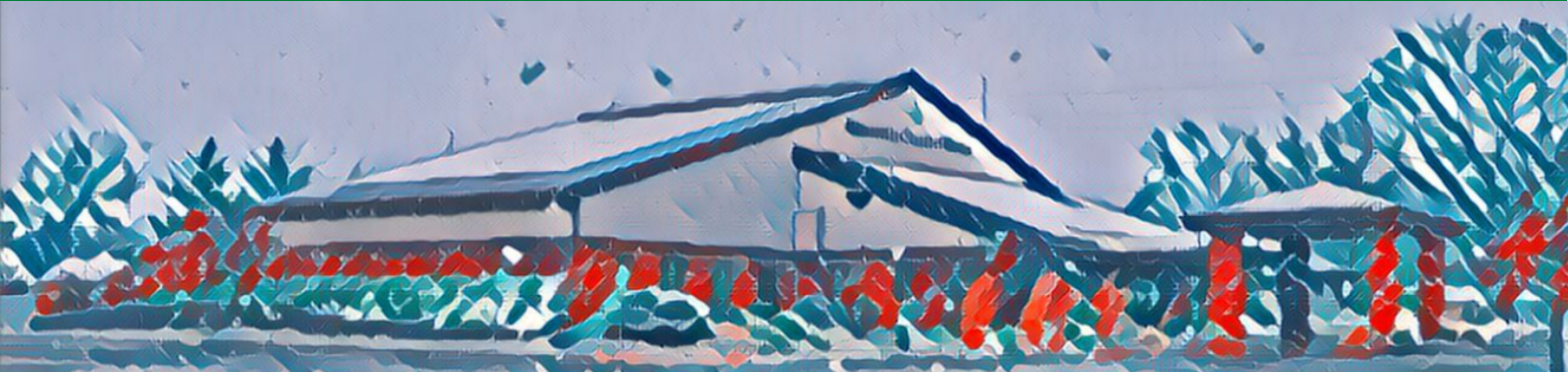


# THE MIDWEEK



## WORSHIP THIS SUNDAY 9:30 A.M.

This is the third Sunday of Advent.

Pastor Kevin Chupp will preach a sermon titled *Wait Like a Farmer* using the scripture James 5:7-10.

Asking someone to exhibit patience in times of suffering seems cruel, and yet James asks those early Christians to try it. 2,000 years later, we wonder whether "patience" is the right word for it.



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



Mennonite  
Church  
of Normal

A congregation of  
Mennonite Church USA

## Covid Update



As of November 28, The McLean County Health Department indicated that the rate was **14.7% and rising**. McLean County is at **Medium** COVID-19 Community Level. Administration Commission encourages the use of masks in large groups, especially for those with multiple chronic illnesses.



## Mennonite Periodicals

As in the past, everyone now has an opportunity to subscribe to several Mennonite publications for a discounted rate through the church office. These include [Rejoice!](#) (a quarterly devotional) by Menno Media for \$33.50, [The Upper Room Daily Devotional](#) (delivered quarterly) for \$8, and [Anabaptist World](#) (16 issues) for \$39. If you would like to **renew, begin, or end** a subscription, please contact Lydia in the church office at 309-452-6622 or [church@normalmennonite.org](mailto:church@normalmennonite.org) by **Wednesday, December 14th**.

## Structure Evaluation Meeting Recording & Survey



Vision Team would like to thank all of those that attended and participated in the congregational feedback session on Sunday. We heard affirmation and concerns from members of the congregation and how they have seen or experienced the church structure functioning over the past year. [A recording of the meeting can be viewed here.](#)

In an interest to hear and capture feedback from all, [please consider responding to the brief survey found here](#) on the functioning of the church structure.

If you have any questions or would like to provide additional verbal feedback, please reach out to a member of the Vision Team.

*Sponsored by the Vision Team*



# Christmas Baking with Ruth and Friends

**TODAY Wednesday, December 7 at 6:30pm**  
**(the time in the bulletin is incorrect)**

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. 😊 **Please sign up [here!](#)**

*Sponsored by the Fellowship Committee*

## Christmas Caroling



**THIS 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. **Please sign up [here!](#)**

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

*Sponsored by the Fellowship Committee*

## Journey Groups



**All Journey Groups will resume meeting again this Sunday after worship**, and will be starting new books. Now is a convenient time to join a Journey Group if you haven't done so yet this year. (If you have not yet picked up a book for your class, please check the table in the Conference Room. If there are no more copies left of the title you need, please let the facilitator for your group know.)

**For this Sunday, Dec. 11th:**

- Journey Group A (20's and 30's), facilitated by Leah Roeschley and Jessica Hall, should read the Introduction to *Grace Will Lead Us Home*.
- Journey Group B (40's and 50's), facilitated by Shannon Unzicker, should read the Author's Note, Introduction, and Chapter One of *Invited*.
- Journey Group C (60's and above), facilitated by Lynette Miller, should read the Introduction and Chapter One in *What is the Bible*.

*Sponsored by the Discipling Commission*  
p. 3 of 14





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Exuberant and very appreciative Thanks to all who put up booths for our one-day Alternative Gifts Fair last Sunday, December 4:

- MCC F7 Fruit Trees: Emma and Jordan, Shelly and Darvis, with the expert help of Lucia the llama and Penny the dog.
- MCC F10 and F11 Bee Box and Buy the Hive! ("BEE KIND"): Addie
- MCC F1,2, 3 and 5 Goats, Chickens, Pigs and Buy the Farmyard!: Katie and Darin , Lily and Anna
- MCC E1and E2 Keeping Girls in School and Backpack with School Supplies: Helen and Heath, Philip, Jack, James and Ruby
- AGI #8 Scholarships for Students in Haiti: Lexi
- MCC W1 Clean Water at Home: Shannon and the High School Sunday School Class
- AGI#3 Relief for Ukrainian Refugees in Hungary: Juergen
- and to Pam and Mark , for helping set up on Saturday afternoon.

Some shopping lists and checks are still coming in. Final totals raised for AGI and MCC , and for the different projects, will be in the Midweek next week. At this time, after a terrific, heartwarming response, we have raised well over \$5000. Best thanks to all for your gifts!



## Update from the Vision Team

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Your Vision Team met on November 29. Following this meeting, Vision Team has the following items to share with the congregation:

- Vision Team received reports on the activities of the Spiritual Gifts Discernment Team (SGDT), Pastoral Team Search Committee (PTSC), the Pastoral Team (PT), and the Commissions and identified ways we can support them.
- We discussed the format and content of the December 4 congregational feedback session concerning evaluation of the current structure. See the separate post in this Midweek for the link to the Structure Evaluation Feedback Form.
- We affirmed the plan for Pastor Chupp to serve as the Pastoral Team Representative to the Outreach Commission. The Spiritual Gifts Discernment team will consult with him as they work to find people who feel called to this aspect of the church's ministry either to serve on the commission or support in other ways.
- We spent significant time reviewing the goals and objectives set forth for our congregation when the structure was originally adopted in 2021. We used this discussion to inform our understanding of pastoral and staffing needs for the coming year as we refine a draft of the Vision Team's portion of the 2023 Spending Plan to be presented to the congregation.

Find Vision Team meeting minutes and resource documents in the Vision Team folder on Google Drive.



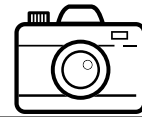
## Commission Meeting Minutes

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There is now a way for everyone in the congregation to view the minutes from each commission's meetings. Click this link to be taken to a Google Drive folder which contains meeting minutes from each commission. Please peruse and enjoy learning about what our commissions are up to! Going forward, this link will be available at the bottom of every Midweek. For help accessing the minutes, please contact Lydia in the church office at 309-452-6622 or [church@normalmennonite.org](mailto:church@normalmennonite.org).

*Organized by the Administration Commission*

## Sharing Our Gifts



Spiritual Gifts Discernment Team would like to begin highlighting the many ways that MCNers are sharing their gifts inside and outside of our congregation. Please send pictures of yourself in the many ministry settings you find yourself-whether here at the church, in your place of work, or with other organizations you minister with. Perhaps you meet with others to pray or you have a regular commission meeting, maybe you're part of a book club or regularly volunteer for Habitat for Humanity. You can email these pictures along with a short description to Lydia at [church@normalmennonite.org](mailto:church@normalmennonite.org). These pictures will be shown on preservice slides and WILL NOT be shown on YouTube. Don't consider your submission as bragging. Rather consider Jesus' words that we should "let our light shine before people; that they may see our good deeds and praise God in Heaven."

*Organized by the Spiritual Gifts Discernment Team*



## For Your Consideration

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Spiritual Gifts Discernment Team is asking for your prayerful thoughts and consideration on where you may be called or able to help. Below is a list of commission and team members' end of term status. As there will be many vacancies in the upcoming year, we encourage people to think about how they could serve. As interest arises, please share with a team member to let this be known! Please contact Nancy Fisher, Kristen Hartwig, Shelly Nester King, Holly Zehr, or Kevin Chupp. Thank you!

*Spiritual Gifts Discernment Team*

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.

*Requested by the Administration Commission*



## 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](#).

# 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](#).

*Shared by the Worship Commission*

## 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](#).

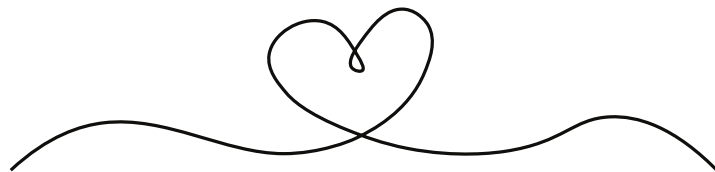
*Requested by the Administration Commission*



## Now Hiring - Assistant Custodian

Administration Commission is hoping to hire an Assistant Custodian to clean the Head Start wing Monday through Friday evenings. The position reports to the custodian. Typically, this person will work 2 hours per day for no more than 40 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](#).

*Requested by the Administration Commission*



# *Birthdays & Anniversaries*

CELEBRATING LIFE'S MOMENTS AT MCN

**Anniversaries**

**Birthdays**



## *This Week at MCN*

A BRIEF LOOK AT THE CHURCH CALENDAR:

### **Wednesday, December 7**

**6:30pm** Christmas Baking with Ruth and Friends Sign-Up (**Sign-up [here!](#)**)

### **Thursday, December 8**

**7:00am** Next Man Bible Study

**6:30pm** Administration Commission (Zoom)

### **Friday, December 9**

**6:00pm** Christmas Caroling (**Sign-up [here!](#)**)

### **Sunday, December 11**

**6:00pm** Junior Choir

**6:45pm** Youth Choir

**7:30pm** Adult Advent Choir

### **Monday, December 12**

**7:00pm** Discipling Commission (Zoom)

**7:00pm** Fellowship Committee (Zoom)

### **Tuesday, December 13**

**7:00pm** Interim Pastoral Team (Zoom)

### **Wednesday, December 14**

**7:00am** Wednesday Morning Book Group

## *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.

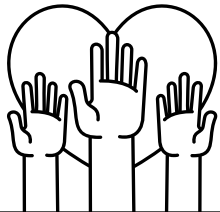




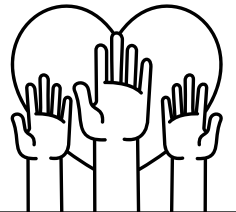
# Sharing of Joys and Concerns



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



## Those Serving This Week



**South Greeters:** Jeff & Amy Reiman

**West Greeter:** Pam Hodel

**Welcome Table:** Mary Dyck

**Ushers:** Hoffmann Family

**Worship Planner:** Holly Zehr

**Worship Leader:** Darvis King & Jaylen Raab

**Sharing Prayer Leader:** Kevin Chupp

**Children's Story:** Janet Wilson & Joe Culpepper

**Scripture Reader:** Rita Munkakusi

**Technology:** Ryan Miller & Caleb Augspurger

**Song Leader:** Cindy Ropp

**Accompaniment, Prelude, & Postlude:** Dorothy Loepp

**Infant Nursery – during worship:** Miriam Kennell

**Infant Nursery – during CE:** Jane Roeschley

**Preschool Nursery:** Carrie Stalter

**Gather Round:** Holly & Randy Zehr



## The Jazz-Gospel Messiah

**Saturday, December 10th at the Scottish Rites Temple in Peoria**

Glenn Wilson will be playing saxophone for Too Hot to Handel - The Jazz-Gospel Messiah. There will be two shows: one at 3 and another at 7:30. Glenn played the show last weekend in Chicago and highly recommends it for Messiah fans! Find more information and purchase tickets [here](#).



\$50 - Register Here

## Young Adult Retreat

**January 7-8, 2023 in Tiskilwa, IL**

*Joy in Jesus: Embracing Celebration and Laughter* Willow Springs Mennonite Church is inviting young adults to attend a retreat January 7-8, 2023. Explore together how knowing Jesus can help us through difficult times and even bring us laughter in the midst of hardship! The retreat will include sessions with worship and speaker input, a service project at Hungry World Farm, food, fellowship, and fun! Use the QR code found on the informational flyer to register. View the flyer [here](#). Registration deadline is December 20th. Questions? Contact Beth at [bethilenegerig@gmail.com](mailto:bethilenegerig@gmail.com).

## Uniting for Ukraine Webinar


**Tuesday, December 20th at 1pm CST**

Since February, over 14 million Ukrainians have been forced to flee their homes and seek safety in areas within and outside Ukraine. In addition, an ongoing humanitarian crisis has resulted in millions of Venezuelans leaving their home in pursuit of a safer future. In response to these humanitarian disasters, the U.S. government has developed sponsorship programs which enable individuals and communities to sponsor Venezuelans and Ukrainians to come to the United States.

Join Mennonite Central Committee and Church World Service to learn more about these sponsorship programs and how the faith community can walk alongside Ukrainians and Venezuelans as they seek refuge in the United States. Register and learn more [here](#).

# Ontario MB leader ousted; two congregations suspended

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Following a September event where local pastors and leaders in the Ontario Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches (ONMB) were able to discuss and reflect together about LGBTQ welcome and inclusion in their church, the leader of the gathering, Ed Willms, has been "terminated without cause" from his position as executive director of ONMB by the ONMB board. Disheartened, Willms says "The conversation was not about changing our Confession of Faith or expecting churches to change their beliefs." Read the full *Anabaptist World* article by John Longhurst [here](#). 

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## MCC Action Alert



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### Call your representative and urge them to stand with Guatemalan human rights defenders

Across Guatemala, human rights activists, Indigenous leaders, journalists, and judges have been jailed or silenced for speaking out against corruption. Recently, members of the U.S. Congress introduced the Restoring Human Rights and the Rule of Law in Guatemala resolution ([H.Res. 1481](#)). This resolution condemns human rights abuses, calls for suspending military aid to Guatemala, and requests that U.S. government resources be monitored to ensure they are not supporting corrupt actors. Read the full Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Action Alert [here](#). Find your representative [here](#).

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## South Central Mennonite Conference to examine MCUSA ties due to LGBTQ Inclusive Resolution

South Central Mennonite Conference (SCMC) of Mennonite Church USA (MCUSA) will hold four regional discernment meetings about its relationship with the denomination on Jan. 16-20. Some congregations in SCMC wish to disassociate from the MCUSA due to disagreement with the "Repentance and Transformation" resolution passed by MCUSA delegates this past May, citing "theological differences" on including LGBTQ+ people in their church. However, "at the same time, some of our member churches continue to find value in our relationship with MCUSA and are reluctant to sever those ties." Please pray for the South Central Mennonite Conference and the congregations in it as they meet to discern their future. Read the full *Anabaptist World* article [here](#).



# Relief, Development and Podcast

New episode: *Preventing and responding to abuse in the church*

This episode of MCC podcast Relief, Development And Podcast explores how church culture can sometimes enable abuse, how to prevent it and how to best respond when it happens. Guests are Jaymie Friesen and Val Hiebert, Abuse Response and Prevention coordinators for Mennonite Central Committee in Manitoba. Listen [here](#). (A transcript is also available to read.)

## SWAP program changes locations in response to flooding, community needs



A new site location for Mennonite Central Committee's Sharing With Appalachia People (SWAP) home repair program is set to open in May 2023 in Elkhorn City, Kentucky. This new location will allow SWAP to serve some of the most vulnerable communities impacted by the the catastrophic flooding in eastern Kentucky this summer. The SWAP site in Harlan, Kentucky, will be closing after 37 years. Learn more about the new location and plans for the future [here](#).



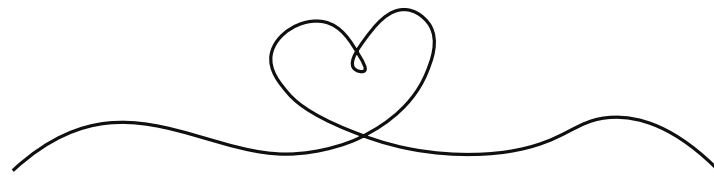
## Mennonite Church USA honors two peacemakers

Mennonite Church USA (MCUSA) has named John Stoner and Clara Weybright this year's #BringThePeace awardees. Stoner received the Legacy Peacemaker award, and Weybright received the Young Peacemaker award. The awards are sponsored by MCUSA's Church Peace Tax Fund. Read the full *Anabaptist World* article by Jessica Griggs [here](#).

## Interim Publication: CDC Connector

Following the retirement of Mary Klassen as the editor of Reporter and focus, the Central District Conference staff, Emma Hartman and Doug Luginbill, will be publishing the *CDC Connector* as an interim publication. This publication will be distributed approximately every four to six weeks. View or download the November Connector [here](#).





## Items for the Midweek



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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

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<u>Building Open:</u>	Monday–Friday 9AM-11AM and Monday–Wednesday & Friday 1:30PM-3PM.
<u>Lydia Hedberg:</u>	Office Administrator; <a href="mailto:church@normalmennonite.org">church@normalmennonite.org</a> ; 309-452-6622
<u>Rita Munkakusi:</u>	Custodian
<u>Kevin Chupp:</u>	Pastor for Outreach; <a href="mailto:kevin@normalmennonite.org">kevin@normalmennonite.org</a>
<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

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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

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