



Offering Christ's peace to hearts, homes, community and world

Midweek Connection at MCN

Dec. 18, 2019

Worship with us this Sunday, Dec. 22

Scripture: Isaiah 35:1-10 & Matthew 1:18-25

**Sermon: "What are you waiting for? Sore Afraid!" by Dr. Joseph A. Culpepper, Retired
Pastor**

What are you afraid of? In the world, in the church, in your life? How do our fears inhibit our embracing God's vision for us seen in the coming of Jesus? How do we get past our fears?

A reminder about announcements on Sundays: Send or give your announcements that you want publicly shared during Community Life or Sharing to the pastor.

2020
2019

Holiday Office Hours and Early Deadlines

The church office will be closed Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

During those weeks the deadline for bulletin and Midweek will be noon on Tuesday. Thanks, Laurie

From our Transition Pastor, Gary Martin

The Transitional Period Begins at Home!

[To Sing Up use this link.](#) If you don't have access to the internet helpers will be at a table in church the first several Sundays in January.

WHAT? Gary Martin, our transitional pastor, would like to visit EVERY household, ideally at your residence, but if you prefer, at the church or another location. The visits will take place Jan 5-13; 19-22; Feb, 2-9; 15-23. These dates will be expanded, as needed.

WHY? These informal visits are the important first step in the transition process, enabling Gary to understand the congregation by first hearing each individual voice. It also helps him get acquainted and learn names. A composite report of the “congregation’s voice” will be presented to the congregation early in March, along with recommendations for specific transition events through May, and a rough projection for transition priorities for the rest of the year.

HOW? To achieve this challenging objective in the limited time frame, we appeal to your flexibility in scheduling a visit in advance. While 100% participation is impossible, getting as close as possible maximizes the many benefits of this effort. Those in warmer climates during winter have the option of scheduling a phone visit.

To stay focused on visit objectives (and on schedule), please “do not feed the pastor” even if it’s meal time. (Be assured, Gary enjoys meals in homes, but that can happen throughout the remainder of the transitional period!)

Visits will be about 90 minutes (or less). Two individuals can schedule a visit together, if that feels more comfortable. Please schedule during weekdays, if you are available then, so evenings and weekends are open for those who work weekdays. When possible, Gary would like to meet when children are home, so he can hear their voices too. They are free to leave after a few minutes. And it’s fine to schedule when children are away, if that’s your preference.

Gary wants to hear whatever you want to share about yourself or the congregation, or any questions about the transition period.

The questions:

1. What brought you to MCN?
2. What keeps you at MCN?
3. Are you aware of your spiritual gift? (1 Cor. 12:1-11; Rom. 12:1-8; Eph. 4:1-16; 1 Peter 4:10-11)
4. When this transition time ends, it will have been worthwhile if MCN _____.
5. After prayerful discernment, I believe the Holy Spirit’s most important desire for MCN is _____.
6. Are there “weighty voices” at MCN? When _____ speaks, everyone listens.

Office and Transition Staff Hours and Contact Info

Church Office Hours: Weekdays (except Wednesdays) 9 am - 4 pm

Jim Bortell, Interim Minister is on medical leave. Please contact Ron Ropp for all pastoral needs.

Ron Ropp, Minister of Visitation (ongoing); rjroppbarn@gmail.com or 309.212.2456. Ron is available for visits related to health issues and pastoral needs. Wayne and Lois Hochstetler and Barry and Marge Weaver are assisting with visitation including visits with those in care facilities or homebound.

Laurie Vial, Office Manager; church@normalmennonite.org or 309.452.6622. Office Hours are 9 am-4 pm every week day, except Wednesdays when Laurie works remotely.

Bryan Oyer, custodian

Lauren Satchwell, Youth Ministry Leader; satchwell.lauren@gmail.com or 309.830.6827.



This Week at MCN

Thursday, Dec. 19

Organ Tuning

6:15 am Next Man Bible Study

7 pm Longest Night Service

Sunday, Dec. 22

9 am Pre-service Prayer

9:30 am Worship

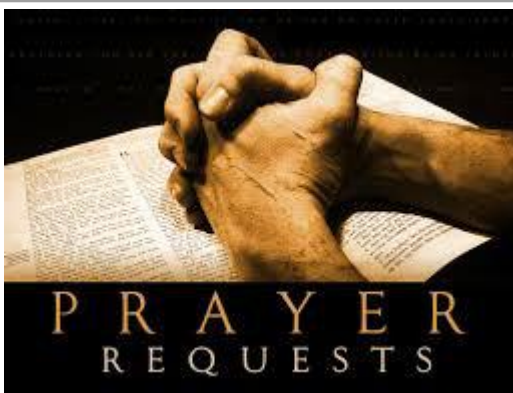
10:45 am Christian Ed for Children

11 am Christian Ed for Adults

Tuesday, Dec. 24

10 am Staff Meeting

6:30 pm Christmas Eve Service



From Dec. 15, 2019

--A special joy is the Christmas music and all those who play and sing it.

--Jim Bortell - please pray for Jim who had surgery on his broken ankle and has a very sore shoulder.

--Joe Haney - please pray for Joe following neck surgery.

--Dick Baum suffered a mild heart attack this past weekend, and had two stents inserted into his blood vessels. Pray for a good recovery and rest for Dick.

Visits to Our Members in Care Facilities

Please remember in your prayers, or with cards or a visit, the following members in care facilities:

Ruth Marquis - Heritage Health

Lloyd Combs - Martin Health Care

Deborah Spacek - Evergreen

Jo Ropp - McLean County Nursing Home (Ron would appreciate mentioning visits to

him.)

Roy Jiles - Evergreen

Joyce Schmucker - Luther Oaks Assisted Living

MCN would also like to develop a list of those who are "shut-ins" in their home. Please contact the church office to add them to this list so we can pray for them and uplift them in other ways.



Communion

Communion will be served Dec. 22. The Bible teaches that we are to “examine ourselves” in preparation (1 Cor 11:27-29). Our Mennonite forebears took seriously the idea of being fully at peace with God and one’s Christian brothers and sisters in order to partake. Let us prepare with similar prayerful reflection and personal examination. Please mark your Mutual Aid offering clearly and put it in the offering plate.

Congregational Vote on TAP - Results

Results of the TAP vote 101 yes to 2 no.

Thank You

Barry and Marge Weaver thank you for your prayers, words of support and many acts of kindness following the death of Barry's father, Harold Weaver, on Nov. 15. The visitation and memorial service for Harold will be on Dec. 20 and 21 in Elkhart, Indiana. The family asks for your continued prayers during this time.

Mennonite Relief Sale

The 2020 Relief Sale is only three months away! You are invited to start thinking about the various ways you support and contribute to the sale. If you are planning to contribute an item to the auction, now is a good time to start working on your project or potentially purchase an item that is on sale for Christmas. Any questions can be directed to Ben Roeschley and Louise Reeser (Board Members) or Gerry Schrock and Marcia Rossi (Sale Promoters).



Everyone is invited to a fellowship time after the Christmas Eve Service, Dec 24.
Please bring a plate of cookies to share if you can. The service is at 6:30 pm



Longest Night Service will take place on Dec. 19 at 7 p.m. During this service we recognize that we all have loss, and that for some of us feeling recent loss, the very merry Christmas season can be especially jarring. We gather to recognize on this day, close to the longest night of the year, that God is present in our darkest nights and that Christ the Light has come.

Lost

My MCN flashdrive is missing. It is black and has my name taped on it on a piece of lavender paper. If you find it please return it to my desk - thanks very much, Laurie

2019 Moro Moro Scholarship Fund Appeals Letter Shared

Hi MCN Friends - This is Doug Valverde. I am very happy to present to you the 2019 Moro Moro Scholarship Fund appeals letter. Right now, we support nine full-time students from my father's hometown of Moro Moro, Bolivia. Please take a minute and read about this important work and please donate if you feel moved. Blessings. [Click here for the link.](#)

All-church Christmas Caroling Party

The Christian Ed committee is organizing an all-church Christmas caroling party. Here are the details:

When? Friday, Dec. 20 from 5:30-7 p.m.

What to bring? Supper is provided, but bring one to two dozen cookies if you can. We will pass these out to the houses where we carol. Feel free to invite friends!

What will we do? We will eat supper together, re-plate our cookies and go out caroling in the neighborhood.

If you'd like to go, it'd be helpful if you could sign-up using this [link](#). That way we'll have enough food for supper.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact Spring Neely (springy20@hotmail.com) or myself. Thanks! Chris Culbertson

Publications to Merge

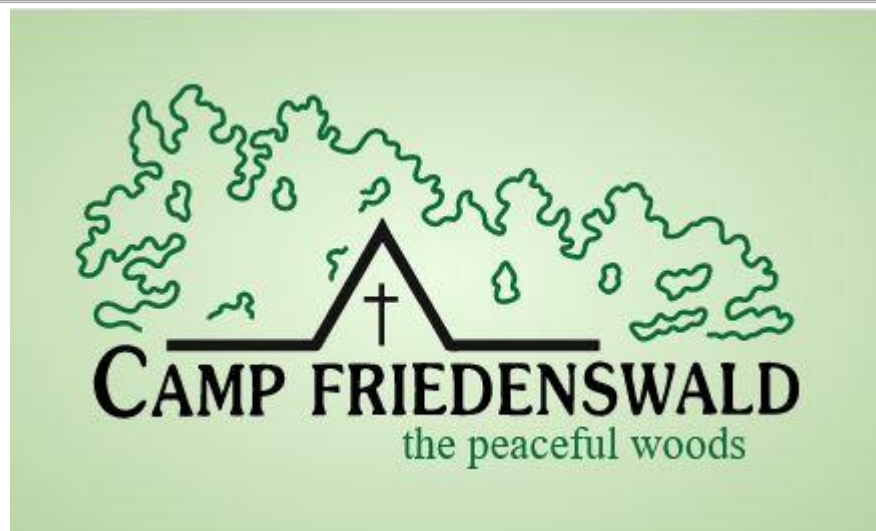
Please be aware *The Mennonite* and *Mennonite World Review* are merging. Very few details are available at this time. We will publish announcements as they are made.

Library Book Missing

Someone checked out the book entitled *Christians True in China* by Robert Kreider. Please search your bookshelves at home - if you find it just slip it in the return slot in the church library. Thanks!



The Lost and Found area is overflowing. Please stop by and look at all the items and take home anything that belongs to your family. Items are on a table in the back of the sanctuary. Thank you.



Camp Friedenswald Winter Church Retreat will be Jan. 24 - 26.
Sign-ups were placed in mailboxes.

Creation Care Confab

Periodic info and musings to help open conversations about God's amazing Creation

In the bleak mid-winter
Frosty wind made moan;
Earth stood hard as iron,
Water like a stone;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow,
Snow on snow,
In the bleak mid-winter
Long ago.

from: In the Bleak Midwinter

Archivist/Historian needed

MCN is in need of an archivist/historian. If you are a good fit for filling this important role in the church please let a Church Board member know.



Birthdays

Cal Hubbard Dec. 19

Marcia Rossi Dec. 19

Grant Reeser Dec. 20

Doug Valverde Dec. 22

Deborah Spacek Dec. 24



Please Wear Your Nametag

Please try to wear your nametag at MCN worship and events.
During this time of transition, nametags are especially important.

Mennonite Relief Sale Association

62nd Annual Illinois Mennonite Relief Sale

“Celebrating MCC’s Century of Global Ministry in the Name of Christ”

The Illinois Mennonite Relief Sale Board says thank you for all of your assistance in past sales. Our 62nd Illinois Sale will be March 20-21, 2020. The Annual Distress Supper/organizational meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, Feb. 11, at 6:30 p.m. at First Mennonite Church of Morton.

Now is a great time to consider a contribution to our 62nd Sale. Donations are welcome year around and may be for Relief Sale general needs or for covering expenses of specific areas such as the auction, baby booth, chicken/fish foods, donuts, Dutch Market, Kiddie

Korner, meat, pancake mix, and many other areas. Donations for “My Coins Count” are appreciated too. Checks may be sent to Treasurer Ben Roeschley, 1926 East Taylor Street, Bloomington, IL 61701.

Again this year many volunteers will be needed. Also your prayers on behalf of the 62nd Illinois Relief Sale, MCC, and the recipients of the funds are very appreciated.



Partners in Healing

MCN has been asked to pray for the Administration at Advocate BroMenn and Advocate Eureka Hospital in 2019. These executives make decisions each day of great importance to patient care. Both the staff who serve, and the patients and families needing those services very much appreciate your prayers.



Conference Newsletter

The Central District Conference Focus is now available in this online format. Just click the picture of the newsletter or the title. A copy is available on the Entrance Bulletin Board. Also available is the [CDC Reporter](#).



Office Hours

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 9-4 and Friday 9-12, 1-4.

Voice of the Day

I prefer to be true to myself, even at the hazard of incurring the ridicule of others, rather than to be false, and to incur my own abhorrence.

-Frederick Douglass



Building Use

Wednesday, Dec. 18

5 pm Overeaters Anonymous

Saturday, Dec. 21

10 am Overeaters' Anonymous

Monday, Dec. 23

5:30 pm Al-Anon

Today's Chuckle

Whenever my aunt went to the doctor, she would complain to me about the long delay she always endured.

One day, when my aunt's name was finally called, she was asked to step on the scale. "I need to get your weight today," said the nurse.

Without a moment's hesitation, my aunt replied, "One hour and 45 minutes!"



Serving this week

South Greeters: J.B., Erin & Clara Ponnou-Delaffon

West Greeter: Shannon Neely

Welcome Table: Wilma Dyck

Ushers: Larry & Louise Reeser, Lotus Hershberger and Tshitshi or Ginette Tshiseleka

Sermon: Joe Culpepper

Worship Leader: David Voegtlin

Song Leader: Cindy Ropp

Accompanist: Denise Hedberg

Scripture Reader: David Voegtlin

Children's Time: Darrel Miller

Children's Song Leader: Phil Hoffmann

Technology: Caleb Augspurger

Toddler Nursery: Kristy Hoffmann

Preschool Nursery: Adam Reiman

Advent Wreath: Anna Tshiseleka & Garret Reeser

