



Midweek Connection at MCN

Jan. 29, 2020

## Worship with us this Sunday, Feb. 2

Scripture: Ruth 1:1-18

**Sermon: *Take the less traveled road* by Pastor Gary Martin**

In Scripture, God seems to always call people to take the less traveled road. Orpah was willing, but chose to play it safe. Orpah reflects on her decision, as we begin a series on the book of Ruth, and celebrate Communion.

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### 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 call the office to sign up.

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

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 - Noon

Building hours 9-4 daily except Wednesday

Gary Martin, Transitional Pastor [gmartin5@comcast.net](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:church@normalmennonite.org) or 309.452.6622.

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, Jan. 30

6:15 am Next Man Bible Study

### Sunday, Feb. 2

9 am Pre-service Prayer

9:30 am Worship

10:45 am Christian Ed for Children

10:45 Blood Pressure checks

11 am Christian Ed for Adults

6 pm Junior Choir

6:45 pm Youth Choir

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From Jan. 26, 2020

--Please pray for Bernice Valverde on the death of her brother and Doug Valverde, on the passing of his uncle, Floyd Weber.

--Diane Wiman asked for prayers for her sister as she recuperates from knee replacement surgery and her brother who is providing care.

--Lynette Miller thanked the congregation for their prayers for her daughter Elizabeth who had surgery on her arm - which went well and asks for continued prayers as they wait for further medical tests and results. One preliminary report was good news.

--Paul Watkins asked for prayers for their family because a favorite cousin died while on a cruise.

--Annette Harnish asked for prayers for their son and daughter-in-law and their young children who have experienced a lot of illness while Gabriella is on maternity leave.

--A joy was shared that Holly Zehr had a successful book fair at her school.

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## 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.

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## Milepost 29

## God Provides, We Decide

February sermons and dramatic monologues will examine four characters in the Book of Ruth. This story sheds light on how our decisions intersect with God's providence. A soap opera motif lightens up this serious theological study.

Ruth is about ordinary people, facing ordinary life events: feasts and famine; birth and death; romance and loneliness; singleness and marriage; stability and uncertainty; celebration and depression; real estate purchases and foreclosures; insiders and outsiders; mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law; sudden appearances of unknown relatives; gossip and manipulation; mystery and suspense; immigration, ethnic prejudice, health care, and welfare. The story is 3300 years old, but has divine cosmic significance for today.

Ruth explores the mystery of how our decisions open up opportunities for God's grace to flow into our lives and the lives of others. The themes apply to life and transition work: taking risks, emotional honesty, doing the right thing, embracing the outsider, and trusting in God's grace.

Gleaning Right is coming soon to a sanctuary near you on the MCN channel, Sundays at 9:30 a.m. Special guests include Orpah (Feb. 2), Naomi (Feb. 9), Boaz (Feb. 16), and Ruth (Feb. 23). They will be available for questions, selfies, and autographs after the service. To prepare, please read the entire story, and reflect on the following questions:

1. Was there an Elimelech in your family history: someone who made a decision taking your family into a radically different experience?
2. Have you felt abandoned by a loved one who died, or was emotionally distant or unavailable in other ways?
3. Have you avoided or taken a less traveled road in the past? Does the Holy Spirit have a less traveled road direction for MCN?

## Transition Updates:

1. How is transition different from an interim? An interim simply covers pastoral responsibilities during the search for long-term leadership. A transition enhances the search process by involving the congregation in self-study and vision discernment before the search begins.
2. Household visits: 41 completed; 23 additional scheduled. That means 60% of active MCN households will have participated. That's good, but it would be even better if we could reach 70%! Thanks for encouraging others to sign up for a visit by Feb. 18, so more data is available to develop a plan for transitional efforts.
3. Important dates: March 8, 10:45 a.m. Presentation of the Visit Report and Recommendations.

March 29: 9:30 a.m.-2:15 p.m. "Re-membering MCN" -the first congregational process event.

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### **100 Gifts for 100 Years**

This year MCC will be celebrating one hundred years of service. We begin preparations for the 62nd year of relief Sales. Mennonite Church of Normal is always active in the preparations of the Sale. As we begin preparations Mennonite Women would like to encourage all to come and help make some things for the Relief Sale. The following six weeks will be designated as work evenings every Wednesday to make 100 gifts to sell at the Sale. ALL are invited to come and share their gift. Together we can make 100 nonfood items.

Bring whatever you can to work on or to share. If you aren't sure what to bring come and help someone or learn something new. We want to work as teams or as families. What kinds of things might we do? Some suggestions are: knot a comforter; put binding on a comforter, sew a project on the sewing machine, (sewing machine will be there), crochet a scarf or potholder or dishcloth; make a wreath; make some cards, knit an item like a scarf, sweater or scrunchie or afghan; plant some flowers/seedlings); make some flower arrangements; put together items for silent auction baskets; all kinds of art; painting; crafts; small woodworking items are just some possibilities.

The two weeks before the Sale will be used for some food items.

This is an opportunity for ALL to be involved on the next 6 Wednesday evenings from 6:30-8:30. Come everyone and bring your project or hands to share and help someone. Let's have fun as we prepare for the Illinois sale. Questions: Ask Gerry, Marcia or Roelie

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### **Coming this Sunday...**

...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!

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### **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.

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### **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.

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### **Candle Policy**

Please remember that "real" candles are not allowed at MCN except during regular and special worship services. 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.

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### **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](http://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](mailto:cropp@ilstu.edu) or 309/826-9183 as soon as possible.

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### **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.

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### **Minutes**

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

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### **Missing**

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

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### ***Thank you!***

Thank you for all the cards, phone calls and visits following Joe's surgery.

Joe and Ruth Haney

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### **Rainbow Confab**

As seen in recent news:

Belated apology for high-profile alumna: [link](#)

The president of Goshen College offered "profound apologies": [link](#)

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### **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.

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### **Mennonite Relief Sale**

The 2020 Relief Sale is around the corner! 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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### **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.

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### **Creation Care Confab**

**Periodic info and musings to help open conversations about God's amazing Creation**  
Baseline survey highlights divergence, convergence in Mennonites beliefs on sustainability & climate change: [link](#)

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### **Hungry World Farm Update**

Greetings, Friends,  
Winter moves along slowly as we plan and wait for spring.  
Here are few items to note from Hungry World Farm:

Friday, Jan. 31 - 6 p.m. - Neighbors' Meal. Bring food to share for a carry-in meal. Enjoy food, interaction, an update from the farm and a short educational segment.

Saturday, March 28 - Hungry World Farm Learning Day. 9 a.m. through lunch with guest speakers on how to build the soil and soil health.

Our current giving project to the FLC window fund has received a total of \$2,561 so far. We are over half way towards our goal of \$4,000! Please consider a gift. Do you know someone who would like to live and learn on the farm as an intern? Direct them to our website and check out "Interns."

Thanks for your support as we learn about food and the many hungers of our lives!  
Peace! Cal Zehr [www.hungryworldfarm.earth](http://www.hungryworldfarm.earth)

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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**

Ross Hershberger Jan. 29

Manuella Kasongo Jan. 30

Nevaeh Nester Jan. 31

Craig Ohmart Feb. 1

Rochelle Augspurger Feb. 4

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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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### **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.

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## 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.

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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

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.

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## Voice of the Day

When morality comes up against profit, it is seldom that profit loses.

- Shirley Chisholm

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## Building Use

**Wednesday, Jan. 29**

5 pm Overeaters Anonymous

**Saturday, Feb. 1**

10 am Overeaters Anonymous

**Monday, Feb. 3**

5:30 pm Al-Anon

**Tuesday, Feb. 4**

7 pm Cantus Novus

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## Today's Chuckle

I went for an interview at a big IT company today for the position of Computer Hacking Investigator.

The boss asked me, "So, what makes you suitable for this job?"

"Well," I replied, "I hacked into your computer and invited myself to this interview!"

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## Serving this week

South Greeters: Emmanuel Kasongo & Tanya Kimbembe

West Greeter: Wilma Dyck

Welcome Table: David Voegtlin

Ushers: Darin and Frank Driscoll, Andreas & Ian Unzicker

Sermon: Gary Martin

Worship Leader: Tanya Kimbembe

Song Leader: Cindy Ropp

Accompanist: Elsa Raab

Scripture Reader: Chellie Miller

Children's Time: Shelly King

Children's Song Leader: Melika Hershberger

Technology: Lynn Reha

Toddler Nursery: Courtney Yoder

Preschool Nursery: Holly Zehr