside. I got the visual idea from a child's hammock chair that would normally hang indoors. I plan on making them - more colorful with a wider opening, something a bit more inviting and cheerful. But, for right now, test it. For most of us, it will be a dark, tight fit. That swinging of it may test our vulnerability, but, then that's kind of the whole idea. It's not too far off the floor so that it could hurt you too much if it plunks down while you are inside, unless of course, it brings the whole building down with it. Just sayin'.

By the way, Easter is coming!

-Joann Sommers Love



Book Club will meet on Sunday, March 18 after church at China Foods, 410 W McMilan, in Clifton Hts. The book to be discussed is "Same Kind of Different As Me" by Ron Hall and Denver Moore.



Join the Lunch Bunch to extend the conversation and fellowship after service each week. Sometimes we visit a local restaurant, sometimes we pack a lunch and dine here. Meet around the round table in the gathering area if interested



Journey Groups

Contact information available through the office for all facilitators.

Women's Spiritual Journey: Contact Facilitator Eleanor Bowman with interest

Women's Group: Group Facilitator Ann Schrock; please contact her to be added to email list or with questions. Playdates Coordinator: Becca Swartzendruber—we have a regular play group for babies & preschool-aged kids that meets at Jane Patty's house on the 1st and 3rd Monday of every month from 9am - 11:30am. Questions? Contact Becca at 513.680.1708 or Jane at 513.238.3857.

Men's Group: Meets every third Saturday of each month--all men are welcome. Coordinator: Jim Miller. If interested and not on Jim's email list, please ask to be added. Watch email for location. Jim would appreciate a headcount midweek prior to the Breakfast. Time is 7:30am -???

Youth Group: coordinators: Scott and Allison Troyer



**Cincinnati
Mennonite
Fellowship**

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Church office located in Peace House at 3046 Minot Avenue, First Floor
Services are recorded and available to be checked out;
Sermons are posted online at cincinnatiannonite.org