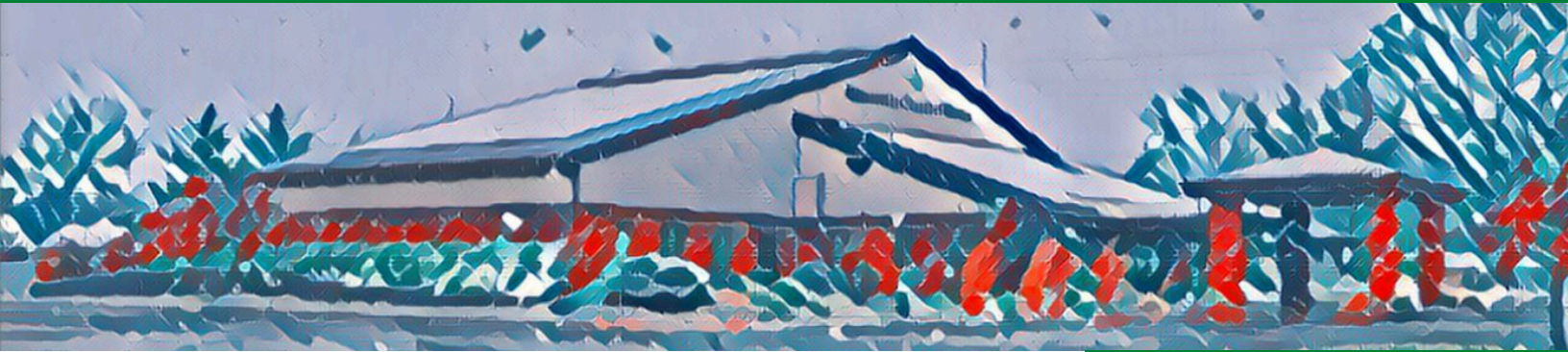


# THE MIDWEEK



## WORSHIP THIS SUNDAY 9:30 AM

This Sunday, Kevin Chupp will preach a sermon titled *Dress Rehearsal* using Luke 3:1-22.

When we meet John the Baptist at the Jordan River, we hear his call for repentance is answered by a microcosm of the people who Jesus would eventually transform in his ministry. Why does Jesus need John before he begins his ministry? And why must we endure this in-between time as we wait for renewal?

## After Worship

Adult CE  
**Salt & Light**  
Room 14

## Children & Youth CE

Pre-K-K Grade  
2nd-4th Grade  
5th-8th Grade  
High School

The service will be live streamed on YouTube at this [link](#).

The bulletins get posted under the Worship tab of our [website](#).



**Mennonite  
Church  
of Normal**

A congregation of  
Mennonite Church USA

## **This Friday, January 10 from 6-8 pm**

Our next volunteer night at Midwest Food Bank (MFB) is Friday, January 10 from 6-8 pm. MFB wants us to sign up at least a week ahead of time to facilitate their project planning, so if you plan to go, **please sign up as early as possible using [this link](#)**. If you have any questions, please contact a member of the Outreach Committee.

*From the Outreach Commission*

## Writing the Prologue to Your New Year” Retreat with Author Judith Valente

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### **This Saturday, January 11, 2025**

“Write it down, make it happen,” suggests retreat leader Judith Valente. The start of a new year is a blank page offering us many possibilities. It is a time to reflect on where we have been and also on where we want to go to turn our dreams into possibilities. This means more than listing New Year’s resolutions that start with good intentions and are swiftly forgotten.

During this morning of reflection, we will endeavor to write the plot we want to see unfold for ourselves in the coming year so that whatever unexpected events might surprise us, we will have written a clear roadmap to help us stay the course toward our goals for spiritual and professional growth.

#### **Saturday, January 11, 2025**

10:00am – 12:00pm via Zoom

The cost of this retreat is \$25. [Register here](#).

*This is a virtual retreat offered via Zoom. A basic familiarity with Zoom is expected of participants.*



## End of Life Planning

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### **THIS Sunday, January 12 during the CE Hour**

The Congregational Care Committee is providing another opportunity to consider options for "end of life" decisions. Vince Sims, President of Evergreen Cremation Services in Champaign Illinois, will provide information on considerations between cremation and burial. He is a licensed funeral director with 40 years of experience. The presentation will be in Room 14 during the Christian Education hour on January 12, in place of the regular Journey class.

*Sponsored by the Congregational Care Committee*

## Open Building/Office Times



The Open Building/Office Hours for MCN have been updated to Monday-Friday 9AM-11AM & 1:30PM-3PM. These are the times I make sure I am at the church to let people in or answer any phone calls. I am often working in the building outside of these hours as well, so if you need to stop by outside of them give me a call or email and we can set up a time. If I am ever not able to be in the building during the listed times, I will send an email to everyone to let you know.

*From Lydia in the Office*

# Immigrants in Bloomington-Normal, what's happening?

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You're invited: **WHEN:** 5PM, Sunday Jan 12. **WHERE:** MRC Community Building. Helen and a friend/colleague, Kimberly, will be hosting a discussion on immigrant families within our schools and community. We will be discussing trends in immigration in Bloomington/Normal, needs and assets they bring to the community, systems of support and systems of inequality for immigrants within our community, and the reaction to changes in political climates. This discussion is to help inform our church community about immigration issues within our community and to discuss our church's role (past, present, and future) with supporting our immigrant neighbors.

*Sponsored by the Community Life Commission*

## A Note from Outreach



The Outreach Commission requested at the MCN congregational meeting on November 17, 2024, to add \$10,000 to the MCN 2025 spending plan as emergency funds to aid those harmed by the possibility of deportation as a result of the recent presidential election.

It would be helpful to understand the immigrant point of view by attending the MCN Community Life Commission sponsored presentation at the MRC (Mennonite Retirement Community Building) at 5:00 pm on Sunday, January 12th by Helen and Kimberly. They will discuss recent immigration patterns in Bloomington/Normal, systems of support, systems of inequality, needs and assets that immigrants bring to the community. Please plan to attend.

*Phil Dick, Chair, Outreach Commission*



## Potluck Information

### Sunday, January 19 after CE

The meal for the Congregational Meeting is Potluck Style! As a suggestion we would recommend dividing things up by last name as follows:

- A-H Salads
- I-P Desserts
- Q-Z Main course

Feel free to trade with someone. Please try to provide for at least 6-8 people. Also, if you want your container back, please try to label it well.

*From the Fellowship Committee*



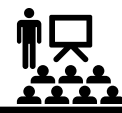
## Winter Retreat

### January 24-26, 2025

EVERYONE is invited to a weekend of fellowship and fun at camp, January 24-26! 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 meals), and to sign up, please click**

*Sponsored by the Fellowship Committee*

# Annual Meeting



**Sunday, January 19th at 1 pm**

The Congregational Annual Meeting will be held on January 19th 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 2025 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 2024 Annual Report, including the 2025 Spending Plan here.** The Zoom link can be found here.

Today's Midweek includes more information about two line items in the spending plan: the emergency funds requested by Outreach and the added support to Illinois Mennonite Conference. If you have questions about anything in the annual report, they may be directed to the Vision Team here. Vision Team members will be available this Sunday after the service to field questions as well. Our hope is that questions can be addressed ahead of the January 19 meeting so the congregation will be prepared to vote on the spending plan that day. Thank you!

*From the Vision Team (Shelly King, Shannon Neely, Ben Roeschley, Lauren Satchwell)*

## Mental Health First Aid



**Monday, January 20, 9am-5pm at the Mennonite Church of Normal**

**We all have mental health.** According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), approximately 1 in 5 adults in the U.S. experiences mental illness in a given year. That's 43.8 million people, or 18.5% of the population. But we all have mental health and we all struggle at times. How do we identify the signs and symptoms in someone who is just beginning to experience a mental health challenge? How do we tell when things are getting worse? What do we do when it becomes a crisis? Over centuries, Christians have built up a lot of misconceptions that contribute to stigma around mental health and discussing it openly. Some claim that mental illness is a sign of weakness. Some tell us to just surrender our mental illness to God or that it's just God's way of testing you and your faith. Some believe that illness, whether physical or mental, is punishment for sins. **NONE OF THESE ARE TRUE!** Mental health disorders are the result of multiple genetic and situational factors and most disorders are highly treatable. Come learn the signs and symptoms and practice offering hope to those who are struggling. All training is free. Please register by contacting Steve Benner.



## 2024 Contribution Statements

The 2024 Contribution Statements were emailed to everyone on Monday, January 6th. If you did not receive yours, have questions about it, or would like a printed copy placed in your church mailbox, please contact the church office at [church@normalmennonite.org](mailto:church@normalmennonite.org) or 309-452-6622.

*From Lydia in the Office*



# Proposal for IMC Funding and Timeline for Membership Decision

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The purpose of this Midweek article is to share additional detail on the proposed financial support of IMC in the 2025 Spending Plan and inform the congregation that a process to decide MCN's future conference affiliation is being planned for 2025.

## Background

MCN's dual affiliation with Illinois Mennonite Conference (IMC) and Central District Conference (CDC) continues to be a topic that is raised for reconsideration. Understanding the rich historical reasoning for why MCN is affiliated with two regional conferences, the deeply held feelings for this arrangement, and practical considerations surrounding the affiliations, Vision Team has previously stated that any church decision to alter or reaffirm this dual affiliation would follow a process that allowed for input and discernment from the congregation.

## Financial Considerations

One of the practical considerations mentioned above is the financial support that member churches provide for the conferences. As of 2023, MCN was giving \$16,000 of annual support to IMC. Since IMC was operating without a conference minister at the time, MCN was encouraged to pause its giving to IMC in mid-2023. In 2024, IMC hired a conference minister and so now the resumption of financial support from all conference member churches is necessary.

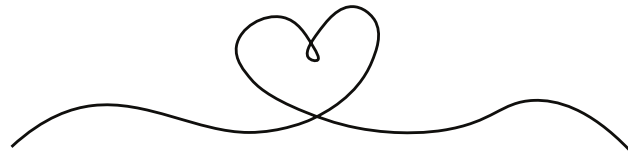
## Proposed IMC Support in 2025 Spending Plan and Next Steps

- Vision Team recommended adding \$8,000 to the 2025 spending plan to fund support for IMC for the first half of the year. This returns to the level of giving pre-2023.
- Vision Team will lead the congregation through a conference membership decision process, aimed to conclude no later than 7/1/2025. More detail on that process will be shared in the coming weeks.
- At the conclusion of that process, the congregation will vote on conference membership.
  - Shall it decide only to retain membership with CDC, it will take necessary steps to withdraw membership from IMC. Funding for IMC for the second half of the year won't be necessary in this scenario.
  - Shall it decide to retain membership in both conferences, the congregation will need to understand a decision to retain membership with IMC will **require an additional \$8,000 of support to IMC in the 2nd half of 2025 (and years beyond)**.
  - The congregation could also decide to retain membership with only IMC and leave CDC.

## Questions

Please contact a member of the Vision Team (Shelly King, Shannon Neely, Ben Roeschley, Lauren Satchwell) with questions or feedback.

*Shared by Vision Team*



## This Week at MCN



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A BRIEF LOOK AT THE CHURCH CALENDAR:

### **Wednesday, January 8**

**9:30 am** Wednesday Morning Book Group

**7:00 pm** Discipling Commission (Zoom)

### **Thursday, January 9**

**7:00 am** Next Man Bible Study

**9:30 am** Women's Bible Study

**6:30 pm** Administration Commission (Zoom)

### **Friday, January 10**

**6:00 pm** Midwest Food Bank Volunteering

### **Saturday, January 11**

**9:00 am** Worship Commission (Zoom)

### **Monday, January 13**

**5:00 pm** Outreach Commission

### **Tuesday, January 14**

**3:00 pm** Pastoral Team (Zoom)

### **Wednesday, January 15**

**9:30 am** Wednesday Morning Book Group

**7:00 pm** Community Life Commission (Zoom)

## Prayer Requests and Announcements

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Prayer requests can be shared during the Sharing Joys and Concerns portion of our Worship Service. For other announcements, please send them to Lauren Satchwell ahead of time 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.



# Sharing of Joys and Concerns



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MCN IS ASKED TO BE IN CONTINUED PRAYER FOR FOR THE PROGRESSIVE CARE UNIT AT  
CARLE BROMENN MEDICAL CENTER—OUR PARTNER IN HEALING FOR 2024



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## Those Serving This Week



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## Birthdays & Anniversaries

CELEBRATING LIFE'S MOMENTS AT MCN



# BMC Year-End Reflections & SCN Highlights

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## Saturday, January 11th

Illinois State University is hosting their first Faith and Family night for ISU Men's Basketball game on January 11th. They invite you to come enjoy the game, help bring together the community, and create a great atmosphere! You can purchase tickets [here](#) using the promo code "FAITH24".

## Peace Theology in Movement: A Lunchtime Colloquium

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*A collaborative effort of AMBS and Mennonite Action*

**Wednesdays, Jan. 15 – April 30 | 11 am – 12 p.m. Central Time via Zoom**

### Instructors

- Janna Hunter-Bowman, PhD, Associate Professor of Peace Studies and Christian Social Ethics at Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS)
- Jonathan Smucker of Mennonite Action

This weekly lunchtime colloquium will focus on the Mennonite Action movement as an expression of Mennonite peace theology. Together, we'll step outside of the intensity of practice to reflect and interpret, considering the following questions:

- What forms of knowing, being and doing from Anabaptist traditions contribute to strategies that challenge and transform violence and organize movements?
- What responsibility do U.S.-based Christians hold in the war in Gaza?

Speakers will include members of the AMBS learning community, members of the Mennonite Action movement, scholars of religious studies, sociologists, theologians, activist-scholars of peacebuilding and decoloniality, pastors and adjacent movement thinkers. **There is no cost to attend, but registration is required for all participants.** Learn more and register [here](#).



# The Immigration Project Year in Review

Read The Immigration Project's "Year in Review" [here](#).



**Thursday, Jan. 16 from 5 to 8 pm**

Prairie Pride Coalition is bringing the traveling exhibit "The Harlem Renaissance: As Gay as it was Black" to B/N for a series of displays during January and February. The opening reception, sponsored by PPC and Jazz Upfront, is **from 5 to 8 p.m. on Thursday, Jan. 16 at Jazz Upfront in downtown Bloomington**. Above is a graphic with more information. Other showings of the exhibit are still being scheduled, but here is what is lined up so far:

- Saturday, Jan. 11 - B/N Martin Luther King Jr. Awards Luncheon (Bone Student Center)
- Thursday, Jan. 16 - Opening Reception at Jazz Upfront
- Saturday, Jan. 25 - Illinois Safe Schools Alliance Student Summit (BHS)
- Jan. 31 - Feb. 1 - ISU LGBTQIA+ Alumni Reunion Weekend
- Saturday, Feb. 1 - IWU Black History Month Cabaret (Evelyn Chapel)
- Early February - event at the Bistro
- Saturday, Feb. 15 - ISU Martin Luther King Jr. Dinner (Bone Student Center)
- Third week in February - display at Bloomington Public Library
- Late February - concluding event featuring poetry and music from the Harlem Renaissance

Please consider joining the Prairie Pride Coalition on the 16th! James and the staff at Jazz Upfront are helping put together an evening of food, drink, and wonderful music from the Harlem Renaissance!

*Shared by the Prairie Pride Coalition*

# CPT Winter Newsletter

Download and read the winter edition of the Community Peacemaker Team's newsletter [here](#).

## ADN Five-Year Review

Read the Anabaptist Disabilities Network's (ADN) recent five-year review [here](#).





**Book Study:** *So We and Our Children May Live* by Sarah Augustine and Sheri Hostetler

Every Thursday, beginning on January 16 through February 13, 2025

7:30 to 8:45 p.m. ET/4:30 to 5:45 p.m. PT on Zoom

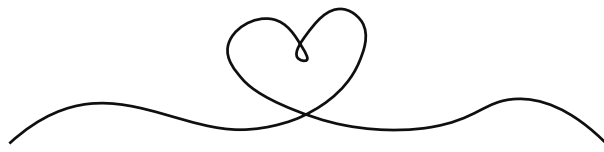
Mennonite Church USA  
Climate Justice Ministry



An interactive Zoom meeting hosted by Karla Stoltzfus Detweiler.

### Thursdays, January 16 through February 13 at 6:30 pm CT

Join Mennonite Church USA in imagining a sustainable future for ourselves, our children, and our planet by participating in an online book study of the compelling and timely book, "So We and Our Children May Live" by Sarah Augustine and Sheri Hostetler. Drawing from Scripture, science, Indigenous wisdom, and personal stories, the authors invite us to open our hearts and our culture to deep, Spirit-led transformation. [Register here](#).



## Staff Contact and Building Open Hours

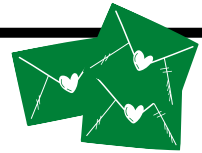
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- Building Open:     **Standard Hours:**  
Monday, Wednesday-Friday 9AM-11AM  
and Monday-Friday 1:30PM-3PM.
- Lydia Hedberg:   Office Administrator; [church@normalmennonite.org](mailto:church@normalmennonite.org); 309-452-6622
- Rita Munkakusi:   Custodian
- Kevin Chupp:     Pastor for Outreach Commission, Worship Commission,  
Congregational Care Committee, Spiritual Gifts Discernment Team,  
and Visitation Team; [kevin@normalmennonite.org](mailto:kevin@normalmennonite.org)
- Lynette Miller:   Pastor for Discipling and Community Life Commissions
- Lauren Satchwell: Pastor for Vision Team & Administration Commissions

## Our Members in Care Facilities

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



## Commission Meeting Minutes

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# Commissions and Teams Contact List

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## Commission, Team, & Committee Members

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### Items for the Midweek



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Please send items to be included in the Midweek to the [Church Office](#) no later than **8am on Wednesday**. Thank you!

### Work Order & Purchase Request Forms

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### Item Check-Out Request Form

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### Structure Documents

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