

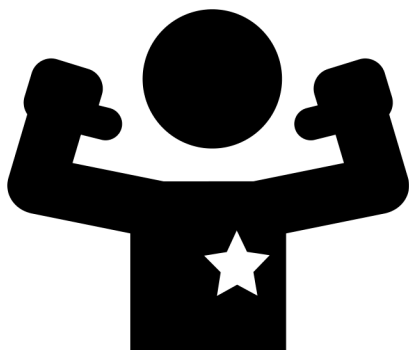
# ***THE MIDWEEK***



## **WORSHIP THIS SUNDAY 9:30 AM**

This week, Pastor Kevin Chupp will preach a sermon titled *Brag Like a Christian* using the scripture Romans [3:28-30] 5:1-11.

In the midst of conversation about justification, Paul weaves in some things that he thinks are worth bragging about. First, he talks about boasting “in our hope” which seems natural. Then he talks about boasting “in our afflictions,” which seems less natural. And finally, he talks about boasting about “receiving reconciliation,” which seems like a good thing at first. But according to Paul that reconciliation came at the cost of Jesus’ life because we were “sinners” and “enemies” of God. Does Paul know what the word “boast” means?



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

# May Month of Prayer



The Spiritual Gifts Discernment Team (SGDT) invites the congregation to a month of prayer in May to support the work of the Worship Commission (WC). Members of the WC are Steve Benner, Joe Culpepper, Annette Harnish, and Kevin Chupp (pastoral team representative). The WC's responsibilities include gathered worship planning and leading, spiritual disciplines, spirituality, spiritual direction, music, drama, and arts. They have and will continue to do very important work for the church. Throughout the month of May we will share more specific ways you can hold them in your prayers. You are also invited to share with the Worship Commission your affirmations, support, and anything else God may bring to your heart. You can do this by emailing the SGDT. Thank you for supporting the Worship Commission in this way!

*From the Spiritual Gifts Discernment Team*



## Home Sweet Home Missions

The Outreach Commission is planning to offer monthly opportunities to show up for our wider community. This month, our focus is Home Sweet Home Ministries. We know some of you are already involved in serving there, but for those of you who are interested you can read more about the volunteer opportunities and fill out a volunteer application [here](#). After completing a short training, you will be able to sign up for things like dishwashing, food prep and serving, custodial work, welcoming, etc. Join us as we partner with those who are already actively serving our community!

*From the Outreach Commission*

## Group Study



### **Monday, May 22 at 6:30 p.m. in the Jr. High Classroom**

What does it mean to describe Mennonite Church of Normal as an Anabaptist Mennonite congregation? How has Anabaptist history shaped the Mennonite church? How are Mennonites similar and distinctive from other Christian denominations? How is Mennonite Church of Normal organized structurally and how do people participate in it? The Discipleship Commission is offering a four to six-session group, with Wayne Hochstetler facilitating, to examine these and other questions. This class will begin Monday, May 22 at 6:30 p.m. and future sessions will be decided by mutual consent. If you would be interested, please let Wayne know of your willingness to participate.

*From the Discipling Commission*



## Update from the Administration Commission

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We had the blessing of many offers for delegates at our upcoming conferences. Here are the delegates that agreed to attend and share reports with us following the conferences:

- Central District Conference – Barry Weaver, Kevin Chupp, and Ron Ropp
- MC-USA – Kevin Chupp, Cindy Ropp, and Lauren Satchwell

Thank you to everyone serving.

*From the Administration Commission*

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## Volunteers Needed



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**May 18-25, May 30-June 8, and from June 18 to the end of the month.**

*Below is a message from Lamar Miller, the Mennonite Disaster Service Illinois Unit Chair.*

The IL Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) Unit is responding to St Clair county (St Louis area) and the flooding they had almost one year ago. The unit has committed to working with the LTRG and homeowners for the months of May and June. The majority of the work will consist of drywall, painting, trim and some minor framing along with some possible floor replacement. We are looking for weekly and daily volunteers, including a Friday/Saturday option. Our current dates to receive volunteers is May 18-25, May 30-June 8, and from June 18 to the end of the month. **For those persons interested in information for volunteering on this project, they can contact Jim Showalter.** Please consider volunteering and pray for the Unit, leaders, and volunteers as we respond to the needs of these homeowners in the name of Christ.



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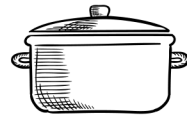
## Camp Indigo Point

The Outreach Commission, at the request of Mama Bears, is giving \$500 in support of Camp Indigo Point. They are a residential summer camp that is specifically for LGBTQ+ youth. It is one of just a few camps like that, and it happens to be in Illinois. You can view their website [here](#).

Jennifer Harris Dault, pastor at Saint Louis Mennonite Fellowship, encouraged congregations in the Supportive Communities Network to consider giving \$1,800 (\$1,300 more than we are already committed) which would represent one tenth of the funds they were hoping to raise for scholarships. We are asking the congregation to help us meet that number. You can give on the camp's website (and let us know how much you gave), or by writing Camp Indigo Point in the memo line of a check to the church. Thanks for helping us make sure everyone who wants to attend this important camp can go!

*From the Outreach Commission*





## Adult Sunday School

The Discipling Commission has been busy planning summer Sunday school for adults. You can look forward to two different teaching plans this summer in a combined group setting.

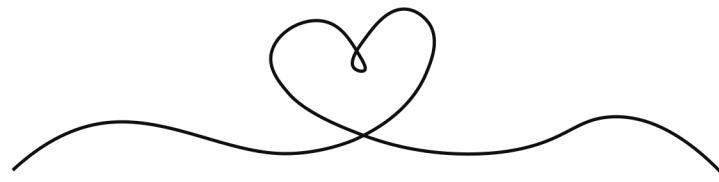
The first three Sundays of June will be focused on recapping our journey group books. All journey groups are invited to join in the sanctuary to discuss key takeaways and poignant discussions, as well as opportunities for outreach at MCN:

- June 4th– Hospitality: “Invited”
- June 11th – Grace Can Lead Us Home: A Christian Call to End Homelessness
- June 18th – What is the Bible and how do we understand it?

Then, we are excited to share “The Way We Were & Who We Became: A Telling of Oral Histories.” This Sunday school content was originally piloted with our 2nd grade thru high school classes last summer. The feedback was so positive from those speaking and facilitating, along with the kids, that we wanted to create an “adult” version this summer!

- **What can be expected?** The teaching format will require volunteers to share their story. Oral story telling can be a very powerful method to share an individual's personal reflection, including their childhood, family & career, faith formation, etc. It can also lead to rich conversations and relationship building.
- **What do we need from you?** We need 1 volunteer to kick off the class on June 25th, followed by 5 volunteers for the month of July and one to conclude this session on August 6th.
- **What will be provided to the volunteer speakers?** A list of thought-provoking questions to get you started, but we encourage every volunteer to share their story with authenticity and the ability to determine if they want to stick to a “script” or not!
- **If you are volunteering, can you bring in props?** Absolutely, last summer volunteers shared photographs, collections, and other visual aids to bring their story to life!
- **Who to contact if you are interested in being a volunteer speaker?** David Voegtlin, Lynette Miller, Shannon Unzicker or Spring Neely.





## Those Serving This Week



**South Greeters:** Eric & Chellie Miller

**West Greeter:** Nancy Fisher

**Welcome Table:** Gail Fisher

**Ushers:** Caleb Augspurger & Andy Reeser

**Offering Counter:** Stephanie Company

**Worship Planner:** Joe Culpepper

**Worship Leader:**

**Sharing Prayer Leader:** Ron Ropp

**Children's Story:**

**Technology:** Adam Augspurger & Wesley Hershberger

**Song Leader:** Wayne Hochstetler

**Accompaniment, Prelude, & Postlude:** Jenell Ulrich

**Infant Nursery – during worship:** Connie Yoder

**Infant Nursery – during CE:** Gabriella Harnish

**Preschool Nursery:** Carrie Stalter

**Gather Round:** Shelly King

## *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*



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MCN IS ASKED TO BE IN CONTINUED PRAYER FOR FOR THE TOP ADMINISTRATORS AND THEIR FAMILIES FROM CARLE BROMENN MEDICAL CENTER—OUR PARTNER IN HEALING FOR 2023



## *This Week at MCN*

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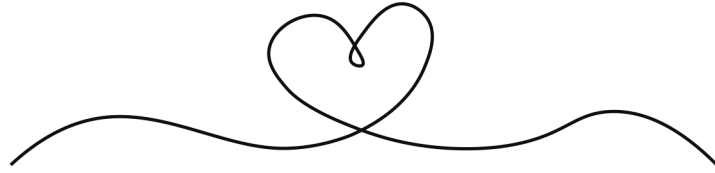
A BRIEF LOOK AT THE CHURCH CALENDAR:

# Birthdays & Anniversaries

CELEBRATING LIFE'S MOMENTS AT MCN

Anniversaries

Birthdays



## Congolese Mennonites preserve church history

Below is an excerpt from an article by Charly Ntumba Malembe written for the April 2023 issue of the *Journal of African Christian Biography* and rebulished by Mennonite Mission Network. **Read the full article [here](#).**

A church history writing workshop was held for Congolese Mennonites, March 20-24, at the [Centre Universitaire de Missiologie](#) (University Center of Missiology) in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The event was organized by Anicka Fast, in her role with Mennonite Mission Network as a specialist in church history and missiology for French-speaking Africa, and Michèle Sigg, executive director of the [Dictionary of African Christian Biography](#), in collaboration with Maurice Matsitsa of the Lay Protestant Ministry of the Communauté des Églises des Frères Mennonites au Congo (CEFMC, Mennonite Brethren Church of Congo). The purpose of this workshop was to develop the talents of Congolese writers and historians by equipping them with the necessary tools to write biographies about the Mennonite men and women who contributed to the birth and growth of the Mennonite denominations in the DRC. The workshop brought together members of three Mennonite denominations in DCR — *Communauté Mennonite au Congo* (Mennonite Church of Congo), CEFMC and *Communauté Évangélique Mennonite* (Evangelical Mennonite Church). This meant that there was a diversity of ethnic groups, languages and ages that proved to us that we are one body in Christ Jesus. The love and unity of the group was tremendous. We, students, have mastered the scientific standards of this training, and we are already at work in the field. We look forward to seeing our research published in a book by Langham Publishing and in the *Dictionary of African Christian Biography*.



## Livestream Event Recording

View a recording of *Anabaptist World's* livestream event with Melody Pannell [here](#) or below. Pannell is a social activist, equity trainer, public speaker, theologian, educator, mentor and counselor.



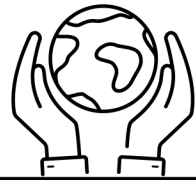
## Ukraine's front line of compassion



*MB churches provide relief to neighbors whose lives have been upended by war.*

Association of Mennonite Brethren Churches in Ukraine (AMBCU) is one of Mennonite Central Committee's local partners in Ukraine, a collective of Mennonite Brethren churches across the country providing relief to people whose lives have been upended by the war with Russia. AMBCU's director, Roman, sees a clear role for the church. There's the military front line that everyone hears about in the news, but churches see their own front line as providing relief and care for people who have been displaced or harmed by the war. "Our area is injured soldiers, injured people, people who fled," Roman said. "And this front, or area of work, will last even longer after the war is finished. It's long-term." Each month AMBCU provides food packages to more than 200 families. Volunteers have distributed relief and hygiene supplies like MCC relief kits, comforters and canned meat. They have also started responding to psychological needs, providing equine therapy, massage and other supports to displaced children. **Read the full *Anabaptist World* article by Emily Loewen [here](#).**

# Répandre l'Évangile en ayant à cœur la protection de la création



*Below is an excerpt from Sibonokuhle Ncube's article for Mennonite World Conference (MWC). Sibonokuhle Ncube, de Bulawayo (Zimbabwe), est membre du groupe de travail pour la Protection de la Création de la Conférence Mennonite Mondiale et co-directrice régionale de Mennonite Mission Network en Afrique et en Europe. [Lire la suite](#).*

L'anxiété climatique est peut-être un nouveau terme inventé dans les pays du Nord, mais ce n'est pas une nouvelle expérience pour les communautés qui dépendent des précipitations pour leur agriculture de subsistance. J'ai commencé à m'inquiéter du temps, ainsi que le font les adultes de ma famille, quand j'avais 8 ans. Dans les communautés agricoles, parler du temps n'est pas bavarder – c'est essentiel. La météo est un facteur important dans la qualité de la vie : il affecte la sécurité hydrique, alimentaire et énergétique. Quand la saison des plantations arrive en retard, nous sommes anxieux. Dans mon enfance, chaque jour [sans pluie] après le 25 novembre était annonciateur de malheur : le potentiel de la récolte de maïs diminuait considérablement jour après jour. Quand j'étais jeune, j'étais attirée par les complexités de la sécheresse et de ses implications pour le bien-être et la survie de mes proches et de leurs communautés dans le Matabeleland rural. D'autres peurs ont aussi hanté ma jeunesse. J'avais peur de la prolifération des meurtres génocidaires et du discours traumatisant dans les communautés urbaines envers les migrants climatiques. Bon nombre de membres de ma famille ont été déplacés à la fois à cause de la sécheresse et menaces de mort. Tout cela était inextricablement lié. Quand j'étais enfant, je voulais être assez puissante pour contribuer à apporter une solution aux problèmes complexes que je voyais. Par conséquent, plus tard, j'ai étudié la planification rurale et urbaine, et j'ai travaillé et fait des recherches sur le développement rural et urbain depuis 1996. J'ai beaucoup réfléchi à ce à quoi ressembleraient la durabilité et la résilience authentiques dans mon contexte. Je pense que ces principes peuvent également être adaptés à d'autres régions. Ma vision de l'Afrique Australe comporte trois éléments interdépendants : un accès général à des solutions innovantes comme l'énergie solaire ; l'autonomisation et le respect des femmes et des filles dans les sites locaux travaillant sur la paix et le développement ; et le ré-équipement et l'agrarisation pour atténuer les impacts négatifs de l'émigration des communautés rurales. Dans cet article, je voudrais montrer ce qui lie ces trois problèmes et ce que cela impliquerait pour les communautés rurales du Zimbabwe si elles pouvaient accéder à des panneaux solaires et aux compétences nécessaires pour les entretenir.



## *Gospel with creation care at heart*

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*Below is an excerpt from Sibonokuhle Ncube's article for Mennonite World Conference (MWC). Sibonokuhle Ncube, from Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, is a member of Mennonite World Conference's Creation Care Task Force and co-regional director of Mennonite Mission Network in Africa and Europe. **Read more** [here](#).*

Climate anxiety may be a new term coined in the Global North, but it is not a new experience for communities that depend on rain-fed subsistence farming. I first joined the adults in my family in worrying about the weather when I was 8 years old. In farming communities, talking about the weather is not small talk – it is everything. The weather is a major determinant for quality of life: it affects water, food and energy security. When a planting season comes late, there is anxiety. In my childhood, each day after 25 November was a harbinger of doom: the potential harvest for corn reduces significantly each day. In my early years, I was drawn into the complexities of drought and implications for the well being and survival of my relatives and their communities in rural Matabeleland. Other fears haunted my childhood as well. I feared the spread of genocidal killings and the traumatic speech from urban communities toward climate migrants. Waves of my relatives were displaced by both drought and death. All these things were inextricably intertwined. As a small child, I wanted to be powerful enough to be part of the solution to the complex problems I saw. Therefore, I studied rural and urban planning and have worked and done research in rural and urban development since 1996. I've thought a lot about what authentic sustainability and resilience would look like in my context. I believe these principles can be adapted to other regions as well. My vision for Southern Africa has three interrelated elements: general access to off-the-grid solutions like solar power; empowerment of women and girls as dignified agents in local peace and development spaces; and re-tooling and re-agrarianizing to mitigate negative impacts of outmigration from rural communities. In this article, I would like to show how these three issues are interrelated and what it would mean for rural communities in Zimbabwe if they could access solar panels and the skills to maintain these systems.

## *Peace Camps*



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Mennonite Central Committee U.S. National Peace & Justice Ministries is excited to share about three upcoming Peace Camps for 2023! Peace Camps are one-week, hands-on learning experiences for young adults hungry to connect with other young adults, root themselves in intentional, theological reflection and apply that to real-world work of peace and justice in their communities. The three camps are: Peacebuilders Training on July 24-29, Descolonizando la construcción de paz on Octubre 15-20 (facilitated entirely in Spanish), and God of Justice on January 2-6, 2024. Find more information [here](#).

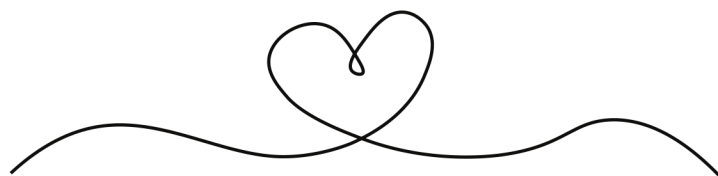




## *CPT Reflects on Their Name Change 1 year Ago*

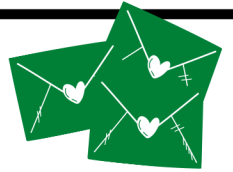
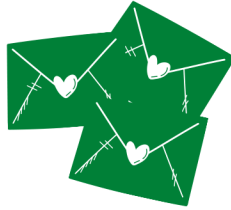
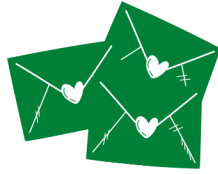
**Below is an article from the Community Peacemaker Team's (CPT) newsletter. CPT was formerly known as Christian Peacemaker Teams. Learn more about CPT [here](#).**

A year ago, CPT took the bold step of living into who we had become: a more profoundly inclusive and diverse organization. We were confident we were doing what was right, but we had doubts about how those who have stood with us and journeyed with us all these years might react. Would they walk with us down this unknown path, or would they decide who we had become was not representative of them? We took this step to live into the boldness and the requirement of our commitment to dismantling structures of violence and oppression. To decide to move from the comfort of the name Christian Peacemaker Teams, with over thirty-five years of reputation, to a new name that questioned our identity required us to question our own solidarities. What partnerships must we reimagine to grow and live into our mission? The intersections of injustice, history, and reality force us to live in the tensions of sometimes unidealistic discomfort. In a recent speech, Arundhati Roy said, "Solidarity can never be pristine. It should be challenged, analyzed, argued about, calibrated." This is where we need to locate ourselves: in places where we live in the vulnerability of partnership that allows us to continuously engage and live in solidarity. A few days ago, CPT received the 2023 International Peace Award from the Community of Christ and the Shaw Family Foundation in recognition of our work founded on partnerships that transform our partners and us to create spaces for peace. We are proud to receive this recognition because it affirms our chosen path and our growth in further learning how to decolonize peace work. Awards aside, throughout last year, we received affirmations from readers and supporters acknowledging our evolution. We are grateful. This year we're looking forward to exploring how to demilitarize, decolonize and reimagine our solidarity. We find ourselves in a crucial historical moment where reimagination is vital to mounting movements against oppression and injustice and where we can build coalitions, grow and evolve with you. We look forward to learning and collaborating with you to support partners in Kurdistan, Palestine, Colombia, Lesvos, Turtle Island, and the Borderlands who challenge the militarization of their streets while sorting and resisting the legacy of colonization in their communities. Would you join us in growing our solidarity?



# Our Members in Care Facilities

PLEASE REMEMBER THESE MEMBERS IN YOUR PRAYERS.  
SEND A CARD IF THE SPIRIT LEADS YOU!



## Staff Contact and Building Open Hours

<u>Building Open:</u>	Monday & Wednesday–Friday 9AM-11AM and Monday-Friday 1:30PM-3PM. Closed: Tuesday Mornings
<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 Commission, Worship Commission, Congregational Care Committee, and the Spiritual Gifts Discernment Team; <a href="mailto:kevin@normalmennonite.org">kevin@normalmennonite.org</a>
<u>Lynette Miller:</u>	Pastor for Discipling and Community Life Commissions
<u>Ron Ropp:</u>	Pastor for Pastoral Care
<u>Lauren Satchwell:</u>	Pastor for Vision Team & Administration Commissions

## Work Order & Purchase Request Forms

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

## 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!

# *Commission Meeting Minutes*

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Click [this link](#) to be taken to a Google Drive folder which contains meeting minutes from each commission.

## *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.