

THE MIDWEEK



WORSHIP THIS SUNDAY 9:30 AM

This Sunday, Kevin Chupp will preach a sermon titled *Road May Flood* using Acts 6:1-7:2a, 44-60.

As Stephen faces accusations of blasphemy, he remains bold in the face of the authorities, perhaps knowing that he would eventually be martyred for his faith. What gives him such confidence? How can we muster some of that?

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



Senior Graduation Celebration

This Sunday, May 4th

Come and celebrate our lone graduating high school senior, Ian, with some punch and treats! This will happen between church and Sunday school on May 4th.

Allyship Training



Monday, May 5

Prairie Pride Coalition is offering Allyship Training for members of their Bloomington-Normal Area LGBTQIA+ Business & Resource Directory. [Of which MCN is a member!] This session, facilitated by Hannah, will include information on how to nurture a welcoming, inclusive environment in your business, office, house of worship, or establishment. Special attention will be given to techniques to de-escalate situations that might arise; these techniques will help you tactfully reinforce your support for the LGBTQIA+ community. **If you would like to attend, please email Lydia in the church office at church@normalmennonite.org by Thursday, May 1.**



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

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.



Cookies Needed

There will be a reception for family and friends following the memorial service for Alice Swift on May 8. Please contact Marge if you're willing to contribute cookies for this event. Thanks!

Shared by Marge

Facility Use Agreement



The Administration Commission has updated the Facility Use Agreement. If you would like to see the new form or request use of the church building, click [here](#). This will now be linked in the Useful Links section of at the bottom of each Midweek as well.

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



Green Team

Are you interested in environmental stewardship and justice? Would you consider joining a group of others at MCN who are talking about and doing things to care for creation? Last month we had Aiden Meyer join us at MCN from [Faith in Place](#), an organization that equips and connects such "green teams" and offers times for us to join together across faith traditions and learn from each others' efforts. Whether you would like to show up for such conversations and actions regularly, or even just occasionally, please let Pastor Kevin know (kevin@normalmennonite.org)!

Picture Directory Update



Many have asked when we will be receiving our new church directory. Indeed, we have waited a long time. Part of that waiting process was to allow the company to book sittings with area churches so we could offer more times to our congregants that missed our time slots last September.

If you haven't gotten your church directory photos taken yet - you are an important part of our church family and our directory wouldn't be complete without you! When participating in a session, you will receive a complimentary 8x10 portrait as well as an updated church directory. The process will only take about 30-45 minutes and you will have the opportunity to purchase family portraits.

You can schedule your appointment by contacting the church office (309-452-6622 or church@normalmennonite.org). Thank you for your commitment to the church, we appreciate all that you do to support and be a part of our church community! We hope to schedule more families for photos and submit our information for a proof the last week of June. Then we should receive our directories in August. Thank you for your patience!

Vision Team Nominations



Shelly's term as Vision Team Chair ends on December 31, 2025. She will be stepping down from the Vision Team at that time. Members of the congregation need to nominate a chair-elect (see [Ministry Description Summary](#)) now who will join Vision Team in June, moving into the position of chair on January 1, 2026. This new member will join Shelly for the remainder of her term, Shannon, Ben, and Helen on the Team. The Spiritual Gifts Discernment Team (SGDT) is responsible for organizing the nomination and election processes for filling this position.

The process:

- Apr. 27–May 7 Nominations for Vision Team chair-elect are submitted.
 - May 8 SGDT prepares a slate of candidates including the names of the 5 people who received the most nominations. *
 - May 11 Election slate announced.
- May 11–14 Ballots are submitted. (Paper ballots and online voting available.)
 - May 15 SGDT reviews the ballots. The person receiving the most votes is contacted and invited to prayerfully discern this call. If that person declines, If that person does not feel called to this role at this time, SGDT will discern who to call next.

*One may not request that their name be removed from the slate. We want the Spirit to speak through the congregation in this process. You may not want to serve, but if the congregation calls you, we want you to prayerfully consider it. And if at that point it still does not coincide with your sense of call, it is appropriate to decline.

Shared by the Spiritual Gifts Discernment Team



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 15th [extended deadline!]** and can be found at this [link](#). You can find a more detailed description of the scholarship [here](#).

Shared by the Discipling Commission



A Note from MDS IL

The MDS IL unit provided assistance to four homeowners in Centralia and did some clean up and mucking out with the help of volunteers from the central Illinois area. In one of those homes we will be returning to do some rebuild. We have been asked to assist others in Salem, Illinois who have not received any help with muck out or clean up. Day or two day volunteers are needed to help with the work that needs to be done. We could also use someone to assist in coordination of the work and volunteers. If you are interested please contact me through this email or by phone. Thank you.

Lamar Miller, MDS Illinois Unit Chair, ilmdsunit@gmail.com

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 input **[extended deadline of May 6!]**, 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



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



Birthdays & Anniversaries

CELEBRATING LIFE'S MOMENTS AT MCN



This Week at MCN



A BRIEF LOOK AT THE CHURCH CALENDAR:

Wednesday, April 30

9:30 am Wednesday Morning Book Group

Thursday, May 1

7:00 am Next Man Bible Study

9:30 am Women's Bible Study

Sunday, May 4

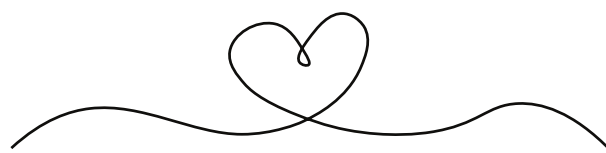
Tuesday, May 6

3:00 pm Pastoral Team (Zoom)

6:00 pm Midwest Food Bank Volunteering

Wednesday, May 7

9:30 am Wednesday Morning Book Group



Collective punishment

On March 5, Israeli occupation forces raided the home of martyr Mohammed Misk, who was killed by Israeli forces on October 1, 2024, after carrying out an operation in the occupied territories in 1948. As part of the collective punishment policy imposed on the Palestinian people, the occupation forces demolished the family's home where he had lived. **Read more in CPT Palestine and CPT Team's Instagram post [here](#).**

Shared by Community Peacemaker Teams (CPT)

Queer Theology Sunday School

May 11th at 5:30pm Central Time

Join Community of Hope Mennonite Church for another Queer Theology Sunday School on Sunday May 11th at 5:30pm Central Time. The theme is "A Queer Approach to Scripture and Art: Parable of the Talents and the Creative Process" and will be led by Michelle Burkholder (they|them), a queer/non-binary/trans artist and pastor currently serving as Associate Pastor at Hyattsville Mennonite Church in Maryland. **Learn more and register [here](#).** Artists Claes Oldenburg & Coosje van Bruggen make sculptures that often depict everyday items made larger than life. Scripture is full of stories that are also larger than life. In this gathering we'll explore the Parable of the Talents, as recorded in Matthew 21, through the lens of Oldenburg and Van Bruggen's artwork to discover how scripture and art in relationship can invite us into unique and expansive experiences of each. We'll also consider how the pairing may encourage each of us to join in enlarging life space, for ourselves and others, by creatively living our own unique and expansive selves into the world.

Shared by the Brethren Mennonite Council for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Interests (BMC)

Read the full Spring 2025 Newsletter [here](#)

Here Together: A Queer Healing Retreat On Land

Friday, May 16, 5:00 PM - Sunday, May 18, 2:00 PM

Here Together: A Queer Healing Retreat on Land invites connection to self, to land/nature, to some seeds of healing and simple tools to keep watering them, to a deeper sense of belonging to queer community and to the wider web of non-human community that sustains us all. **Find details and registration [here](#).** [Registration will close **May 1** at midnight EST.] This retreat in Michigan is hosted by a BMC collaborator, Nicole Bauman, who served as facilitator for the [repair ritual](#) between BMC and Camp Friedenswald. This work of organizational repair is in part what enables the choice to hold this queer retreat at Camp Friedenswald – one of the ways that reparative justice “ripples out.”

Shared by the Brethren Mennonite Council for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Interests (BMC)

Read the full Spring 2025 Newsletter [here](#)

AMBS Hymn Sing

Tuesday, June 3, 7–8:30 p.m. ET in Elkhart, Indiana

Join the Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) to celebrate the 60th anniversary of AMBS’s Chapel of the Sermon on the Mount! The event will include songs sung at the chapel dedication on June 3, 1965; songs marking the 500th anniversary of Anabaptism; songs composed by AMBS alumni; and other favorites — accompanied by organ, piano and other instruments. All are invited to join in raising the rafters with our praise!

Sustainability Intern at Camp Friedenswald

Camp Friedenswald is seeking a candidate to serve as Sustainability Intern beginning August/September 2025 (beginning date is flexible). The Sustainability Intern will aid in implementing organizational goals related to environmental and sustainability education, energy use, waste practices, biodiversity, and social justice issues. Specific duties will include teaching outdoor education classes, helping with land stewardship at Camp, monitoring Camp compost, and tracking metrics related to goals mentioned above. Benefits include free housing/utilities/WiFi, a monthly stipend, a flexible work schedule, food when the Dining Hall is open and access to leftovers, and the opportunity to be a part of a fabulous team working to create resilient and sustainable change in the beautiful setting of the Peaceful Woods. **Read the full job description and how to apply [here](#).**

Rest in motherhood

In a blog post part of Mennonite Church USA’s ongoing [Learn, Pray, Join: Undoing Patriarchy series](#), Leah Hoffner shares her experience of choosing to step away from the career she built to rest and live a slower life after becoming a mother. **Read Leah Hoffner’s Menno Snapshot for Mennonite Church USA [here](#).**

MMN 2025 Anti-Racism Grant Recipients

Mennonite Mission Network offers an [Anti-Racism Grant](#) for individuals and organizations managed by Asian, Black, Hispanic, Indigenous or other People of Color groups who are engaged in peacebuilding, social justice and anti-racism efforts. These four organizations were selected from the 95 applicants to receive the funding they requested:

- [Back to Basics Community Empowerment](#) (Los Angeles, California)
- [Roots of Justice](#) (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania)
- [Mary's House for Older Adults](#) (Washington, D.C.)
- [Women of Color on the Move](#) (Sacramento, California)

Learn more about these organizations and the grants in Jane Morrow's article for Mennonite Mission Network [here](#).

ADN Job Openings

- Anabaptist Disabilities Network (ADN) is seeking a Communications Director. The Communications Director leads the public communications activities of Anabaptist Disabilities Network, including primary responsibility for all print and electronic communications. This is a half-time, salaried position. Please see the Communications Director position listing on their website [here](#) for more information.
- ADN is seeking a Project Director for All In. All In: Immersive Worship for Everybody is a five-year project funded by the Lilly Endowment's Nurturing Children Through Worship and Prayer Initiative. It is a cooperative learning project with congregations to create accessible, intergenerational worship that engages children with disabilities. The All In Project Director will direct and coordinate the project, including education, support and resources. They will oversee the project budget, communications, and plans for sustainability. Please see the Project Director position listing on their website [here](#) for more information.

In memoriam : pape François (1936-2025)

La Conférence Mennonite Mondiale se joint aux catholiques et à toutes les autres communautés de foi de par le monde, qui sont endeuillées par la mort du pape François, ce 21 avril 2025, à l'âge de 88 ans. Il était alors en convalescence dans sa résidence Domus Sanctae Marthae après avoir été hospitalisé pour une pneumonie bilatérale. « Nous voulons nous souvenir de la vie du pape François avec gratitude », dit Cesar Garcia, secrétaire général de la CMM. « Nous voulons nous souvenir de la façon dont, par l'exemple de sa vie et par ses enseignements, il a mis en lumière des grands thèmes portés aussi par notre communauté anabaptiste : l'imitation du Christ dans son approche du pouvoir ; sa compréhension du leadership comme un service à rendre ; son engagement pour la paix ; son attention particulière pour les marginalisés, les pauvres et les migrants ; son intérêt pour l'unité de l'Eglise, comme il l'a montré dans ses relations avec les autres communautés chrétiennes et sa pratique de la synodalité ; son respect pour les différentes façons de croire ; et son attention pour la Création. Ces efforts, parmi d'autres, l'ont rendu cher pour beaucoup de frères et sœurs, tout au long de son ministère. » [En savoir plus ici.](#)

In memoriam: Pope Francis (1936–2025)

Mennonite World Conference joins Catholics and other faith communities across the world in mourning the loss of Pope Francis, who died on 21 April 2025, at the age of 88. He had been recovering at his residence Domus Sanctae Marthae after hospitalization for bilateral pneumonia. "With gratitude, we remember the life of Pope Francis," says César García, MWC general secretary. "We reflect on how, through his life and teachings, he highlighted important issues for our Anabaptist communion: the imitation of Christ in his approach to power; his understanding of leadership as service; his commitment to peace; his focus on marginalized individuals, the poor, and immigrants; his concern for church unity as demonstrated in his relationships with other Christian communions and the practice of synodality; his respect for different faiths; and his care for God's creation. These efforts, among others, endeared him to many of our brothers and sisters throughout his years of ministry." [Read more here.](#)

Climate Justice Corner

While Earth Day was last week, anytime is a great time to study Creation Justice Ministries' new resource, [The Power of God: From Extractive Theology to Transformative Faith](#). What we believe about the power of God changes how we adjust our thermostats, fuel up our cars, commute to work, carry out our jobs, engage in politics, advocate for legislation, shop for home goods, and plug or unplug our toaster. Gather a group to discover how God's power might reshape our theology, reform our practices and renew our commitment to the work of creation justice.

Shared by Karla Stoltzfus Detweiler, Mennonite Church USA Climate Justice Coordinator

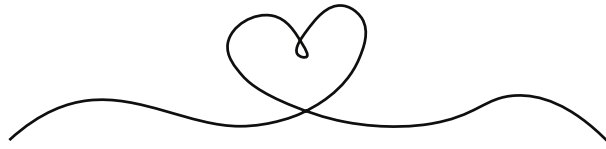
Recent articles from the MCC US National Peace & Justice Ministries April E-Memo

- **Short reprieve in Gaza:** A family returns home, only to be forced out again. During a two-month cease-fire, MCC aid gets through. [Read more.](#)
- **Faith communities setting courageous example:** Religious leaders are showing up in Washington, in state capitals and in small towns, insisting that they will not bend to an agenda that degrades our society and harms our people. [Read more.](#)
- **Judge won't block immigration enforcement in places of worship:** A federal judge declined a request on April 11 to block immigration agents from conducting enforcement operations at places of worship while a lawsuit filed by religious groups works its way through the court system. [Read more.](#)
- **Repeating one of the darkest chapters in U.S. history:** Kimiko Hirota, Policy Director for Church World Service (an MCC collaboration partner) writes about the Trump administration's use of the Alien Enemies Act in The Hill. [Read more.](#)

Shared by Mennonite Central Committee U.S. National Peace & Justice Ministries. Read the full April E-Memo [here.](#)

Elders honored at MC USA's 12th annual Hope for the Future celebration

"Mennonite Church USA honored seven community elders during a gala at its [12th Hope for the Future Conference](#), Feb. 28-Mar. 2 2025, in Goshen, Indiana. The elders were highlighted during a slide tribute and presented with an oil lamp to thank them for lighting the way forward. Each honoree shared a few words of encouragement for the attendees, either in person, via a videotaped message or through a message read by an attending family member. The honored elders are: Lupe DeLeon, Jr., Seferina G. De Leon, Harley Eagle, James Logan, Thulani Conrad Moore, Maati Yvonne, and Suzette Shreffler or Ámé'há'e." **Read the rest of Mennonite Church USA's article [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

Items for the Midweek



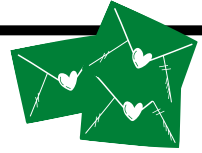
Please send items to be included in the Midweek to the [Church Office](#) no later than **8am on Wednesday**. Thank you!

Facility Use Agreement

Commissions and Teams Contact List

Our Members in Care Facilities

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



Work Order & Purchase Request Forms

Past Midweeks

Commission, Team, & Committee Members

Commission Meeting Minutes

Item Check-Out Request Form

Structure Documents
