



**Mennonite  
Church  
of Normal**

A congregation of  
Mennonite Church USA

*Offering Christ's peace to hearts, homes, community and world*

# The Midweek

The Midweek Wednesday

Mennonite Church of Normal

March 17, 2021

**Worship this Sunday  
via Zoom at 9:30 a.m.**

## **Lent 2021: Deep calls to Deep**

On this Fifth Sunday in Lent, we go deep in the earth, to be called to deep growth. God promises, "I will put my law within my people, and I will write it on their hearts." In Pastor Gary's sermon, "An inside job" (Jeremiah 31:31-34, John 12:20-33), we are called to deep growth, which is possible by following Jesus' example as he faced crucifixion. Joe Culpepper is planning and leading this service.



## **After Worship Option**

There will be only one after worship option: Introduction to Voices Together Part II. Stay on the Worship Zoom link.

This folder contains music from last Sunday [click here](#). Please note that you need to download the music before playing it. Late Saturday afternoon the folder will also include the worship order and sermon slides for this coming Sunday.

**Questions for reflection:** How is God calling you to deep growth? What do you need to let go of so that you can grow?

We invite you to have a bowl with six stones nearby. Each Sunday we remove a stone, to represent a personal response to God's call. You may want to write a word on it, and put it somewhere where it can remind you of your response each day. As Lent continues, we will watch our bowl empty, representing the removal of what is weighing us down and preventing us from seeing what really matters.

## **Lent Schedule: *Deep calls to Deep***

March 21 Deep in the earth: Called to deep growth  
March 28 Deep in the current: Called to deep hope  
Easter, April 4 Deep in the feast: Called to deep living

Gary Martin  
Holly Zehr  
Gary Martin

## Transition Process Update

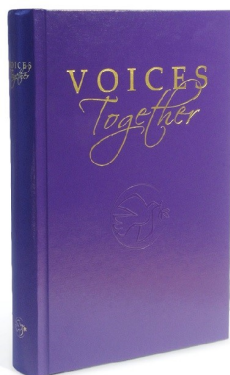
The Proposed Vision Statement, will be sent to the congregation early next week. Please prayerfully read, and reflect on the statement, in preparation for our Congregational Conversation Sunday, March 28.

The Structure Evaluation Task Group meets next on March 22. Please support the task group, in prayer.

### Daily Lenten Meditation Options:

Meditations written by Goshen College students, staff and faculty, based on the Lenten texts we are using at MCN, are available by [clicking here](#).

Jim Bortell has written daily Lenten meditations for his home congregation, which are available [here](#). This is an updated link.



### VT Event Part II Planned for Sunday

The Mennonite Church of Normal loves to sing, and we have experienced great worship together. Therefore, the Voices Together Introduction Committee invites you to attend Part II, a more formal introduction to this wonderful new resource, Voices Together. VT replaces our current hymnals, and we want you to begin to become acquainted with it. Zoom may not be the best platform to do this, but it is the best we currently have. Please join us after the worship service for a time of learning and singing - just stay on the Worship Zoom. See page 8 for more information.



## Milepost 440 Something to Celebrate in March

Long, long ago, a young boy was carried across the sea to a foreign land, and forced into slavery. He prayed daily for freedom. He escaped, and boarded a ship carrying hounds to another country. He cared for the dogs in exchange for his fare. After many hardships there, he found his way back to his homeland.

In a dream one night, babies in the land where he had been a slave, pleaded with him to return and tell them about Christ. He entered a monastery to prepare, and was sent as a missionary to the nation where he had been enslaved. A century later, there were monasteries throughout this formerly pagan nation, sending missionaries to other nations.

Although St. Patrick is the patron saint of Ireland, he was English by birth. He wrote that one cannot *not* live in the presence of God: *God beneath you, God in front of you, God behind you, God above you, God within you.* He urged people to *become aware* of God's presence.

In my 55-year sojourn among Mennonites, I have heard it said frequently: "We need to add a young person to this committee or project. We need to hear their voices." On rare occasions, we might actually put a younger person in charge of something really important. In my experience, the results were almost always astounding. But then we return to being satisfied with hearing their voices.

Scripture and Church History have numerous stories of God calling very young people to be in charge of really important things, like St. Patrick.

I followed the Voices Together project from a distance over the last seven years.

I knew it would be impressive in its forward-looking perspective. But the completed project far exceeded my expectations, on that score. The editorial "quartet" had two in their 30's and two in their 40's. Historically speaking, I believe that's on the younger end of the spectrum for being "in charge" in Mennonite institutions.

The younger generation has been instrumental in leading MCN through the last twelve challenging months, in areas of music, technology, biblical teaching, youth ministry, and worship. Outcomes have been impressive because they were "in charge" and empowered.

As MCN makes some significant decisions in the next few months, I encourage us to see the many among the younger generation, who are unquestionably "ready for prime-time." And not just to help us get things done, but to actually "be in charge." -Gary Martin

## Easter Breakfast Exchange



Easter Breakfast at MCN has traditionally been a time to fellowship and share a meal with others before the service on Easter Sunday. Even though we can't be physically together this year, the tradition continues! The Fellowship Committee is hosting an Easter Breakfast Exchange. Individuals or families will sign up to either exchange a breakfast casserole or pastry with another individual or family. This will provide you the opportunity to cook for other church members and maybe share a favorite recipe. Additionally, in the midst of the

exchange you will be able to connect with others and potentially see a friend face-to-face from a safe distance! What a great way to "raise" spirits as the temperature "rises" and we remember the "rising" of Jesus! If interested in fellowshiping in this way, click on [this link](#) to sign up. **Deadline to sign up is 3-24-21.** Fellowship Committee will match people on 3-25-21 and you will be responsible to work out the details on time and place of exchange for what works with you!





## Youth Group to Host Variety Show

The Youth Group will be hosting a Variety Show to generate funds for the Illinois Mennonite Relief Sale. We need your help! Do you have a way you express yourself you can share? We are looking for acts - read a poem, play an instrument, do a dance, tell a joke, do a charade, sing a song, tell a personal story, stand on your head. The options are endless. Please consider adding a recorded entry for our show! Email entries or questions to Lauren Satchwell at [satchwell.lauren@gmail.com](mailto:satchwell.lauren@gmail.com) by **this Sunday, March 21.**

## Outreach Committee Update

The Outreach Committee continues to reach out to the community. We supported a food drive in December and were pleased with the donations received. Along with the Fellowship Committee, we will be holding another drive on March 20. There are many people in need in our community. Please donate as you are able.

We continue to work with our community partners (SHOWBUS, United Way and BN Welcoming) to deliver boxes to immigrant families. Boxes of food and necessities were delivered to 15 families twice in February. Adding fresh fruits and vegetables to these deliveries has been greatly appreciated.

BN Welcoming disbursements are approved by our committee. So far \$19,909 has been donated to this fund and \$14,656 has been disbursed for expenses of immigrant families. Needs continue so please consider donating to the fund. It's easy - to donate to BN Welcoming—please use the PayPal button on the BN Welcoming tab on the church website. To donate by check make out a separate check to MCN with BN Welcoming in the memo and mail it to the church at 805 S. Cottage Ave., Normal, IL 61761.

The Committee supports a suggested adult Sunday School class, possibly this spring, designed by MCC called "Peaceful Practices". The curriculum is designed to help individuals and congregations reflect on and practice how they engage with interpersonal conflict. The Peace and Justice committee is also supporting this class.

Although we haven't been able to worship in person, there are various ways to stay connected with MCN family and friends. Please continue to support the congregation as we anxiously wait to open our building and get back together in person. We miss you!

## Food Drive Planned

Fellowship and Outreach Committees are once again organizing a food drive, this time for Mount Pisgah food pantry. You may drop off your donations under the portico at MCN on Saturday, March 20 from 10 a.m. - noon.

Monetary donations are also acceptable (checks made out to Mt. Pisgah Food Pantry). Thanks for your generosity and support!

Most needed items:

- skillet meals (such as Hamburger Helper)
- peanut butter and jelly
- tissue
- canned vegetables
- boxed Mac n cheese
- mashed potatoes
- paper towels



## Illinois Mennonite Relief Sale 2021

Our Illinois Mennonite Relief Sale Online Auction is getting closer. The items up for auction, are now available for viewing. If you go to the web site: [ilreliefsale.org](http://ilreliefsale.org) and click on the info there, it will get you to the sale items. There are about 7-8 pages of items. You may look without bidding. Bidding will start on March 13, and the auction will end on March 20, throughout the day. If you think you want to bid, you can get registered now. You will be asked for a credit card number, but it will not be used. Payment will come when you pick up the items on March 21 (noon-5pm) or March 27 (8 a.m.-noon). Questions call or email Louise Reeser. 309-826-3423 [reeserfarms@gmail.com](mailto:reeserfarms@gmail.com)



## Opportunity to Bake

A bake sale to support Illinois Mennonite Relief Sale will be Friday held March 19 at North Danvers Mennonite Church. We are being asked to contribute bake goods for the sale. We still have about 25 apple pie fillings available to make apple pies. We also have more than 20 bags of frozen rhubarb available to make rhubarb pies. They also can use breads cookies, rolls, cakes etc. All items needed to be wrapped and labeled with ingredients. Aluminum pie pans, cake pans, plastic bags and labels are available too. All baked goods can be delivered to the North Danvers Church from 9-3 on Thursday March 18 for the sale. Contact Gerry with questions and if you can help with this project. Thank you all for your help with this way to support the Relief Sale.



## Online Dutch Market Announced

An online Mennonite Relief Sale Dutch Market will be held over the coming week. The online store will open for ordering items at midnight Sunday night March 15 and close Thursday morning March 18 at 8 a.m. Pickup of ordered items will be at North Danvers Mennonite Church from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. under the west entrance canopy. Items available for purchase include pies, cookies, tea rings, sweet breads, pussy willows and peanut/pecan brittle among other things. To shop the store, go to <https://north-danvers-mennonite-church.square.site>



If you are not comfortable with purchasing online, you can text or leave a message for Kathy Miller at 309-242-0789 with your order. Payment due with check or exact cash when you pick up on Friday. Please note there will be no change given. All items are donated and all proceeds go to MCC.

## Veggies Available...

Roasted veggies —onions, potatoes, beet and carrots in 5 -6 cup batches (frozen) are available for a donation. Phone (309-452-5994) or email ([ldhersh@ilstu.edu](mailto:ldhersh@ilstu.edu)) and Lotus will set some out on the bench. You can keep the container or return. Suggested donation is \$5 each (or more, of course). You can write a check (separate, please) to MCN with Relief Sale in the memo line.





## MCN Comforter Collaboration:

Dear friends,

Would you be interested in participating in the making of a comforter to donate to MCC? No quilting experience is required, and families with children are welcome!

Since making a full comforter is a big project for any one person, the Fellowship Committee would like to propose creating one or more together. Each participant would contribute one (or more!) 12x12-

inch square(s), and these blocks would then be assembled by one (or a few) volunteer(s). By each contributing one small piece of this project, we can safely reconnect around a common purpose and share hope and comfort with a family in need.

If interested in contributing a square and/or assembling, please e-mail [jbponou@yahoo.com](mailto:jbponou@yahoo.com) or more information on MCC's guidelines, preferred colors, etc. Thank you. The Fellowship Committee.



**Midwest**  
FOOD BANK

## Midwest Food Bank Volunteer Opportunity

Please join us for a fun evening of service with your church family at Midwest Food Bank 5-7 p.m. on Tuesday, April 6. Anyone 5 years and older is welcome! Due to COVID-19 restrictions, temperatures will be taken on arrival and masks are required. Please sign up [here](#).

## Board Update

March 9

The Board welcomed Devon to her position as Office Manager and offered sincere words of appreciation to Laurie Vial for her time and work with us.

The Welcome Home Task Group will be meeting soon to review where we stand in terms of the COVID-19 statistics we are watching locally. Should you have questions about this, do not hesitate to contact any of the Task Group members: Cindy Ropp, Lotus Hershberger, Mary Ann Watkins, Gail Fisher, Mary Dyck, Glenn Wilson, and Laurie Vial.

Reports were offered regarding the recent Illinois Conference and Central District Conference meetings. As MCN relates to both conferences, it is important work of the church to engage in these meetings. Concerns were raised regarding the health of Illinois Conference. Giving to the conference has dropped dramatically in the last several years, and communication from the conference has been limited. Central District Conference reported steady growth with a robust engagement of congregations.

We reviewed the timeline for our transitional work. Gary assures us we are on track.

As always, should anyone have questions, concerns, or affirmations, please reach out to any Board Members.

Cindy Ropp, Church Chair



WINNER OF THE  
2021 DIVERSE VOICES  
PLAYWRITING INITIATIVE

# *The DePriest Incident*

by Charles White

March 25 (Thursday)

6:15 p.m.

Conversation with the playwright

7:00 p.m.

Staged reading



RSVP for free using the link below

## Staged Reading Over Zoom

Next week is The Crossroads Project's virtual staged reading of Charles White's *The DePriest Incident*! Don't miss the chance to experience this captivating new play about race and national politics in the 1920s—all revolving around a tea party at the White House. The staged reading will be directed by Master's in Theatre Studies candidate Demitri Corbin and performed by a stellar cast of local and professional actors. Click [here](#) to reserve your ticket. Click [here](#) to read more information about the play and playwright.

## Men's Bathroom Remodel Begins

Recently, the Financial Stewardship Committee approved a re-model of the



men's bathroom off of the Fellowship Hall, which has not been updated since the building was built. This week began work led by one fiercely determined Lotus, The Hersherberger family and Loren Moshier worked together for over 20 hours to remove the wallpaper in the bathroom and the paste behind it. Here is a photo of them hard at work! If you would like to volunteer any of your time and skills to this remodel, please contact Lotus. Next up will be painting!

## Voices Together CD's Available

As announced in the Zoom session on the Voices Together introduction, the 4 CD collection of songs in Voices Together can be purchased [here](#) for a cost of 59.99 for all four. Individual cd's can be purchased [here](#) for a cost of 17.99 each. If you purchased the complete set, it is a savings of \$12, or \$3. each. These cd's are an excellent way to enjoy and learn the songs in Voices Together. They are performed by college choirs and congregational groups.

## Vaccines

By: Ron Ropp

When I was a young boy  
There were no vaccines  
For chicken pox or measles  
And many other things

Then dangers like tetanus  
Brought science to create  
A vaccine to prevent  
Lock jaw's terrible fate

Since then science miracles  
Produced vaccines of all kinds  
To prevent many infirmities  
And even more they find

Covid-19's the latest one  
To avoid a terrible fate  
If only there were a vaccine  
To cure or prevent hate

## Update on MCN Finances from FSC

Spending Plan Status:  
February Income: \$23,025.85  
February Expenses: \$28,739.25  
For February: Income - Expenses = - \$5,713.40  
Status at the end of February  
Total income: \$56,081.41  
Total expenses: \$54,495.33  
Total income - expenses = \$1,586.08





**A new small group** focused on discerning passion, spiritual gifts, and callings will begin when enough express interest. The group will begin by sharing life stories, and then focus on helping each other discern gifts. It will meet on zoom, for 6-8 sessions, unless other options become available. The schedule will be determined by those who participate. It's ok to join if you have already participated in one of the new small groups this past year. If interested, please contact Melika Hershberger, at [mfkhersh@gmail.com](mailto:mfkhersh@gmail.com) or 309 888 6241.

## **Birthdays**

Gerry Schrock March 19

Anna Driscoll March 20

Alexa Hoffman March 22



## **This week at MCN (All via Zoom)**

### **Wednesday**

6:30 p.m. Pastoral Council

### **Thursday**

6:30 a.m. Next Man Bible Study

### **Saturday**

9:30 a.m. Worship Rehearsal

### **Sunday**

9:30 a.m. Worship

10:30 a.m. Voices Together Introduction Part II

### **Monday**

5:30 p.m. Structure Evaluation Task Group

### **Tuesday**

4:30 p.m. Staff Meeting

5:30 p.m. Peace & Justice Committee



## Staff Contact Info

Virtual Office Hours M-F 9:30 to 4:00, Sunday 12:00-4:00

Deadline for Midweek items is noon Wednesday

Gary Martin, Transitional Pastor [gmartin5@comcast.net](mailto: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 and Devon Tracy, Office Managers; [church@normalmennonite.org](mailto: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](mailto: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:**

Alice Swift  
Luther Oaks Apt. 2201  
601 Lutz Road  
Bloomington, IL 61704

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

Jo Ropp  
McLean County Nursing Home, Apt 328  
901 N Main St.  
Normal, IL 61761

Deborah Spacek  
Evergreen Village, Apt 292  
1701 Evergreen Ln.  
Normal, IL 61761

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

Ken Shoemaker  
Sugar Creek Alzheimer's Special Care Unit  
505 E Vernon Ave.  
Normal, IL 61761



You are invited to watch Lydia Hedberg's Junior Cello Recital on March 20th at 7:00pm. It will premiere through YouTube that day at 7pm. To watch the recital please go to this link: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCLs-gl81oy9y1xLCoLqOUKQ/videos> Thanks!

## Mid-Year Gathering

The Board of Directors of the Central District Conference will host two gatherings via Zoom instead of the annual Regional Gatherings. The final meeting will be held March 27, 9:30 - 11:45 a.m. Eastern time. [Register here for the March 27 meeting.](#)

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting. For a schedule [click here.](#) There will be breakout sessions on a variety of anti-racism themes, along with stories from three congregations about their creative Christian Education efforts during the pandemic.

## Menno Haven Camp and Retreat Center is calling your name!

Join Menno Haven staff on Saturday, April 24 from 8-4 (or part of the day) for the Spring Work Day. Volunteer, meet others that love the camp and enjoy a meal! Work and meals can be indoors (masked) or outdoors. For more information contact Marge Weaver or sign up at [mennohaven.com/work-day](https://mennohaven.com/work-day). See you there!

## Voice of the Day

May the road rise up to meet you. May the wind be always at your back.  
Irish Blessing

## Today's Chuckle

Bono and The Edge walk into a Dublin bar and the bartender says, "Oh no, not U2 again."