

THE MIDWEEK



WORSHIP THIS SUNDAY 9:30 AM

This Sunday, Kevin Chupp will preach a sermon titled *2024 YR4* using Luke 10:25-42.

Jesus celebrates with 72 who found success in the towns that lie ahead and then turns to his disciples with some private words in the form of a parable championing a man who is eager to help his neighbor. In case the disciples feel they grasp the moral of the story, Jesus has a surprising reaction to a situation in the home of Martha and Mary. In response, we are invited to embrace the nuance of Jesus' call to faithfulness.

After Worship

Adult CE

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

Lent at MCN



Wednesdays at 6:30 pm in the Sanctuary

Brothers and sisters in Christ, since early days Christians have observed with great devotion the time of our Lord's passion and resurrection. We prepare for this with a season of penitence and fasting. By carefully keeping these days, Christians take to heart the call to repentance and the assurance of forgiveness proclaimed in the gospel, and so grow in faith and in devotion to our Lord. You are invited to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy word. In addition to our regular Sunday worship, Worship Commission invites you to join the community in prayer and meditation on God's word during this holy season. MCN will be meeting the Wednesdays of Lent at 6:30 for prayer, confession, song, and lectio divina. The first service will take place on Wednesday, March 5 and will include the imposition of ashes. The following six weeks, we will gather for Lenten Vespers.

Wednesday, March 5, 6:30pm Ash Wednesday

Wednesday, March 12, 6:30pm Lent Vespers

Wednesday, March 19, 6:30pm Lent Vespers

Wednesday, March 26, 6:30pm Lent Vespers

Wednesday, April 2, 6:30pm Lent Vespers

Wednesday, April 9, 6:30pm Lent Vespers

Wednesday, April 16, 6:30pm Lent Vespers

Thursday, April 17, 5:30pm Maundy Thursday Foot Washing (note earlier time)

Friday, April 18, 12:00pm Ecumenical Good Friday (at MCN)

PPC / El Town Hall



Thursday, March 6th at 6:30

As we were last year, MCN has been invited to host a table at the Prairie Pride Coalition/Equality Illinois Town Hall Meeting on March 6th at 6:30. (Learn more [here](#) or view a flyer.) Our table is offered for us "to share information about themselves and the support and inclusion they offer to the LGBTQIA+ community." If you'd like to join us in hosting the table, please contact Pastor Kevin.

SGDT Announcement



The Spiritual Gifts Discernment Team, in consultation with the chair of Discipling Commission, has called Caroline to serve on Discipling Commission. Please send any feedback to Janet by March 7th. Thank you!

From the Spiritual Gifts Discernment Team

Coffee Meet Up



Saturday, March 22 from 9:30AM - 11:00AM

The Community Life Commission invites you on Saturday, March 22 from 9:30AM - 11:00AM for another Coffee Meet Up. All are welcome to this time of fellowship and connection.

From the Community Life Commission
p. 2

Possible source for help on end of life planning

Wednesday, March 12 at 1 PM

A focus of the Congregational Care Committee is encouraging all adults to complete Advance Care Planning as outlined in the Death Preparation Manual available on the church website. Part of that planning is for every adult to have an up to date will. Decisions may include electing a guardian for any minor children, choosing a competent executor, and deciding how you want your estate divided. Luther Oaks is providing an informational webinar on Wednesday, March 12 at 1 PM. Registration and or information is available [here](#) (click on the notice itself.)

Shared by the Congregational Care Committee



Strawberry pies

Thursday, March 13 from 8-10 am

Friday, March 14 from 8-12 am

We again have a goal of making 75 Strawberry Pies with the majority of work happening Friday morning. The sign up sheet is on the table in the north atrium. Looking forward to creating together!



Il Mennonite Relief Sale

Friday, March 14 & Saturday, March 15

The theme of the 67th Illinois Mennonite Relief Sale is: "World Relief in the Name of Christ!" On Friday, March 14, there is a Trivia Night starting at 6:00 P.M. On Saturday, March 15, the Pancake & Sausage Breakfast begins at 6:00 A.M. The booths open at 7:00 A.M., and the auction starts at 8:30 A.M. Your support will be appreciated by people in America and in forty-five countries of the world. View the schedule and learn more [here](#). Learn more about creating a trivia team and to sign up for a team [here](#).

We are also looking forward to seeing all the baked goods come through the door for the sale, supplies are available on the tables in the atrium for pickup. We still have signs, posters, and booklets to distribute in the community at prominent businesses and restaurants. **This Sunday we will have a table to display homemade goods going to the sale from our very own MCNer's! Please bring your items you plan to donate by this Sunday to display!** Thank you in advance for all your support!



Good Friday

Friday, April 18th at 12:00pm

This year, we are honored to host the Ecumenical Good Friday service at MCN with New Covenant Community leading the planning of the worship, around the theme: Human Suffering and God's Redemptive Love. You can mark your calendars for April 18th at 12:00pm—a time which is intended to enable people to attend during their lunch hour. This service is put together each year with the local Christian clergy group, with pastors across traditions leading most parts of the service. We hope you will join us for this meaningful opportunity to worship across traditions! If you are interested in helping host this event please reach out to Pastor Kevin.

A Word a Day for Lent

The Worship Commission invites you to use this resource created by Unitarian Universalists Barb Greve and Alex Kapitan during Lent. On each day, reflect on each word and how you experience or witness it in your life and in the world. How might Jesus be calling you to respond? Maybe you can draw a picture, take a photograph, or write some words about each word. Consider sharing them on the Mennonite Church of Normal Facebook page or sending them to the Church Office for inclusion in the Midweek.

From the Worship Commission

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
MARCH		5 loss	6 chaos	7 anger	8 mourning	9 love
10 deconstruction	11 curiosity	12 faith	13 humility	14 change	15 consent	16 equity
17 resistance	18 fear	19 grace	20 blessing	21 vulnerable	22 safety	23 interdependence
24 liberation	25 bravery	26 dignity	27 courage	28 weeping	29 rest	30 justice
31 suffering						
APRIL	1 goodness	2 hope	3 relationship	4 receive	5 kindness	6 generosity
7 commitment	8 resilience	9 surrender	10 sweetness	11 family	12 creativity	13 pluralism
14 power	15 friends	16 grief	17 waiting	18 mercy	19 wonder	20 transformation

Join the Financial Planning Group

CLC is moving forward with plans to start a small group/class focused on financial planning and budgeting! Several people have already expressed interest, and we're planning for the group to meet for 6-7 weeks during the Sunday school hour. If you're looking for guidance on budgeting, working toward financial goals, or simply want to be more intentional with your finances, this is a great opportunity. Whether you'd like to participate or have experience and wisdom to share, we'd love to hear from you! Please email to express your interest or ask any questions.

From the Community Life Commission

Mike Huckabee's old-school Christian Zionism is bad news for anyone who wants Middle East peace

Peace-seeking Mennonites might wish to read why Forward, a Jewish online publication which describes itself as "Jewish, Independent, Non-Profit," writes that confirming Mike Huckabee as American Ambassador to Israel will be bad news for all those seeking a lasting peace in the Middle East. Huckabee is a passionate Zionist who has said "There is really no such thing as a Palestinian," and believes that Israel should take over all of Palestine. Huckabee believes that all the armies of the world will battle in Israel (Armageddon), bringing about the Rapture and the Return of Christ. Mennonite Christians who have a different understanding of the Prince of Peace may wish to oppose his nomination to their Senators. It is strongly supported by Zionist Christians. Read the article [here](#).

Shared by Meredith Schroer

Delegates Needed

The Mennonite Church USA Convention and Delegate assembly is meeting this summer. It's not too early to consider being a delegate for the conference. Please let Lauren know if you have interest or questions.

From the Administration Commission

A Note from Louise & Larry



Bluffton University has played a very important part in the lives of many in this congregation. We met our spouse there, we made lifelong friends, we learned our vocation, and we learned how to live a life of service to others. Bluffton is where we grew into responsible adults.

This past week has been one full of change for Bluffton University. Our president resigned, effective immediately. An interim president has been named. His name is Dr. J. Alexander Sider. He has served the college since 2006 as Professor of Religion and most recently Vice President of Academic Affairs and Academic Dean. The Board and Faculty are supportive of this appointment and look forward to working with Dr. Sider.

We then received notice that the University of Findlay, who Bluffton had spent considerable time working with as partners, exploring ways we could benefit each other, had decided this was not working for them, and canceled this collaboration. Bluffton is now, once again on their own.

Meanwhile, a group of Bluffton grads created a Bluffton College Foundation. Two of the founding families have strong ties and have attended Normal Mennonite.

- Stan and Jo Clemmens '63 & '63
- Jim and Kay Sommer '68 & '69

Others are:

- Ed and Karen Diller '69 & '68'
- Greg and Donna Wannemacher '77 & '78
- Kent and Gaye Yoder '78 & '78

They together have given a total of \$5,000,000.00 toward this campaign with hopes of raising 12.5 million. The Bluffton College Foundation will focus its financial impact on experiential elements within our Mennonite heritage which make Bluffton distinctive. You can show your support by giving online or by check to the Bluffton College Foundation.

We ask for prayer and guidance for Dr. Alex Sider, the Bluffton University board, the faculty, and support staff as they go forward.

From Louise and Larry Reeser



Prayer Requests and Announcements

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



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



Birthdays & Anniversaries

CELEBRATING LIFE'S MOMENTS AT MCN



Those Serving This Week





A BRIEF LOOK AT THE CHURCH CALENDAR:

Wednesday, March 5

9:30 am Wednesday Morning Book Group

6:30 pm Ash Wednesday Service

Thursday, March 6

7:00 am Next Man Bible Study

9:30 am Women's Bible Study

Sunday, March 9

7:00 pm Adult Choir

Monday, March 10

5:00 pm Outreach Commission

Tuesday, March 11

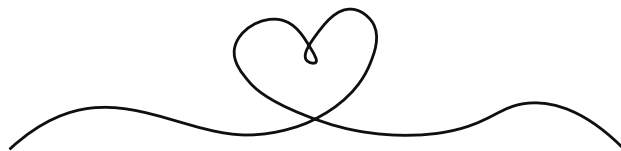
3:00 pm Pastoral Team (Zoom)

Wednesday, March 12

9:30 am Wednesday Morning Book Group

6:30 pm Lent Vespers

7:00 pm Community Life Commission (Zoom)



"In a world that demands constant labor and productivity, what if rest was not just a necessity, but an act of defiance? Mennonite Church USA (MC USA) invites women from across the denomination to reclaim rest as resistance at the [MC USA Women's Summit](#), a transformative one-day event on July 8, 2025 in Greensboro, North Carolina. The gathering, themed "Beholding it Together," is designed to affirm, support and resource women in MC USA in their callings, ministries and faith journeys." **Read the rest of Mennonite Church USA's announcement [here](#).**

Lent at Home 2025

Mennonite Education Agency, the education agency of Mennonite Church USA, is pleased to share the Lent at Home 2025 worship guide and calendar, available for download in English and Spanish at the MEA website [here](#). We extend our gratitude to writer Talashia Keim Yoder, designer Erin Ramer, and translator Ubaldo Rodriguez.

This resource is offered at no cost to the congregations, conferences, individuals, and families of MC USA and MC Canada. However, gifts to help cover the costs of production are joyfully accepted at the [MEA website](#). May this beautiful resource inspire and deepen your experience of Lent!

Urge Congress to protect clean energy tax credits

Background: An upcoming budget bill in Congress threatens to cut popular clean energy tax credits to pay for expanded tax cuts and increased immigration enforcement. Federal tax credits for energy efficiency in homes were instituted with bipartisan support in 2005, saving households money on energy bills and reducing energy use. In recent years, two major pieces of legislation allocated tax credits on solar panels, wind energy and electric vehicles—incentives now in jeopardy. Clean energy tax credits are creating tens of thousands of jobs, meeting rapidly growing energy needs, reducing the strain on the energy grid, and [saving households and non-profits money](#). By 2024, more than [2,500 houses of worship](#) had solar panels. By 2030, these tax credits, along with other Inflation Reduction Act programs, could help reduce overall emissions by 30-43% below 2005 levels. Repealing the tax credits would mean the loss of over [\\$300 billion in private investment](#) in the clean energy sector and close to 100,000 jobs over the next 15 years. Additionally, clean energy projects that have already broken ground, such as battery production plants, could be canceled.

Faith reflection: “Your steadfast love, O Lord, extends to the heavens, your faithfulness to the clouds. Your righteousness is like the mighty mountains; your judgments are like the great deep; you save humans and animals alike, O Lord.” (Psalm 36:5–6)

Take action: Click [here](#) to urge Congress to protect clean energy tax credits

An Update from Camp Friedenswald

When the Carters came to church

“One Sunday morning in July 1993, we and our three daughters drove up to our church parking lot at Fort Garry Mennonite Fellowship in Winnipeg, Man., to find two rather large black SUVs strangely parked outside the marked lines.

We were early because Bert was the newly elected congregational chair, and we needed to check on things. As we walked into the church, we saw what appeared to be security people wandering around the building. To our great surprise, Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter walked in.” **Read the rest of Lee & Bert Friesen’s article for the *Anabaptist World* [here](#).**

BMC Seminary Field Education Internship 2025-26

BMC Seminary Field Education Internship 2025-26: [Details and application are here.](#) This is an ideal placement for students who are interested in LGBTQIA+ religious activism and who are pursuing ministry in nontraditional settings. The placement can be arranged in person in Chicago or remotely, and we offer a modest stipend. It typically follows the academic year, beginning in September 2025. Please share with LGBTQIA+ seminary students in your network!

Shared by the Brethren Mennonite Council for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Interests. Read the full winter newsletter [here](#).

MC USA Safe Church – recorded webinar: A Person Who Is a Known Sex Offender and Your Congregation

If you missed the January 28 webinar “A Person Who Is a Known Sex Offender and Your Congregation” from Mennonite Church USA, you can watch a recording [In English](#) or [En español](#).

Typical

Our society is structured so that “typical” is synonymous with “able-bodied” and “normal.” In their debut poem, “Typical,” Kathryn Newswanger pushes back against this idea: why do those without disabilities have the privilege of deciding who is “weird” or “atypical”? By inviting us into her perspective, Kathryn also invites us to imagine her (as well as others with ADHD, autism, and other forms of neurodivergence) as normal, and to see that maybe, we aren’t so different. **Read Kathryn Newswanger’s debut poem “Typical” shared by the Anabaptist Disabilities Network [here](#).**

Tell Congress: Hands off the International Criminal Court

Tell Congress: Hands off the International Criminal Court. On Jan. 9, the House passed a shameful bill that would sanction individuals who help, assist, or support the International Criminal Court (ICC) investigation into war crimes by Benjamin Netanyahu and Yoav Gallant. Soon, that same bill will be voted on in the Senate. While in the midst of a fragile ceasefire agreement, Republicans in Congress have made it a priority to punish those trying to hold the Israeli government accountable for its atrocities against Palestinians. The bill has already passed the House. It's imperative that it does not pass the Senate as well. [Click here](#) to use Jewish Voice for Peace’s tool to tell your Senators to oppose this bill when it comes for a vote.

Shared in the Community Peacemaker Teams (CPT) Weekly Newsletter

A new kind of community

“Rooted in Anabaptism and the Black church, we’re truth tellers, peacemakers, community builders.” **Read Trey Ferguson’s article for the *Anabaptist World* [here](#).**

A Note from The Immigration Project

Dear friends of The Immigration Project, We are relieved that the federal grant freeze has been rescinded, allowing us to continue providing critical legal services. This is a significant win, but we remain mindful that funding uncertainties could still impact our programs in the future. Take this story of Claudia who came to TIP in April 2024 needing legal representation, social services support, and therapy services, while grappling with PTSD, anxiety, depression, and the aftereffects of being a victim of domestic violence. Thanks to a federal grant, we were able to assign her an attorney who has been diligently advocating for her rights. By July, Claudia also began her journey in therapy services. Throughout the past 6 months, we have watched Claudia demonstrate admirable strength, resilience, and determination as she continues to grow, heal, and flourish. Despite the uncertainty, we are ready to adapt and continue serving our immigrant communities - but we need your support. The strength of our work comes from the incredible community that believes in access to justice and immigrant rights. So many of you have asked how you can help, and your ongoing support - whether through advocacy, spreading the word, or staying engaged - means everything. **Click [here](#) to donate.**

From The Immigration Project

Team with transgender athlete refuses to play B.C. college after alleging abuse

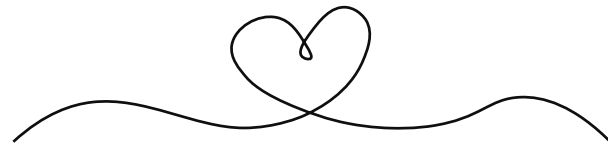
The Vancouver Island University women’s basketball team refused to play a pair of games against Mennonite-affiliated Columbia Bible College in January because of [alleged verbal and physical mistreatment](#) of a transgender teammate by Columbia’s coach and players in October. Vancouver player Harriette Mackenzie, who is transgender, said Columbia coach Taylor Claggett went on a “tirade” after losing on Oct. 25, yelling about how Mackenzie shouldn’t be allowed to play against women, [The Associated Press reported](#). Mackenzie said her opponents physically targeted her when the teams played again Oct. 26. [In a statement](#), CBC officials said “accusations that CBC, its coaches, players and fans are a safety threat are simply untrue and misinformed.” Located in Abbotsford, B.C., CBC is affiliated with Mennonite Church British Columbia and the British Columbia Mennonite Brethren. **Read the *Anabaptist World* article [here](#).**

The U.S. military complex is terrifying

"In 2020, Canada witnessed the [Nova Scotia attacks](#) in which 23 people were killed between April 18 and 19. This remains the largest massacre in Canada [since 1972](#). Within two weeks Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced an immediate ban on over 1,500 models and variants of assault-style firearms. Two months later, my family moved from Calgary, Alberta, in Canada, to Harrisonburg, Va., in the United States. I was adjusting to a new country amid a global pandemic. One of the biggest culture shocks was the difference in the ways Canada and the U.S. view guns, assault weapons and the military. As a lifelong Mennonite and pacifist, I have always wrestled with how to approach the military complex in whichever country I live in. I often recall phrases like, "Make borscht, not bombs," and my all-time favorite Mennonite Central Committee tank top that said, 'This is how Mennonites bare arms.' Even when attending Mennonite schools and existing in majority Mennonite circles, there were still several moments that stuck with me." **Read the rest of Mackenzie P. Miller's article for the *Anabaptist World* [here](#).**

"There is no Future in Palestine"

"There is no Future in Palestine" This is a message Israeli settlers are plastering across the West Bank to terrorize Palestinians and pressure them to leave their homeland. For decades, Palestinians have lived under conditions that rob them of their rights, dreams, and even hope for a future. Every day brings new challenges and threats, leaving us to wonder: Is there truly a future in Palestine?" **Read more from Community Peacemaker Teams [here](#).**

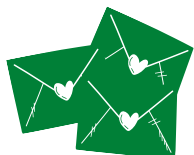


Staff Contact and Building Open Hours

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



Commissions and Teams Contact List

Work Order & Purchase Request Forms

Commission Meeting Minutes

Commission, Team, & Committee Members

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!

Item Check-Out Request Form

Structure Documents
