

Midweek Connection for Dec. 31,
2019

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Midweek Connection at MCN

Dec. 31, 2019

Worship with us this Sunday, Jan. 5

Scripture: Isaiah 60:1-6; Ephesians 3:1-12

Sermon: Through the church by Pastor Gary Martin

A graphic showing the year 2020 in large, 3D, red numbers, with the year 2019 in smaller, 3D, grey numbers positioned behind it.

Holiday Office Hours

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



The Annual Meeting of the Mennonite Church of Normal will be Sunday, Jan. 19, 2020. There will be a potluck after Sunday School followed by the Annual Meeting. The Annual Report will be posted on the Drive before Sunday, Jan. 5. [Please use this link to view it.](#)

From our Transition Pastor, Gary Martin The Transitional Period Begins at Home!

[To Sign 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 - Noon
Building hours 9-4 daily except Wednesday

Gary Martin, Transitional Minister, gmartin5@comcast.net cell 574 238 5475.

Ron Ropp, Minister of Visitation; rjroppbarn@gmail.com or 309.212.2456. Ron is available for visits related to health issues. 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.

Bryan Oyer, custodian

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

Change in Church Office Hours

With the retirement of two pastors and the imminent arrival of our transitional pastor, life seems to be a bit in flux here at Mennonite Church of Normal. The Board very much appreciates the willingness of church members to step up and offer assistance as it is needed.

This past June, we welcomed Laurie Vial to our church office. She has worked diligently for us, getting used to how we do things, and learning new systems.

Since Pastor Jane's retirement, Laurie has become the sole in-the-office staff person during the week. Many things have come to her that would typically have been handled by one of the pastors. She is now completing month-end, quarter-end, and year-end reports for the first time.

Laurie has communicated to the Board that she is needing assistance in handling the additional demands. Together, we have worked out a plan. Starting Monday, Dec. 23, office hours will be 9-12, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. If you call or come to the office in the morning, there will be a church volunteer who will be greeting people and answering the phone.

In the afternoon, Laurie will still be in the office working, but the office will be officially closed, unless there is an emergency. Laurie will continue to work from home on Wednesdays.

We anticipate that during the first several weeks of Pastor Gary Martin's time with us in January, there may be need for additional help while he is out of the office doing congregational visits. It is our intent for this schedule to be in place until his congregational visits are complete.

Currently, we have arranged for the first three weeks of coverage. If you are interested in volunteering for a morning, please reach out to Melika as soon as possible. Bring something with you to fill your time if it is a relaxed morning and there isn't much for you to do.

Cindy Ropp, Church Chair, and Melika Hershberger, Chair of Pastoral Council, are also available to respond to calls or emails at any time. Do not hesitate to reach out. We want to be as responsive as possible to the needs of our church family during this time of change.



This Week at MCN

Sunday, Jan. 5

9 am Pre-service Prayer
9:30 am Worship
10:45 am Christian Ed for Children
10:45 am Blood Pressure Checks
11 am Christian Ed for Adults



From Dec. 29, 2019

--Please pray for Wayne and Lois Hochstetler as they leave on a six-week MDS trip to Texas.

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

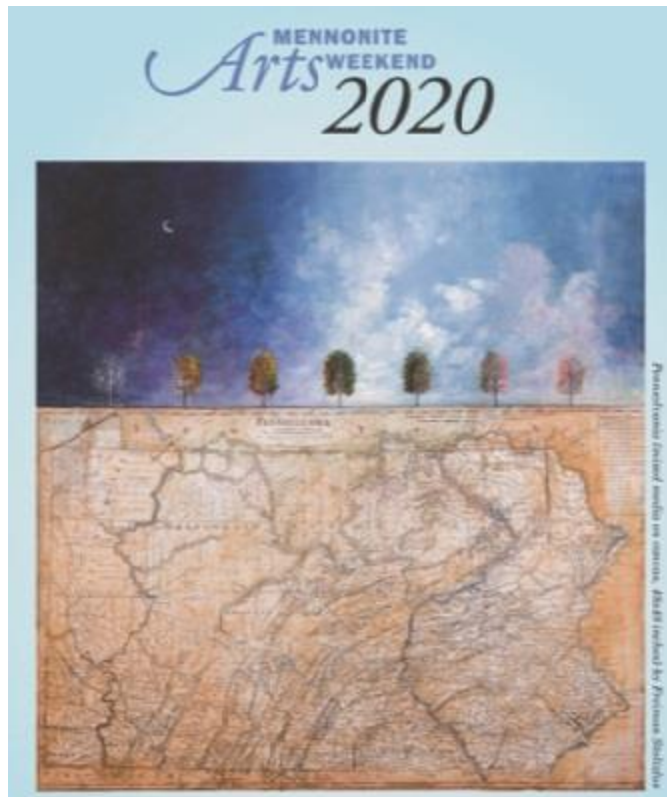
Deborah Spacek - Evergreen

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.



Mennonite Arts Weekend

Interested in attending the Mennonite Arts Weekend in Cincinnati Feb.7-9? It is an opportunity to see/hear the faith-based presentations/products of excellent Mennonite artists. Lynn Reha is the local representative for this weekend. She is attending and can provide three others with transportation. For more information and to register, please go to www.mennoniteartsweekend.org. Please contact Lynn if you are interested in going.

Mennonite Relief Sale

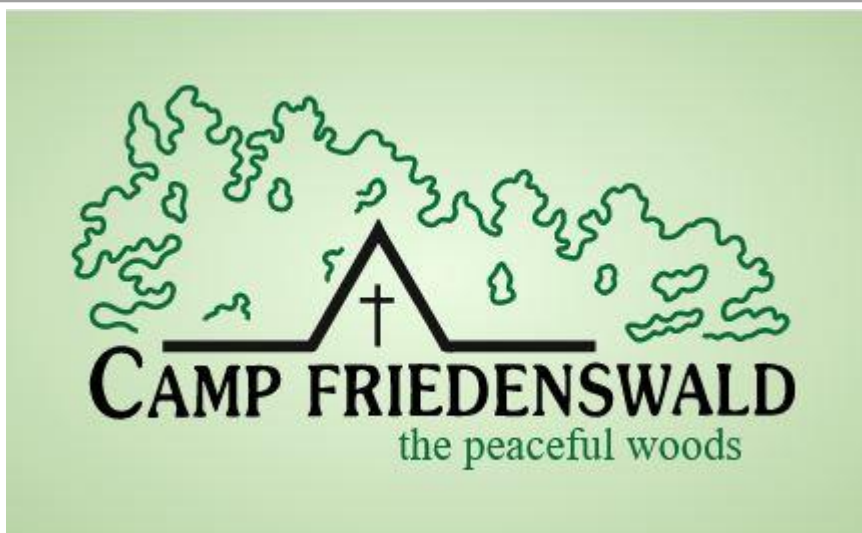
The 2020 Relief Sale is only three months away! You are invited to start thinking about the various ways you support and contribute to the sale. If you are planning to contribute an item to the auction, now is a good time to start working on your project or potentially purchase an item that is on sale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



Merry Christmas from the Marys at MCN!

Worship Participants

A spreadsheet of Sunday morning volunteer positions for the first two months of 2020 was put in all mailboxes on Sunday. If it does not pertain to you just recycle it. On the back are tips for ushers and nursery helpers. If you trade a duty with someone please email the office. Thank you to Elsa Raab, Julie Musselman, Spring Neely, Caleb Augspurger and Jenell Ulrich who create these lists and to Beth Reeser and Louise Reeser who helped in the past. Laurie now keeps the master spreadsheet and works on distribution and publicity. Thank you to all who help with these important Sunday morning tasks. The list is on the bulletin board. To see the list online [use this link](#).



**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

Climate and Community Retreat at Friedenswald: <https://friedenswald.org/retreats/> - April 17-19, 2020

Presenters: Dr. Sibonokuhle Ncube and Pastor Michael Crosby; Music with Wendy Chappell-Dick and Amy Stauffer-McNutt

Are you passionate about working on the climate crisis and feeling the need for heart-felt, open, and honest conversation about this critical topic? Come be part of this special gathering to replenish your energy, connect with like-minded folks, deepen your knowledge, and vision for next steps in your community. Who should attend? Formal and informal green teams for churches, pastors, interested individuals, youth groups, and families are all welcome!

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.



Anniveraries

Larry & Louise Reeser 52 years Jan. 6

Birthdays

Eric Miller Jan. 1

Rebecca Josefson Jan. 3

Grant Zehr Jan. 3

Carol Lou Eisenhardt Jan. 4



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 and Friday 9-Noon

Building is open 9-4.

Deadline for Midweek and bulletin items is noon on Wednesday.

Voice of the Day

“Treat the earth well: it was not given to you by your parents, it was loaned to you by your children. We do not inherit the Earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children.”

- Native American Proverb



Building Use

Wednesday, Jan. 1

5 pm Overeaters Anonymous

Thursday, Jan. 2

5:30 pm HAAQG Board

6:30 pm HAAQG

Friday, Jan. 3

7 am HAAQG Retreat

Saturday, Jan. 4

8 am HAAQG Retreat

10 am Overeaters Anonymous

Monday, Jan. 6

5:30 pm Al-Anon

Today's Chuckle

Everything I Needed To Know About Life I Learned From A Jigsaw Puzzle

By Jacquie Sewell (with apologies to Robert Fulghum)

1. Don't force a fit - if something is meant to be, it will come together naturally.
2. When things aren't going so well, take a break. Everything will look different when you return.
3. Be sure to look at the big picture. Getting hung up on the little pieces only leads to frustration.
4. Perseverance pays off. Every important puzzle went together bit by bit, piece by piece.
5. When one spot stops working, move to another. But be sure to come back later (see #4).
6. The creator of the puzzle gave you the picture as a guidebook. Refer to the Creator's guidebook

often.

7. Variety is the spice of life. It's the different colors and patterns that make the puzzle interesting.

8. Working together with friends and family makes any task fun.

9. Establish the border first. Boundaries give a sense of security and order.

10. Don't be afraid to try different combinations. Some matches are surprising.

11. Take time often to celebrate your successes (even little ones).

12. Anything worth doing takes time and effort. A great puzzle can't be rushed.

13. When you finally reach the last piece, don't be sad. Rejoice in the masterpiece you've made and enjoy a well-deserved rest.



Serving this week

South Greeters: Barry & Marge Weaver

West Greeter: Mary Dyck

Welcome Table: Marcia Rossi

Ushers: Lotus Hershberger, Nancy Fisher, Marianne Israel & Shannon Neely

Sermon: Gary Martin

Worship Leader: Deb Stenger

Song Leader: Cindy Ropp

Accompanist: Chris Culbertson

Scripture Reader: Deb Stenger

Children's Time: Darrel Miller

Children's Song Leader: Melika Hershberger

Technology: Adam Augspurger

Toddler Nursery: Miriam Kennell

Preschool Nursery: Beth Reeser
