

THE MIDWEEK



WORSHIP THIS SUNDAY 9:30 AM

This Sunday, Kevin Chupp will preach a sermon titled *Fatal* using Acts 8:26-39.

In the story of the Ethiopian eunuch and Philip, the road is the setting for transformation. What is it about being away from routine and experiencing in-between places that opens us up to change? How do we bring ourselves to those places?

After Worship

Adult CE

Room 8

Children & Youth CE

Pre-K-K Grades

1st-5th Grades

Jr High School

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

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

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

The Wonderful World of Backyard Birds



May 18 at 5 PM at the MRC Community building

Wayne will offer a presentation entitled "The Wonderful World of Backyard Birds." Wayne writes "I will talk about my fascination with birds, how I got started watching them, what I experience and learn from them, how they ground me, and you will see photos of birds in McLean County which I have taken. You will see that they are beautiful, and varied, and so unique." There will be an opportunity for questions.

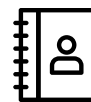
Sponsored by the Community Life Commission

Quilt Project



Wednesdays from 1-4 pm at the church

A quilt project is starting to make quilts for Home Sweet Home Ministries. They will meet every week on Wednesday from 1 to 4 pm. Contact Gerry or Ruth for more information.



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. 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!

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.

"Last call" for 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.

Please send your nominations for a chair-elect for the Vision Team today to Janet, chair of the SGDT. **Deadline: Midnight tonight!**

Oppose the Fragmentation and Defunding of Older Americans Act Programs

Last Sunday, Laura shared serious concern for the possible "Fragmentation and Defunding of the Older Americans Act Program" in the FY 2026 federal budget. The budget proposes to zero out critical aging programs (including Long Term Care Ombudsman and elder justice programs like Adult Protective Services) that support older adults' health, safety, and independence." Here are ways you can respond.

Shared by the Congregational Care Committee

Advocacy Breakfast Collaborative (Virtual) May 12, 2025 9 AM - 10:30 AM on Zoom

We invite elected officials, aging network providers, local partners, & concerned citizens to a community discussion about current issues facing Illinois older adults, caregivers, & families. Register [here](#).

Oppose the Fragmentation and Defunding of Older Americans Act Programs

The Trump Administration's leaked FY 2026 budget shows a deeply troubling plan to tear apart the Older Americans Act (OAA)—a 60-year-old, unified system of support for older adults and caregivers—and split its programs across two different federal agencies. Instead of maintaining the OAA's coordinated delivery model, the Administration plans to:

- Move nutrition programs to the Administration for Children and Families (ACF),
- Move the rest of the OAA programs—like in-home care, transportation, caregiver respite, and elder justice—to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), a large agency ill-suited to these community-based services.

At the same time, the budget proposes to zero out critical aging programs (including Long-Term-Care Ombudsman and elder justice programs like Adult Protective Services) that support older adults' health, safety, and independence. This is not efficiency—it's dismantling. We must speak up NOW to stop this plan. Tell Congress to keep OAA programs together and fully funded. Take Action [here](#) with AgeGuide Northeastern Illinois.



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



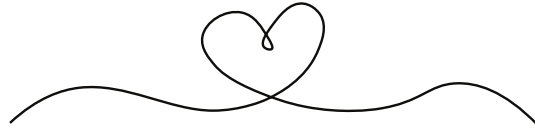
Adult CE

The Adult Christian Education class will meet in the Junior High classroom for the remainder of June.



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)!



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, May 7

9:30 am Wednesday Morning Book Group

1:00 pm Quilt Project for Home Sweet Home

Thursday, May 8

7:00 am Next Man Bible Study

3:00 pm Alice Swift Celebration of Life

7:30 pm Administration Commission (Zoom)

Sunday, May 11

Monday, May 12

5:00 pm Outreach Commission

Tuesday, May 13

3:00 pm Pastoral Team (Zoom)

Wednesday, May 14

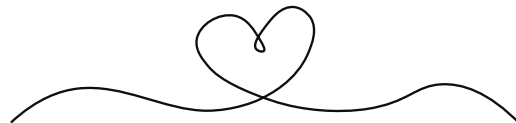
9:30 am Wednesday Morning Book Group

7:30 pm Vision Team (Zoom)

1:00 pm Quilt Project for Home Sweet Home



Those Serving This Week



Healing happens

In a blog post for Mennonite Church USA's ongoing [Learn, Pray, Join: Undoing Patriarchy series](#), Jeanne Zimmerly Jantzi shares her experience healing from the patriarchal abuses she experienced in her life and work. **Read Jeanne Zimmerly Jantzi's Menno Snapshot for Mennonite Church USA [here](#).**

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](#)

Service of apology with John Linscheid

Sunday, May 11th at 4pm Central Time at Peace Mennonite Church

With John Linscheid, Brethren Mennonite Council for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Interests (BMC) wishes to make our community aware of a Service of Repentance and Restoration to be held between John and Western District Conference (WDC) on May 11th in person and online. John had been Licensed Toward Ordination in WDC after beginning a pastorate Lawrence Mennonite Fellowship (now Peace Mennonite Church) in 1980. However, in 1984 after learning that John was gay, the WDC Ministerial Committee rescinded his ministerial credential and John stepped down from his role as pastor in discernment with his congregation, which was being subsidized by WDC. John plans to accept an official apology and receive an honorary ministerial credential from WDC. John will also offer remarks at the service, speaking to the wider church context and impacts harm in 1984. WDC's [announcement](#) includes their steps that led to this service of apology. The service will take place on Sunday, May 11th at 4pm Central Time at Peace Mennonite Church, 615 Lincoln Street, in Lawrence, KS. To watch via Zoom contact the WDC office at wdc@mennowdc.org to receive the zoom link. It is worth noting that while his formal credentials were stopped, John's ministry did not stop in 1984. In the decades since, John went on to continue fruitful and impactful religious leadership. Both John and his late beloved partner Ken White were active BMC leaders, spiritual teachers, and conveners of queer community. They played a key role in their local Germantown Mennonite Church's journey to affirm and bless LGBTQ people. A repository of some of John's sermons, talks, articles, and other writing can be found on [BMC's website](#). As recently reflected in our [article about BMC's repair work with Camp Friedenswald](#), one apology or reparative process "does not absolve all the harm done to LGBTQ+ people or the church's moral injury." Yet it may be one fractal of healing, not only for queer and trans folks, but for the well-being of the entire church.

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

An Evening with Ruth Anne King: Storytelling & Concert

Thursday, May 15, 6:30 pm

Prairie Pride Coalition, Not In Our Town, and other sponsors (see flyer [here](#)) would like to share a special invitation to join them Thursday, May 15, 6:30 pm at the Bloomington Public Library for "An Evening with Ruth Anne King." Author and musician, Ruth Anne King inspires resilience and hope, weaving stories and music based on her memoir — "RUTH: When I was thirty-five years old, I became Black". Ruth shares how she finds self-acceptance, healing and an evolving sense of self-identity as a biracial Black lesbian navigating the complexities of race and family relationships. Born in 1959 to a White mother and an absent Black father, and raised in her early youth by white supremacist grandparents, Ruth will share through her music and story how she cultivates resilience, compassion and the ability to see the humanity in everyone. Ruth will have her book and CDs for sale at the event. If you wish to read her book in advance, Ruth's book is available through May 15th online via Bobzbay bookstore [here](#). **More information is available on the Facebook event link [here](#).**

Party with a Purpose

June 12 from 5-7 pm at Dublin Pub (1975 Wabash Ave, Springfield, IL)

The Immigration Project's Party with a Purpose is Here! Don't miss this exciting evening of connection, conversation and community action at the Dublin Pub on June 12th, 2025 to raise a glass for immigrant justice and support the critical legal and social services we provide across downstate Illinois. In a year when immigration is in the headlines, your support and presence matter more than ever. By joining us, you'll support vital immigration services while enjoying great company and conversation. You'll meet others who care about justice, learn more about how you can get involved, and help ensure immigrants in our community receive the support they need. Let's raise a glass and raise awareness - together. Reserve your Spot Today - Space is Limited! Don't miss this opportunity to connect, engage and support immigrant justice. RSVP now to secure your place at Party with a Purpose. **Register [here](#).**

Shared by The Immigration Project

MCC "Week of service" peacebuilding camp in Mexico

July 27 to August 2, 2025

Join Mennonite Central Committee Mexico for a *Week of service: Summer camp for peacebuilding with kids*. Be part of a unique service experience with children and learn about the Rarámuri, Mestizo, and Mennonite communities in the City of Three Cultures.

- **Where:** Cuauhtémoc, Mexico
- **Who:** Young adults 18-30 years old (intermediate Spanish skills required)
- **When:** July 27 to August 2, 2025
- **Cost:** MCC covers local expenses; participants cover travel to Chihuahua, Mexico.
- **How:** Register [here](#) by May 15!

For more information about the camp, contact: Gyna Romero, coordinator of projects, relations, and exchange program, MCC Mexico, at gynaromerocamacho@mcc.org.

Why Oak Flat Matters: A Mennonite Reflection on Sacred Land

"In February I spent a week doing prayerful accompaniment at Oak Flat (Chi'Chil Bildagoteel) in Arizona, sacred land of the Western Apache. Sarah Augustine and the Coalition to Dismantle the Doctrine of Discovery encouraged Mennonite Men to pursue training to accompany Apache Stronghold as they advocate for the protection of Oak Flat and their religious freedom. I did the training and have served on the accompaniment team. This February I joined a Mennonite teammate at Oak Flat for daily prayer walks, camping on the land, communicating with and supporting Apache Stronghold, and experiencing God's creation firsthand. Each time I've gone to Oak Flat has been transformative. For a Midwesterner it has taken multiple days, multiple visits, and learning from the Apaches to get acclimated and begin to realize just how full of life this sacred land truly is. Even without verbal explanations, simply being at Oak Flat inspires gratitude, reverence, and prayer. That said, if Apache Stronghold had not shared history and background with me, I would not even begin to understand the depth of its sacredness." **Read the rest of Jon Zirkle's article for Mennonite Men [here](#).**

Federal cuts impact Washington congregations

"The termination notice arrived on Presidents' Day. Paris Rossiter had worked at the Federal Emergency Management Agency for a year and a half and had taken on a new role as a civil rights analyst about six months ago. That started a 12-month probationary period, making him subject to sweeping and indiscriminate cuts in the name of government efficiency by the Trump administration. With more cuts expected, congregations in the Washington, D.C., area are facing collective angst and grasping for hope. Church members who work in government or government-adjacent roles to support marginalized populations worry they could be next — regardless of how long they have been in their position — and are now working to support each other as well." **Read the rest of Tim Huber's article published by the *Anabaptist World* [here](#).**

The wild feminine voice

In a blog post for Mennonite Church USA in preparation for the 2025 Mennonite Church USA convention ([Follow Jesus '25](#)) and the [Women's Summit](#) that precedes convention, Chris Hoover reflects on the divine feminine voice and how it seems to be missing from the world today. **Read Chris Hoover's Menno Snapshot for Mennonite Church USA [here](#).**

Right to Education

Students have the right to education all over the world, but in Palestine the situation is different. For the past week, the occupation has been preventing students and teachers in areas near the Ibrahimi Mosque, particularly at the Ibrahimiyyah School, from passing through the Qatun checkpoint to reach their school. **Read more in CPT Palestine's Instagram post [here](#).**

Shared in the Community Peacemaker Teams (CPT) Weekly Newsletter

Uncertainty in fears calls us to compassion

Abby Endashaw shares how our uncertainty because of the many fears we face today can be quelled by offering ourselves compassion, as an access point to God. **Read Abby Endashaw's Menno Snapshot for Mennonite Church USA [here](#).**

I've learned to be swifter to speak

"Let everyone be swift to hear and slow to speak, James tells us. But my inclination when a difficult conversation arises is not to speak at all. I've had to learn to be swifter, not slower, to speak. Too often I've left unsaid words I should have said — friendly words, words of welcome, words of advocacy. Mom gave me my first lesson in communication when I was in sixth grade. She could tell something was bothering me and took me into the bathroom — a private place in our large family. She sat on the toilet; I perched on the tub. 'What's bothering you?' she asked. 'It's good to talk about your feelings. Dad is the one who taught me to talk about my feelings more.'" **Read the rest of Lucinda J. Kinsinger's article for the *Anabaptist World* [here](#).**

A radical love: A student's reflections on Hope for the Future 2025

In a blog post published by Mennonite Church USA, Eliza Alemán reflects on her experience at the Hope for the Future conference and the love and comfort she felt while there. **Read her blog post [here](#).**

Staff Updates from the MCC US National Peace & Justice Ministries April E-Memo

- **MC USA visits DC:** On April 3, Galen accompanied Mennonite Church USA leaders Iris de León-Hartshorn and Jon Carlson to meetings on Capitol Hill to lobby for passage of the Protecting Sensitive Locations Act. Iris later spoke at a vigil on the eve of the first hearing in the lawsuit MCUSA v. DHS which seeks to limit the ability of ICE enforcement in churches.
- **Anabaptists advocate for clean energy and trees:** On April 10, Anabaptist Climate Collaborative and MCC hosted a climate advocacy training virtually and in Washington, D.C., for 20 Mennonites from nine states. Participants advocated in 15 congressional offices to protect clean energy tax incentives, such as direct pay for solar panels and [USDA tree planting grants](#). Join this effort by [sending an email to Congress](#)!
- **"Stones cry out" Peace Camp:** The "Stones Cry Out" Peace Camp was held in Akron, Pennsylvania, March 10-15, engaging topics of climate change, immigration and advocacy. The week included Wild Church sessions, a day on the Hill, and a song-writing session during which we collectively wrote the lyrics: Fueled by curiosity, Plant the seeds of empathy, When the "I" becomes the "we," The earth can breathe free.

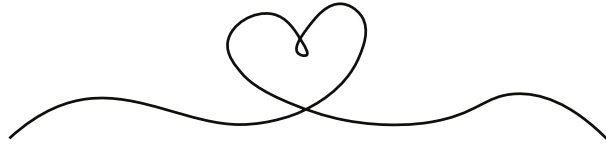
Shared by Mennonite Central Committee U.S. National Peace & Justice Ministries. Read the full April E-Memo [here](#).

Supportive Communities Network Updates

- New SCN Member: Welcome to Hebron Mennonite Church in Hagerstown, MD who joined SCN in March!
- Spring Training: Forty Brethren and Mennonite leaders gathered on March 25 for an SCN training on Harnessing Our Power to End Political Violence. We workshopped 5 strategies to counter lgbtqia+ violence within an intersectional framework. A 1-pager on the 5 strategies can be found [here](#). Thanks to SCN member On Earth Peace for co-hosting this training!

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

Read the full Spring 2025 Newsletter [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



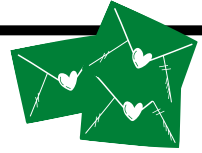
Please send items to be included in the Midweek to the [Church Office](#) no later than **8am on Wednesday**. Thank you!

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
