

# ***THE MIDWEEK***



## **WORSHIP THIS SUNDAY 9:30 AM**

This Sunday, Lynette Miller will preach a sermon titled *What Is Necessary?* using Luke 24:13-35.

This is a two-part sermon. Why was crucifixion necessary? And how do elements in this passage prepare us for the revelation of Jesus among 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

# Spring Family Fun Night

## Easter in the Garden

Friday, April 25th

**Friday, April 25**

Please join us for food, faith and fun on April 25<sup>th</sup> for our spring Family Fun Night, Easter in the Garden! We will sing, play, create and learn. Avanti's gondolas will be provided for supper. **Please use [this link](#) to RSVP.**

## Celebration of Life



**Thursday, May 8 at 3:00pm at MCN**

The Celebration of Life for Alice Swift will be held here at the Mennonite Church of Normal on Thursday, May 8 at 3:00pm. All are welcome to attend. It will also be livestreamed [here](#). You can read her obituary [here](#). Please keep Alice's family in your prayers.



## 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 **May 15<sup>th</sup> [extended deadline!]** and can be found at this. You can find a more detailed description of the scholarship.

*Shared by the Discipling Commission*



**Midwest**  
FOOD BANK

## Midwest Food Bank Volunteering

**Tuesday, May 6 at 6 pm**

Our next volunteer night at Midwest Food Bank (MFB) is Tuesday, May 6 at 6pm. MFB wants us to sign up at least a week ahead of time to facilitate their project planning, so if you think you might 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*

# Save the Date: Congregational Meeting on Dual Conference Affiliation May 18

**Sunday, May 18 after CE**

Vision Team is inviting you to attend and participate in a discussion of MCN's historical and future affiliation with Illinois Mennonite Conference and Central District Conference on May 18 following the CE hour in the sanctuary and on Zoom. This meeting will involve discussion surrounding an [FAQ document](#) that has been developed to dive deeper into the questions and considerations around this topic. This is considered a living document and will be updated as more information is received, or as new questions/considerations are raised.

Thank you to those that have engaged with Vision Team to help provide input to this point. We invite participation from all that want to be a part of this process.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact a member of the Vision Team.

*Shared by the Vision Team*

## 2025 GRADUATION



The faculty and graduating class of **Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary** invite you to attend the 2025 Graduation events honoring graduating students who are completing degrees or certificates.

### COMMISSIONING SERVICE

Friday, May 2  
7 p.m. EDT

### COMMENCEMENT SERVICE

Saturday, May 3 3 p.m. EDT

#### SPEAKER

Valerie Rempel, PhD  
Director of Accreditation for the  
Association of Theological Schools

Chapel of the Sermon on the Mount  
Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary  
3003 Benham Avenue, Elkhart, Indiana, USA

A reception for graduates and guests will take place immediately following the Commencement Service in the Courtyard and Waltner Hall Lounge (approximately 4:30 p.m.) Livestream links available at: [ambs.edu/graduation](https://ambs.edu/graduation)

Thank You Mennonite Church of Normal for supporting me on this wild seminary journey! This wouldn't have happened at all without my home congregation noticing and nurturing my gifts for ministry all along the way, for close to 20 years. I am so grateful for that journey together, which has enabled me to claim my call to pastoral ministry. My time at AMBS is drawing to a close, and a new beginning is approaching. I don't know yet where God will call me, but I have begun the process of discerning a ministry placement within MC USA. A special thank you for the card of support (signed by many) that arrived at the end of February - it was a boost that kept me going!

*Thank you,  
Melika*

## A Note from Ian

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Dear MCN friends: I am excited to share that I have been accepted into the 2025-26 Service Adventure program through Mennonite Mission Network. Service Adventure is an experience designed for young adults to grow in their faith, participate in the work of the church in a new location, learn to see what God is doing in the world, and to imagine and explore ways to continue to serve in the years to come. You can learn more about it . I will be leaving in late August to spend the year in Anchorage, Alaska, where I will have the chance to live with several other participants and get to know a community different than my own. There are different ways to support me, whether through prayer, words of encouragement, or financial support. Participating in Service Adventure requires me to raise financial support so that the communities where we are serving do not have to fully support us with their own dollars. If you would like to offer financial support, you can find my fundraising page . If you would prefer to mail a check to MMN or to give through their website, please include Service Adventure and my name in the memo line (or where it asks if you are giving specifically for a participant). I know that many people from MCN have served (and continue to serve) close to home and abroad, and I grew up hearing about the impact that service has had on their lives and the lives of others. I am looking forward to having my own year full of new experiences and I know there will be challenges, growth and discovery. I would be happy to talk more about it with anyone personally in the coming months as I prepare for my upcoming service year. Thank you!

*From Ian*

## MCN Action Network

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A suggestion was made that the Mennonite Church of Normal needs to have a network of like-minded people concerned with freedom, peace, and justice who are ready and willing for political action. We are not powerless unless we don't act. We have started the Action-Network of the Mennonite Church of Normal. If you would like to join please contact Lydia ([church@normalmennonite.org](mailto:church@normalmennonite.org)) or me.

Several of us attended a protest on April 21st at Rep. LaHood's office in Uptown Normal where the focus was on disability rights and saving Medicaid. This was organized by Alliance for Community Services. See the photo above.

*Thanks, Phil, Chair, MCN Outreach Commission*

## Sharing Our Gifts



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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](mailto:church@normalmennonite.org). We're all eager to see how you are serving in your community!



## Overage Discussion

As was shared in the Annual Meeting and year-end financials, we ended 2024 with an excess of income over expenses of \$31,091. This current excess (Unrestricted Net Assets - Current on the Balance Sheet) is in addition to the accumulation of excess income over expenses from prior years (Unrestricted Net Assets - Prior Years on Balance Sheet). In 2018 a group called the Spending Plan Task Force was tasked with developing some policies around significant mid-year deficits as well as year-end overages, and as part of that made a recommendation for a formulaic approach to keeping a reasonable amount in that Unrestricted Net Assets line (funds that are in the checking/money market account but not allocated to any Balance Sheet accounts/funds/projects) from year to year, fluctuating with the level of the spending plan.

Given the growth of that line over the past 5 years, the Administration Commission is looking at what to do with that accumulation of approximately \$84,500 and looking for input from the congregation. For example, the last distribution of an overage (at the end of 2022) was allocated 10% to donations and 90% to Capital Improvement savings.

We have an aging building with numerous capital improvement needs. Some of our ideas include replacing leaking windows, repadding chairs, disability accommodations (recommendations forthcoming from the Safety, Access, and Accommodation subcommittee of the Administration Commission), and 10% donations. We have learned that in the last few years that our giving to Mennonite Church USA does NOT include Mennonite colleges or seminaries. We are open to the congregation's ideas.

After a period of two weeks of input **[ending April 23]**, AC will develop a recommendation to be shared with the congregation. Please reach out to Mary or anyone on the Administration Commission to share any ideas or thoughts on ways the money could be used. Your prayerful input is much appreciated!

*Shared by the Administration Commission*



## Birthdays & Anniversaries

CELEBRATING LIFE'S MOMENTS AT MCN





# Those Serving This Week



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## This Week at MGN



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A BRIEF LOOK AT THE CHURCH CALENDAR:

### **Wednesday, April 23**

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

**6:30 pm** Congregational Care Committee (Zoom)

### **Thursday, April 24**

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

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

**7:30 pm** Administration Commission (Zoom)

### **Friday, April 25**

Family Fun Night

### **Sunday, April 27**

### **Tuesday, April 29**

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

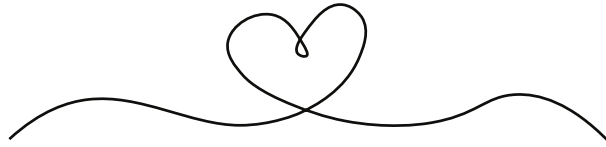
### **Wednesday, April 30**

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

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## 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.



## Protect clean energy tax credits

On April 10, Anabaptist Climate Collaborative and Mennonite Central Committee hosted a climate advocacy training virtually and in Washington, D.C., for 20 Mennonites from nine states. Following the training, the advocates met with the offices of 15 members of Congress with more meetings planned in districts over the next two weeks. The advocates urged Congress to protect clean energy tax incentives, such as direct pay for solar panels, and USDA tree planting grants in the budget reconciliation bill. Join this effort by sending an email to Congress [here!](#)

*Shared by Mennonite Church USA Climate Justice Corner*

## A Message from The Immigration Project

We have an important opportunity to advocate for our immigrant neighbors and ensure they have access to vital services through budget advocacy. Budget advocacy involves engaging with decision-makers to influence how public funds are allocated, assuring that our community's needs are not only recognized but also prioritized in the budget-making process. Here's what we are currently advocating for:

- **Raise funding for Immigrant Services Line Item and Illinois Access to Justice:** These initiatives would provide added protection to vulnerable Illinois residents who are losing resources and protection at the federal level.
- **Advocate for the Health Benefit for Immigrant Adults (HBIA) program:** The proposed budget eliminates this program, denying life-saving care for Illinois immigrants and straining our emergency health care system.
- **Expand the provisions of the Illinois TRUST Act and Safe Schools for All:** This would allow members of our Illinois community access to crucial public services, such as law enforcement and education, without fear of being accosted.

If you have a moment, please reach out to your legislators and help us express support for these vital initiatives. Your voice matters and can make a real difference in the lives of many. **See who to call [here](#) and a script of what to say [here](#).**

*From The Immigration Project*

## Short reprieve in Gaza

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*A family returns home, only to be forced out again. During a two-month cease-fire, MCC aid gets through.*

"A two-month cease-fire between Israel and Hamas, which ended March 18, paved the way for humanitarian aid into Gaza, including a Mennonite Central Committee shipment of food for 4,000 families, plus comforters and hygiene supplies. 'When I saw the comforter, I wanted to hold it in my arms and keep my children warm with it,' said Khayria, 60 years old, whose 11 children and 25 grandchildren are living with her in a bombed-out house. 'At night, your heart feels like it's going to stop because of the cold.'" **Read the rest of Linda Espenshade's article for Mennonite Central Committee published by the *Anabaptist World* [here](#).**

## As partners lose U.S. foreign aid, MCC provides additional funding

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*Agency can cover only a small fraction of 'devastating gap' in humanitarian assistance.*

"In response to sudden and great needs caused by cuts to U.S. foreign aid, Mennonite Central Committee is releasing \$765,356 above previous budgets for its partners around the world. It's a small fraction of the billions of dollars the U.S. government previously provided to nongovernmental organizations. While none of MCC's projects are directly impacted financially, many partners are greatly affected. 'The scale of this reduction, combined with sizable cuts in support from other governments, will leave a devastating gap in humanitarian funding,' said Mark Epp, MCC Canada senior director of international program. 'As a result, communities in need will face increasing hardships, and the long-term impact on their resilience and recovery will be felt for years to come... Thanks to our faithful donors, we're able to bridge a small part of the gap.' Epp said effective international development and relief relies on successful interaction between government, nonprofits and donors." **Read the rest of the Mennonite Central Committee article published by the *Anabaptist World* [here](#).**

## Fearfully, wonderfully made

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*My brother felt the 'shame' of his disability. The idea that some bodies are better than others is deadly.*

"I grew up in an Irish Catholic family with seven children, a typically large brood for that era. My oldest brother, Kevin, was born in 1955 with spina bifida, a severe spinal disorder. He was not expected to live more than a few years, but he did. As he grew older, Kevin lost the use of his underdeveloped legs. Initially, he used crutches and braces. After a spinal fusion surgery, he used a wheelchair. As an adult he got along quite well, with an apartment, a job, a car. Kevin never lived with us full-time. My parents found specialized institutions for him, and he came home for summers and holidays. I looked forward to his visits, but his relationships with the rest of the family were fragile. My mother cared deeply for Kevin, but she died early. My father and stepmother were, to put it generously, not very comfortable around him. My father was almost constantly irritated, impatient and on edge around Kevin." **Read the rest of Will O'Brien's article published by the *Anabaptist World* [here](#).**

# Policy Updates from the MCC US National Peace & Justice Ministries March E-Memo

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- **Refugee resettlement:** In [Pacito v. Trump](#), refugee resettlement agencies sued to restore the U.S. refugee admissions program. Following a favorable ruling, the Trump Administration was ordered to outline their plan to restore the program. In response, the administration terminated existing contracts and announced plans to move forward with a singular provider. More than 20,000 individuals considered “Ready for Departure” are stranded outside the U.S.
- **Alien Enemies Act:** In mid-March, the Trump Administration invoked the [Alien Enemies Act of 1789](#). The act was last invoked to justify the detention of people with Japanese, German, and Italian ancestry during World War II. The White House has used it to deport roughly 250 Venezuelans they claim to be associated with a gang, [despite a court order blocking the action](#).
- **Continuing resolution passes, averting government shutdown:** On March 14, the U.S. Senate passed a House-approved [continuing resolution](#). The bill largely continues government funding levels from the previous fiscal year with increases of roughly \$500 million for immigration enforcement, \$6 billion for defense, \$13 billion in cuts to a variety of non-defense programs, and a \$1 billion cut to the D.C. city budget. The funding ends on September 30.
- **West Bank:** Violence against Palestinians by the Israeli military and settlers has continued to increase, particularly home demolitions. [In the month of February](#), 156 Palestinian homes and other facilities were destroyed, with 93 more given demolition notices. More than 40,000 Palestinians from the North continue to be displaced from their [homes during Ramadan](#), one of the holiest months of the year for Muslims. **Take action [here](#).**
- **Gaza:** In an effort to pressure Hamas in negotiations, [Israel banned](#) the entry of food, medicine and fuel into Gaza on March 2. One week later, [the electricity supply was cut](#). In response to President Trump’s Gaza plan, [an alternative plan](#) proposed by Egypt has the support of all other Arab countries. Under the plan, Arab states would provide 52 billion USD for a Palestinian-led reconstruction. **Take action [here](#).**
- **Korean Peninsula:** The recently reintroduced [Peace on the Korea Peninsula Act \(H.R. 1841\)](#) could address growing tension in the region by taking steps toward a formal peace treaty between North Korea, South Korea and the US. **Take action [here](#).**

## Supporting Boys Coming of Age

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“Over the past year, parents have approached Mennonite Men about what we might offer for boys coming of age. Parents recognize that current activities—such as sports, clubs, and Scouts—are not the only ways to support their sons’ development. As an organization and through our JoinMen committee, we are considering how we can best serve parents, leaders, and boys who are maturing into adulthood. Are there particular Anabaptist approaches that can be modeled?” **Read the rest of Jon Zirkle’s blog post for Mennonite Men [here](#).**

## The free exercise of our faith

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In a Menno Snapshot for Mennonite Church USA, Michael Danner discusses the theological rationale for why Mennonite Church USA joined the lawsuit against the federal government. **Read the rest of Michael Danner's Menno Snapshot for Mennonite Church USA [here](#).**

## Journalist receives Order of Canada honor

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"Winnipeg-based journalist John Longhurst, a frequent contributor to *Anabaptist World*, has been named a member of the Order of Canada for his media contributions to Canada's interfaith dialogue. Longhurst, a former Mennonite Central Committee Canada communications coordinator, is a freelance columnist at the *Winnipeg Free Press*." **Read the rest of the *Anabaptist World's* article [here](#).**

## MCC reaches settlement with two former service workers

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"Mennonite Central Committee has reached a six-figure legal settlement with a couple who allege their employment as service workers in Burkina Faso was terminated without sufficient cause while they were on sick leave. The couple had raised concerns about workplace abuse." **Read the rest of the *Anabaptist World's* article [here](#).**

## MCC immigration staff in U.S. field urgent calls, questions

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As immigrants witness enforcement happening on the news and in the streets, with and without a warrant, calls to MCC's immigration staff have increased. Immigrants are asking MCC staff for ways to get documentation so they can stay in the country. **Find out how MCC's immigration staff, especially in California and Florida, are responding [here](#).**

## Women of the Archives

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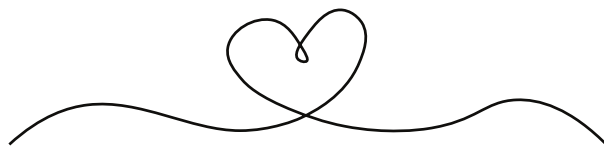
In a blog post for Mennonite Church USA's ongoing [Learn, Pray, Join: Undoing Patriarchy series](#), Olivia Krall shares how the stories of Mennonite women included in the Mennonite Church USA Archives have inspired her to push for a better future. **Read Olivia Krall's Menno Snapshot for Mennonite Church USA [here](#).**

## The criminalization of Palestine solidarity in Toronto

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Since 7 October 2023, Toronto police have arrested 105 people in connection with their Palestine solidarity activism. The Legal Support Committee provides assistance to those targeted. **Read CPT Turtle Island Solidarity Network's post [here](#).**

*Shared in the Community Peacemaker Teams (CPT) Weekly Newsletter*



## Staff Contact and Building Open Hours

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- Building Open:     **Standard Hours:**  
Monday-Friday 9AM-11AM & 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!



## 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!

# Commission Meeting Minutes

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## Commissions and Teams Contact List

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## Past Midweeks

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## Work Order & Purchase Request Forms

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## Commission, Team, & Committee Members

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## Item Check-Out Request Form

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## Structure Documents

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