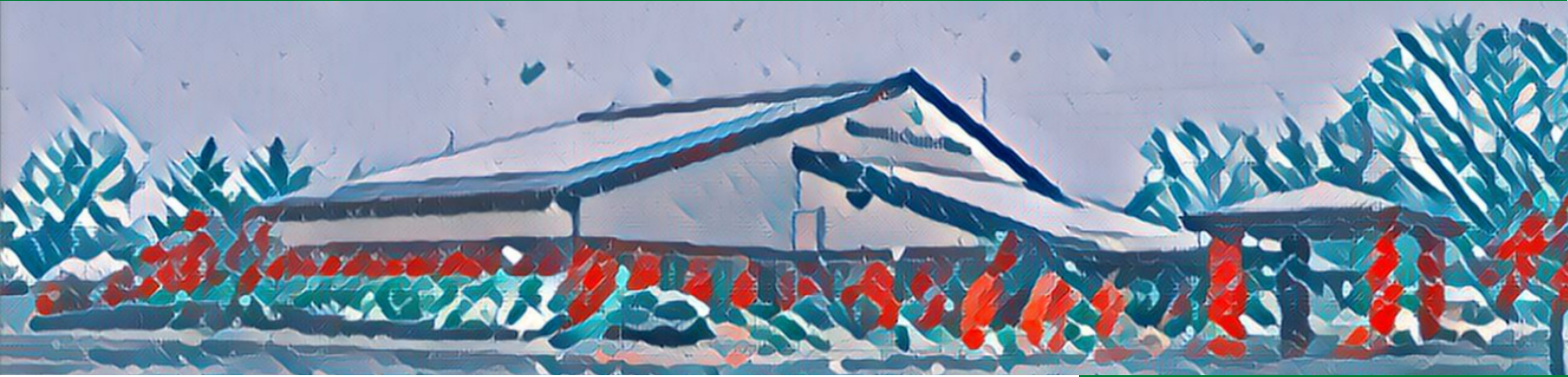


THE MIDWEEK



WORSHIP THIS SUNDAY 9:30 A.M.

This is the first Sunday of Advent.

Pastor Kevin Chupp will preach a sermon titled *Counting to 3,600* using the scripture Matthew 24:36-44.

In Matthew 24, Jesus tells the disciples they will have to wait for restoration but to be ready for it. As we are invited into this Advent season of waiting, we wonder about what it might look like to wait faithfully.



The service will be live streamed on YouTube at this [link](#).

The bulletins get posted under the Worship tab of our [website](#).

After Worship

Adult CE

Journey Groups:

Group A (20's-30's)

First Office

Group B (40's-50's)

Conference Room

Group C (60's and above)

Room 4

Children & Youth CE

Pre-K-1st Grade

Room 11

2nd-5th Grade

Room 12 & 9

Junior High

Room 8

High School

Room 7 & 5



Mennonite
Church
of Normal

A congregation of
Mennonite Church USA

Covid Update



As of November 14, The McLean County Health Department indicated that the rate was **11.9% and rising**. Administration Commission encourages the use of masks in large groups, especially for those with multiple chronic illnesses.

TAKE SURVEY



Spending Plan Update & Survey

On Sunday, November 13, we met as a congregation to discuss the proposed 2023 Spending Plan. Last Thursday evening Administration Commission met and had further discussion. We discussed several comments from the hearing including the affordability of a second pastor, stretch giving, that even without a second pastor we will need to increase giving by 1/3. We wondered about revising the formula for non-local giving from 5% to 3-4%.

We decided to use a multi-prong approach to gather further data from the congregation for decision making on the 2023 Spending Plan.

First, we are asking for prayers of discernment to determine where we need to be on our 2023 Spending Plan.

Second, we are asking each commission to identify where they might be able to cut their spending plan. Lydia shared information about items that are included in each budget line to assist with their discernment.

Third, we are asking for congregational feedback using several scenarios to identify our ability to stretch our giving over the next year. [Find an anonymous survey here](#). If you're unable to connect to the survey, feel free to email [Mary Dyck](#) with comments and/or responses. We appreciate your support.

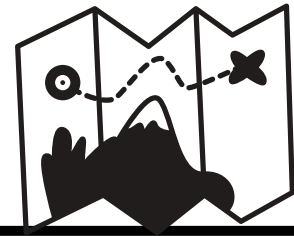
-Administration Commission



A Prayer for Peace

Pastor Kevin offered a prayer at the *Interfaith Thanksgiving Service* last Sunday. Anyone interested can find a copy of the prayer [here](#).

Journey Groups



As mentioned earlier, Journey Group participants who used one of the books purchased by MCN are asked to return it to the table in the Conference Room. There you should also find and take a copy of the book that your group will be reading for the Winter Quarter. They are as follows:

Journey Group A (20's and 30's—Leah Roeschley and Jessica Hall) will be reading *Grace Can Lead Us Home*

Journey Group B (40's and 50's—Shannon Unzicker) will be reading *Invited*

Journey Group C (60's and above—Lynette Miller)) will be reading *What is the Bible and How Do We Understand It?*

Journey Groups will not meet again until December 11th. Facilitators will be emailing their respective groups with information about what chapter(s) should be read for that first Sunday. If you will be joining a group for the first time, please email the facilitator listed for your age group so they can share any necessary information with you about the upcoming class. New members are always welcome!



Christmas Baking with Ruth and friends

Wednesday, December 7 at 6:30pm

All are invited to come to church to enjoy baking of Christmas cookies with Ruth Haney and friends on Wednesday, Dec. 7 at 6:30pm.

The Cookies that are made will be boxed and given out by our carolers on the night of Dec. 9 when the Christmas Caroling event is held.

Bring your aprons and join in the fellowship. You might even learn why certain cookies are special to Ruth and her friends. 😊

Christmas Caroling



FRIDAY, DECEMBER 9 FROM 6-8PM

You are invited to join your voices together on December 9 as we carol to our members in Nursing Homes (dependent on current Covid restrictions) and MRC. Many voices are needed, young and old, to be able to spread the Christmas spirit. Bring a flashlight, and dress warm. Music books, cookie boxes, and locations will be assigned and provided to the caroling groups at the church at 6pm, Dec. 9. We will meet back at the church for hot chocolate and treats following our caroling.

If you are a resident of the MRC and wish for carolers to stop and sing, please leave your porch light on. 😊

-This event is sponsored by the Fellowship Committee.



Alternative Gifts Fair

Sunday, December 4th before the Service and After the Structure Evaluation

Thanks to our tremendous young people offering to make booths, we will have a one-day only Alternative Gifts Fair on December 4th, before the Service and after the Structure Evaluation. Shopping lists for both Mennonite Central Committee and Alternative Gifts International will be in mailboxes this Sunday, and a number of MCC Christmas Giving Guides will be on the table in the library, for you to take home as well. First come, first served! You can also access the shopping list [here](#) to print it out at home. Persons attending online can print out order blanks and send them to the church ASAP. Gift cards and inserts will be in individual church mailboxes by December 11 (online attendees can contact the office to schedule individual pick-up or alternate arrangements), in time to mail them. All the projects listed on the shopping lists can be viewed in their entirety online here: [MCC](#) & [Alternative Gifts](#).

For those new to our church, an Alternative Gifts Fair is an opportunity to support projects which help lift people out of challenging circumstances around the world. We remember Jesus's words, "I am come that they might have life, and have it more abundantly." Instead of hunting for a gift for loved ones who already have so much, our Fair offers the opportunity to honor them with the gift of joy and thanksgiving in the lives of others--which is God's gift to us every Christmas. Booths, sponsored for the most part by our young people, highlight different AGI and MCC projects.

Please bring shopping lists back on Sunday, December 4, as this will be a one-day Fair! Of course, you may want to add to them after seeing the booths on December 4!

Church Structure Evaluation and Feedback

Congregation
early- to mid-December

Commissions and
Teams
mid-Dec to early-Jan

Vision Team
January

Sunday, December 4th during the CE hour

Isn't it hard to believe that our congregation has been operating under its "new" structure for over a year now? Many of people currently serving on the Commissions and Teams were called to their roles in late summer or early fall 2021. One thing Pastor Gary Martin encouraged us to do was to evaluate how the new church structure functions approximately one year in. So with that in mind, Vision Team will be launching a church-wide evaluation beginning December 4. This evaluation will allow the congregation to consider areas working well or identify areas of needed improvement. For more details on the plan for this process, [review this document](#).

A congregational feedback session will be held during the CE hour on December 4. There will be no adult CE that Sunday, and all are invited to attend. This will be a hybrid event. Find the Zoom link [here](#). Knowing congregants have had differing levels of interaction with the church structure, this session will start with brief review of the structure design and how we got here. We'll also hear how communication and decision-making occur in the current structure. Finally, time will be left open for question and answer time. Vision Team will lead this session and will capture notes from the verbal feedback received. A survey will be sent out following the informational session to solicit written feedback from the congregation.

If at any point in the last 18 months you've had questions about the church structure, or if you've had positive or negative experiences from it, we encourage you to attend this session and provide your feedback to Vision Team through this process.



Worship Commission Notes

We were happy to have Kevin join us as we completed plans for Advent/Christmas season. Dorothy & Elsa also joined us to discuss Worship Accompanist scheduling. We finalized Christmas Eve worship which will be at 7:00 & will include Lessons, Carols, a meditation by Kevin, our wonderful string combo, special music, & the closing candlelight service. We also planned acquisition of a rug for Children's Time (see separate article); celebrated the hiring of Sally Hoffman Gowdy (Phil's mother & grandmother to Alexa & Jace! ♥) as our choir accompanist; discussed Worship Planner scheduling; & tweaked an email reminder of Guidelines for Ushers. Your Worship Commission is happily at work as we prepare for the upcoming Advent & Christmas seasons.

-Worship Commission

Will You Do Something on the Children's Time Rug?

That's an old joke about awkward wording in church newsletters! (Please laugh!) Seriously, your Worship Commission plans to purchase an educational rug for children to sit on during Children's Time. This will be more hospitable for our children, allowing them to sit comfortably on the floor & gather closer around the story teller while still maintaining their privacy off camera. Rugs are used for story time in our elementary schools, & we believe this will enhance a loving & effective experience for all. We are asking for donations to help purchase the rug, which will cost several hundred dollars. A church member has offered to make a matching gift of up to \$400 to match gifts from others. If you would like to give, mark your donation "Children's Time Rug. Thank you!

-Joe Culpepper, on behalf of the Worship Commission



Family Fun Night Thank You Note

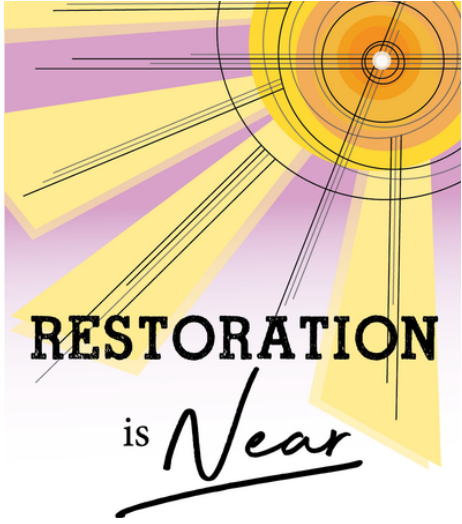
We had a fantastic turnout for Family Fun Night last Friday with almost 60 attendees! It was a fun-filled evening and the Christian Education subcommittee provided Papa John's pizza and a large, inflatable bouncy house. Thank you to Louise Reeser for providing fresh fruit and Marge Weaver and Spring Neely for making salads. We appreciate Jon & Janelle Friesen and Carrie Stalter for providing beverages and fall plates/napkins. A special thank you to the Community Life Commission and Fellowship subcommittee, Deb Stenger, Mary Ann Watkins, Pam Hodel, Marianne Israel, and LeRoy Loepp, for providing delicious desserts.

FFN isn't possible without a lot of volunteers helping to lead Bible story and song time, as well as facilitate games and activities and of course clean-up! We are thankful for the many volunteers who generously gave their time.

Advent Daily Family Devotions



Your Worship Commission is providing a daily Advent devotion/activity resource for individuals or families. There are seven sheets with four days to each which can be cut into individual days, then optionally you can place them into envelopes to be opened each day, color the graphic each day, & light a candle. We hope this might be a meaningful adult & children activity as we prepare spiritually for Christmas. **Copies will be available this Sunday**, or if you wish you can print your own [here](#).



Advent at Home

"Restoration is Near!" is the theme of the Advent at Home 2022 worship guide, now available from Mennonite Church USA (MC USA). Using the theme developed for Leader magazine, the guide offers weekly and daily Scriptures from the lectionary texts, worship rituals, prayers, activities, and background information to help individuals and households of all ages prepare for Advent through Epiphany. Download it [here](#). Read the whole press release [here](#).

Offering Counters Needed



Administration Commission is recruiting volunteers to assist the Assistant Treasurer in counting the offering on Sunday mornings. We would like five to ten volunteers so we can rotate these volunteers just like we rotate greeters and ushers. The role of an offering counter includes counting cash and coins, counting checks, recording cash and checks on offering worksheets, signing offering worksheets, and placing money in a locking bank bag. The Offering Counter does NOT handle cash/coins/checks alone nor enter data into computer system. If you have questions, please email [Mary Dyck](#).

Give supplies so we can fill buckets full of hope.

This Thanksgiving, show your gratitude and provide hope to those in need by collecting relief supplies. The supplies you donate will fill a *Bucket of Thanks* for people affected by conflict or disaster around the world.



MCC partner Uman Help Center, distributes relief buckets, hygiene kits and blankets in Uman.* (Photo courtesy of Uman)

Learn more at: mccbuckets.org

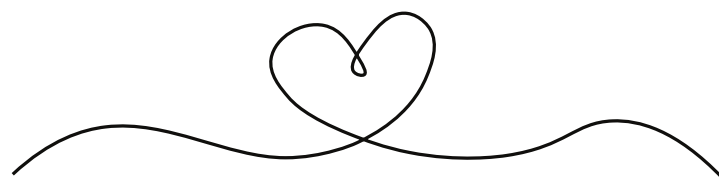


Through the month of November, show your gratitude and provide hope to those in need by collecting relief supplies for Mennonite Central Committee. The supplies you donate will fill a Bucket of Thanks for people affected by conflict or disaster around the world. **Place supplies in the bucket at the back of the sanctuary.** [Supply List](#). [More Information](#).



Now Hiring - Assistant Custodian

Administration Commission is looking to hire an Assistant Custodian to clean the Head Start wing Monday through Thursday evenings. The position reports to the custodian. Typically, this person would work 2 hours per day for no more than 32 hours per month. The Assistant Custodian will provide additional coverage as needed. Apply using an application form in the church office or [linked here](#). For questions, email [Mary Dyck](#).



This Week at MCN

A BRIEF LOOK AT THE CHURCH CALENDAR:

Thursday, November 24

Office Closed

Friday, November 25

Office Closed

Sunday, November 27

6:00pm Junior Choir

6:45pm Youth Choir

7:30pm Adult Advent Choir

Tuesday, November 29

7:00pm Interim Pastoral Team (Zoom)

Wednesday, November 30

7:00am Wednesday Morning Book Group



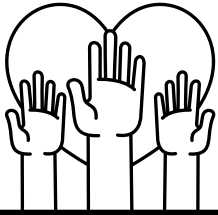
Sharing of Joys and Concerns



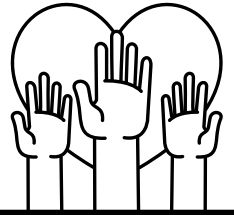
MCN IS ASKED TO BE IN CONTINUED PRAYER FOR FOR THE CARDIOVASCULAR CARE UNIT OF CARLE BROMENN MEDICAL CENTER—OUR PARTNER IN HEALING FOR 2022

Prayer Requests and Announcements

Sharing of Joys and Concerns have returned to open mic sharing during the services. Please continue to send announcements to Lynette Miller so that these can be shared by the worship leader during the Community Life portion of the service. When sharing, it's helpful if your requests are succinct. This is true whether in person or livestreaming on YouTube.



Those Serving This Week



South Greeters: Annette & Rick Harnish

West Greeter: Judy Hershberger

Welcome Table: David Voegtlin

Ushers: Deb & Steve Stenger

Worship Planner: Holly Zehr

Worship Leader: Holly & Addy Zehr

Sharing Prayer Leader: Lauren Satchwell

Children's Story: Janet Wilson & Joe Culpepper

Scripture Reader: Chad Gundy

Technology: Rick Harnish & Glenn Wilson

Song Leader: Cindy Ropp

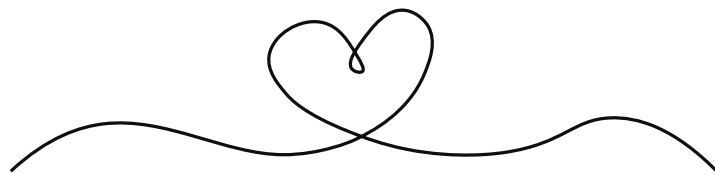
Accompaniment, Prelude, & Postlude: Dorothy Loepp

Infant Nursery - during worship: Jessica Hall

Infant Nursery - during CE: Caroline Roeschley

Preschool Nursery: Jane Roeschley

Gather Round: Jessica Hall



Newcomer Hospitality Network Virtual Meetup



Next Tuesday, November 29th at 9:30am CST & November 29th 6:30pm CST

The Newcomer Hospitality Network is a virtual meetup space for those welcoming newcomers to connect with one another in a small group setting. Participants can share their experiences and discuss topics relevant to welcoming refugees and asylum seekers in their communities. Join them for this month's meeting about Charles Baraka's journey and his advice for those engaged in welcoming work. Find more information [here](#).

To accommodate newcomers with different work schedules, they offer the same meeting twice – once in the morning and once in the evening. Register for [Tuesday, November 29 from 9:30–10:45 AM CST](#) OR [Register for Tuesday, November 29 from 6:30–7:45 PM CST](#).

*Marty Lehman nominated as MCUSA
moderator-elect*



The Mennonite Church USA Executive Board has nominated Marty Lehman of Goshen, Indiana as moderator-elect for the Delegate Assembly cycle beginning July 2023. Read more [here](#).



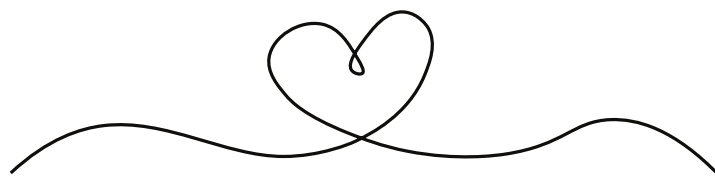
Mennonite Arts Weekend

REMINDER: Mennonite Arts Weekend early bird registration ends **Nov. 30, 2022!** Come celebrate artists at Mennonite Arts Weekend on Feb. 3-5, 2023. There will be presentations, workshops, children's activities, and a concert by Girl Named Tom. Find the list of presenters and registration, location, and lodging information [here](#).

Disability and the social model

WELCOMING EVERYBODY
Learn. Pray. Join.

"I was once leading a congregational training session about disability and access in faith communities, when I provided a high statistic about how many people with remain underemployed. Someone in the audience responded, 'Well, obviously. They're disabled.'" Read Kathy Dickson's full MCUSA blog post [here](#).



Items for the Midweek



Please send items to be included in the Midweek to the [Church Office](#) no later than 8am on Wednesday. Thank you!

Staff Contact and Building Open Hours

<u>Building Open:</u>	Closed: Thursday 11/24 & Friday 11/25 Open: Monday 11/28 – Friday 12/2, 9AM-11AM and Monday 11/28 – Wednesday 11/30 & Friday 12/2 1:30PM-3PM.
<u>Lydia Hedberg:</u>	Office Administrator; church@normalmennonite.org ; 309-452-6622
<u>Rita Munkakusi:</u>	Custodian
<u>Kevin Chupp:</u>	Pastor for Outreach; kevin@normalmennonite.org
<u>Lynette Miller:</u>	Interim Pastor for Discipling and Community Life Commissions
<u>Ron Ropp:</u>	Pastor for Pastoral Care
<u>Lauren Satchwell:</u>	Interim Pastor for Vision Team & Administration Commissions
<u>Holly Zehr:</u>	Interim Pastor for Worship & Spiritual Gift Discernment Team

Structure Documents

Updated structure documents, including ministry descriptions, vision statement with commission assignments for the goals, structure changes, and a list of individuals called to serve in the new structure, are available at this [link](#).

Please click [here](#) for past meeting and other recordings.

Work Order & Purchase Request Forms

[Work Order](#) & [Purchase Request](#)