

THE MIDWEEK



WORSHIP THIS SUNDAY 9:30 AM

This Sunday, Kevin Chupp will preach a sermon titled *Triptych* using Luke 18:31-19:10.

When Jesus enters Jericho, in three scenarios he offers foresight, healing, and acceptance.

The blind and the "lost" experience transformation while the twelve remain confused. What do we make of that? How do we understand what Jesus has offered us?

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



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.

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)



Hands Off! Bloomington Fights Back

Saturday, April 5 from 12 – 1pm CDT

Join Voices of Reason of Indivisible and your Democratic and progressive friends in McLean County to stand up against the Republican challenge to the US. Our country belongs to us, not to Donald Trump and Elon Musk. We will gather Saturday, April 5, at noon. We will hear speakers and stand along the road with our signs. This is intended to be a peaceful rally. They're taking everything they can get their hands on—our health care, our data, our jobs, our services—and daring the world to stop them. This is a crisis, and the time to act is now. This mass mobilization day is our message to the world that we do not consent to the destruction of our government and our economy for the benefit of Trump and his billionaire allies. Alongside Americans across the country, we demand a stop the chaos and build an opposition movement against the looting of our country. A core principle behind all Hands Off! events is a commitment to nonviolent action. We expect all participants to seek to de-escalate any potential confrontation with those who disagree with our values. **Click [here](#) to sign up for the event.** Check out handsoff2025.com for more information.

Shared by the Outreach Commission



Easter Breakfast

Sunday, April 20th from 8 am to 9 am

The Fellowship Committee is respectfully requesting donations of either Fresh Fruit or pastries or coffee cake, so that we might all enjoy some very light refreshments before the Easter Service. We specifically request nothing that needs to be heated such as egg casseroles, in order to focus ourselves on the Easter Sunday celebration, and not kitchen duty. We will be serving from 8 am until 9 am before the service, so please come early and help us rejoice!! Donations can be dropped off anytime after 8 am Easter Sunday.

From the Fellowship Committee



Sunday, April 6th at 11 am

This Sunday, Dr. Will McCorkle will be joining our adult Sunday school hour. Dr. Will McCorkle is an assistant professor of educational foundations and social studies education. His research focuses on the intersection of nationalism, immigration, and education with a particular focus on more marginalized migrant communities. He is currently the program director of the Master's of Teaching, Learning, and Advocacy at College of Charleston. Will is from Normal, Illinois. On Sunday, he will be sharing specifically about how the church in America responded in the 1980's to asylum and sanctuary compared to their response today.



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.



Holy Saturday Meditation Walk

Saturday, April 19, 2025 at 10:00 am

Merwin Nature Preserve Parklands

Come soulfully wander among the wildflowers this Holy Saturday, April 19, on a Meditation Walk co-led by Jane and Judith. The Walk will include extraordinary springtime beauty, poetry and readings, some silence, and moments for contemplation and reflection. You must be able to walk safely for 3 miles on an unpaved woodland trail that includes some steep areas and some steps. Waterproof pants and walking shoes recommended and, if needed, a stick for balance. Please arrive in time to begin the walk at 10 am. There are porta potties available in the parking area. Bring a small notebook/journal and pen and water bottle. To register, send a text to Jane.

Delegates Needed

The Mennonite Church USA Convention and Delegate assembly is meeting this summer. Please consider being a delegate for the conference. Let Lauren know if you have interest or questions.

Update from Vision Team on Dual Conference Affiliation at MCN

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.

As shared with the congregation in December, the **Vision Team will be leading the congregation through this discernment process over the next few months, with a targeted decision around future conference affiliation to be made by July 1.**

Where we started:

One year ago, Vision Team conducted an information gathering congregational survey to garner the thoughts and feelings held across the congregation. While no decisions were made from the results of that survey, the results were insightful. Here are a few results from the survey:

- 85% of survey respondents answered "No" to the question "Do you think it is important that MCN be dual-affiliated in the future?"
- 70% of survey respondents answered "No" to the question "Would you have concerns with MCN ending its formal affiliation with one of the conferences?"
- When asked, "If MCN were to maintain membership with just one conference in the future, with which conference do you believe it should maintain membership?," 87% of survey respondents indicated CDC only, while 2% indicated IMC only.

There were many valid points and concerns raised in the survey responses. We know some people feel strongly about this issue. However, **the survey results revealed a potential lean in direction among the congregation toward ending dual-conference affiliation and remaining affiliated with CDC only.** As Vision Team prepares to lead the congregation through this discernment process, we think it is helpful to go in with this baseline understanding of where the congregation appears to be at with this topic. But again, **no decisions have been made at this point in time.**

Where we are:

What questions does this prompt in you? **ACTION ITEM:** We ask that congregants send ALL questions you may have to the Vision Team for processing and inclusion within a comprehensive FAQ document that will be prepared and shared. This FAQ document will also include questions Vision Team thinks the congregation would benefit from having answered and will be used to prompt discussion on certain aspects of this issue.

Please send your questions to Ben or Shannon by April 6.

Where we are going:

The intention is to lead the congregation to a decision around future conference affiliation before July 1, 2025. Part of a potential decision to withdraw membership from a conference would be to discuss as a congregation how we exit a decades-long relationship peacefully and with love and grace.

Additional resources:

- Proposal for IMC Funding and Timeline for Membership Decision 12.2024 view.
- Comments on Dual Conference Affiliation at MCN 12.2024 view.
- [MCUSA Membership Guidelines](#)

From the Vision Team



IL Mennonite Relief Sale

The Illinois Mennonite Relief Sale Board wishes to extend special thanks to all individuals who helped with our 67th Illinois Sale. The Friday night Trivia entertainment was enjoyed by approximately 105 people, and sausage and some food items were available. Income for Friday night was approximately \$6,500. On Saturday 1,844 people enjoyed pancakes and sausage. The auction began at 8:30 A.M. This year approximately 80 quilts and wall hangings were auctioned, which totaled \$21,185. Many other quality items were auctioned and brought in \$38,420. The net profit for the entire sale will be shared later when all expenses have been paid. Thanks again to all who shared in helping with another successful event because of God's very special blessings!

Shared by Mrs. Ruthie Roth, Relief Sale Executive Secretary

Mennonite Action is Seeking Monthly Donors

Mennonite Action has recently announced the hiring of 2 new full time staff organizers and is continuing its vital work of organizing in support of Palestine and our undocumented neighbors. To help continue its important work Mennonite Action has set a goal of reaching 750 monthly donors by the end of the year, and they're already almost a third of the way there. Mennonite Action is almost entirely funded by individual donors, not large foundations. Might you join in becoming a monthly donor to Mennonite Action? MennoniteAction.org/donate

Shared by the Outreach Commission and Jane



Lloyd and Aldine Combs Scholarship

Administration Commission and Discipling Commission are pleased to announce a new opportunity for students pursuing higher education. Lloyd and Aldine Combs generously endowed an annual scholarship of \$5000 to be awarded annually to a student pursuing college or seminary. Mennonite institutions are preferred, but not required. Students may apply regardless of their participation or non-participation in the Student Mutual Aid Program. **Applications are due by April 25th and can be found at this . You can find a more detailed description of the scholarship .**

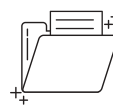
Shared by the Discipling Commission

Lost and Found

The lost and found alcove is once again quite full! Please take a look at the photo below and the items laid out at the back of the sanctuary and claim your items. Any items not claimed by Monday, April 7th will be donated.

From the Church Office

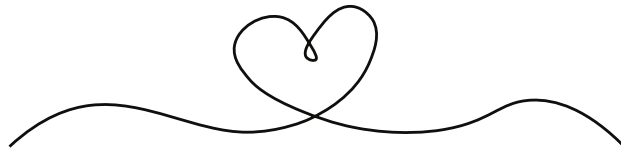




A Note from the Midwest Food Bank

Midwest Food Bank has shared this message. You can also sign up to volunteer with other people from MCN [here](#).

Midwest Food Bank in Normal needs volunteers! As food insecurity grows in our communities, Midwest Food Bank has increased their efforts to support the agencies who serve those in need. God has been so generous with his blessings of donations to the food bank, and with the increase in these blessings comes a need for an increase in our volunteer team. To learn more about volunteering at Midwest Food Bank in Normal, IL, please join us at our Volunteer Fair on **April 22 from 10am-1pm**. View an informational flyer for the Volunteer Fair flyer [here](#). Volunteers can also visit Midwest Food Bank of Illinois-Bloomington-Normal - Midwest Food Bank [here](#) and look for Volunteer opportunities.



This Week at MCN



A BRIEF LOOK AT THE CHURCH CALENDAR:

Wednesday, April 2

9:30 am Wednesday Morning Book Group

11:30 am Worship Commission (Zoom)

6:30 pm Lent Vespers

Thursday, April 3

7:00 am Next Man Bible Study

9:30 am Women's Bible Study

6:30 pm Administration Commission (Zoom)

Sunday, April 6

7:00 pm Adult Choir

Tuesday, April 8

3:00 pm Pastoral Team (Zoom)

Wednesday, April 9

9:30 am Wednesday Morning Book Group

6:30 pm Lent Vespers

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

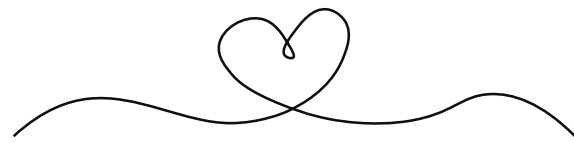


MCN IS ASKED TO BE IN CONTINUED PRAYER FOR FOR THE PROGRESSIVE CARE UNIT AT CARLE BROMENN MEDICAL CENTER—OUR PARTNER IN HEALING FOR 2024



Those Serving This Week





Monthly Community Meeting

The guest presenter of the next Prairie Pride Coalition and Equality Illinois monthly meeting will be Mimi Davis, librarian at Bloomington Public Library, who will share information on books, music, movies, and online resources available through the library. Leaders from Equality Illinois and Prairie Pride Coalition will provide updates on legislation, activities, and projects. After the meeting, hang around and share refreshments and conversation. As always, the meeting is hybrid so you can attend in person or via Zoom.

2025
LGBTQ+
ADVOCACY
DAY

EI EQUALITY ILLINOIS
TOGETHER WE WILL

Thursday, May 8th, 2025
Illinois State Capitol,
Springfield, IL

JOIN US FOR LGBTQ+ ADVOCACY DAY!

Now more than ever, we must take action. Join LGBTQ+ leaders and allies from across Illinois for advocacy training on key LGBTQ+ legislative priorities and the opportunity to meet with state lawmakers. Together, we can drive progress, tackle systemic challenges, and advance LGBTQ+ rights. This event is a vital opportunity to unite, take action, and make our voices heard.

REGISTER TODAY!

Sensitive Locations, Sacred Spaces

Interfaith Prayer Vigil

Thursday, April 3rd

6:30pm

National City Christian Church

5 Thomas Circle NW DC

A prayer vigil in support of the historic lawsuit against the rescission of the sensitive locations policy

Join Mennonite Church USA for an interfaith prayer vigil on the eve of the first hearing of our coalition's [historic lawsuit](#) against the Department of Homeland Security's rescission of the sensitive locations memo. Together, we will gather in person and online in solidarity, lifting prayers for justice, compassion and the protection of immigrant communities. **RSVP [here](#).**

ACC Climate Advocacy Day

Thursday, April 10th

Join Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) and Anabaptist Climate Collaborative (ACC) in Washington, D.C., to advocate for tree planting grants and clean energy tax credits in the upcoming budget reconciliation bill. A virtual option is possible. Registration is still open for those from CA, IL, IN, IA, KS, MT, NY, OH, OR, PA, TX, and VA.

Congress needs to hear from you about how much this and other climate issues matter to you! Join us on April 10!! No prior experience or expertise is needed. A training in advocacy and the specific issues will be provided. MCC and ACC will set up all meetings with Congressional offices. A virtual option for the advocacy training and a future meeting locally with your representative is possible. Note: We are especially looking for advocates from Republican districts.

- **Date:** April 10
- **Time:** 9:30am – 4:30pm
- **Schedule:** A mini-advocacy training in the morning followed by Congressional meetings
- **Location:** MCC office in Washington, D.C.; Congressional offices on Capitol Hill
- **Cost:** You will cover your own transportation costs (and lodging if needed). MCC and ACC will cover lunch. Donations to the [Anabaptist Climate Collaborative](#) are encouraged! Please consider asking your church to sponsor you for this important advocacy event.

Shared by the Anabaptist Climate Collaborative

When life doesn't go as expected

Spiritual director Sherill Hostetter has been diagnosed with a rare and incurable disorder, and she shares how she has developed resiliency in the face of her diagnosis and health challenges. **Read her Menno Snapshot for Mennonite Church USA [here](#).**

Activists seek justice in Chicago

“More than 100 Mennonites and allies gathered March 21 in Chicago’s Union Station for a ‘flash-mob’ public worship service, declaring ‘God’s Love Knows No Borders.’ It was part of a larger movement of Mennonite Action chapters hosting public services across the United States. Activists sang Mennonite, Hebrew, Black liberation and Spanish songs led by Mennonite Action Chicago, Songs 4 Liberation, and Immigrant Solidarity DuPage for around two hours. Sawsan Abubaker, Cristóbal Cavazos and Candace Bell spoke to the importance of working toward justice for Palestinians, immigrants, LGBTQ+ neighbors and all impacted by cuts to diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives and other vital federal programs.” **Read the rest of Serena Lindsey’s article published by the *Anabaptist World* [here](#).**

BIPOC storytelling: Our Mennonite history

“The [MC USA Archives](#) and the [Racial Ethnic Council](#) (REC) are partnering on a new initiative to prioritize BIPOC history and storytelling. ‘Just 5% of the materials in the MC USA Archives is devoted to stories of African American, Latino, Asian American or Native American Mennonites,’ said distinguished Mennonite historian and author Felipe Hinojosa, Ph.D., speaking to the MC USA Executive Board during its [fall 2024 meeting](#). Much of that history is told through the eyes of others, mostly missionaries, he added.” **Read the rest of Mennonite Church USA’s article [here](#).**

Anabaptist Witness 11.1, “Mission and Peace in Ethiopia.”

Anabaptist Witness 11.1, “Mission and Peace in Ethiopia.” The articles in this issue of Anabaptist Witness — guest edited by Henok T. Mekonin, MA, and James R. Krabill, PhD — are organized in two sections. The first focuses on mission and peace efforts in the broader context of the Ethiopian nation, and the second focuses more specifically on Meserete Kristos Church (MKC) history and perspectives. Proceeds from the print edition — available for purchase on Amazon — will support MKC programs. The free online version is now available [here](#).

Shared by the Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary

A faith that makes room for all of me

“In the early pages of *Love, Auntie*, Shantell Hinton Hill describes a transformative meeting with a pastor about a decade ago. When she was 30 and sensing a call to full-time ministry, her pastor explained all the reasons why she could not be hearing God rightly. Even though she’d rebuilt the church’s youth ministry program, wanted to serve God by serving others and had begun ‘to discern the voice of God saying there was more for me,’ still her pastor told her the Bible demanded she remain quiet in the church. He traced ‘every single text in the New Testament having to do with women remaining silent’ and insisted that Hinton Hill should not pursue seminary education or church leadership roles. She chose not to listen.” **Read the rest of Melanie Springer Mock’s article for the *Anabaptist World* [here](#).**

A Message from CPT

In early March, President Trump [unambiguously threatened US universities](#). Aiming to uproot campus solidarity for Palestine, he wrote "Agitators will be imprisoned/or permanently sent back to the country from which they came." Mahmoud Khalil was his first casualty, ["the first", Trump promises, "of many to come"](#). His wife has explained how, on 8 March, ICE officers barged warrantless into their home, arrested Khalil, hung up the phone on his lawyer, and threatened to arrest her too. "40 years after my parents immigrated here, and just weeks before I'm due to give birth to our first child, and I feel more unsafe and unstable than I have in my entire life" she said. ["US immigration ripped my soul from me when they handcuffed my husband and forced him into an unmarked vehicle."](#)

Trump says he wants to drive antisemitism off campus and out of the country. Just a few weeks ago, however, his ex-Chief Strategist [Steve Bannon told a reporter](#) that "the number one enemy to the people in Israel are American Jews that do not support Israel and do not support MAGA... the biggest enemy you have is inside the wire". Trump meanwhile said of Democrat Chuck Schumer that ["He used to be Jewish. He's not Jewish anymore, he's Palestinian."](#) He has been condemned for using "Palestinian" as a slur, and for setting his own criteria for Jewish identity. He also reveals his worldview: the line between friend and enemy is drawn by race as much as politics. Palestinians and the "wrong" kind of Jews, honouring their histories and the consequent commitments, threaten his foreign policy. The Department of Homeland Security admits as much, justifying revoking Khalil's Green Card by citing the 1952 Immigration and Nationality Act, which enables the removal of migrants whose presence is thought to have "potentially serious adverse foreign policy consequences".

If people – by virtue of who they are – cannot accommodate themselves to his project, Trump will just get rid of them. Resisting this tendency, hundreds [rallied outside a New York courthouse demanding Khalil's release](#) as a judge blocked his deportation. Yesterday [police arrested 98 members of Jewish Voice for Peace](#) as they held a sit-in for Khalil at Trump Tower. As states' attempts at using illegal means to reach their ends are frustrated, where will they turn next? In 2024, a Palestine solidarity encampment occupied Athens Law School. Twenty-eight people were arrested, and nine of them, not Greek citizens, were held in a "pre-removal detention centre" as Greece attempted to deport them. Yesterday a court acquitted them of all charges. Today, in a planned parliamentary reshuffle, a new Minister of Migration has been appointed, Makis Voridis, who has [a violent history of membership](#) to fascist anti-Semitic groups.

Those demonstrating outside courts understand that the fight against the authoritarian turn is on two fronts: at home and abroad. CPT's Turtle Island Solidarity Network reports this week from a demonstration against [the world's biggest mining convention](#), organised by the Prospectors and Developers Association of Canada. "The companies that find a home at PDAC have contributed to violence and destruction in every one of the contexts in which CPT works", they write. From Iraqi Kurdistan we publish [an update on the violent suppression of a wave of strikes and blockades](#) demanding withheld payment, a result of political bartering over oil revenue. And in Lesvos, we publish [a statement from the #FreePylos9 campaign demanding answers](#) from Europe's border patrol agency Frontex, which has tried to hide behind policy and protocol to justify its failure to assist over 600 victims of the Pylos shipwreck. As Turtle Island Solidarity Network reminds us, in order to build the world we deserve, we must disrupt business as usual.

Ryan James, Community Peacemaker Teams' Communications Associate

Faith and Forestry in the Great Plains

"Forestry runs in my family. As a second-generation forester in Kansas, my father served as an Extension forester at the Fort Hays Experiment Station. Dad helped farmers plant and care for windbreaks. He worked with towns and communities when Dutch elm disease arrived in '57 killing thousands of American elms. My spouse Melissa Atchison also has a forestry degree, and after raising kids and attending the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, she now serves as pastor of Manhattan Mennonite Church. Faith and forestry find common ground in our family." **Read the rest of Bob Atchison's blog post for Mennonite Men [here](#).**

From a Nazarene to a Mennonite

Steve Bomar began his faith journey as a Nazarene, but upon being exposed to Anabaptist theology, he began to consider if Mennonite Church USA might be the place for him and his beliefs. **Read his contribution to Mennonite Church USA's Menno by Choice series [here](#).**

American Friends Service Committee: Stop deportations now!

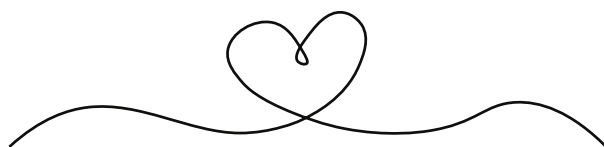
Join the American Friends Service Committee in demanding that Congress take immediate steps to halt deportations. Tell them to protect places of worship, workplaces, schools, hospitals, and other critical spaces from ICE raids. **[Click here](#)** to sign the petition.

Shared in the Community Peacemaker Teams (CPT) Weekly Newsletter

The scramble to save critical climate data from Trump's war on DEI

"When the White House took down a critical environmental justice tool just three days into President Trump's administration, a team of data scientists and academics sprang into action. They had prepared for this exact moment, having created a list of 250 online resources widely expected to be taken down during Trump's second term. The Climate & Economic Justice Screening Tool, a platform created to help federal agencies, states, and community organizations identify neighborhoods heavily burdened by pollution, topped the list. The team worked quickly to re-create the tool using previously archived data and host it on a new website. Two days later, the webpage was up and running." **Read the rest of Naveena Sadasivam's article for Grist [here](#).**

Shared in the Community Peacemaker Teams (CPT) Weekly Newsletter



Our Members in Care Facilities

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



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

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

Past Midweeks

Work Order & Purchase Request Forms

Commission Meeting Minutes

Commission, Team, & Committee Members

Item Check-Out Request Form

Structure Documents
