



The Midweek Wednesday
2020

Mennonite Church of Normal

April 1,

The Midweek

The Midweek is published three times a week during the Covid-19 Pandemic. Previous issues are posted in the lower right hand corner of the church website.

Worship Information for Sunday

We worship together, in our homes, every Sunday, 9:30 a.m. (see instructions below for connecting via computer or phone)

Palm Sunday: Show us God, how to balance celebration and grief

Isaiah 50:4-9a; Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29; Matthew 21:1-11; Philippians 2:5-11

Sermon: Jesus gave up everything!

As we begin Holy Week, the Apostle Paul explains both the significance of Jesus' life and death, and implications for life in the faith community, in Phil. 2:1-11. It helps us put our current travails in perspective. There will be a special time for children, and inspiring music to bring peace to our souls.

Looking ahead to Easter Sunday: We will celebrate Communion! Don't worry about the elements—any bread or cracker or chip, and beverage you have at home, will be blessed as we gather at our Lord's Table.

Zoom invite

Topic: MCN Worship

Time: Each Sunday 09:20 AM Central Time Service begins at 9:30

Join Worship [click here.](#)

<https://zoom.us/j/762323722>

Meeting ID: 762 323 722

One tap mobile
+13126266799,,762323722# US (Chicago)

Here is the phone number and code to join worship by any phone.
+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

Meeting ID: 762 323 722

Zoom

MCN will offer worship, committee meetings and more over Zoom, which is a video teleconferencing platform. Zoom is free and very user friendly. One option is to simply call in from any telephone, follow the prompts and listen. You will be asked to enter the meeting code followed by the # sign. Here is a video on [how to use Zoom](#) sent by a clergy person [link](#). If you need help call Laurie at 309-452-6622. Ross Hershberger has also volunteered to help 309-660-0710. You can also call Lydia Hedberg 309-660-9232.



MCN Social Hour is Tonight!

Tonight at 7:30 p.m. the Mennonite Church of Normal will gather via Zoom to socialize with each other. Leroy Loepp said he wishes he could make great coffee for everyone. You will have to provide your own coffee, tea, hot chocolate or whatever but please connect to Zoom and connect with each other. (Note from Laurie: I will only be able to start this meeting when Pastoral Council ends so be patient).

Topic: MCN Social Hour
Time: Apr 1, 2020 07:30 PM Central Time

[Join Social Hour Click Here](https://zoom.us/j/765550367)
<https://zoom.us/j/765550367>

Meeting ID: 765 550 367

One tap mobile
+13126266799,,765550367#

Dial by your location
+1 312 626 6799

Meeting ID: 765 550 367

God of Grit

By Devon Tracy

God of Splendor, God of Grit
God of beauty, God of sunshine
Father God, Mother Earth, so beautifully entwined

God of laughter from the belly
God of tears cried, not alone
God of patience, God of tenderness
God who makes our hearts, his home

I praise you each morning, at the moons descend
Your warmth on my face,
A beginning that knows no end, a walk into eternity with a steady pace

May my words today be yours, honest, tender, and sweet
May I live to serve, and serve to live, my life a gift laid at your feet
May my heart flow outright, not perfect but after you
May your gentle hand guide me, From dawn until the starry night, under thunderous skies and those that shine blue

Brother Jesus, Father God, Holy Spirit wise and true
Please walk with me today and help to see me through
May my life be a song of praise
Joyously, vulnerably, tenaciously
Lifted up to you!



Milepost 92 Respecting elders among us

Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you. Exodus 20:12

One of the challenges with displaying the Ten Commandments in public places is that Jews, Catholics and Protestants use different numbering systems. The text begins with, “Then God spoke all these words (v. 1). Accordingly, Jews call them the Decalogue—literally, the Ten Words. They appropriately consider the first Word to be the first thing God spoke: v. 2: “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt....” For Jews, the first Word, is pure grace. Christians skip v. 2, and begin numbering with v. 3: “You shall have no other gods before me.” (Protestants and Catholics split and combine other commandments, to end

up with different numberings.)

The above is provided free of charge, to explain why I can’t assign a number to the Word quoted above. But what is most relevant, is that this Word begins the section on how to interact within society. The first section of Words, is about our relationship with God.

I find it interesting that foremost among societal relationships, is the need to honor our parents. It is the only Word with an explanation of why it is important: “so that your days may be long in the land.”

I was taught as a child that honor=obedience. But the word in this context primarily conveys respect for the role of parents in the family system. Consequently, both ancient and traditional cultures to this day, assign this respect of role to the eldest living parents. Grandparents lived in the same household with their children and grandchildren. Their role was clear: the repository for wisdom growing out of life experiences. We learn how to live and die, by listening to their stories. Hence God’s explanation: if you don’t respect their role, you won’t learn what you need to know, make too many bad choices, and your life will be cut short. Again, it’s very much in our

self-interest, to follow God's ways!

The COVID-19 realities are reminding us of our need to respect our elders, and protect their lives. But respecting our elders involves more than keeping them safe. And some of us, who are separated from our parents due to the virus, feel we are not honoring them as we should. Remember two things: the first Word, is pure Grace, and secondly you have honored them in life by respecting their role. Perhaps you can honor them, by seeing that their stories are told (see below).

Having listened to many of our elders' stories at MCN, I am aware of the wealth of wisdom from their life experiences. A few have personal memories of the Great Depression years. A number have heard stories directly from their parents about the deadly flu epidemic of 1918-19, and the Depression. (What I recall hearing from my parents, had a profound impact in shaping my values.) And we have some who experienced WWII related suffering and deprivation in Europe and other parts of the world.

Elders among us: please share your wisdom! How did Christian faith help you or your parents through these terrible crises in the past? What counsel or encouragement do you have for the rest of the MCN household today? Please share them briefly in writing, and email them to me. If you are not comfortable writing, please let us know, and we will find someone with writing skills, to listen to and transcribe your story. -Gary Martin

Volunteers

Several people have volunteered to help fill out government forms and apply for the many assistance programs that have been announced at local, state and federal levels. Contact a member of Pastoral Council and they will match you up with someone who can help in these areas.

God at work in our lives!

A new small group via Zoom: The primary purpose of this group is to help each other discern passion, spiritual gifts, and callings. If you know your spiritual gifts, please consider participating-- you can help others in this process. If interested, contact Gary Martin as soon as possible. Watch for an explanation of why this will be helpful for the congregation, in Friday's Midweek.

From Pastoral Council: Thanks to those who have signed up to help with specific tasks to respond to the new needs we have at MCN. More volunteers are needed. To sign up, [click here](#). If you have immediate needs for pastoral care or anything else, please contact Gary Martin, Ron Ropp, Melika Hershberger, Connie Satchwell, Keith Unzicker or Steve Stenger. (Contact information is below)

Melika Hershberger mfkhersh@gmail.com 309-888-6241

Connie Satchwell cssatch@hotmail.com 309-287-6124

Keith Unzicker keithunzicker@gmail.com 309-369-5008

Steve Stenger ststeng@gmail.com 309-825-2464

Staff Contact Info

Virtual Church Office Hours M-F 9 to 4

Gary Martin, Transitional Pastor gmartin5@comcast.net cell 574.238.5475.

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 with those in care facilities or homebound. This care will be done by phone calls.

Laurie Vial, Office Manager; church@normalmennonite.org or 309.452.6622 will forward to the

new church cell phone 217.255.2119.

Bryan Oyer, custodian

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



This Week at MCN

Wednesday

6:30 p.m. Pastoral Council and Cluster Leaders (Zoom)

7:30 p.m. Social Hour (Zoom)

Sunday

9:30 a.m. Worship (Zoom)

Tuesday

5:30 p.m. Church Board (Zoom)



Since the last issue:

--Laurie Vial asks for prayers for Carmen who tested positive for Covid-19. She is at home (alone) and it is still touch and go.

--Pray for our Pastoral Council (Melika Hershberger, Steve Stenger, Connie Satchwell, Keith Unzicker, and Gary Martin) as they address increasing needs within the congregation, and organize many others to assist.

Our Members in Care Facilities

We hope to add the mailing address here by Friday so you can send cards more easily.

Please remember in your prayers, or with cards, the following members in care facilities:

Ruth Marquis - Heritage Health

Lloyd Combs - Martin Health Care

Deborah Spacek - Evergreen

Jo Ropp - McLean County Nursing Home

Evelyn Bertsche - McLean County Nursing Home

Roy Jiles - Evergreen

Joyce Schmucker - Luther Oaks Assisted Living

www.cdc.gov

<https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/coronavirus>



Anniversaries

Roger & Linda Clemmons 54 years April 2

Paul & Mary Ann Watkins 57 years April 7

Birthdays

Ruby Brandon April 1

Phil Dick April 6

Denise Hedberg April 6

SNAP and WIC Benefits

SNAP and WIC benefits have both increased. These payments are now staggered across the entire month. Something to consider: Many of these families' benefits are depleted more quickly because children are staying home from school. Also, please respect their needs by not buying items with a WIC shelf tag unless you absolutely need them. They cannot simply substitute these items with others; they would go without. This will also help to keep some of our city's most vulnerable safer.

Watching out for Fraud

Here are a few examples of fraud to be aware of:

While the majority of the world is responding to the COVID-19 pandemic with God's love and compassion, we have to be reminded that there are people in the world who would seek to take advantage of others in this time of struggle. Please remember not to send money or give out personal information in response to an unexpected request or demand. Do your research and talk to someone you trust.

--Individuals and businesses selling fake cures or fake testing kits for COVID-19 online and engaging in other forms of fraud.

--Phishing emails from entities posing as the World Health Organization or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

--Malicious websites and apps that appear to share Coronavirus-related information to gain and lock access to your devices until payment is received.

--Individuals and businesses seeking donations fraudulently for illegitimate or non-existent charitable organizations.

--Medical providers obtaining patient information for COVID-19 testing and then using that information to fraudulently bill for other tests and procedures.

--Emails or phone calls requesting banking information (in order to receive payments related to the CARES Act, or to settle issues with various governmental agencies).

--Malicious websites and apps that target children due to their increased use of computers and tablets.



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](#).



Virtual Office Hours

M-F 9-4

Deadline for Midweek items is noon M-W-F

Voice of the Day

What we all need to do is find the wellspring that keeps us going, that gives us the strength and patience to keep up this struggle for a long time.

- Winona LaDuke



Building Use

Our building is closed until it is safe to be open again.

Today's Chuckle

We took the kids to one of those restaurants where the walls are plastered with movie memorabilia. I went off to see the hostess about reserving a table. When I returned, I found my 10-year-old granddaughter Kaitlyn staring at a poster of Superman standing in a phone booth.

Kaitlyn looked puzzled. "She doesn't know who Superman is?" I whispered to Jenny.

"Worse," Jenny replied. "She doesn't know what a phone booth is."

Below are older articles you may find valuable:

Help for Small Businesses Amid Pandemic

The Illinois Small Business Development Center of McLean County at Illinois Wesleyan University is a resource for small business owners, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. Our local SBDC is funded in part through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration, the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Illinois Wesleyan University, the City of Bloomington, and the Town of Normal. Small business owners from MCN can benefit from their knowledge - reach out.

A Poem by Ron Ropp

"Hear my prayer. oh Lord
as the shepherd o'er my fears
for loneliness and pain
have lead my heart to tears

Grant peace within my mind
as your spirit's waters flow
into the pastures of my heart
that hope and love may grow"

To those who live with a loved one, give an extra hug to your loved one for those who are isolated alone!!

Handling the Effects of Trauma

COVID-19 consumes much of our mental and emotional energy these days. It is easy to feel

isolated and very much alone - even if there are others in your home. Recognize that we all are living through trauma. It is important to look at what we know about trauma and how to deal with it in this crisis.

Traumatic events can impair our ability to grasp or cope with what is happening, which can lead to a slew of challenges such as sadness, grief, pain, panic, confusion, despair, anxiety, and depression. Feelings may become intense and unpredictable. Sleep or eating issues may appear. Changes in interpersonal relationships may happen - for example, an increase in conflict, or a tendency to isolate or withdraw. Difficulties in making decisions, fear, and mood swings can also be present. Disinterest in preferred activities may also occur. So many changes happening can be overwhelming.

There are things you can do to help!

- Stay connected with people. Even if the times necessitate quarantine or social distancing, get creative in ways to stay connected to others. Technology can be a great resource when physical proximity is not an option.
- When all else fails, remember the basics. Be sure to get enough sleep, eat well, and exercise. Research demonstrates that these basic daily tasks support our brains in coping effectively, regulating stress, decreasing depression and anxiety symptoms, and processing information.
- Just as you would create a medical toolkit, create a coping toolkit for yourself. Put together a list or kit of activities and objects that help you feel grounded, safe, bring you joy, and increase your quality of life as you ride out this crisis.
- Although staying informed is important, as possible, minimize your exposure to media on the outbreak and/or the flooding of traumatic stories about the pandemic. Exposure to trauma-filled media has been linked with increases in vicarious traumatization and traumatic stress symptoms. Even if you cannot get mental health services in person, there are many ways in which you can obtain distance mental health services. Multiple providers offer online counseling services or 24/7 crisis lines).
- If all else fails, normalize your struggles. Remember that you are not alone in this and many others are dealing with the consequences of this distressing time. Be kind to yourself (and others). Kindness and compassion can go a long way.

We encourage you to stay connected to your church family. There are many ways we can help each other. Make your needs known. Let us know if you are struggling. God works through each of us and we can minister to each other. May the Creator's boundless love flow through all of us to find healing for ourselves and each other.

~ Lois Hochstetler and Cindy Ropp

Excerpts taken from:

Turmaud, D. R. (2020). Trauma of pandemic proportions: Mental health consequences of the covid-19 pandemic and tools for coping. Psychology Today. At

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/lifting-the-veil-trauma/202003/trauma-pandemic-proportions>

Press Conference Updates

Gov. Pritzker continues to hold daily press conferences at 2:30 p.m.

Updates from Menno Haven

We have updated our summer camp deposit requirement so that if Menno Haven does need to cancel summer camp, we will refund in full any monies (including the typical "non-refundable deposit) that was paid. We hope that these are two small ways that Menno Haven can care for your family in this uncertain time.

Summer Staff Recommendation Grant - If your family recommends a new summer staff member to Menno Haven and that staff is hired, your family will receive a \$150 grant towards your child's 2020 MH Youth Summer Camp registration fee. Applicants must apply by April 30 and must indicate on their application that your family referred them to work at Menno Haven. This grant can only be used for registrations costs towards 2020 Youth Summer Camp. If you have already paid in full, the \$150 will be refunded for your family.

Giving Blood

Blood donations are down during the Covid-19 Pandemic. The local Red Cross chapter is at 1 Westport Ct. Bloomington. 1-800-RED-CROSS [website](#). The Red Cross has new safety measures in place.

How to Protect Yourself From Coronavirus When Grocery Shopping

(Editor's note: This information is related to the grocery store article we published Monday - it is near the bottom of this newsletter. Thanks to Andy and Denise Hedberg for this information.

For an article from Consumer Reports on Protecting Yourself from Coronavirus When Grocery Shopping click on [this link](#).

"We used InstaCart for the first time this past weekend, and found it useful and easy to use. It opens up delivery options for other stores including: Schnucks, Target, Hy-Vee, Fresh Thyme, Petco, Kroger, Meijer, CVS Pharmacy, Aldi, Jewel-Osco and Sam's Club."

Local Team Forms to Help Area Citizens in High Risk Group

[Click here](#) for the Pantagraph article on the new McLean County Covid-10 Mutual Aid Team which can run errands for people in high risk groups. Later in the article there is information about free food for those who are food insecure.

Grocery Store Delivery and Pick-up Info

Compiled by Cindy Ropp, Laurie Vial and Lotus Hershberger

Three Bloomington-Normal grocery stores offer pick-up and delivery services: Kroger (Oakland Avenue only), Meijer and Wal-Mart (both locations). There is a fee, usually close to \$5 for pick-up and close to \$10 for delivery. Wal-Mart says delivery is free for the first 15 days after you sign up. Kroger may offer the first three pick-ups for free.

These services require signing up with a credit or debit card and placing your order online. For pick-up they will place your order in your car when you pull up. As we go to press these pick-up and delivery times are about three days in the future.

There is something called Instacart that will purchase and deliver groceries from many stores. If you have information related to pick-up or delivery please send to Laurie to share with your MCN family. If you go to the store in person most stores are not allowing the re-usable bags at this time. Remember to sanitize your groceries before touching them or let food set for 72 hours for any live virus to die. Also, many stores have special hours for those in the high risk category.

