



**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 31, 2021

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

Lent 2021: Deep calls to Deep

Christ is risen! We celebrate Jesus' death and resurrection in Holy Communion on Easter Sunday. Jesus' resurrection calls us beyond mere belief, to transformed living. Mary was more than a messenger of the Good News (John 20:1-18). Her transformed living, enabled the Disciples to move beyond their fear, to become bold messengers of Jesus' resurrection. In Pastor Gary's sermon, "Christ is Alive! Live the Feast Prepared for All," the feast metaphor in Isaiah 25:6-9, encourages us to abundant living today. This Easter, we go "Deep in the feast, and are called to deep living." Elsa Raab is planning, and Ben Roeschley will lead the service.

Response Ritual: The vessel which held stones during Lent, should now be empty! Use it to hold a feast!

Questions for reflection: How is God calling you to deep living? Can you see your life as feast, in some way?

Opportunity for Virtual Fellowship after Easter Service:

We are offering a time to connect with other MCN households after the Easter service! We did this at Christmas and enjoyed visiting with folks! If you'd like to participate, just stay on the Zoom link after the service and you'll be put into a group of 5-6 households for 20 minutes of chatting, then regrouped for another 20 minutes. Include the kids!

Transition Process Update: The next Congregational Conversation is April 11, during which we will discuss the Proposed Vision Statement, and if ready, take action. Please note further information about the vision statement, in today's Milepost.

Reminder: The church building remains closed, despite it being used last week for Relief Sale activity. If you see a vehicle or two in the parking lot, that only means staff are working. To facilitate a smooth transition in office staff over the next several weeks, we ask that you continue to contact Cindy Ropp for permission to enter the building. We hope it won't be too much longer!

Thank You Julie!

The Worship Committee would like to publicly thank Julie Musselman for all of her years of faithful service to the Committee. Her attention to detail and coordination has been very much appreciated.

Thank
You



Farewell from Laurie Vial:

As I depart MCN to start the retired chapter of my life I want to thank the Church Board for their caring COVID-19 policies that protected staff and others. I also want to thank some specific individuals who have gone above and beyond in their volunteer duties to lighten my load: Lynn Reha, Leroy Loepp, Lotus Hershberger and Adam and Caleb Augspurger. I want to acknowledge our current staff and the support system we have built for each other: Ron Ropp, Bryan Oyer, Lauren Satchwell and Gary Martin. I enjoyed my rather brief professional encounters with Tim Schrag, Jane Roeschley and Jim Bortell. Gary and I have probably spent less than hour together in person but he has been a stellar supervisor and we worked together very well remotely. I was so happy when you adopted the LGBTQIA+ inclusion statement. As a person with a degree in agricultural communications I never dreamed my career path would include six jobs working with churches or Christian organizations “God doesn’t call the qualified, he qualifies the called.” I wish Devon Tracy the best as she continues to take the reigns and I pray for the best for MCN as they continue with transition. I hope to maintain a relationship with you. Most of all I will miss listening to Dorothy Loepp as she practices!
Laurie lbvial6@gmail.com 309-242-8571.

Milepost 454 Imagination

Thanks for the good work last Sunday! A personal note: I had planned to take last weekend off a while back. When last Sunday became the time to present the vision, it was good timing to be away, so MCN leaders could make the presentation. Regarding health concerns—I have felt fine for several weeks now. All is well on that front.

The heart of the proposed Vision Statement is the three goals, not the specific objectives:

By 2024 Mennonite Church of Normal will be a congregation that is equipping all to learn about, walk with, and live out the teachings of Jesus in daily life;

a dynamic faith community that nurtures and nourishes relationships, so that our care and understanding of each other is deepened;

an active faith community, developing significant and meaningful relationships through expanding our care for and understanding about/with those beyond MCN.

To summarize the goals: Over the next three years, MCN will be *intentional* in deepening our walk with Jesus, our relationships with each other, and our relationships beyond the congregation. To say YES to this Vision, means affirming these three priorities, and recognizing that greater intentionality will require some changes. All aspects of congregational life will adjust their efforts to meet the goals.

The objectives under each goal are best viewed as illustrations for now. As the vision is pursued, they may be adjusted because the Holy Spirit will show you even better ways to accomplish the goal or reveal new opportunities. It's helpful to read them with *imagination*. That's why there are few details as to how or when things will be offered. For example: when Christian Education classes are referenced, you will not be limited to 10:30am on Sunday mornings at 805 S. Cottage Ave.

Equipping everyone to deepen their walk with Jesus, can happen in all kinds of places and times. The third goal, expanding our care for and understanding about and with those beyond MCN, will hopefully go beyond only responding to needs. It will lead you to greater understanding of the causes of hunger, homelessness, violence, racism, injustice, inequality, etc., and changes in lifestyle and engagement in the world.

One of the criteria the Structure Evaluation Task Group is using in discerning recommended revisions is, "A structure should facilitate vision accomplishment." I have written an article, which explains how structures can either enforce status quo, or facilitate new vision. [Click here](#) for "Where Vision and Structure Intersect."

- Gary Martin



Bake Sale Success!

Kathy Miller from North Danvers Mennonite Church wrote to us to thank us for our involvement in the Dutch Market Bake Sale writing, “ We would like to thank all who participated in the online Dutch Market either by baking, donating or purchasing. The online sales grossed 1,285.50. Net for online sales was \$1,235.62. We were blessed with a nice day, so we set up outside as well. Those add-on sales/donations totaled \$2,793.50.” . Thanks to all!



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](#).



6 apple pie fillings available...

6 apple pie fillings (frozen) are available for a donations. Phone (309-452-5994) or email ldhershb@ilstu.edu) and Lotus will set some out on the bench. 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.

Birthdays

Ruby Brandon 04/01

Phil Dick 04/06

Denise Hedberg 04/06

Anniversary

Roger & Linda Clemmons 04/02

Pal & Mary Ann Watkins 04/07



This week at MCN (All via Zoom)

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. Congregational Vision Meeting

Monday

5:30 p.m. Structure Evaluation Task Group



Staff Contact Info

Virtual Office Hours M-F 9:30 to 2:30

Deadline for Midweek items is noon Wednesday

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.

Devon Tracy, 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:

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

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 jbponnou@yahoo.com or more information on MCC's guidelines, preferred colors, etc. **The deadline to sign up is April 18.** Thank you. The Fellowship Committee.



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. See you there!

Voice of the Day

Our Lord has written the promise of resurrection, not in books alone, but in every leaf in spring-time. -Martin Luther

Today's Chuckle

What happened to the Easter Bunny when he misbehaved at school?
He was egg-spelled!