



Midweek Connection at MCN

March 11, 2020

Worship with us this Sunday, March 15

Scripture: Exodus 17:1-7; John 4:1-42

Sermon: *Turning Whine into Water* by Gary Martin

Third Sunday in Lent. Show Us the Rock of our Salvation from which comes living water.

Note: There will be no "open mic" during Lent. Please write announcements for Community Life and/or joys and concerns for Sharing on the paper provided and hand it to Pastor Gary.



Church Directory is Ready to Proofread - Deadline March 16 at noon!!!

The 2020 Church Directory is printed and in the back of the sanctuary on a table. I printed the directory directly from our church database software **for the first time**. Birthdays and anniversaries will be listed in the back. Even if your listing was correct last year and you have no changes, I need you to proofread your listing. There are instructions on the table.

You can also look at the file online using [this link](#) . There are instructions on how to communicate changes and/or let me know it is o.k. as is.

A few of you could be missing entirely - we need to correct that!

If you do NOT proofread your listing a volunteer will call or email you. Please proofread your listing to minimize the time this step takes. If you are willing to help with this step, sign up to help in the office March 16-25. [Use this link.](#)

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. Laurie

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 through March 12; March 15-19; 28-31; April 5-14; 19-22.

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

Wednesday, March 11

6:30 p.m. 100 Gifts for 100 Years

Thursday, March 12

6:15 a.m. Next Man Bible Study

Sunday, March 15

9 a.m. Pre-service Prayer

9:30 a.m. Worship

10:45 a.m. Christian Ed for Children

11 a.m. Christian Ed for Adults

5 p.m. JMYF & MYF

6 p.m. Junior Choir

6:45 p.m. Youth Choir

7:30 p.m. Adult Choir

Monday, March 16

5 p.m. Outreach Committee

Tuesday, March 17

5:30 p.m. Church Board

6:30 p.m. Youth Ministry Committee



From March 8

--Please pray for Evelyn Bertsche who is back in the hospital. When she is dismissed she will be moving to the McLean County Nursing Home.

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 71 Corona Virus and Congregational Life

Last Sunday we were called into worship with Psalm 121: When we have troubles and difficulties, where does our help come from? Our help comes from the Lord who made heaven and earth. Throughout the service we prayed: "Lord, show us the extent of your faithful, loving presence," and were comforted with our Lord's words through a song, "Don't be afraid. My love is stronger than your fear."

What our world is facing is real, and will have significant impact on everyone's life, and congregational life. But I encourage us to claim the promises above: we don't need to be overwhelmed by fear or panic. God's love is faithful and present among us. And, as brothers and sisters at MCN, we are here for each other. It's time to pray fervently (Phil. 4:4-7), and claim the promise that the "peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus."

A detour is ahead. We pull off at this mile marker, to adjust the direction of our journey together. As of Monday, the Church Board and Pastoral Council began work on a response plan. Unfortunately, both groups had to reschedule their meetings this week, to next week. But we are working via e-mail, and hope to have an initial response plan e-mailed to the congregation by Saturday.

What we can say today:

1. We encourage everyone to follow hygiene recommendations: wash hands frequently, use sanitizer when you can't wash hands, cover coughs/sneezes, maintain practical social distances, replace handshakes with elbow bumps, etc.
2. We strongly encourage those in high risk categories (elderly, compromised immune systems, and those with contagious illnesses) to not attend worship services.
3. We are working on plans to maintain congregational life connections in the short term for

those who can no longer attend; and contingency plans in case services have to be cancelled in the future. These will include use of technology, and more thorough attention to contact with everyone on a regular basis.

4. Relief Sale: As of now, the sale is on, with added hygiene precautions. The Relief Sale Board is in communication with local public health officials, and will likely have an emergency meeting this weekend. Ben Roeschley writes: "I am encouraged and confident that our decision will be informed/ driven by the institutions and authorities in our local community."

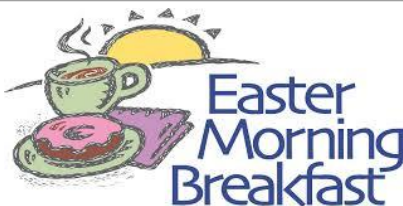
5. My focus this week has already shifted to the above concerns, and away from preparation for transitional events. That is to say, we may likely postpone events which have minimal benefit with lower participation.

-Gary Martin, Transitional Pastor



Invitation to consider giving electronically to MCN

About 1/3 of the giving units already use a means other than checks or cash in the offering plates to offer gifts to MCN. Some have their bank or other financial institution send checks directly to the church. Some checks come from a regular bank and others from a Donor Advised Fund or as a Required Minimum Distribution from an IRA. An alternate route is to have funds transferred electronically from your checking or savings account or your credit or debit card directly to the church account. What are the advantages of such a plan? How do I get signed up to make this happen? Do you have some questions? See documents on the table in the foyer at church or contact the Office Manager.



Please join us for our annual Easter Sunday Breakfast at MCN!

Celebrate this special morning with our church friends and visiting families on April 12 from 8-8:45 a.m. Please sign up to bring a breakfast casserole, breakfast break (coffee cake, muffins, cinnamon rolls, etc) or fruit. Everything else will be provided. We are looking forward to spending a joyful time together! [Click here for the Sign Up Genius link](#) or see the sign up sheet on the bulletin board in the atrium. Please see Vivian Hubbard with questions.



Needed: pussywillow branches

Pussywillow branches are needed for our Easter morning breakfast! Do you have a pussywillow bush that needs a little pruning? We are looking for some cuttings to use as table decorations for our Easter brunch. If you can share, please contact Vivian Hubbard (309-310-6570 or Vivian.hubbard@gmail.com). Thanks!

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

Update: Thank you for hosting - we have housing covered. 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 hope you will join them for worship. After participating in our service, they will join us for the annual post-Relief Sale lunch.



Compostable Tableware for Relief Sale

Thanks for all who have made an extra donation to the Relief Sale in order to replace styrofoam tableware with compostable tableware. The amount needed was about \$500 and that much has been donated. Thanks so much. --Lynn Reha

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: Transgender people are gay or lesbian.

Fact: There is no direct correlation between gender identity and sexual orientation. Transgender people may identify as gay, bisexual, pansexual, asexual or heterosexual.

source: Brethren Mennonite Council for LGBT Interests

62nd Illinois Mennonite Relief Sale

62nd Illinois Mennonite Relief Sale, March 20-21 at the Interstate Center in Bloomington. The 2020 theme is "Celebrating MCC's Century of Global Ministry in the Name of Christ."

*The DISPLAY TABLE is Sunday, March 15. Bring your quilts, comforters, knitted & crocheted items, arts & craft things and other homemade items. They will be put in boxes ready to be brought to the Relief Sale on Friday morning.

*All BAKED GOODS, plants, and other items have to be brought to the church by FRIDAY, March 20 by 9 a.m.

*DUTCH MARKET: needs a few people for stocking on Friday afternoon, any time between noon and 4 p.m.

*SIGN-UP SHEETS: a few volunteers are still needed for serving chicken/fish dinners (Friday 4:05-5:30 p.m.), serving pancakes (Saturday 5:30-8:30 a.m., 10:30-12:30), Information Booth (Saturday 6:30-9:30 a.m.) and setup tables and booths (Thursday, between 8 a.m.-2 p.m.).

*NEW SOUP BOOTH, Friday 4 p.m. Soup and composting are taken place in two different places and are separated from each others. We need more people for the trash/composting.

*Distribute BOOKLETS, POSTERS and YARD SIGNS.

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

HELP!!!!

More pies are needed.

A call was received this week for 70 more fruit pies served individually at the chicken and fish dinners on Friday night. I have committed to 30. They are especially wanting cherry, blueberry and peach pies. Please sign up on the sheet if you can make a pie or two or more! Help is also needed on Friday at 9 a.m. at the church to cut the pies into pieces and put in individual containers. Thank you for rising to the challenge. Gerry and Marcia

Creation Care Confab

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

There is nothing at all good about the news climate scientists are sharing with us, even in their more optimistic models, but their news does present a vital space for the work of Christian communities. --Anthony Siegrist

For the full article, read here: <https://mennocreationcare.org/but-we-cant-make-a-difference/>

Bethel College Choir Sings in Grain Bin

Which Bethel College is this? Kansas? I used to be a technical writer for GSI Grain Bins so this struck a chord with me. [Click on this link](#). Enjoy, Laurie

Volunteer receptionists in the office needed and appreciated

We are nearing the home stretch....in the office.....we are done with year-end as soon as the Directory is printed and distributed, hopefully soon after the MCC Relief Sale. I could use some assistance to watch the phone and act as receptionist while I catch up on the stack of non-timely projects that got set aside during the busy season. And then there are some long-range projects such as entering everyone in the email address book and creating groups for committees. Please consider signing up for a slot [at this link](#). If your plans change you can always go back into Sign Up Genius and delete it. Bring something to do in case it is a quiet day. You can also sign up for an afternoon, just note that in the comments - any time slot is appreciated. Thanks everyone! Laurie



Anniveraries

Larry Schrader and Elfriede Massier March 14

Birthdays

Erin Ponnou-Delaffon March 11

Al Dick March 13

Darrel Miller March 13

Carroll Miller March 15



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

We can have democracy in this country or we can have great wealth concentrated in the hands of a few, but we cannot have both."

- Louis Brandeis



Building Use

Wednesday, March 11

5 p.m. Overeaters Anonymous

7 p.m. Back to Basics

Saturday, March 14

10 a.m. Overeaters Anonymous

Monday, March 16

5:30 p.m. Al-Anon

Tuesday, March 17

7 p.m. Cantus Novus

Today's Chuckle

The manager of a large city zoo was drafting a letter to order a pair of animals. He sat at his computer and typed the following sentence: "I would like to place an order for two mongooses, to be delivered at your earliest convenience."

He stared at the screen, focusing on that odd word "mongooses." Then he deleted the word and added another, so that the sentence now read: "I would like to place an order for two mongeese, to be delivered at your earliest convenience."

Again he stared at the screen, this time focusing on the new word, which seemed just as odd as the original one. Finally, he deleted the whole sentence and started all over. "Everyone knows no fully stocked zoo should be without a mongoose," he typed. "Please send us two of them."



Serving this week

South Greeters: Eric & Chellie Miller

West Greeter: Mary Ann King

Welcome Table: Shannon Neely

Ushers: Andy & Beth Reeser, David Voegtlin & Heath Brandon

Sermon: Gary Martin

Worship Leader: Darvis King

Song Leader: Barry Weaver

Accompanist: Dorothy Loepp

Scripture Reader: Darvis King

Children's Time: Shelly King

Children's Song Leader: Shelly King

Technology: Lynn Reha

Toddler Nursery: Kristy Hoffmann

Preschool Nursery: Lexi Neely

Presentation at Mennonite Museum announced

Lauren Friesen and David French, of the University of Michigan, will present an illustrated presentation on "The Dutch Golden Age: Mennonite to the Core" on Saturday, March 28 at 10 a.m. at the Illinois Mennonite Museum, Metamora.

MHF seeks half-time Exec

Mennonite Healthcare Fellowship (MHF) is seeking a half-time Executive Director to start between May and September 2020 who is committed to Anabaptist values and the mission of MHF, has proven skills in administration, communication, and networking, and has an intergenerationally compelling vision for MHF. Interested persons are invited to send a resume and statement of intent, including the broad strokes of your vision and thoughts about a strategic plan, to president@mennohealth.org. More information at www.mennohealth.org.

New: Worship Participants!

A spreadsheet of Sunday morning volunteer positions for 2020 is posted on the bulletin board. If you trade a duty with someone please email the office. To see the list online [use this link](#). The list was updated Feb. 18.

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.

Cold and Flu Season

It's cold and flu season at MCN. Consider an elbow 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.