

THE MIDWEEK



WORSHIP THIS SUNDAY 9:30 AM

This week, Pastor Kevin Chupp will preach a sermon titled *Strike Root* using the scripture 1 Corinthians 13:4-5 and Hosea 14 (entire chapter).

As we finish the second verse of Paul's attributes of love in 1 Corinthians 13, we encounter a difficult one—love "keeps no record of wrongs." This reminds us of the common phrase "forgive and forget," which has some profoundly harmful consequences for vulnerable people. Instead, we are invited into a deeper understanding of forgiveness, described through the prophet Hosea, as he wraps up his graphic story of God's faithfulness amid people's unfaithfulness.



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

The Way We Were and Who We Became: A telling of oral histories.

Room 4

Children & Youth CE

Pre-K–3rd Grade

4th–7th Grade

8th Grade & High School



**Mennonite
Church
of Normal**

A congregation of
Mennonite Church USA

Hosting in Homes BBQ



Sunday, July 30 at 5pm

Enjoy picnicking with members of your church family

Sign up for a Backyard BBQ

Sunday, July 30 at 5pm

Hosts- Steve and Deb Stenger

Sign up on back bulletin board at church or by emailing Deb.

Sponsored by the Community Life Commission

Deb Stenger and MaryAnn Watkins (co-chairs), Connie Satchwell, & Joanna Oyer



Escape to Camp Menno Haven

Sunday, August 13, 2023

Worship: 10:00 am

Lunch: served by camp staff at noon. The cost will be covered by Fellowship Committee. Registration is required by Wednesday, August 2; sign up [here](#).

Afternoon activities at the camp include use of canoes and paddleboats, swimming in the pool, lawn games, hiking trails, and use of the activity center.

Camping: a small number of camping spots are available. This reduction in spaces is due to sharing the camp this year with another congregation. Amy Reiman has agreed to be the contact for camping.

Carpool: if you are willing to share a ride with another camp attendee please indicate on the registration form. If needing a ride, please indicate on the registration form.

Sponsored by the Fellowship Committee

Share a Blessing for Pridefest!



At Bloomington's Pridefest July 29th, area clergy (including Pastor Kevin) will be offering a "Blessing Booth." At the booth, people will be invited to receive a blessing from a clergyperson. You can participate in this, even if you don't attend the Pridefest. This Sunday, there will be ribbons available at church. Simply, choose a ribbon, write a blessing on it, and leave it to be collected Sunday afternoon. Please leave 3-4 inches blank on one end so we can tie a knot on that end. These ribbons will be hung on an archway in the Blessing Booth. Please reach out to Pastor Kevin if you have any questions! Thank you for helping make Blessed at Pridefest a success!



Making Comforter Tops

Thursdays from 1-4pm in the MRC Community Building

All are invited to join in making comforter tops each Thursday afternoon from 1- 4pm at the MRC Community Room. Since June 1 there have been over 20 different individuals who have gathered together to work on putting comforter tops together. A total of 18 comforter tops have been completed and 6 more have been donated. Others are being made by individuals working in their own homes. Kits are available for anyone interested in putting a Comforter Top together in their home. Contact Gerry Schrock if you have an interest in this. There has been a good response and we are grateful for those who have participated so far. View (new!) photos [here](#).

A handmade comforter provides not only warmth but a tangible message to people that their needs are not forgotten. Soon we will be asking for volunteers to assist in a variety of ways at the MCC Comforter Bash to be held at our church on Friday, September 15 & Saturday, September 16 from 9am – 4pm each day. There will be something for everyone to do – tie knots, thread needles, help with food service, and more! Your participation in the Comforter Bash will go a long way in helping MCC in meeting its goal of 45,000 blankets by the end of 2023. It is our hope to complete at least 50 comforters.

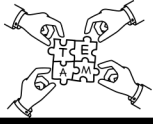
If you have questions contact: Gerry Schrock; Deb Stenger; or Mary Ann Watkins.

Menno Haven Photo Slide Show



Our annual worship service at Menno Haven Camp is Sunday, Aug. 13. The Worship Commission would like to put a slide show together for the morning service with your assistance. They are asking for pictures of the outside of your home. Think of it as a virtual garden tour of your home—and as a way to honor God's creation. Suggestions are pics from your vegetable garden, fruit trees, flowers, native grasses, bee keeping, or landscaping. Please send up to four pictures with short descriptions to Lydia at church@normalmennonite.org. Feel free to submit pics even if you won't be attending the service that morning. We hope to post them in the Midweek later for everyone to enjoy. Please talk to Annette Harnish if you have questions.

From the Worship Commission



MCN Pastoral Team

In the coming months, we, as a congregation, will be making decisions about our immediate pastoral needs. Some details to keep in mind as we consider our options:

- In 2021, our congregation strongly affirmed the plan for a commission-based structure and a pastoral team model.
- As we began the search for a pastoral team in the Fall, 2021, four individuals accepted the call to serve on an interim pastoral team. This team worked hard and effectively to support the commissions, teams, and subcommittees while covering many other pastoral roles for our congregation.
- Kevin Chupp was hired as a full-time pastor in the fall of 2022, with the understanding that he would be working within a pastoral team model.
- Final decisions need to be made as to how the invaluable work of our interim pastors will be covered when their service comes to an end.

The task at hand is to determine what would constitute a “permanent” pastoral team that would adequately support and meet the needs of our church as we function now and as we follow through on plans to grow and thrive. This will all be balanced with what is determined to be financially feasible for our congregation. The Vision Team invites the congregation to pray and imagine with us as we all discern together these next important steps.

Please watch the Midweek for more information about this process and plan to attend a congregational meeting in September to talk about it.

From the Vision Team

Wiping Out Medical Debt!

Central Illinois and Statewide

The Power of Unity

A collaboration between MBCR & Local Congregations in Bloomington Normal



Medical Debt Jubilee

You may have heard about the campaign for wiping out medical debt in Central Illinois on WGLT. Our local effort is being led by First Baptist Church of Bloomington, and we are planning to participate with their “Medical Debt Jubilee” weekend by hosting a special offering here on August 27th.

This is being facilitated by an organization called “RIP Medical Debt” who buys unpaid medical debt at \$1 for every \$100 of debt. The goal for our local campaign is to raise \$12,000, which would pay of 1.2 million dollars of medical debt! That may sound like a big goal, but we are already over halfway there, with over \$6,300 having been raised to date. You can read or listen to WGLT’s coverage of this [here](#), and you can look at the campaign site [here](#).

We hope you will mark August 27th on your calendars, and will be ready to give whatever you can for this special opportunity to partner with the wider religious community to be a blessing to those in need here.

From the Outreach Commission

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) School Kit Challenge: Notebooks and pencils are treasures for families around the world who have been forced to flee their homes or struggle to afford basic school supplies. Without these items, many kids in places like Syria, Ukraine and South Sudan can't get the education they desperately need. To learn more about this challenge and to download this free guide click [here](#).

Let's start gearing up to do MCC School Kits at Mennonite Church of Normal

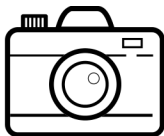
- The supplies are out at reduced cost at Walmart.
- Several items: 4 pens, ruler, & metal pencil sharpener (not at Walmart) are the most expensive. I can order online at a very reduced price in quantity. I would like to do this to keep costs down for each kit, but would ask you to contribute one dollar to cover the cost, for each kit.
- You can purchase the following items at Walmart :
 - 4 spiral notebooks (8.5 X10.5). 70 SHEETS ONLY = 35 cents each. (\$1.40)
 - 8 new unsharpened pencils = 47 cents for 10 pencils
 - 12 colored pencils (in a box) Crayola is best!! = 97 cents
 - 1 large eraser = 47 cents for 2

TOTAL = \$3.31, PLUS tax and \$1 FOR ORDERED SUPPLIES

- The other 3 items we will get online as I said above. (4 pens, ruler, metal pencil sharpener).
- We will have the cloth bag available for your kits.
- More information will be coming. I am planning to challenge another smaller Mennonite Church to see if we can do more bags than they do. They did over 200 bags last year. MCC wants 10,000. Bags. I HOPE EVERYONE CAN HELP!!

TENTATIVE FINAL DATE FOR KITS IS AUGUST 6. WE NEED FABRIC. WE NEED BAGS. WE NEED FOLKS WILLING TO SEW. CONTACT LOUISE.

--Louise Reeser

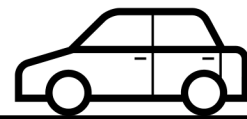


Sharing Our Gifts

The "Sharing Our Gifts" slide show will be playing again this Sunday before and after the service and will be available to view in the following Midweek. If you've not sent in a photo yet, please do so! You can email them to church@normalmennonite.org. We're all eager to see how you are serving in your community!

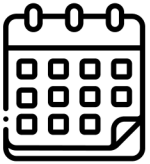
From the Spiritual Gifts Discernment Team

Drivers Needed



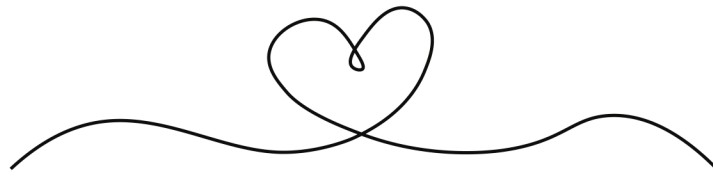
The Congregational Care Committee is looking for volunteer drivers to pick up and/or take home individuals who are no longer driving, but would like to attend Sunday Worship Service. Volunteers can be put on a list as "regular" or "as needed" basis. Contact the MCN office if you are willing to provide this service.

From the Congregational Care Committee



Summer Nursery Volunteer Schedule

Find the schedule of volunteers for the Infant and Preschool nurseries [here](#).



This Week at MCN



A BRIEF LOOK AT THE CHURCH CALENDAR:

Thursday, July 20

1:00pm Comforter Tops at the MRC Community Building

6:30pm Administration Commission (Zoom)

7:00pm Fellowship Committee (Zoom)

Saturday, July 22

3:00pm Central IL Relief Sale Board Meeting

Tuesday, July 25

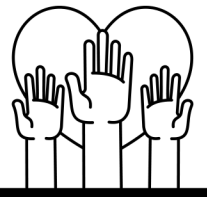
3:00pm Pastoral Team

Birthdays & Anniversaries

CELEBRATING LIFE'S MOMENTS AT MCN



Those Serving This Week



South Greeters: Linda & Roger Clemmons

West Greeter: Nancy Fisher

Welcome Table: Annette Harnish

Ushers: Janelle & Jon Friesen

Offering Counter: Lotus Hershberger

Worship Planner: Holly Zehr

Worship Leader: Ben Roeschley

Sharing Prayer Leader: Lauren Satchwell

Children's Story: Steve Benner

Scripture Reader:

Technology: Ryan Miller & Adam Augspurger

Song Leader: Wayne Hochstetler

Accompaniment: Dorothy Loepp

Prelude & Postlude: Lydia & Charlotte Hedberg

Infant Nursery – during worship: David Harnish

Infant Nursery – during CE: Beth Reeser

Preschool Nursery: Amy Reiman

Gather Round: Resumes in September

Prayer Requests and Announcements

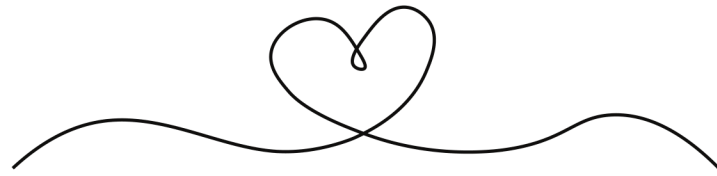
Sharing of Joys and Concerns have returned to open mic sharing during the services. Please send announcements to Lauren Satchwell so that these can be shared by the worship leader during the Community Life portion of the service. When sharing, it's helpful if your requests are succinct. This is true 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



Singing Southern Gospel favorites

from Bill Gaither and Ernie Haase & Signature Sound



SUNDAY

July 30, 2023 at 6:30 PM

Wesley United Methodist Church

502 East Front Street • Bloomington, Illinois

FREE ADMISSION: A freewill offering will be taken with all proceeds going to support the construction costs of the Bill McConnell Memorial Duplex at 1305 and 1307 Bunn St in Bloomington.

Anabaptism at 500 Seeking Story Ideas

Anabaptists around the world are gearing up to celebrate the 500th anniversary of the Anabaptist movement in 2025, and to mark this historic occasion, Anabaptism at Five Hundred is excited to announce the creation of a commemorative story book that will capture the diverse and inspiring stories of Anabaptist witness from around the globe. They invite individuals, congregations, organizations, and communities to submit their story ideas to be considered for inclusion in the book. These stories can be both large-scale projects and small, personal testimonies that illustrate the transformative power of Anabaptist faith. **To read the full press release click [here](#). To learn more about Anabaptist at Five Hundred click [here](#).**

Suggested Reading from CPT



Find reading recommendations from Community Peacemaker Teams (CPT) below:

- [How the labor movement is showing up for LGBTQ+ rights](#)
- [A Titanic Disparity in How the World Responds to Maritime Disasters](#)
- [5 Key Reasons to Stop the Mountain Valley Pipeline](#)
- [End the Safe Third Country Agreement Now](#)
- [Not On Our Dime: End New York Funding of Israeli Settler Violence](#)



Some can't sidestep war's hard choices

Russia's invasion of Ukraine on Feb. 24, 2022, marked a major escalation in a war that began already in 2014. Since then, those of us in North America have looked on in horror at scenes of cities laid waste, families fleeing their homes as refugees, waves of newly deployed weapons and caskets lined up in rows. Most news agencies report that at least 50,000 combatants and civilians have died in the conflict, with perhaps 300,000 suffering injuries. Barely remembered amid the carnage unfolding in Ukraine are violent conflicts in places like Afghanistan, the Central African Republic, Somalia, South Sudan and Syria. Pray for the churches who face daily pressure to conform to the logic of violence. Pray for our churches who are drawn to the seductions of Christian nationalism. And ask how you and your congregation can respond creatively, courageously and compassionately to the suffering of innocent people, even as we bear witness to the resurrection claim that life is more powerful than death. **Read about the urgent and consequential moral questions raised by war and violence churches face in John D. Roth's article for the *Anabaptist World* [here](#).**

Returning land, repairing relationships



Indigenous community, descendants of settlers form a partnership in Minnesota.

Is repair between Indigenous communities and settler communities possible? The people of Makoce Ikkicupi think so, and a recent recovery of land in rural Minnesota is an example of the power of returning land and repairing relationships damaged over centuries. **Read about their recovery of land in Craig Landes's article for the Anabaptist World [here](#).**



MC USA Interim Minister of Church Safety

MC USA names interim denominational minister of Church Safety and continues abuse prevention work.

Mennonite Church USA (MC USA) has named Nancy Kauffmann, former board president of Dove's Nest and longtime Mennonite church leader, as the interim denominational minister of Church Safety for MC USA's Church Vitality office, effective June 26, 2023. This new position was created so that the denomination could address the need for continued abuse education and prevention work. This need came after Dove's Nest, an abuse prevention ministry, dissolved May 31, 2023. MC USA will use the name Safe Church to continue and to expand on the work that Dove's Nest started, according to Michael Danner, MC USA associate executive director of Church Vitality. By August 1, many of Dove's Nest's resources, including the "Circle of Grace" curriculum, guidelines for setting up safe space policies, consultation services and a speakers' bureau will be available on the MC USA website. **Read more in MC USA's post [here](#).**

Called to be Bad Podcast



Below is an excerpt from Mariah Martin's (she/her) blog post for Mennonite Church USA.

The Called to be Bad Podcast is my attempt at creating a community steeped in safety, storytelling, and a refusal to accept the damaging and lazy binary of "good" and "bad." Called to be Bad digs into the intersections between good and bad, pure and profane, holy and ordinary. In each episode a guest reveals a "bad" topic they are passionate about. By "bad" I mean strange, scandalous, taboo, non-traditional — something that goes against the status quo of what it means to be faithful. If the Christian church has labeled a behavior, identity, theology or topic as bad, shameful or sinful I want to investigate why. We have had episodes on bad words, religious trauma, toxic secrets, leaving the church, purity culture, hell, shame-free sex and more. **Read more about the Called to be Bad Podcast by Mariah Martin (pastor at Faith Mennonite Church) in her blog post for Mennonite Church USA [here](#).**



The Culture of Hospitality

Below is the beginning of a Mennonite Church USA (MC USA) Menno Snapshot by Reverend Erica Lea-Simka (she/her/hers), currently pastor of Albuquerque Mennonite Church and the Southwest Representative for Mennonite Women USA.

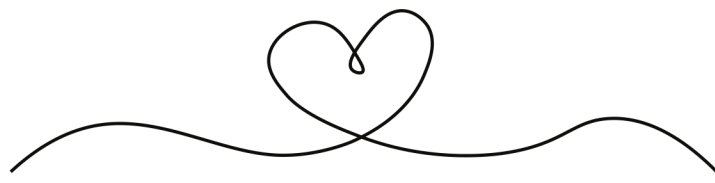
One of the many reasons I chose to be Mennonite is the culture of hospitality. Between potlucks and the overall warmth in the congregations I have interacted with, I have always felt a sense of belonging ... to a point. Recently, I listened to a discussion about the [Resolution for Repentance and Transformation](#), which was passed by delegates at the 2022 special delegate assembly, as compared to hospitality. The question of how congregations, conferences and Mennonite Church USA can be hospitable to LGBTQ people reflects embedded bias. Firstly, hospitality includes an essential power dynamic. There are hosts, who manage the space that guests are invited into. At the heart of the resolution, there is the need for former and current power holders, "hosts," to recognize their role and step aside, so there is equitable, just, space for LGBTQ Mennonites to also be "hosts." **Read the rest of Reverend Erica Lea-Simka's MC USA Menno Snapshots post on the Mennonite culture of hospitality [here](#).**

Living Into Repentance and Transformation



Below is the beginning of an article written by Randy Spaulding, pastor of Boulder (Colorado) Mennonite Church and one of the leaders of Inclusive Mennonite Pastors.

In March, a group of queer, transgender and ally Mennonite leaders from across Mennonite Church USA (MC USA) gathered for a Queer Mennonite Visioning (QMV) retreat at [Camp Friedenswald](#), Cassopolis, Michigan. We gathered to worship, sing, imagine, share meals, remember, connect and simply be. It was the first time in my 30+ years of Mennonite ministry, and as a gay Mennonite pastor, that queer Mennonites gathered in a denominationally supportive setting. There wasn't a crisis or a need to meet in secret or a fear that we would be told to leave. At the invitation of the [Brethren Mennonite Council for LGBT Interests](#) and leaders from [Inclusive Mennonite Pastors](#), MC USA's [Central District Conference](#) (CDC) provided funding for the retreat, and Camp Friedenswald provided hospitality. This funding was made possible in large part through MC USA delegates affirming the [Resolution for Repentance and Transformation](#) in May 2022. CDC leaders shared that this was a concrete way to repent for past harms to the queer community and to enter into the work of repair. **Read more about how Randy Spaulding asks the question "What does repentance and transformation look like?" in his article published by MC USA [here](#).**



Staff Contact and Building Open Hours

Building Open:

Standard Hours:

Monday & Wednesday–Friday 9AM-11AM
and Monday-Friday 1:30PM-3PM.

Lydia Hedberg:

Office Administrator; church@normalmennonite.org; 309-452-6622

Rita Munkakusi:

Custodian

Kevin Chupp:

Pastor for Outreach Commission, Worship Commission, Congregational Care Committee, and the Spiritual Gifts Discernment Team;
kevin@normalmennonite.org

Lynette Miller:

Pastor for Discipling and Community Life Commissions

Ron Ropp:

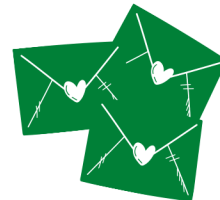
Pastor for Pastoral Care

Lauren Satchwell:

Pastor for Vision Team & Administration Commissions

Our Members in Care Facilities

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



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

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.