

THE MIDWEEK



WORSHIP THIS SUNDAY 9:30 AM

This week, Pastor Kevin Chupp will preach a sermon titled *Not Ashamed* using the scripture Romans 1:1-17.

In the first breath of Paul's letter, after introducing himself and offering some flattering words to the church in Rome, he makes sure to mention that he is "not ashamed of the gospel." In other words, that is not the thing that has kept him away from them. What immobilizes us? What are we ashamed? How does our shame affect our action or inaction?



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

There is no Christian Education this week.

Children & Youth CE

There is no Christian Education this week.



**Mennonite
Church
of Normal**

A congregation of
Mennonite Church USA

Meal and Sacred Listening



THIS Sunday, May 7th after worship during the CE hour

MCN is participating in Central District Conference's (CDC) "Sacred Listening" process on May 7th. Immediately following worship, we will share a light meal and will be sharing stories of our congregation with our "listeners" who are joining us from nearby CDC congregations. There are 6 prompts that will guide this process (found below.) Everyone is encouraged to share their voice. You can learn more about the process and read the prompts [here](#).

The 6 prompts are:

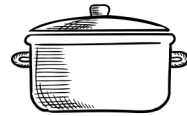
1. Tell a story about a time when you were especially excited or grateful to be a part of your church.
2. The mission of Central District Conference is summarized as "Knowing Christ's love...Answering God's call." Share a story or two that you feel demonstrates God's love within your congregation.
3. We "support missional partnerships that make God's reign visible." How are you living out your congregation's vision in the community around you? Can you share a story that demonstrates this?
4. We want to "call and nurture wise, dynamic and compassionate Anabaptist leadership." How does your congregation nurture your gifts and the gifts of others?
5. We want to be communities in which "grace-filled relationships flourish." Can you share an experience when your congregation was blessed by its relationships with other CDC churches, or other communities such as camps or colleges?
6. Our Mennonite Church USA vision calls us to be communities of God's "healing and hope." As you envision your future as such a Spirit-led community, what would that look like in your context?

From the Pastoral Team

No Christian Education

All ages will have **no Christian Education** this Sunday, May 7.

Meal Train



Congratulations to Caroline and Ben Roeschley for the new addition to their family! If you would like to support them, you can sign up to bring them a meal or give a restaurant gift card here: <https://mealtrain.com/>. If you have any questions, please contact Deb Stenger.

From the Community Life Commission



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 want to attend this important camp can go!

From the Outreach Commission

Worship Commission Notes



We reviewed our recent special Holy Week & Easter worship services with positive responses to all. We discussed at length concerns raised about potential for sharing germs in communion. Our discussion included spiritual, pastoral, and sanitary perspectives, & we noted that any method we use involves people handling plates or elements that others have touched. We also noted that several of our members have allergies to either gluten or grape juice. We want to be sensitive to concerns people have, but we also wonder if any method of serving the whole congregation really eliminates those concerns. So, we will provide options for those who have concerns. We will provide a station at the back with both apple juice & gluten free communion options. Each person is responsible for their own decision about taking communion, so if your concern is either allergies or germs, you can choose to go to the station to receive the optional form. Full notes on our discussion are in the minutes [here](#). We always welcome your comments & suggestions as we seek to create meaningful worship experiences together.

From the Worship Commission



Annual Evaluation of the Vision Team

Commission chairs, as well as chairs of the Spiritual Gifts Discernment Team and Vision Team, and all members of the Pastoral Team, recently completed the annual evaluation of the Vision Team (VT). The evaluation results were compiled by the Spiritual Gifts Discernment Team. Among the affirmations for the VT were the following: good follow-through on plans; a well-balanced, high-functioning team; regular, dynamic communication with the congregation; active engagement by team members in church life; and valuable regular check-ins with commissions. Some areas were submitted as areas for potential improvement and growth including: continued refinement of the understanding of the VT's role/scope of practice; increased efforts to be consistently proactive vs. reactive; increased support to pastors and timely attention to human resource matters; and refinement of ways to support commission members' understanding of their respective commission's goals and tasks while equipping and empowering commissions to carry out their work. There were both affirmations for the VT's efforts to be transparent and communicate with the congregation as well as requests for the VT to provide other methods of communication including more verbal updates. All evaluation input has been shared with the Vision Team to help inform and shape their work going forward.

From the Spiritual Gifts Discernment Team



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.

Open Office Schedule Changing

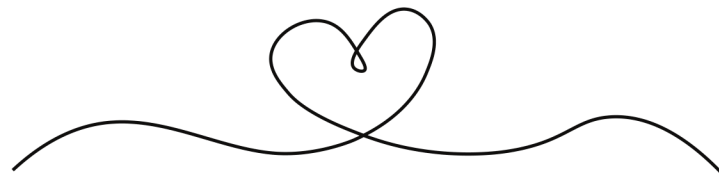


Beginning this week, the hours the office will be open to stop by during will make these changes:

1. The office will be **closed Tuesday mornings**.
2. The office will be **open Thursday** afternoons **from 1:30pm-3pm**. (The same time as other weekdays.)

Please let me know if you have any questions, and thank you for your understanding!

From Lydia in the Church Office



Those Serving This Week



South Greeters: Linda & Roger Clemmons

West Greeter: Pam Hodel

Welcome Table: Paul Watkins

Ushers: Kay & John Reimer

Offering Counter: Kristen Satchwell Hartwig

Worship Planner & Leader: Wayne Hochstetler

Sharing Prayer Leader: Kevin Chupp

Children's Story: David Harnish

Scripture Reader:

Technology: Caleb Augspurger &

Song Leader: Wesley Hershberger

Accompaniment, Prelude, & Postlude: Elsa Raab

Infant Nursery – during worship: Nancy Fisher

Infant Nursery – during CE: Nancy Fisher

Preschool Nursery: Janet Wilson

Gather Round: Jessica Hall

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 TOP ADMINISTRATORS AND THEIR FAMILIES FROM CARLE BROMENN MEDICAL CENTER—OUR PARTNER IN HEALING FOR 2023



This Week at MCN

A BRIEF LOOK AT THE CHURCH CALENDAR:

Wednesday, May 3

9:30am Wednesday Morning Book Group (Zoom)

Thursday, May 4

7:00am Next Man Bible Study

6:30pm Administration Commission (Zoom)

Sunday, May 7

After Worship Sacred Listening with CDC

Tuesday, May 9

6:30pm Vision Team (Zoom)

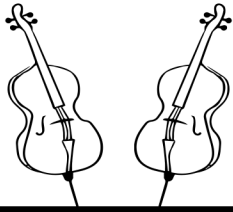
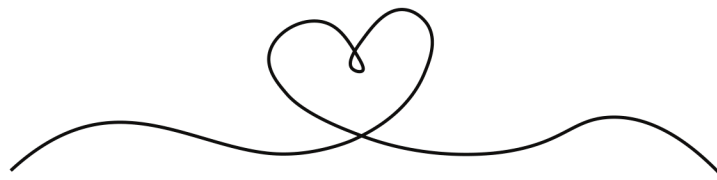
Wednesday, May 10

9:30am Wednesday Morning Book Group (Zoom)



Birthdays & Anniversaries

CELEBRATING LIFE'S MOMENTS AT MCN



NPL Tiny Book Concert

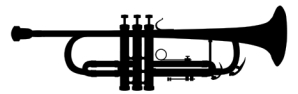


Tomorrow, Thursday, May 4 at 12:00pm
at the Normal Public Library

Stop in at the Normal Public Library this Thursday for a free pop-up concert in the Café. Two cellists, Christine Cicha and Lydia Hedberg, will be playing the music of John Williams including songs from Star Wars, Jurassic Park, and more. May the 4th be with you!



B-N Community Band Concert



Tomorrow, Thursday, May 4 at 7:00pm
at the Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts

The Bloomington-Normal Community Concert Band (CCB) invites everyone to their free concert this Thursday at 7pm. It will include the premiere performance of *Dramatica* composed by Todd Stalter and commissioned by the CCB with a grant from the David & Kay Williams Music Education Fund from the Illinois Prairie Community Foundation. Learn more about CCB [here](#).



Queer Theology Sunday School: Reading From the Margins

This Sunday, May 7 at 5:30pm CDT

In this event designed for LGBTQ+ folks and those who love them, we'll explore transgender readings of Scripture and how they can be a powerful blessing not just for transgender folks, but for non-trans folks as well. We're thrilled to be welcoming [Father Shannon TL Kearns](#) (he/him), of [queertheology.com](#) fame, as our guest teacher this time! We'll offer a longer Q&A this time, followed by breakout discussion groups, and close in prayer. One discussion group is always queer-only. [Register ahead of time](#) for the Zoom link!



ISU SGTD Play

This Saturday, May 6 at 1:30pm

The Illinois State University campus community is invited to attend a staged reading of the play *Lost in Yonkers* by Neil Simon, **directed by alum Jane Lynch**, at 7:30 p.m. Friday, May 5, or at 1:30 p.m. Saturday, May 6, in the Center for the Performing Arts Theatre. A limited number of seats are available, and **advance registration is required**. Attendees must show their registration confirmation at the door.

Lost in Yonkers is a coming-of-age story set in Yonkers, New York. Simon's Tony and Pulitzer Prize-winning play centers around two brothers, Arty and Jay, who live with their grandmother and their mentally challenged Aunt Bella, while their father travels, desperately trying to scrape enough money together while working as a salesman to pay off his debts to a loan shark, and their mother has died of cancer. Over the course of the play, the young boys learn lessons about love, responsibility, and the importance of family that will carry them into adulthood. This event is "pay what you can" with gifts directly benefiting the School of Theatre and Dance. For the Friday, May 5 performance, there will also be an opportunity to support the LGBTQ+ Student Support Fund. Attendees will be able to make their contribution at the event in person. **Registration for Friday is now closed. | Register [here](#) for Saturday, May 6, at 1:30 p.m. in the Center for the Performing Arts Theatre.**



May is Mental Health Awareness Month

Save 40% on Not Quite Fine

From MennoMedia: Chances are you or others in your congregation are suffering from mental health problems. How can the church support our own people struggling with mental health? In this Deal of the Week, we are offering 40% off *Not Quite Fine* by Carlene Hill Byron. Use the code WEEKLY at checkout and **order before May 7, 2023**. Purchase the book [here](#).

In *Not Quite Fine* Byron offers words of hope for those who struggle as well as practical insights to equip congregations to better support those who are suffering in their midst.



Documentary to premiere May 19

Friday, May 19 in Elkhart, IN

A new documentary that features stories of life in Elkhart's predominantly African American Benham West neighborhood — known as “the village” — will premiere on Friday, May 19, at the Crystal Ballroom at the Lerner Theatre in downtown Elkhart. Titled *What Happened at Benham West: African American Stories of Community, Displacement and Hope*, the film also includes elders' experiences of segregation in Elkhart, documents the process of the city's eventual clearing of the Benham West neighborhood, and names the elders' hopes for their city. Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary is hosting an event to celebrate the release of the 80-minute documentary. There is no charge to attend, but space is limited to 300 participants, and registration by May 12 is recommended. Learn more and register to attend [here](#).

CDC Annual Meeting



June 22-24 in Goshen, IN

Central District Conference (CDC) invites everyone invite you to attend the 2023 Annual Meeting at Goshen College in Goshen, Indiana, June 22-24. All ages are welcome to attend as the theme of Tending Transformation is explored. The website contains information about the annual meeting and registration forms. Registration deadline is June 10. Learn more and register [here](#).

Four groups join the Supportive Communities Network

The Brethren Mennonite Council for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Interests (BMC) is happy to welcome the following new members to the Supportive Communities Network (SCN)!

- East Chestnut Street Mennonite Church in Lancaster, PA
- Faith Mennonite Church in Newton, KS
- Rochester Mennonite Fellowship in Rochester, NY
- Southern Hills Mennonite Church in Topeka, KS



The Mennonite Church of Normal is happy to be part of SCN as well. Learn more [here](#) about SCN and vital work they do to build collective power in Brethren and Mennonite denominations and increase safety and visibility for queer and trans folks among us.

Menno Simons Sermon Prize awarded to German pastor



The University of Hamburg department of peace church theology has awarded the Menno Simons Sermon Prize to Joachim Leberecht, pastor of Evangelical Lydia Church in Herzogenrath, Germany. The winning sermon will be delivered during the worship service Sept. 3 at Hamburg-Altona Mennonite Church, followed by the public award ceremony. The sermon was originally delivered on Good Friday in 2022 as part of a Passion sermon series about dreams. Leberecht connects literary tales of dreams to the nightmare of war in Ukraine. The sermon recalls the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross, concluding that “we should no longer sacrifice people. It is enough once and for all.” Leberecht laments the attitudes of church leaders amid the war and recalls conscientious objectors’ testimony. “Through Jesus’ death, we are freed and called to nonviolent resistance,” the sermon concludes. **Read the full [Mennonews.de](#) article reprinted by *Anabaptist World* [here](#).**

Indigenous activists share mixed feelings on Vatican repudiation of Doctrine



Steven Newcomb, who is Shawnee and Lenape, recalls first writing to the pope in 1992 to ask him to revoke the papal bulls behind the Doctrine of Discovery. That was Pope John Paul II. Two popes ago. So when the Vatican released a statement last week saying it repudiated that doctrine — which, backed by a series of 15th-century papal bulls, justified the domination by European Christians of lands already inhabited by Indigenous peoples — Newcomb said he wasn’t terribly surprised. “I just think it’s fascinating and it’s really great because what it does is it catapults the issue to the *world stage in a very prominent manner*,” said Newcomb, author of the 2008 book *Pagans in the Promised Land: Decoding the Doctrine of Christian Discovery* and co-founder and co-director of the Indigenous Law Institute. But Newcomb, like many Indigenous activists and organizations that have been outspoken about the continuing impact of the Doctrine of Discovery, has mixed feelings about the Vatican’s repudiation. “They haven’t even begun to come to terms with the true nature of what we’re actually talking about,” he said. The Doctrine of Discovery has received renewed attention in recent years as Indigenous activists have pushed for action to right the wrongs of colonization, and a number of Protestant — mostly mainline — denominations have issued their own repudiations. The doctrine was first expressed by Pope Nicholas V in the 1452 papal bull “Dum Diversas,” which — along with subsequent bulls “Romanus Pontifex” and “Inter Caetera” — created a theological justification for Christian rulers to seize the property and possessions of non-Christians. **Read the full *Anabaptist World* article by Emily McFarlan Miller [here](#).**

Webinar: What to Expect?



If you missed the "Youth & Young Adult Climate Summit: What to Expect" webinar featuring planners and panelists, it's not too late! You can view a recording of it [here](#). Learn more and register for the Climate Summit [here](#).



Love in a time of climate change

*Below is an excerpt from Basaria Sianturi's article for Mennonite World Conference (MWC). Basaria Dwi Febrina Sianturi serves at Gereja Kristen Muria Indonesia (GKMI) Sidodadi in northern Semarang, Central Java, Indonesia. **Read more** [here](#).*

I cannot forget the high tide flooding of 23-25 May 2022. As pastor of GKMI Sidodadi in Semarang in Central Java province, Indonesia, I still recount the anxieties and panic of the community. Our church building is just 10 minutes' walk from Tanjung Mas Seaport from where the flood came. Seawater ran down so fast, hitting the pier embarkment and flooding the area. Our church and people's settlements were flooded. The water level was as high as an adult's hip. We were shocked, especially those who worked near the pier.

During the high tide hit, 55 families of the GKMI congregation who live around the church suffered from the disaster. Some of them were forced to flee to another safe place. On the first and second day of the flood, these families could not have sufficient food because their houses were inundated by seawater. On the third day, the condition improved because they began to receive assistance from different groups and other GKMI congregations.

I believe that God wants us to serve one another with love in times of trouble. The apostle Paul says that we must "bear one another's burdens" because in this way we shall "fulfill the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2-5). God's power was shown to our congregation during the tidal flood. We not only serve our members but also those in need.

No matter how solid the embankment is built, one day it will not be able to contain the strong waves and sea pressures of which volumes continue to increase as a result of global climate change. Our earth is suffering. Human behaviour has caused ecological damage. In addition, our greed brings about exploitations on earth. As God's people, we must remember that God gave humans the duty and responsibility to "work and care for" the earth and all that is in it. We must not destroy the earth's riches. We must restore these. If nature is angry, humans will receive its consequences.



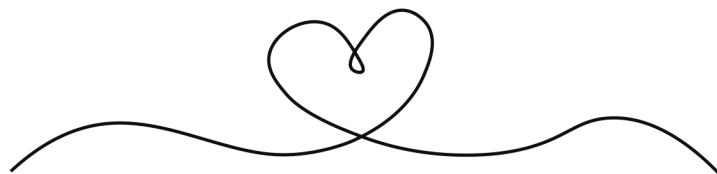
Below is an excerpt from Basaria Sianturi's article for Mennonite World Conference (MWC). Basaria Sianturi est pasteure à Gereja Kristen Muria Indonesia (GKMI) à Sidodadi dans le nord de Semarang, Java central (Indonésie). [Lire la suite](#).

Je ne peux oublier l'inondation suite au raz de marée des 23-25 mai 2022. Moi qui suis pasteure de la GKMI Sidodadi à Semarang dans la province centrale de Java (Indonésie), je parle encore de l'angoisse et de la panique de notre communauté. Notre bâtiment d'église est à seulement 10 minutes à pied du port maritime de Tanjung Mas, d'où est venue l'inondation. La marée a monté incroyablement vite, passant par-dessus l'embarcadère et la jetée et submergeant tout autour. Notre église et les habitations ont été inondées. L'eau est arrivée au niveau de la taille d'un adulte. Cela a été un choc terrible, surtout pour ceux qui travaillaient près de la jetée.

Le premier et le deuxième jour de l'inondation, ces familles n'avaient pas suffisamment de nourriture parce que tout était trempé. Le troisième jour, la situation s'est améliorée parce qu'elles ont commencé à recevoir de l'aide de différents groupes et d'autres paroisses de la GKMI. Comme ma maison n'a pas été inondée, j'ai pu cuisiner chez moi et distribuer des produits de première nécessité aux membres de notre assemblée locale et aux communautés environnantes touchées par la catastrophe.

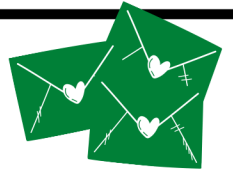
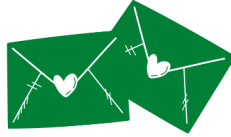
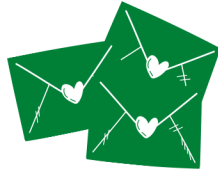
Je suis convaincue que Dieu veut que nous nous venions au secours les uns les autres avec amour dans les moments difficiles. L'apôtre Paul dit que nous devons 'porter les fardeaux les uns des autres' parce que de cette manière nous 'accomplirons la loi de Christ' (Galates 6/2- 5). Dieu a manifesté sa puissance en aidant notre paroisse pendant le raz de marée. Nous servons non seulement nos membres mais aussi ceux qui sont dans le besoin.

Quelle que soit la solidité de la digue, un jour, elle ne pourra pas arrêter la force des vagues et les pressions marines dont les volumes continuent d'augmenter en raison du changement climatique mondial. Notre terre souffre. Le comportement des êtres humains a entraîné de graves dommages écologiques. En outre, notre cupidité provoque l'exploitation de la terre. En tant que peuple de Dieu, nous devons nous rappeler que Dieu nous a donné le devoir et la responsabilité de 'travailler et de prendre soin, de la terre et de tout ce qui s'y trouve. Nous ne devons pas détruire les richesses de la terre. Nous devons les restaurer. Si la nature est en colère, nous en subiront les conséquences.



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; church@normalmennonite.org ; 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; kevin@normalmennonite.org
<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

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

Commissions and Teams Contact List

[Commissions and Teams Contact List](#)

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.