



Midweek Connection at MCN

Feb. 26, 2020

100 Gifts for 100 Years Cancelled for Tonight

Worship with us this Sunday, March 1

Scripture: Mathew 4:1-11

Sermon: Beginning the Journey by Jan Miller

This is the first Sunday of Lent. Jesus begins his Lenten journey with 40 days in the wilderness, where he is confronted by the devil. We will look at his time in the desert and also consider how we might spend our days journeying to Easter. Perhaps a labyrinth can help us along our journey.



Church Directory Announcement

It's that time of year - time to publish a new church directory of names, addresses, emails, phone numbers and birthdays. If you have corrections from last year please email Laurie at church@normalmennonite.org. Once it is updated we will print a copy for you to proofread - it will be available on a table for several Sundays. You will also be able to look at the file online. We are going to print the directory this year directly from our church database software **for the first time**. Even if your listing was correct last year and you have no changes we need you to proofread

your listing. Once these edits are corrected we will be print and publish the 2020 Directory. Thanks for your help in making it up-to-date and accurate.

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 March 8-12; 15-19; 29-31; April 5-14; 19-21.

Ron Ropp, Pastor of Visitation is providing pastoral care for those who are ill or hospitalized. Barry and Marge Weaver and Wayne and Lois Hochstetler 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

Thursday, Feb. 27

6:15 am Next Man Bible Study

Sunday, March 1

9 am Pre-service Prayer

9:30 am Worship

10:45 am Christian Ed for Children

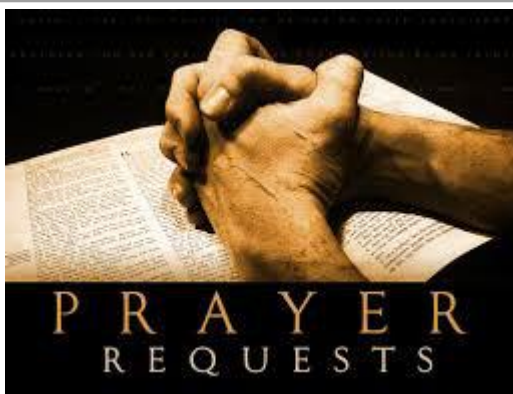
11 am Christian Ed for Adults

5 pm JMYF & MYF

6 pm Junior Choir

6:45 pm Youth Choir

7:30 pm Adult Choir



From Feb. 23

--Please pray for Lynn Reha who had hernia surgery yesterday.

--Helen Dick Brandon asks for prayers for a friend, Mandy White, who has bone cancer and has had lots of complications and has been in and out of the ICU.

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 57

Lent 2020: Show Us

Today is Ash Wednesday, the first day in Lent. Lent can do for our life what spring cleaning does for our home: a time to shake out a year of accumulated dust and dirt from inside our lives, and open the windows to let in the fresh new winds of the Holy Spirit. Ash Wednesday helps us realize the need for spring cleaning in our life, and invites us to begin the Lenten journey that takes us all the way to the Cross.

Ash Wednesday reminds us of our frailty and weaknesses, because left to our own devices, we try to be in control, and independent. Ironically, it is our vulnerability, the acknowledgment of weaknesses, that empowers us. Our Lord told the Apostle Paul, "My kindness (grace) is all you need. My power is strongest when you are weak." (2 Cor. 12:9).

Our Lenten theme is "Show us." In the Gospel texts Jesus invites us into a deeper understanding of and relationship with him. Whether it's a way forward through the desert, a way to overcome temptation, the extent of God's love, or the power to overcome death, Jesus wants to show us. Jesus wants to be revealed in new and deeper ways to his church.

Let's pray that Jesus will show up in our lives in new ways during Lent, and show us who he is and who we are, as his brothers and sisters. Daily meditations on the Lenten texts, written by Goshen College staff, students and faculty, are available at [this link](https://www.goshen.edu/devotions/).

<https://www.goshen.edu/devotions/>

Transition Update

The household visits are completed, and the report to the congregation is being written. Please contact me if you would like a get acquainted visit. I will continue to visit, but at a much slower pace. Thanks to all who participated, and for understanding how this major effort consumed a majority of my workload in January and February. I will be more available now, but it will be different from the Tim and Jane era! Please contact me anytime—whether I am in Normal or at home: gmartin5@comcast.net; 574.238.5475. My contact information is in the bulletin and Midweek Connection, every week.

Important congregational meetings:

March 8, 10:45 a.m.—Visit Report and Transition Plan for 2020;

March 29: 9:30 a.m.-2:15 p.m. "Re-membering MCN" -an interactive story telling experience.

-Gary Martin



The Worship Committee is grateful to Jim and Kay Sommer once again for creating our banner, with the addition of dead twigs and the cross. Kay selected a banner hand-dyed and assembled by Janelle Friesen a few years ago to use as background for this season's Lenten/Easter theme "SHOW US."

We also would like to thank Nancy Fisher for her work in creating the Worship Table and niche visuals. Her selection of desert plants, twigs, moss and rocks communicate the dry and spiritually barren climate of this Lenten season.

New: Worship Participants!

A spreadsheet of Sunday morning volunteer positions for 2020 is posted on the bulletin board. Tips for ushers and nursery helpers are included. 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 was updated Feb. 18 to include a few more months.

The Bethel College Choir

On Monday, March 23rd, we have the opportunity to host the Bethel College concert choir. We will have a sign-up for hosting the students. A host simply needs to provide a place to stay on Monday evening following the 7 p.m. concert, breakfast the next morning, and a sack lunch for the bus ride the next day; we will need to find housing for 50 people. We will also have a sign-up for desserts and salads for the choir's Monday evening supper. Please sign up at the back of the church or on [Sign Up Genius \(https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F4CAFA92FABF49-bethel\)](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F4CAFA92FABF49-bethel). Thank you in advance for opening your home and hospitality to the students and their conductor. If you have questions, please contact Phil Dick at (309) 824-2551 or Helen Dick Brandon (309) 826-4359.

Hesston College Bel Canto Singers

We have the privilege of being included in the tour schedule of the Bel Canto Singers from Hesston (KS) College on Sunday morning, March 22. We are asked to provide Saturday night lodging/hosting (arriving at 9 p.m.) and Sunday breakfast in your home for these 20 folks. After participating in our worship service, they will join us for the annual post-Relief Sale lunch provided before they leave for KS. This is a wonderful chance to connect with students and faculty! Please use the Sign Up Genius or contact Marge Weaver (309-530-8713, margemartinweaver@gmail.com) to make your reservation to host. Thanks so much for sharing your homes! [Sign Up Genius Link](#)

Adult Choir Practice

Adult Choir Practice resumes this coming Sunday at 7:30 p.m. All are welcome.

Food in Kitchen

We are busy people and we all hate to see food go to waste. Lately the rule about labeling all food in the kitchen including the refrigerators and freezers has been largely ignored. Please label ALL food left in the kitchen including condiments. If the food is intended for a certain group please indicate that. If you want anyone to eat it so it does not go to waste, say so. Food left in the frig or freezer unlabeled does not get eaten because no feels they have the right to do so. Therefore, we are wasting a lot of food - especially ice cream.



New Compostable Tableware for Relief Sale

If you are interested in supporting this effort to turn the tableware for the dinner and breakfast meals into compost, not landfill waste, please donate to the Compostable Tableware Project. Your donation will save the plates, cutlery, and cups from going into the landfill. Compostable tableware is about 25% more expensive than Styrofoam, so to maintain our funding to MCC projects, we are seeking donations to defray the additional costs. If you wish to contribute, please write a separate check from other contributions. Make it out to Mennonite Church of Normal with Compostable Tableware in the memo line.

Cancelled tonight.

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 six 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



Rainbow Confab

Periodic info and musings to help open conversations about God's amazing rainbows
Myth & Fact

Myth: It's a "lifestyle"

Fact: It's sometimes said that lgbtq people live a "gay lifestyle."

The problem with that word is that it can trivialize lgbtq people and the struggles they face. Being lgbtq is no more a lifestyle than being straight or cisgender – it's a life, just like anyone else's.

source: Brethren Mennonite Council for LGBT Interests

62nd Illinois Mennonite Relief Sale

62nd Illinois Mennonite Relief Sale is March 20-21 at the Interstate Center in Bloomington. The 202 theme is "Celebrating MCC's Century of Global Ministry in the Name of Christ."

***THE DEADLINE FOR ORDERING PIE CRUSTS IS TODAY! Please call Gerry Schrock (452-7345) if you still need pie crusts.**

*Each church is asked to donate five or more NEW ITEMS FOR THE AUCTION. Let us know as soon as possible.

*The DUTCH MARKET needs more pies (especially cherry pies), cookies, bread, tea rings and gluten-free food items.

More volunteers are needed on Friday evening.

*SIGN-UP SHEETS: Thank you to everyone who have signed up so far. There are still many empty spaces. More volunteers are needed especially for serving the chicken/fish dinners (Friday, 4:05-5:30 p.m.) and serving pancakes (Saturday, 5:30-8:30 a.m. and 10:30-12:30). All help is appreciated

*NEW SOUP BOOTH: needs few volunteers for the compostable/trash sorting. People would put compostable items in the compostable bin and the trash in the trash bin.

*Help is needed for the RECYCLING of cardboard, syrup bottles, applesauce cans etc.

*Help distribute the booklets, posters and yard signs.

*DISPLAY TABLE will be on Sunday, March 15.

*Questions? Ask Gerry Schrock, Marcia Rossi or Roelie Homan



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

If in Doubt, Throw it Out

- 1 - Recycling becomes impossible when too much contamination occurs, which means good recyclables could be sent to the landfill
- 2 - Recycling machinery can break when contaminants get tangled
- 3 - Unsafe work environments are created for those sorting our stuff
- 4 - The worth of recyclables can be devalued by contamination, which could mean buyers stop buying or taking our materials

Use the following links to know what to recycle and what not to:

[recycle coach](#) (also available as a phone app)

[Link](#) to the City of Bloomington's recycling Info

[Link](#) to the Town of Normal's recycling Info

[Link](#) to recycling info for other communities in McLean County





Birthdays

Bess Desch Feb. 27
Marjorie Kasongo Feb. 28
Lorene Busenitz March 1
Loren Moshier March 2
Bryce Nester March 2
Lily Driscoll March 3
Jeremy Haab March 3
Amy Reiman March 4



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.



ILLINOIS
NETWORK HUB



Come join the MEDA Illinois network hub as it visits a local upstart business: The Proving Ground Bouldering Gym. Our evening will give attendees the opportunity to network and explore one of Bloomington/Normal's newest small businesses and will feature a conversation with Barry and Marge Weaver, co-owners. The Weavers will share about the satisfying and challenging experiences of starting a small business.

DETAILS

DATE: THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2020

TIME: 7 PM - 8:30 PM

PLACE: THE PROVING GROUND BOULDERING GYM | 1503 E COLLEGE AVE, NORMAL, IL 061761

COST: \$0 *(If you plan to enjoy the climbing experience after the presentation, the cost is covered, but please fill out a waiver at tpgbouldering.com ahead of time if this is your first time climbing at TPG. The gym is open until 10:00pm)*

Light refreshments will be served.

ABOUT THE SPEAKERS: Dr. Barry Weaver practiced pediatrics for nearly 30 years in Bloomington, IL. Recently retired from medicine, Barry and his wife, Marge, have jumped into the world of owning and helping operate a small business: The Proving Ground Bouldering Gym in Normal. Barry's longtime passion for climbing and interest in running a small business have intersected at The Proving Ground, which keeps Barry and Marge busy in post-retirement.

RSVP BY FEBRUARY 25

All are welcome. Please RSVP by calling/texting
Eric at (309) 831-6585.

Voice of the Day

You are never strong enough that you don't need help.

-Cesar Chavez



Building Use

Wednesday, Feb. 26

5 pm Overeaters Anonymous

7 pm Back to Basics

Saturday, Feb. 29

10 am Overeaters Anonymous

Monday, March 2

5:30 pm Al-Anon

Today's Chuckle

While eating at an outdoor cafe in the historic district, an art connoisseur noticed a mangy little kitten lapping up milk from a saucer. The saucer, he realized with a start, was a rare and precious piece. After finishing his meal, we went up to the owner and offered him two dollars for the cat.

"It's not for sale," said the owner.

"Now, now" said the collector, "that cat is just ugly and no one would want it, but I'm eccentric. I like to help out underprivileged animals. I'll raise my offer to five dollars."

"It's a deal," said the proprietor with a smile, and pocketed the five on the spot.

"For that amount I'm sure you won't mind throwing in the saucer," said the connoisseur. "The little kitten seems so content drinking from it."

"No way," said the owner. "That's my lucky saucer. I've already sold 26 cats so far this week drinking from it!"



Serving this week

South Greeters: Andy & Beth Reeser

West Greeter: Shannon Neely

Welcome Table: Mary Jantze
Ushers: Roger & Linda Clemmons & Heath & Phil Brandon
Sermon: Jan Miller
Worship Leader: Marge Weaver
Song Leader: Wayne Hochstetler
Accompanist: Elsa Raab
Scripture Reader: Marge Weaver
Children's Time: Shelly King
Children's Song Leader: Melika Hershberger
Technology: Adam Augspurgen
Toddler Nursery: Caeli Haab
Preschool Nursery: Kenayah Tshiseleka



Cold and Flu Season

It's cold and flu season at MCN. Consider a fist bump instead of a handshake. Let's all wash our hands frequently and make use of the hand sanitizer at the Welcome Desk and other locations. Thanks!

Missing

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

Please Wear Your Nametag

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

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 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.

Minutes

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

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.