



Midweek Connection at MCN

Dec. 11, 2019

## **Worship with us this Sunday, Dec. 15**

**Scripture: Isaiah 11:1-10 & Matthew 3:1-12**

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

We don't like to talk about judgement in a time when we emphasize a God of grace. But Christ's coming includes judgement. How do we understand Christ's pronouncement of judgement and call to repentance as integral to God's grace?

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

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## **From our Transition Pastor, Gary Martin The Transitional Period Begins At Home!**

(The sign up will hopefully go live Thursday or Friday of this week. When it does I will send out a "postcard" through this email list with the hotlink to sign up via Sign Up Genius. Thanks, Laurie)

**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. 5-14; Jan. 26-Feb. 2; Feb. 9-16. 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.

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### Office and Transition Staff Hours and Contact Info

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

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

Ron Ropp, Minister of Visitation (ongoing); [rjroppbarn@gmail.com](mailto:rjroppbarn@gmail.com) or 309.212.2456. Ron is available for visits and pastoral needs.

Laurie Vial, Office Manager; [church@normalmennonite.org](mailto: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](mailto:satchwell.lauren@gmail.com) or 309.830.6827.

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### This Week at MCN

#### Thursday, Dec. 12

6:15 am Next Man Bible Study

9 am Pastor Peer

6 pm Pastoral Council

#### Sunday, Dec. 15

9 am Pre-service Prayer

9:30 am Worship

10:45 am Christian Ed for Children

11 am Christian Ed for Adults

Congregational Meeting

Surprise Luncheons

6 pm Junior Choir

6:45 pm Youth Choir

7:30 pm Adult Choir

#### Tuesday, Dec. 17

9:30 am Staff Meeting

6:30 pm Youth Ministry Committee

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From Dec. 8, 2019

--Prayers are requested for Joe Haney who had neck surgery Monday. He was scheduled to be released from the hospital today.

--Please continue to pray for Janet and Glenn Wilson's mothers.

--A joy is the gifts our church family bring for church life, worship and talents they share in many ways.

--Craig Ohmart asks for prayers for peace for a man he met who served in Vietnam. He is dying of the effects of Agent Orange. His war experiences bother him more and more as he gets older.

--Jim Bortell fell Saturday and broke his ankle. He is having surgery Friday. Please pray for Jim and his wife, Roberta. Jim on medical leave from MCN until further notice.

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### Visits to Our Members in Nursing Homes

Please remember in your prayers, or with cards or a visit, the following members in nursing homes:

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

**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.**

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### Congregational Meeting to vote on TAP set for Dec. 15

On Wednesday evening, Oct. 16, a meeting was held with the congregation to discuss Adult Sunday School strategies as well as an inquiry into renting our former Head Start space by The Autism Project - known as TAP. A presentation was made by the directors of the program and good conversation was had around tables. TAP is an ISU-based program serving the needs of children with autism and their families. The Board has reviewed and discussed feedback received from the congregation and is now ready to bring forward a proposal to you, and it reads as follows:

"The Church Board recommends that Mennonite Church of Normal rent space in the church building to The Autism Project (TAP), a program run by faculty and students at Illinois State University to meet the needs of children with autism and their families, from Jan. 1 through Dec. 31, 2020."

Details of the agreement will be finalized by the Office Manager, the Financial Stewardship Committee, the Church Board, and TAP administration as is our typical process.

There will be a congregational vote taken at the rise of worship two weeks from Dec. 1, on Dec. 15.

If you have questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to member of the Church Board.  
Read in worship by Cindy Ropp on Dec. 1, 2019

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### *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.

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### **Concert at MCN Sunday**

I want to invite you and your friends and family to a concert Sunday, Dec. 15 at 3 p.m. at the Mennonite Church of Normal. Paul Huppert, area violinist and former concert master of St Louis Civic and myself (pianist) present sonatas by Bach and Beethoven as well as folk dances by Bartok. This concert is within an hour long, free and open to the public and family friendly! Take a pause from the hectic pace of the holiday season rest in an afternoon of beautiful chamber music!

Heidi Brooks

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### **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).

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### **Christmas Cards for Former Pastors**

To send a Christmas card to Mark and Jane Roeschley use the address in the directory. To send one to Tim and Sue Schrag use this address: PO Box 414, Goessel, Kansas 67053.

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**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.**

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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.

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### 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

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### 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.](#)

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### 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](mailto:springy20@hotmail.com)) or myself. Thanks! Chris Culbertson

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### 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.

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### BACHS - An Evening of Christmas Music

Hear the Bloomington Area Choir for Home Schoolers, and MCN vocalist, Charlotte Hedberg,

perform their Choir Christmas Concert on Dec. 13 at 7 p.m.: The concert features the BACHS' Treble, Cantate and Concert Choirs at Christ Church in Normal. Free admission. Donations are welcome for this not-for-profit organization.

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Found at MCN, if it is yours please contact Laurie at the office. Thanks!

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### 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!

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Annual Reports are due to the office on Dec. 15.

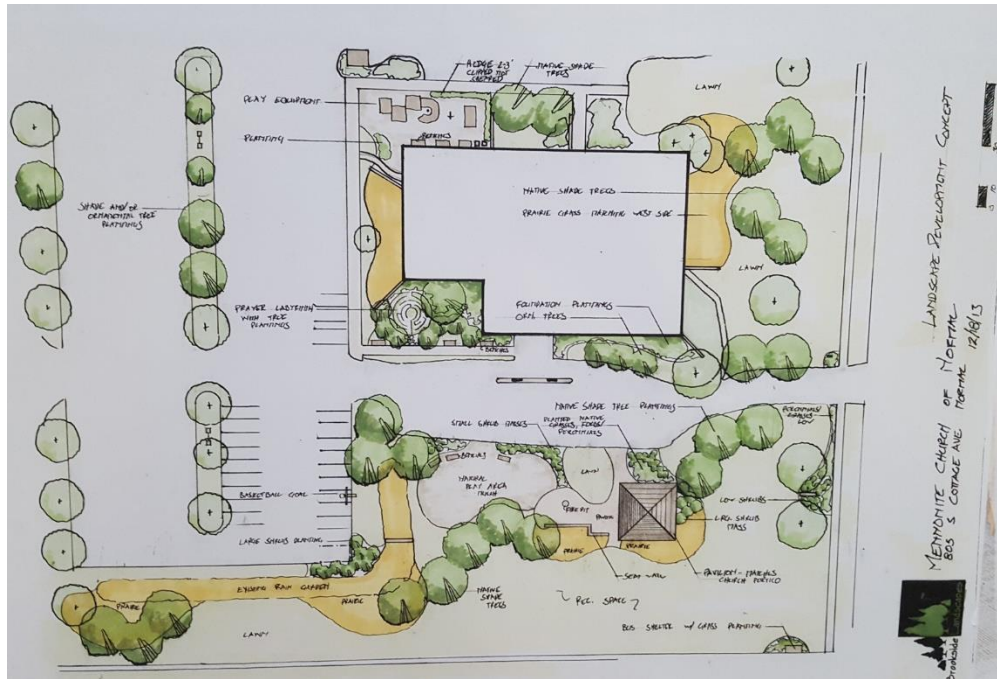
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The Lost and Found area is overflowing. Please stop by and look at all the items and take

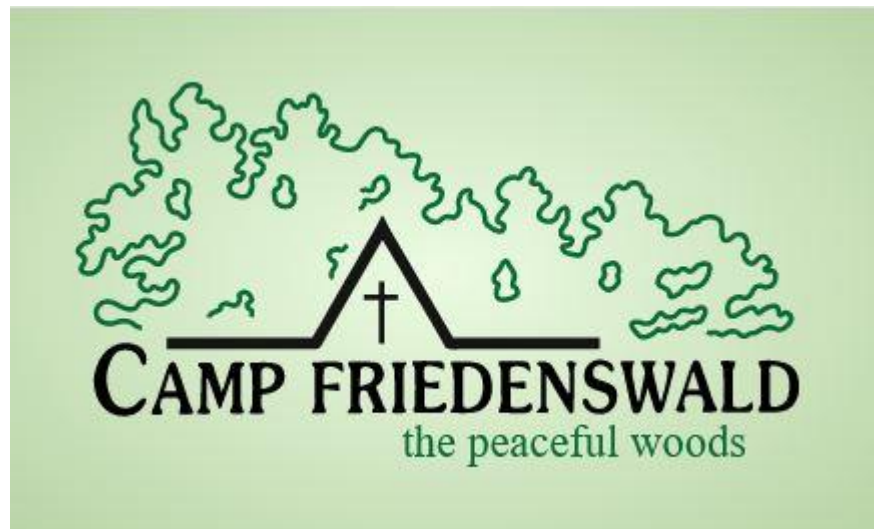
home anything that belongs to your family. Items are on a table in the back of the sanctuary. Thank you.

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The MCN Campus Use Plan drawing will be on display for the next several weeks so everyone can study it.

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Camp Friedenswald Winter Church Retreat will be Jan. 24 - 26.  
Sign-up coming soon!

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### 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

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### 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.

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### Birthdays

Philip Brandon Dec. 11  
Connie Reeser-Hall Dec. 11  
Abby Warfel Dec. 12  
Amy Arkell Dec. 14  
Roberta Miller Dec. 14  
Julie Musselman Dec. 14  
Rebecca Houtsma Dec. 15  
Wilma Dyck Dec. 17  
Timothy Kauffman Dec. 17

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### Please Wear Your Nametag

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

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### Messiah Sing-A-Long

Illinois State University invites you to the Messiah Sing-A-Long, a fundraiser for Friends of the



Arts in conjunction with the Wonsook Kim College of Fine Arts. Contact [mmosier46@gmail.com](mailto:mmosier46@gmail.com) with questions. Location is the Center for the Performing Arts, Sunday, Dec. 15 at 3 pm.

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## 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.

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## 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](#).

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## Office Hours, Deadline

To email Laurie (office manager) use [church@normalmennonite.org](mailto:church@normalmennonite.org).

### Office Hours

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

Deadline for Midweek Connection and Bulletin is noon on Wednesday.

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## Voice of the Day

Without justice and love, peace will always be a great illusion.

- Don Helder Camara

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### Building Use

**Wednesday, Dec. 11**

5 pm Overeaters Anonymous

**Saturday, Dec. 14**

10 am Overeaters' Anonymous

**Sunday, Dec. 15**

3 pm Concert - all welcome

**Monday, Dec. 16**

5:30 pm Al-Anon

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### Today's Chuckle

A cop stops a guy for speeding.

Guy: "Officer, I know I was speeding, but I don't think it's fair - there were plenty of other cars going just as fast, so why did I get the ticket?"

Cop: "Ever go fishing?"

Guy: "Ummm, yeah..."

Cop: "Ever catch all the fish?"

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### Serving this week

South Greeters: Paul & Mary Ann Watkins

West Greeter: Connie Satchwell

Welcome Table: Shannon Neely

Ushers: Shelly & Darvis King, Lotus Hershberger, Shannon Neely

Sermon: Joe Culpepper

Worship Leader: Deb Stenger

Song Leader: Barry Weaver

Accompanist: Dorothy Loepp

Scripture Reader: Deb stenger

Children's Time: Darrel Miller

Children's Song Leader: Shelly King

Technology: Caleb Augspurger  
Toddler Nursery: Sarah Nichols  
Preschool Nursery: Lexi Neely  
Advent Wreath: Nevaeh Nester & Alexa Hoffman

## A Further Jazz Holiday

Glenn Wilson and Friends present A Further Jazz Holiday - jazz versions of your holiday favorites featuring three guest vocalists Friday, Dec 13, 7 PM at the Normal Theater. Tickets are \$10/\$5 students and seniors.