



The Midweek Monday

Mennonite Church of Normal

May 11, 2020

Worship

Join us for worship each Sunday at 9:30 a.m. via Zoom.

Milepost 132 What is an Anabaptist Christian?

“If you love me, keep my commands. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever – the Spirit of truth.

John 14:15-17a

The Anabaptist Vision (Harold S. Bender, 1943), has shaped Mennonite understanding of Anabaptism for three generations. He summarized Anabaptism:

- Christianity is discipleship: following Jesus;
- The church is community: committed to Christ, and each other;
- Jesus’ followers have an ethic of love and nonresistance.

When Mennonites today are asked “What do Mennonites believe?” the most common answer is, “we believe in peace.” Coming in a distant second, is “community.” Why don’t we say, “We believe in, and follow Jesus, who taught us to love our enemies?”

Today, Bender’s summary has morphed for many Mennonites, into: Anabaptism

means being

- globally involved in social justice, peacemaking and relief work,
- grounded in selective readings from OT prophets and the Sermon on the Mount, and
- supported by participation in a community of like-minded people.

Bender missed an integral dynamic in 16th Century Anabaptism: bold missional zeal evidenced in witnessing to holistic faith in Christ, as many were martyred.

Palmer Becker attempted to reshape Mennonite understanding of Anabaptism in his 2008 pamphlet, “What is an Anabaptist Christian?” It can be downloaded at [click here](#). Becker summarizes Anabaptism:

- *Jesus* is the center of our faith.
- *Community* is the center of our lives.
- *Reconciliation* is the center of our work.

Being a Christian from an Anabaptist perspective combines believing in Jesus, belonging to community, and behaving in a reconciling way. For Becker, “reconciliation” integrates social justice and evangelism.

Our 16th Century Anabaptist ancestors relied on The Word, and The Spirit. It was the Spirit of Christ which empowered ordinary men and women to boldly communicate their personal faith. Because they sincerely desired to obey the Word, the Spirit enabled them to embrace interpretations of Scripture considered blasphemous by virtually all other Christians in their day. They relied on the indwelling help of the Holy Spirit. -Gary Martin



This Week at MCN

Tuesday

4:30 Staff Meeting (Zoom)

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

Wednesday

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

Thursday

6:30 a.m. Next Man Bible Study (Zoom)

Saturday

3 p.m. Worship Rehearsal (Zoom)

Sunday

9:30 a.m. Worship (Zoom)

10:35 a.m. After Worship Options (Zoom)

Distancing

By Ron Ropp

Forty days and forty nights
Were spent to test his soul
Temptations lay on every hand
To risk that he lose control

Social distancing for us today
Challenges the spirit of many
With threats to our well-being
Yet opportunity for charity

These threats for us today
For some cause much pain
But they also bring challenge
The spirit's strength to gain



Since the last issue:

--Beth and Andy Reeser asked for prayers for one of Andy's co-workers, Bryn Holevoet. Bryn's wife, Kelly, died unexpectedly and leaves three young children.

--Joe Culpepper wished all mother-like figures a Happy Mother's Day. He also said an increased interest, during shelter in place, in Mother Earth is a joy and he hopes this interest in preserving and caring for earth continues.

--Cindy Ropp asked for prayers for those who do not have access to Zoom and other internet and computer-related options.

--Meredith Schroeer said the migrating birds have been a joy to her. Wayne Hochstetler added that he helped with the migrating bird count on Saturday.



Zoom

If you need training or help call Laurie at 309-452-6622. The following four people have also volunteered to help Ross Hershberger, 309-660-0710; Lydia Hedberg, 309-660-9232, Terry Wiebenga, 309-452-6159 and Glenn Wilson 309-310-5468. **Important Notice: Please begin updating to Zoom 5.0 [now](#). After May 30, all Zoom users on older versions will receive a forced upgrade when trying to join meetings. Click [here](#) for more information.**

Staff Contact Info

Virtual Office Hours M-F 9 to 4

Deadline for Midweek items is noon M-W-F

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.

Our Members in Care Facilities

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

Ruth Marquis

Heritage Manor, Apt 111
700 E. Walnut St.
Bloomington, IL. 61701

Jo Ropp

McLean County Nursing Home, Apt 451
901 N Main St.
Normal, IL 61761

Evelyn Bertsche

McLean County Nursing Home, Apt 329
901 N. Main St
Normal, IL 61761

Deborah Spacek
Evergreen Village, Apt 292
1701 Evergreen Blvd
Normal, IL 61761

Roy Jiles
Welbrook at Bloomington, Apt 122
1402 Leslie Drive
Bloomington, IL 61704

Joyce Schmucker
Luther Oaks Assisted Living, Apt 2110
601 Lutz Rd
Bloomington, IL 61704-8624

Lloyd Combs
Martin Health Center, Apt C130
2025 E. Lincoln Ave
Bloomington, IL 61701

Voice of the Day

To be where Jesus is means that as church, we must be with the people who are suffering most during this pandemic. - Kelly Brown Douglas, Liz Theoharis

Today's Chuckle

The teacher heard Little Johnny use some serious language and was shocked. "Little Johnny, don't you ever use language like that again, not near me, not ever. Where on earth did you learn that?"

"I got it from my dad," replies Johnny.

"Well, your daddy should be ashamed. I hope you don't know what all that even means?"

"Oh but I do," says Johnny. "It means the car won't start."

Reminder of MCN Building Policy

The Church Board reminds everyone that Shelter in Place in Illinois has been extended through the end of May. The MCN building remains closed. No one is to enter the building without permission from the Church Board. The Board thanks the

congregation for adhering to this policy.

MCN Forms Another Partnership to Help

MCN and B-N Welcoming have established a fund to help undocumented families who are not eligible for government assistance or stimulus funds. The Outreach Committee will approve and distribute monies from this account according to requests that come from B-N Welcoming for rent or other larger monthly expenses. They will be paid to the vendor.

Helen Brandon shared that many families are at risk because they are not able to advocate for themselves due to a lack of documentation and fear. She said that many people who would like to donate money to support undocumented families in our community. Funds would come from the community and possibly from church attendees/members.

Community members donating to the fund will not receive a tax letter. This program was approved by the Church Board on a six-month trial. To donate send a paper check to the church with B-N Welcoming in the memo line. Please write a separate check from other giving. You may also donate on the church website using the Give tab. If you choose the checking account option there is a tiny fee taken. If you give by credit card almost 3% is taken so you could consider covering that in your donation.