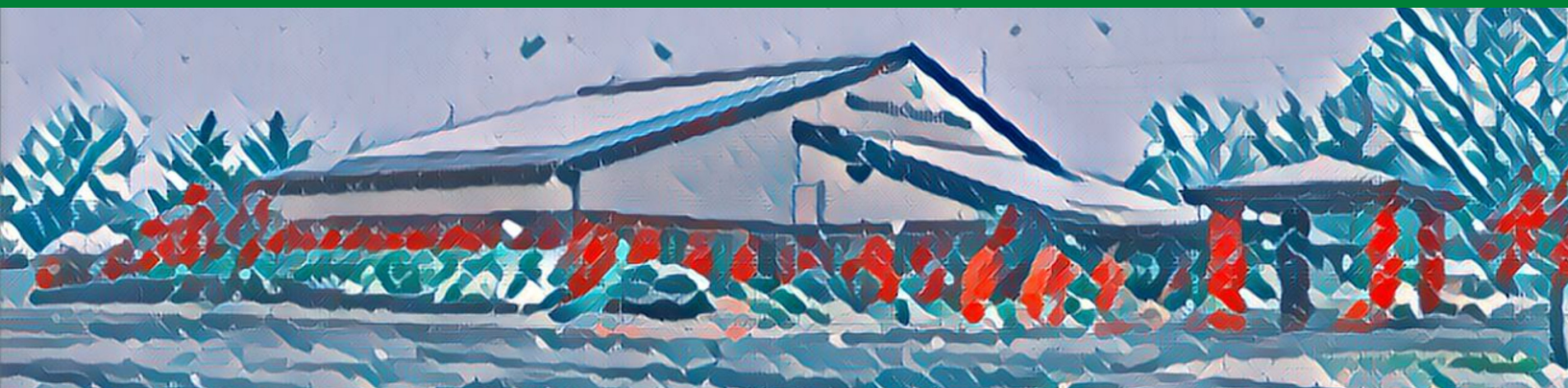


THE MIDWEEK



WORSHIP THIS SUNDAY 9:30 AM

Kevin Chupp will preach sermon titled Neon Wine this week on Mark 2:1-22 .

Jesus was accustomed to upsetting religious people. Far from being a troublemaker for its own sake, he cared so deeply about the substance of faith that he was entirely unwilling to compromise it with unworthy vessels. How do we know whether our containers are fit to carry Jesus' new way as it meets us today?



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)
Conference Room

Group B (40's-50's)
Room 4

Group C (60's and above)
Room 4

Children & Youth CE

Pre-K-K Grade

2nd-4th Grade

5th-8th Grade

High School



**Mennonite
Church
of Normal**

A congregation of
Mennonite Church USA



Midwest Food Bank

Tomorrow! Thursday, January 11 from 6-8 pm

Our next scheduled volunteer night at Midwest Food Bank is January 11 from 6-8pm. Click [here](#) to sign up.

From the Outreach Commission

McLean County Board Resolution



Tomorrow, January 11 at 5:30 pm

The Outreach Commission would like you to be aware of an upcoming resolution from the McLean County Board that promotes fearful anti-migrant rhetoric in our community. You can read the resolution [here](#). The board is meeting Thursday evening at 5:30pm to discuss this. **If you would like to sign up to offer public comment on this resolution at the board's meeting, you can sign up [here](#) by 5pm today (Wednesday 1/10).** [Not In Our Town](#) will be there to speak against the resolution.

From the Outreach Commission



Choirs

This Sunday, January 14 at 7:00 pm

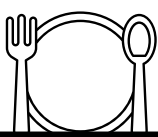
- The Advent Choir will rehearse Sunday evening, January 14 for one more anthem concluding the holiday season. Please come at 7:00 pm.

- Cindy Ropp

Ritual of Thanksgiving and Blessing for Commission and Team Members



During this Sunday's worship, there will be a brief ritual of thanksgiving for commission and team members that have rolled off in 2023 and a blessing for those that have rolled on to their respective commissions or teams in 2023/2024. Pastor Kevin will lead this shared moment, and those that are being recognized may be invited to stand or participate.



Congregational Meal

Sunday, January 21 at noon

The fellowship committee thought it would be best to do all food for meetings as potlucks this year.

- People with last name A-H bring a soup/casserole to feed at least 8 people
- People with last name I-P bring a salad/side to feed at least 8 people
- People with last name Q-Z bring a dessert to feed at least 8 people.

If you do not want to bring what is "assigned", then find someone with an appropriate name and switch. The next group meal we will switch so A-H brings dessert and so on. This also eliminates any need for signup. If you are wanting to come to the meal, bring food "assigned" to your last name. Hopefully this will also prevent having a bunch of one thing.

From the Fellowship Committee

Annual Meeting

Sunday, January 21 at 1 pm

The Congregational Annual Meeting will be held on January 21st at 1:00 PM. This will be a hybrid meeting, allowing participation in person or via Zoom. A congregational meal hosted by the Fellowship Committee will precede the meeting!

Members will be able to electronically vote on whether to accept the proposed 2024 Spending Plan following the meeting. We strongly encourage everyone to attend in person or online. However, absentee ballots will also be available in the church office for those who cannot attend or vote electronically.

View the 2023 Annual Report, including the 2024 Spending Plan, [here](#). The Zoom link can be found [here](#).

From the Vision Team



Sharing Our Gifts Photos

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 the church office at church@normalmennonite.org. We're all eager to see how you are serving in your community!

Shared by the Spiritual Gifts Discernment Team



Camp Friedenswald Retreat

January 26-28, 2024

EVERYONE is invited to a weekend of fellowship and fun at camp, January 26-28! Friedenswald is a beautiful retreat with large, comfortable, warm lodges for us to stay in. Whether you're looking for social time or solitude, there's something for everyone! Activities for the weekend can include sledding, tubing, hiking, relaxing, eating, cross country skiing, reading, games, worship, fellowship, and more! **For more details (including notes on cost and an important note about meals), and to sign up, please click [here](#).** If you have any questions, please contact Shelly and Darvis King.

Sponsored by the Fellowship Committee

66th Annual Illinois Mennonite Relief Sale



Dear Relief Sale Pastors, Churches, and Volunteers,

The 66th Annual Illinois Mennonite Relief Sale is scheduled for **Saturday, March 16th, 2024**, at Interstate Center, Bloomington. Again this year it will be a one day sale starting at 6:00 A.M. with pancakes and sausage; booths and the Grand Auction will begin in the morning and continue throughout the day.

In preparation for our 66th Relief Sale we have scheduled the **Annual Distress Supper/Organizational Meeting to be held Tuesday, February 13th, at 6:30 P.M.** in the First Mennonite Church of Morton, IL. It is very important for MCC promoters, booth chairs, and all those involved in the Illinois Relief Sale to attend this event. All people from our churches and communities are highly encouraged to participate as well.

In order to prepare for the meal for this event, we need to know how many will be attending. **Please notify Mrs. Don (Ruthie) Roth regarding the number of people joining us for this very special meeting.**

Your prayers and support for our 66th Annual Illinois Mennonite Relief Sale will be gratefully appreciated!

Your servant in Christ,
Mrs. Don (Ruthie) Roth, Relief Sale Executive Secretary

2023 Contribution Statements



The 2023 Contribution Statements have been sent out to everyone by email. If you have any questions or would like a printed copy, please contact the church office at church@normalmennonite.org or 309-452-6622. Thank you everyone for your support of the Mennonite Church of Normal!

From Lydia Hedberg, Office Administrator



Condolences



It's with deep sadness that I share Roberta Miller, wife of Carroll (both former MCN members and MRC residents), mother and mother-in-law of Eric and Chellie, and grandmother of Ryan and Nathan, passed away peacefully Thursday, January 4, around noon at Grace Pointe Senior Care Community in Greeley, Colorado, where she had been a resident since spring 2023. She was 88 years old. Carroll was her faithful caregiver the last few years and visited her every day since her move to Grace Pointe.

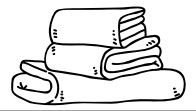
The family is in the process of finalizing arrangements, which will likely include a memorial service in Greeley, as well as one in Indiana at a future date. She will be cremated and laid to rest in the cemetery on the family farm in Indiana. Please keep the Miller family in your thoughts and prayers as they navigate this next phase of life. They are sad, and yet they celebrate a life well-lived. Thank you for all your love and support.

View her obituary and memorial service details [here](#). I understand a virtual option to view the service online will be included on this site and should be available on Saturday.

Eric

(on behalf of Carroll, Chellie, Ryan and Nathan)

Supporting Immigrants in Our Community



If you are looking for additional ways to give this season, here are the two opportunities I mentioned in church.

- **Warm Welcoming Closet** - If you would be willing to donate items to District 87's Warm Welcoming Closet, here is the [link](#) to the Amazon wishlist. Families that are recent arrivals to the community often need blankets, sheets, pillows, rollout mattresses and other items. Thank you for considering!
- **BN Welcoming** - Through the BN Welcoming fund housed by our church, we are able to help support families or individuals who are unable to get the assistance from other avenues. We have been able to support people with rent, medical bills, utilities, etc. You can designate this fund in your giving, by clicking the link for B-N Welcoming on the website, or using [this link](#).

Thank you for considering giving! If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to Helen Dick Brandon.



Ride for Art

Art has recently moved to Evergreen Village (1701 S Evergreen Ln, Normal) and is no longer driving but hopes to continue to attend worship at MCN on Sundays. Anyone who is willing to offer a ride to Art, or wants more information, please contact Pastor Kevin or anyone from the Congregational Care Committee (Bess Desch, Laura Dick, Gail Fisher, Ryan Miller, Lynn Reha).

From the Community Care Committee

Hosting in Homes Information



We are inviting interested individuals in the Congregation to be a part of Hosting in Homes. You may remember that Hosting in Homes was initiated during the summer months by CLC as a way of working toward one of our Congregational Goals for 2023. The process includes a host from the Congregation extending an invitation to the Congregation inviting a specified number of people to gather in fellowship for a meal or other activity in the home of the host. For those who are interested in hosting in your home in December, contact Lydia Hedberg Office Administrator with your invitation, including the date and time that you have selected for hosting for the holidays in the month of December. Your invitation can then be included in Midweek with a link for use in signing up by persons interested in coming to your home.

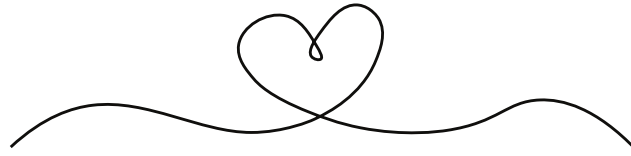
From Community Life Commission (CLC) and Fellowship Committee



Missing Steamer

MCN's new handheld steamer (used for decorations) has gone missing. Please contact the church office at church@normalmennonite.org or 309-452-6622 if you have any information about.

From the church office



Those Serving This Week



South Greeters: Neely family
West Greeter: Marianne Israel
Welcome Table: Mary Ann King
Ushers: Steve and Deb Stenger
Offering Counter: Mark Roeschley
Worship Planner: Cindy Ropp
Worship Leader: Joe Culpepper
Sharing Prayer Leader: Lynette Miller
Children's Story: Louise Reeser
Scripture Reader:
Technology: Glenn Wilson & Ryan Miller
Song Leader: Cindy Ropp
Accompaniment, Prelude, & Postlude: Lydia Hedberg
Infant Nursery – during worship: Open for parents
Infant Nursery – during CE:
Preschool Nursery: Alexandra

Prayer Requests and Announcements

Sharing of Joys and Concerns have returned to open mic sharing during the services. Please send Lauren Satchwell your announcements 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



- Harvella Stutzman was a long-time member of this congregation. Her daughter, Judy Kanagy, sent the following message this week. “Mom is in hospice care. Appears she had a small stroke right before New Years. Changes in mood, appetite, sleeping 20+ hrs a day prompted us to contact hospice on Wed. Intake Thu, assessment Fri, on call nurse over the weekend, case manager and social worker today. Condition deteriorating ... focused on comfort care. She is ready to go. So so so much nausea and pain right now. Please pray for her release.” Please hold Harv’s entire family in your prayers during this time.
- Laura Dick shared a story of finding compassion for migrants in an unexpected person. She challenges us to learn with her not to make assumptions about how people in our communities might think about and respond to such issues.
- Phil Dick drew attention to the Mennonite Action gathering in DC for a “Peace Service on Capitol Hill” on January 16th, which is part of this groups work of advocating for a ceasefire in Gaza. He mentions that Outreach Commission is willing to sponsor anyone from MCN who might be willing to travel to DC for that event.
- Darvis King shares that Evan is leaving for Indonesia, where he will be for 3 months, followed by a short trip in Vietnam. He also shares that the sign up is open for Camp Friedenswald.
- Jessica Hall shared that she would be induced this week, and thanks all of us for our prayers.
- Ron Ropp shared that there have been 7 families in MCN that have been hospitalized recently, and asks that we be mindful of their needs following those events.
- Wayne Hochstetler shared gratitude for those who came to their home to help them give good homes to some of their belongings as they prepare for their move to Luther Oaks this week.
- Joe Culpepper shared that there were 24 households participating in worship online, one of whom responded in gratitude for the song “Creation is a Song”
- Prayer requested for Pam Dick who is home recovering from a sever case of pneumonia.
- Prayer requested for Joe Jantze as he recovers from his recent surgery relating to his kidney, and Mary as she cares for him.
- Prayer requested for Curt Over as he recovers with rehab from a major leg fracture.
- Prayer requested for Ron Ropp as he meets with a thoracic surgeon this week.

This Week at MCN



A BRIEF LOOK AT THE CHURCH CALENDAR:

Wednesday, January 10

9:30am Wednesday Morning Book Group

5:30pm Community Life Commission (Zoom)

7:30pm Vision Team (Zoom)

Thursday, January 11

7:00am Next Man Bible Study

6:30pm Administration Commission (Zoom)

Saturday, January 13

9:00am Worship Commission (Zoom)

Sunday, January 14

7:00pm Adult Choir

Monday, January 15

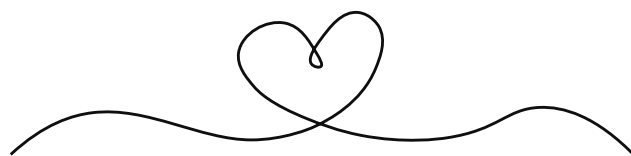
All Day Office Closed in observation of Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Tuesday, January 16

3:00pm Pastoral Team (Zoom)

Wednesday, January 17

9:30am Wednesday Morning Book Group



Engaging MC USA's Safe Church

January 22, 2024 at
7 p.m. ET/4 p.m. PT

A webinar with
Nancy Kauffmann,
Michael Danner and
Glen Guyton



HIGH SCHOOL ESSAY CONTEST

The contest is open to Mennonite, Brethren in Christ and other Anabaptist youth of high school age and to all youth who attend Mennonite high schools within the United States, including Puerto Rico.



DEADLINE:
FEB. 23

TOPICS

CLIMATE CHANGE

IMMIGRATION

MASS INCARCERATION

GRAND PRIZE OF \$1000



La CMM appelle à une transition énergétique mondiale



Les valeurs anabaptistes, au contraire, appellent à l'intendance (une prise en charge réfléchie), à la simplicité et à la dignité de toutes les personnes créées à l'image de Dieu. Au nom de la Conférence mennonite mondiale, le Groupe de travail pour la protection de la création (Creation Care Task Force, CCTF) a soutenu l'appel interreligieux en faveur d'un traité de non-prolifération des combustibles fossiles. « Pour être de bons gardiens de notre maison commune, nous devons agir et mettre fin progressivement à la production de combustibles fossiles », peut-on lire dans la lettre interconfessionnelle. [Lire la suite.](#)



MWC calls for global energy transition

Earth in all its diversity, vitality and abundance is a gift that has been overshadowed by neglect, exploitation and unsustainable consumption. Anabaptist values, by contrast, call for stewardship (thoughtful care-taking), simplicity and the dignity of all persons created in the image of God. On behalf of Mennonite World Conference, the Creation Care Task Force (CCTF) has endorsed the interfaith call for a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty. [Read more here.](#)

Our God of women singing



Despite living two millennia ago, Mary, the mother of Jesus, experienced many of the same political and social issues that we are experiencing today. In her post for MC USA, Rev. Rachael Weasley reflects on how Mary, along with Elizabeth, bring forth new life amid suffering and injustice, but continue to sing out to God and against oppression. **Read Weasley's blog post "Our God of women singing" published by Mennonite Church USA [here](#).**



Use of sass to "name and claim" equality

After researching the experiences of women in ministry, Amy Zimbelman shares how women have used sass as a means to deal with inequality in ministry. **Read Zimbelman blog post "Well, I guess you're looking at a miracle today!": Women's use of sass to "name and claim" equality" published by Mennonite Church USA [here](#).**

Celebrating 50 Years

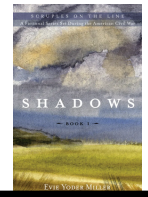


Et Cetera Inc. in Bluffton, Ohio, is planning a yearlong 50th anniversary celebration in 2024. Initially opened as a thrift and gift store in 1974, Et Cetera was created by Lois Sommer Kreider and was sponsored by local Mennonite churches. Today, Et Cetera Inc. is sponsored by six area churches and has grown from one store to three separate stores. Et Cetera Shop is a thrift store. Ten Thousand Villages Bluffton sells fair trade goods. Book ReViews sells used books. Events next year will include a summer garden tour, style show, customer appreciation days, comforter blitz for Mennonite Central Committee and crafts for kids at Bluffton Family Recreation. **Read the article published by the *Anabaptist World* [here](#). View the shop's Facebook page [here](#).**

Fear not of man: Where MC USA is going

Read a blog post by Jon Carlson, moderator for Mennonite Church USA and member on MC USA's Executive Board since 2019 titled "Fear not of man: Where MC USA is going" [here](#). In the post, Carlson reflects on how Mennonite Church USA is better together and how our collective participation in the church both shapes us and reflect who we are as a body.

Choosing to Live Actively, in Peace



Below is an excerpt from Evie Yoder Miller's reflection "Choosing to Live Actively, in Peace" for Mennonite Women USA.

Violence leaves ugly images in our minds and hearts. We don't usually need help interpreting a burning house with a nearby sign that says, "Go Back Home." We are repulsed by acts of destructive force or of subtle verbal manipulation. We see them as unjust, because they exert power over another person, family, institution, or country. Non-violence may be more difficult to define or describe, but I offer three main components that need to be present to recognize actions as positive alternatives. 1) Behaviors between and among humans will show mutual respect. 2) Disputes or disagreements will be acknowledged by all sides involved. 3) Resolution must be intent on safekeeping the dignity of each person, side, or group that's involved. For Anabaptists, it may be especially important to understand that non-violence is not passive. It's more than not violent, more than inaction. Being a bystander can be a means of avoidance. But being non-violent requires an active choice that considers and respects the rights of all individuals and groups affected. **Find Evie Yoder Miller's full reflection and learn about her historical fiction trilogy *Scruples on the Line: A Fictional Series Set During the American Civil War* narrated by five voices from traditional peace churches [here](#).**



Tangible Peace Witness with an Anvil

In a blog post that is part of Mennonite Church USA's [Learn, Pray, Join: End Gun Violence](#) initiative, Joel Shenk (pastor of Toledo Mennonite Church) describes how he learned blacksmithing as part of his personal peace witness and how his conference and congregation have joined him in this work. **Read it [here](#).**

A Different Trip to the Ocean



Read "A Different Trip to the Ocean: Unexpected Barriers to Beauty" written by Jill Keyser Speicher and published by the Anabaptist Disabilities Network [here](#). About the article, she says "For those of you with a disability or who have a family member with one, I expect that you may be able to relate to my article. My hope is that everyone who reads this essay will gain an understanding of the complexity of getting around in a wheelchair. In addition, I challenge everyone to advocate for additional accessibility in our churches and our world."



Staff Contact and Building Open Hours

Building Open:

Standard Hours:

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

Closed: All Day Monday, January 15th

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!



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!

Commissions and Teams Contact List

[Commissions and Teams Contact List](#)

Item Check-Out Request Form

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

Work Order & Purchase Request Forms

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

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.