

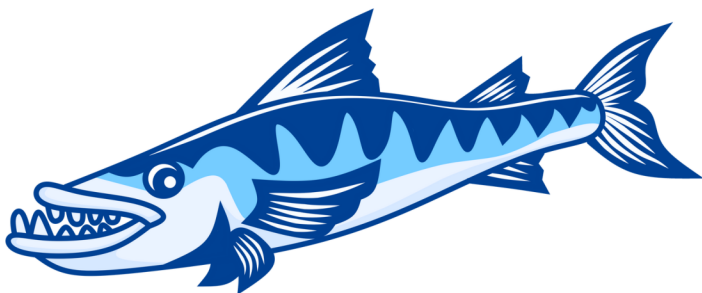
THE MIDWEEK



WORSHIP THIS SUNDAY 9:30 AM

This week, Pastor Kevin Chupp will preach a sermon titled *Appointed* using the scripture 1 Corinthians 13:7 "[Love] bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things" and Jonah 3.

As we imagine what it might mean that love "hopes all things," we meet Jonah, a reluctant prophet who actively avoids taking part in God's plan for confronting a "wicked" city. As many of us have heard since childhood, it takes the intervention of a giant fish to make Jonah willing to participate. With such an unbelievable story it is surprising how relatable Jonah is!



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

Ice Cream Social
Fellowship Area



Mennonite
Church
of Normal

A congregation of
Mennonite Church USA

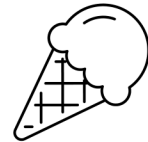


Blessing of the Backpacks and Ice Cream Social

On August 20 during the Children's time, Holly Zehr will present a blessing of the backpacks. Anyone returning to school or work is invited to bring their backpack, but we especially hope that children will. This is for all students whether they attend homeschool or public school. We will also distribute backpack tags with a loving message so that our students will know their church family supports them!

Also, **during the CE hour on August 20 (this Sunday!)** the entire congregation is invited to join in an Ice Cream Social celebrating our "back to school / back to CE / back to routine" season. (Ice cream for lunch anyone?) Seating will be available inside, but if you'd like to sit on the lawn, please feel free to bring chairs or blankets.

Back to School Bash



Sunday, August 27 at 5:00 pm at Darrel and Lynette Miller's home

You are invited to sign up for homemade ice cream and accoutrements at the home of Darrel and Lynette Miller on Sunday evening, August 27 at 5:00 p.m. to mark summer's last hurrah. Please let Lynette Miller or the church office if you are interested in attending. We have four steps into our home, but have side rails on both sides of the steps. This is a Hosting in Homes initiative.

Sponsored by the Community Life Commission



Nature Slideshow

The Worship Commission wants to thank everyone who submitted slides of nature scenes from their home places. Since some of you weren't able to see them at Menno Haven, they are available to enjoy in all their glory as a PDF [here](#) and a video [here](#). Also, a big thank you to Lydia for organizing and labeling all of the slides. We couldn't have done it without her!

CDC Connector



Central District Conference

A conference of Mennonite Church USA

The August edition of Central District Conference's monthly *Connector* publication is now available to read [here](#). It's full of photos and stories from MennoCon23 and the MC USA delegate sessions last month in Kansas City, Emmanuel Mennonite Church's Fortieth Anniversary, and more. If you would like a paper copy, they will be available on the Library Table in the coming weeks.



Item Check-Out Request Form

The Administration Commission and church office have created a new form to use if you'd like to borrow items from the church for personal use (such as folding chairs). This will help us keep track of the church's items and keep an accurate inventory of what's in the church. You can fill out the form by either submitting this Google Form [here](#) or printing this PDF version [here](#) and returning it to the office. These links will be at the bottom of every future Midweek (next to the Purchase Request Form and Work Order Form). If you have any questions or run into any problems using the form, please feel free to contact the office at church@normalmennonite.org or 309-452-6622!

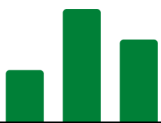
From the Administration Commission

Vision Team Update



Your Vision Team met on August 10. Following the meetings, Vision Team (VT) has the following items to share with the congregation:

- We received reports on the activities of the Spiritual Gifts Discernment Team (SGDT), the Pastoral Team (PT), and the Commissions and identified ways we can support them.
- We discussed updates to the Pastoral Team ministry description that had been recommended by the Pastoral Team.
- We discussed drafted revisions to the church constitution and congregation objectives which are being done following the implementation and evaluation of the church structure.
- We discussed the results of our quarterly self-evaluation of the VT and made initial plans for a VT retreat in the fall.
- Find Vision Team meeting minutes and resource documents in the [Vision Team folder on Google Drive](#).

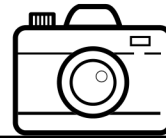


Spending Plan Update

Spending Plan Status as of July 31, 2023

Shared by the Administration Commission

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

MCC School Kits

SCHOOL KIT UPDATE!!

We are still receiving donations in cash and supplies, and women are still sewing bags. This Sunday (August 20), I will be in PA and Virginia for family reunions. You are welcome to bring supplies, but we will not pack any bags. Next Sunday, August 27, we will hope to fill the final bags. I hope to get a picture with the children and all of the bags. We are well over 200 bags & counting. We thank you for your support.

--Louise Reeser

Office Closed



The church office will be closed the **afternoon of Wednesday, August 16th**. Thank you for your understanding!



Hungry World Farm

Hungry World Farms in rural Tiskilwa, IL has a roof that needs replacing. Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) will supply tools and supplies, but they need volunteer workers to complete the work in August. Please contact Lane Miller (Lynette's son) at lanekm@gmail.com if you are willing to help.

Thanks, Phil Dick, Chair, MCN Outreach Commission

From the Outreach Commission

MCC Comforter Bash Registration and Volunteer Sign Up

Friday, September 15 and Saturday, September 16 | 9:00 am - 4:00 pm each day

Registration and Volunteer Sign Up are requested by September 8.

Join us as we gather to assemble comforters that MCC will distribute to those in need around the world. A handmade comforter provides not only warmth but a tangible message to people that their needs are not forgotten. Your participation in the Comforter Bash will go a long way in helping MCC meet the goal of 45,000 blankets by the end of 2023. It is our hope to complete at least 50 comforters.

We invite contributions of pre-made comforters tops (60" x 80") and backs (65" x 85") for assembly at the Comforter Bash. Tops and backs can be brought directly to the Comforter Bash or dropped off at Mennonite Church of Normal in advance. Financial donations are accepted. View photos of comforter tops being made in preparation [here](#).

We invite all women, men, and children to join us. There will be something for everyone to do - tie knots, thread needles, help with food service, and more! Lunch and snack breaks will be available each day. Consider signing up for a few hours, for all-day, or better yet for both days. Please come and go as you are able.

RSVP to attend in one of three ways:

- By using this link: <https://forms.gle/nEHa6m9CoGG3ousH7>
- By email: church@normalmennonite.org
- By printing and returning this form: [click here](#)

There are several ways to participate in the Comforter Bash. Everyone can knot comforters and there are also other specific Volunteer tasks related to hosting the Comforter Bash. Please sign up on the link above to register for the day and sign up on the link [here](#), or on the bulletin board in the atrium of the church to volunteer for specific tasks.

Registration is requested by September 8 so we can plan for lunch and breaks. If you have questions contact: Gerry Schrock, Deb Stenger, or Mary Ann Watkins.

Hosted by the Community Life Commission



Offering Envelopes

If you need more offering envelopes, please contact Lydia in the church office at church@normalmennonite.org or 309-452-6622. You are also always welcome to contribute electronically [here](#) (find more instructions [here](#)).

MCC School Kits



Our very own Pastor Kevin wrote a blog post for Mennonite Church USA's "I choose to be Mennonite because..." series. Read the beginning of his blog post below!

"Clergy are asked to dress in a way that identifies them as clergy," read the email. It was a simple instruction that presented a complicated issue for me. Usually, for interfaith events, there was an invitation to dress as you would in your own worship setting. This led some people to show up in robes and stoles, and it led me to show up in a cardigan. One of my peers from another faith jokingly asked whether it was my "liturgical sweater." However, this time, the message regarding dress came in the context of planning an interfaith clergy "blessing booth" for our community's Pridefest. In this setting, the markers of the institution carry a visual power that might serve an important function toward healing for those who have been harmed and marginalized by institutions. But the question remains: What does a Mennonite pastor look like? **Read the rest of Kevin's blog post for MC USA [here](#).**

Wiping Out Medical Debt!

Central Illinois and Statewide

The Power of Unity

A collaboration between MBCR & Local Congregations in Bloomington Normal



FIRST BAPTIST
CHURCH



Mennonite
Church
of Normal
A congregation of
Mennonite Church USA



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 off 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



Children's CE

There will be no children's Sunday School on August 27th.

From the Discipling Commission

MDS St Clair County Project



Below is a message from Matt Kreeb, Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) St Clair County Project Director.

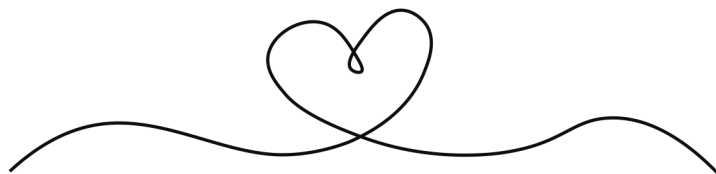
Brother and Sisters in Christ, welcome to August! Time flies when you're having fun, and we've had LOTS of fun at the St Clair County MDS project this summer. Thank you, to ALL who participated in ALL aspects of the project – remote assistance, weekly volunteers, donors, quilters, prayers, workers and more – to Bless the communities and individuals of which we serve. You are indeed the hands and feet of Jesus, 'Restoring Hope' in Jesus' name. I echo Philippians chapter 1 to you – 'I thank the Lord my God in remembering you...because of your partnership in the Gospel.' (Matt's New Revised Version).

The project is moving along with two of the five properties finished and two more underway...we are onto the later half, but really need your help. **Would you consider joining to help see this through to completion and inviting friends and family?** It's a tremendous experience to BE a Blessing and BE Blessed at the same time! We are seeking volunteers to finish out the last few weeks, with flexible dates in August and September. Email mds2jim@gmail.com or phone (317) 727-4922 with inquiries and interest.

Lastly, enjoy viewing the pictures found [here](#), including a home dedication (brightly colored quilt) that witnessed the transformative power of Jesus in her experience of MDS...there were no dry eyes at that moment!



Summer Nursery Volunteer Schedule





Those Serving This Week



South Greeters: Cal & Vivian Hubbard

West Greeter: Annette Harnish

Welcome Table: Marcia Rossi

Ushers: Caleb Augspurger & Andy Reeser

Offering Counter: Kristen Hartwig

Worship Planner: Kevin Chupp

Worship Leader:

Sharing Prayer Leader: Lynette Miller

Children's Story: Holly Zehr

Scripture Reader: Jonah King

Technology: Jaron Zehr and Glenn Wilson

Song Leader: Barry Weaver

Accompaniment, Prelude, & Postlude: Elsa Raab

Infant Nursery – during worship: Gabriella Harnish

Infant Nursery – during CE: Miriam Kennell

Preschool Nursery: Carrie Stalter

Gather Round: Resumes in September



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

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.

This Week at MCN



A BRIEF LOOK AT THE CHURCH CALENDAR:

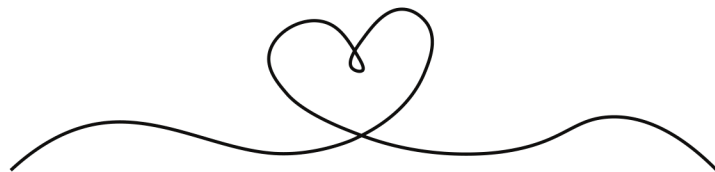
Wednesday, August 16
Afternoon Office Closed

Thursday, August 17
1:00pm Comforter Tops

Sunday, August 20
11:00am Back to School Ice Cream Social

Birthdays & Anniversaries

CELEBRATING LIFE'S MOMENTS AT MCN





Second Annual Further Jazz Festival

September 9th from 4-9pm at the Connie Link Amphitheatre

Several Jazz ensembles, including Glenn Wilson/Rory Stuart, will be performing during the second Annual Further Jazz Festival at the Connie Link Amphitheatre from 4-9pm on September 9th. View a flyer with more information [here](#).

Lessons enter through different doors



Below is an excerpt from an article in Mennonite World Conference's [Courier](#) magazine.

After last summer, you can't deny it. It's here. It was the driest year in France and it's been like that for several years. So you can see people are becoming more aware of climate change. Now it is beginning to affect them. And yet there is still so much more to talk about. Our motto at LightclubberZ is "Faire du beau pour faire du bien": make beauty, in order to do good. God set the example for us in creation and Jesus continued to show us how to live that out. Let us work at this together. **Read the full article by Ephraïm Goldschmidt, a member of the Mennonite church in Altkirch and director of LightclubberZ with Joie et Vie, [here](#).**



Faire du beau pour faire du bien

Below is an excerpt from an article by Ephraïm Goldschmidt in Mennonite World Conference's [Courier](#) magazine. Goldschmidt est membre de l'église mennonite d'Altkirch et directeur de LightclubberZ avec 'Joie et Vie'.

Après l'été dernier, on ne pouvait plus le nier. On y était. Ce fut une année très sèche en France, et cela a été ainsi depuis plusieurs années. On voit que les gens sont de plus en plus conscients du changement climatique. Maintenant, cela commence à les affecter. Et pourtant, il y a encore tant à en dire. Notre devise à l'association LightclubberZ est « Faire du beau pour faire du bien » : faire du beau afin de faire du bien. Dieu nous a donné l'exemple dans la création, et Jésus a continué à nous montrer comment le vivre. Travaillons-y ensemble. [Lire la suite](#).

July 2023 Courier | Juillet 2023 Courier

Read the July 2023 edition of Mennonite World Conference's (MWC) monthly Newsletter [in English](#) and [en français](#).

Courier Correo Courier

July 2023
Volume 58, Number 3



Mennonite
World Conference
A Community of Anabaptist
Related Churches

Congreso
Mundial Mennonita
Una Comunidad de
Iglesias Anabaptistas

Conférence
Mennonite Mondiale
Une Communauté
d'Églises Anabaptistes

3

Inspiration and reflection

Renewal:
the core of the
gospel

6

Perspectives

- Living every day is a miracle
- "We are peace-loving Mennonites"
- Hope takes action in despair
- Hope was never lost
- "If we do not give up..."
- Deep faith fills Bowls of Hope

14

Country Profile

Taiwan

17

Resources

- Peace Sunday
- Online Prayer Hour
- The Officers' Column
- From Our Leaders
- In Memoriam



Courier Correo Courier

Juillet 2023
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Inspiration et réflexion

Le renouveau : le
cœur de l'évangile

6

Perspectives

- Vivre chaque jour est un miracle
- « Nous sommes des mennonites attachés à la paix »
- Le désespoir engendre l'espoir
- Nous n'avoir jamais perdu espoir
- « Si nous ne nous décourageons pas... »
- Une foi profonde remplit les 'Bols de l'Espoir'

14

Profil d'un pays

Taiwan

17

Ressources

- Dimanche de la Paix
- Heure de prière en ligne
- La colonne des membres du bureau de la CMM
- Communiqué de nos responsables
- In Memoriam



How do Mennonites think about peace?



Below is the introduction to Andrew G. Suderman's article for *Anabaptist World*. Suderman serves as secretary of Mennonite World Conference's Peace Commission and as the Director of Global Partnership for Mennonite Mission Network.

Anabaptist World invited me to reflect on this interesting, but rather daunting question: "How do Mennonites think about peace?" This is daunting because who am I – a white, cis-gendered, North American male – to respond to such a question? Clearly, I cannot offer an overarching, uniform definition or assumption that encompasses all Mennonites and their perspectives. What I offer, therefore, is simply one perspective of a much larger, necessary, and ongoing discussion among our global family of faith. **Read the rest of Suderman's article for *Anabaptist World* [here](#).**



Art for Change

Below is the beginning of a blog post from Mennonite Church USA (MC USA) by Lisa Longacher, a fiber artist and the development officer for Hesston College.

“Give peace a chance!” “Protect children, not guns!” “No human is illegal!” When you think of changing the world, what does that look like? Have you ever marched for — or against — something that you are passionate about? I’ve done a little marching myself. In 1991, I joined tens of thousands of people in Washington, D.C., for a protest against the Gulf War. I was a college student, learning to express myself in new ways. I remember the rush of feeling part of something much bigger than myself. It took courage for me to chant along with those around me. As a cradle Mennonite who grew up in rural Kansas, I felt more comfortable joining in singing “All we are saying is give peace a chance” than I did with the shouting. My ancestors were discouraged from voting, in order to not conform to the world, and here I was, voicing my opinion publicly! It seemed like a big leap, but one I was interested in making. I got my inner hippie on, and it felt OK. But are marches and protests the only way we can express ourselves? I’ve participated in a few marches since college, but for a variety of reasons, it’s not always accessible. Can I work for change simply by being creative? **Read the rest of Lisa Longacher's blog post *Art for change: Exploring your creativity* [here](#).**

The New Law Against Immigrants Affects the Church



A new law intended to restrict the ability of individuals without immigration documentation to live and work in Florida was already having an impact on churches in the state before it went into effect July 1. Javier Márquez wrote in a release from Mosaic Conference of Mennonite Church USA that the bill Gov. Ron DeSantis signed into law forces businesses with more than 25 employees to verify the immigration status of workers. It also prohibits the use of driver’s licenses not issued by Florida. The law creates fines of \$1,000 a day for not using a federal immigration status database in a certain time period and requires hospitals to ask about patients’ immigration status. Secundino Casas, pastor of *Iglesia Evangélica Menonita Shalom* in Tampa, said many people are fearful. “Our faith community is 95% immigrants; half have gone to other states,” he said. “So, we try to respond to those who remain. We have invited an immigration lawyer to our church to have guidance and firsthand information.” Andres Mendoza, pastor of *Iglesia Menonita Encuentro de Renovación* in Miami, said some members of his congregation are planning to leave Florida as well. “Let us ask God together to help them make good decisions and give them peace,” he said. “One of these families has young daughters, and they are very afraid of being separated from their loved ones. Let us pray together to our God, so that he gives a way out of this situation.”

Read the article by Javier Márquez for the Mosaic Mennonite Conference [here](#).



We Are Still Willing

Below is an excerpt from a blog post by Brooke Natalie Oyana, a Mennonite Women USA Trustee.

When my father was ordained in the Franconia Mennonite Conference (now called Mosaic), he was given a beautiful Fraktur piece as a gift of welcome from the conference. The very first line of the Franconia Conference traditional closing statement (We are still willing) is written out in big, flowing calligraphy and is at least four times bigger than the rest of the passage. It's gorgeous, and I'm so grateful my mother passed it on to me. As I reflect on my experience at Mennonite Convention 2023 in Kansas City, that big first line jumps out at me: We are still willing. I have been to six of the last twelve conventions. My first two—Nashville and Atlanta—were as a youth. I went to Pittsburgh in 2011 as a youth sponsor. In 2017, I was invited to be part of the Future Church Summit in Orlando. And then I went two years ago to Cincinnati and this year to Kansas City as a representative of Mennonite Women. There was just a different vibe this year. I heard it commented on over and over. It just felt...comfortable. Now if you had asked me prior if the other conventions I'd been to had been uncomfortable, I don't think I would have agreed. But now that I've been to a "post schism" convention I can see how they were just that: uncomfortable. Coming into convention this year in Kansas City, I had no idea what to expect. I just knew it would be a far cry from the huge 5,000+ people conventions of my youth, and I hoped the contentious atmosphere of earlier gatherings were behind us. *We are still willing.* The community that gathered this year in Kansas City were those who are still willing. There were still [pink t-shirts](#) and rainbow ribbons on our nametags, but they weren't needed like they have been in past years. We all knew that those who gathered together this year were those who are still willing to be church with their LGBTQ siblings. There was a sense of calm, of peace, of *unity*. **Read the rest of Brooke Natalie Oyana's article on her experience at the 2023 Mennonite Church USA MennoCon23 [here](#).**

Food Safety

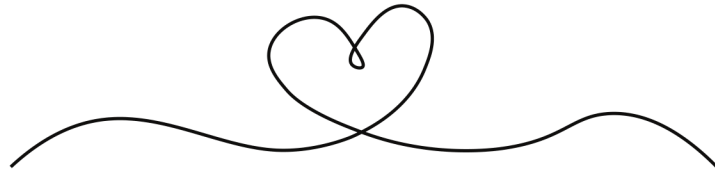


Summertime is optimal picnic time! Whether you are hosting by cooking at home or bringing a potluck to meet friends and family, heating your food properly and keeping it cooled or heated at the correct temperature can make the difference between a successful event or an explosive ending! Follow [these food safety tips](#) shared by the Community Wellness & Faith Community Health Services at Carle to keep your summer snacking successful!



The search for gender identity, say trans people, brought them closer to God

Ari Fernandez, a journalist and aspiring rabbi living in Atlanta, began to realize the gender they were assigned at birth wasn't a good fit in 2018, when they were reconnecting with their Jewish roots by working at Hillel International, a campus faith group. "When I was first exploring outside of the (gender) binary," said Fernandez, who was a philosophy student at Appalachian State University at the time, "I wasn't really aware of how queer Judaism could be." As opposition to recognition for transgender Americans has increased in recent months, so have clashes between people with transgender identities and faith leaders. But it's not always the case that faith and transgender don't mix. Some transgender seekers, such as Fernandez, have found that the search for a gender identity can often come with a more profound sense of spirituality. **Read more in Emma Ryan's article for the *Religion News Service* and republished by the *Anabaptist World* [here](#).**



Staff Contact and Building Open Hours

Building Open

Standard Hours:

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

Closed: Wednesday 8/16 afternoon

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!

Item Check-Out Request Form

[Google Form Version](#) & [Printable PDF Version](#)

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.

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.