



Midweek Connection at MCN

Jan. 22, 2020

Worship with us this Sunday, Jan. 26

Scripture: Philippians 4:4-9

Sermon: "Thank You! That's a Good One!" by Pastor Joe Culpepper

Sometimes we can feel overwhelmed by what is going on in the world, our nation, our families, even our church. How do we respond in our conversations with others? As people of faith, how can we keep from having a negative response & develop a positive one instead?

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 this coming Sunday.

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. 22; Feb. 2-4; 9-12; 16.

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.

Those in warmer climates during winter have the option of scheduling a phone visit.

To stay focused, please "do not feed the pastor." (Be assured, Gary enjoys meals in homes, but that can happen later). Visits will be about 90 minutes. 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 Pastor gmartin5@comcast.net cell 574.238.5475. In the parish Feb. 2-4; 9-12; 16-18; 23-26; March 8-11.

Ron Ropp, Pastor 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.



This Week at MCN

Wednesday, Jan. 22

5 pm Outreach Committee

6:30 Youth Ministry Committee

Thursday, Jan. 23

6:15 am Next Man Bible Study

Feb. 24-26 Retreat

Sunday, Jan 26

9 am Pre-service Prayer

9:30 am Worship

10:45 am Christian Ed for Children

11 am Christian Ed for Adults



From Jan. 19, 2020

--Ben and Caroline Roeschley announced a joy - they are expecting a baby in July.

--Pamela Dick gave an update on the fire that occurred at their business on Oct. 31. She said she and Al have decided not to rebuild. They are still dealing with paperwork, demolition and other related matters.

--Shelly King shared a joy that the Winter Retreat has increased sign-up and reminded everyone that there is still time to register.

--Carrie Stalter asked for prayers for a former co-worker whose 2-year-old son was recently diagnosed with stage four cancer. The couple also has four-year-old twins.

--An update on Dustin Wyse-Fisher, son of Gail and Nancy Fisher:

Thank you for your prayers for Dustin's restored health after his brain tumor surgery in May and proton radiation therapy in the fall. He is now in the chemotherapy phase of treatment, nearing the halfway point. He continues to tolerate and manage the effects of the chemo, teaching full time this spring semester at ICC. We covet your prayers for him and his family as they live with this reality.

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.



Milepost

"Milepost" is a weekly item in Midweek Connection. It invites congregants to reflect on the

transitional process. Think of it as a scenic lookout where we pull off the highway, to look back on where we have just been, and contemplate what's ahead. The number is the accumulated days into the journey.

-Gary Martin, Transitional Pastor

Milepost 22

Transition Period Objectives

The ultimate objectives for transition efforts are a quality search process for long-term pastoral leadership through thorough congregational preparation; and increased potential for healthy long-term relationships among congregants and between pastor and congregation.

Humans were created in God's image. One aspect of that is the potential to live fully in the present, unencumbered by past pain or anxiety for the future. It's a life-long journey. Congregational health involves that same journey toward more "fully present in the now" moments, by reducing energy devoted to the past or future anxiety. We live in the past when we focus on accomplishments, or are weighed down with guilt over failures. We live in the future when we allow anxiety about what could go wrong to limit or control us. Discerning vision for the future is essential, but that work is hindered if approached with fear or anxiety.

Thus, transition begins by reflecting on the MCN story: both celebrating accomplishments, and recognizing unresolved pain or conflicts. We begin that task on March 29, with "Re-membering MCN," a unique interactive story-telling experience. This experience, along with the household visit project, will likely surface several areas which need further attention so as not to impact the next steps.

The focus then shifts to clarifying and embracing our current identity: who we are and why we exist in 2020 (our mission). This will also involve interactive processes.

The third focus is discerning a specific direction (vision) for the next three years. This grassroots effort is the highpoint for many congregations in transition. When an energizing and congregationally owned vision is in place, the current structure will be evaluated by asking, "Is the current structure an adequate vehicle to carry MCN in the new direction?" The pastoral staffing model will be an integral part of this work.

With the completion of these three foci, the search process begins, with potential to move more quickly than the norm. Whenever possible, transition work attempts to build on what exists. We won't re-invent the wheel.

This has been a generic overview! A specific plan and timeline, based on the results of the household visit project, will be presented to the congregation on March 8. If you have not signed up for a visit, please do so! A high percentage of congregant voices is essential, to accurately project a transitional plan.

-Gary Martin, Transitional
Pastor

Coming soon...

...on the MCN channel, each Sunday in February, at 9:30 a.m.: *Gleaning Right*, a mini-series on the book of Ruth, with guest appearances by Orpah, Naomi, Obed, Boaz, and Ruth, the star of *Gleaning Right*. Invite family and friends!

TAP announcement

The congregation recently approved inviting the TAP program into our space to provide assistance and support to children with autism. We anticipated a start date in January. However, due to a current lease under which they are still subject, they will not be in our facility until June or July of this year. We look forward to their arrival!

Parking

If you are able-bodied, please do not park on the south side of the church during Sunday worship and other well-attended events. This leaves spaces for people who do not have a handicap permit but would benefit from parking near the door. Thank you.

Fourth Sundays

On the fourth Sunday of each month, one or two members of the Church Board will be available after worship if anyone wants to discuss an issue - a joy or a concern. These opportunities will most likely take place in the middle office. The Board wants to dialogue with you.



Candle Policy

Please remember that "real" candles are not allowed at MCN except during worship service such as Christmas Eve. If you would like to use a candle or candles during Sunday School, Spiritual Direction or other events please use a battery-powered candle. During a recent fire inspection we were marked down for matches and candles in several Sunday School rooms. Please follow this policy to create a safer environment in our building.

IMC Annual Business Meeting

IMC will hold its annual business meeting **Saturday, Feb. 15, 2020** at Camp Menno Haven. One agenda item will be reviewing IMC leadership's current **practices regarding credentialing** related to same sex marriage. The stated practices from 2017, as well as a proposal from MLT, is posted on the website at www.illinoismennonite.com. Our congregation is allowed to have 5 delegates plus a pastor in attendance. If you are interested in participating, please contact Cindy Ropp at cropp@ilstu.edu or 309/826-9183 as soon as possible.



Communion

Communion will be served Feb. 2. 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 them in the offering plate.

Minutes

The minutes of all committees and the Church Board are available for reading in the white binder in the church library.



Statements

Statements for contributions for 2019 were sent by email on Monday through our church accounting software PowerChurch. If we did not have your email in PowerChurch they were printed and will be in mailboxes late this week. If you have changes please email Laurie at church@normalmennonite.org. A few statements "bounced" Laurie will attempt to update your email address in PowerChurch and re-send.

Missing

MCN is missing two eight-foot polymer tables. Please bring them back. Bryan

Thank you!

Thank you to all for the uplifting cards and memorials in honor of my brother. Your kind words of support and hugs helped us through a difficult time. Deb and Steve Stenger



Rainbow Confab

Here is information about the Supportive Communities Network of the Brethren Mennonite Council for LGBT Interests that Andy Hedberg shared at the Congregational Meeting:
<https://www.bmclgbt.org/scn>

And, here is the article Andy mentioned during his presentation:

How to Make Your Church Safe for the LGBTQ+ Community from Ethics Daily

[Link](#)

<https://ethicsdaily.com/how-to-make-your-church-safe-for-the-lgbtq-community/>

Here are a few excerpts from the above article, in case you don't have time to read it in its entirety:

Studies show that youth who grow up in religious communities have lower rates of suicidal ideations than youth who do not. However, for one segment of the population, the statistics are opposite. LGBTQ persons who mature in religious contexts experience higher rates of suicidal ideation and attempts than LGBTQ persons outside the church, according to research by Jeremy J. Gibbs published in 2015.



Wedding Invitation

Leah Roeschley and Jacob Walker will be getting married during a portion of the worship service at Hopedale Mennonite Church on Sunday, Feb. 16. ALL are invited to come to Hopedale Mennonite Church that day for worship and to witness this special event. The service begins at 9:30 a.m.. There will be a cupcake and coffee reception following the worship service. The church is located at 5192 Hopedale Rd., Hopedale, IL.

A note from the Worship Committee

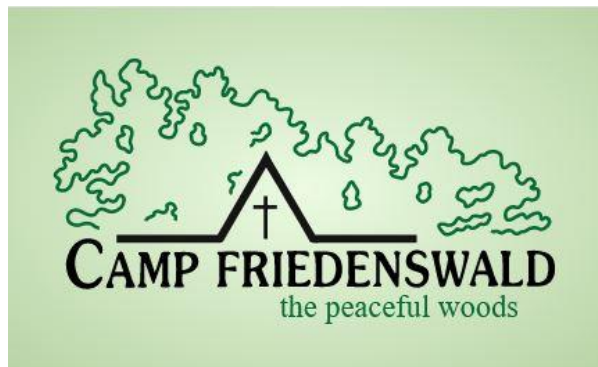
The effects of extreme weather and warming temperatures are being felt all around the world. As Christians, we are called to be mindful of the impact these environmental changes are having in our country and around the globe. On the worship table on the podium, the ceramic tray depicts the elements of wind, water and sky. The plant shows life and growth, and the 100-year-old Bolivian cloth reminds us of our neighbors in other parts of the world. God's word, the Bible, remains a constant and calming presence despite the many changes that surround us.

Mennonite Relief Sale

The 2020 Relief Sale is only two 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).

Worship Participants

A spreadsheet of Sunday morning volunteer positions for 2020 is posted on the bulletin board. On the back are tips for ushers and nursery helpers. If you trade a duty with someone please email the office. Laurie keeps the master spreadsheet and works on distribution and publicity. Thank you to all who help with these important Sunday morning tasks. To see the list online [use this link](#). The list is updated frequently and will soon include more months.



Camp Friedenswald Winter Church Retreat will be Jan. 24 - 26.
Please [visit this link](#) for more details and to sign up.

Creation Care Confab

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

As announced last Sunday, here are details about this Thursday's Interfaith Green Team Gathering:

WHEN: Thursday, Jan. 23 from 7-8:30 p.m.

WHERE: First Presbyterian Church

MEETING PURPOSE: To continue exploring common goals and collaboration for Creation Care in our community.

Climate change tends to scramble time, defying our sense of an orderly progression. As Robert Macfarlane, the chronicler of nature, climate, and the environment, has said, "We burn Carboniferous-era fossil fuels to melt Pleistocene-era ice to determine Anthropocene future climates."

source: [One Thing You Can Do: Make Your New Year's Resolutions Count](#)

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.



Anniversaries

Paul and Lynn Chang 60 years on Jan. 23

Birthdays

Vivian Hubbard Jan. 23

Ben Jablonski Jan. 25

Emily Petri Jan. 27



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 2020

MCN has been asked to pray for the Progressive Care Unit. PCU is located on the second floor of the patient bed tower and provides care for neurosurgical and other high-acuity patients at Advocate BroMenn Medical Center.



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 on those same days.

Deadline for Midweek and bulletin items is noon on Wednesday.

Voice of the Day

God didn't call America to do what she's doing in the world now.

- Martin Luther King Jr.



Building Use

Wednesday, Jan. 22

5 pm Overeaters Anonymous

Saturday, Jan. 25

10 am Overeaters Anonymous

Monday, Jan. 27

5:30 pm Al-Anon

Tuesday, Jan. 28

7 pm Cantus Novus

Today's Chuckle

City slicker: "Look at that bunch of cows."

Farmer: "Not bunch ... herd."

City slicker: "Heard what?"

Farmer: "Herd of cows."

City slicker: "Sure I've heard of cows."

Farmer: "No, a cow herd."

City slicker: "Why should I care what a cow heard? I've got no secrets from a cow."



Serving this week

South Greeters: Adam & Amy Reiman

West Greeter: Mark Roeschley
Welcome Table: Julie Musselman
Ushers: Ben & Caroline Roeschley, Mike & Stephanie Company
Sermon: Joe Culpepper
Worship Leader: Lynn Reha
Song Leader: Glenn Wilson
Accompanist: Dorothy Loepp
Scripture Reader: Joe Jantze
Children's Time: Darrel Miller
Children's Song Leader: Phil Hoffman
Technology: Rick Harnish
Toddler Nursery: Kristen Satchwell
Preschool Nursery: Lexi Neely