

THE MIDWEEK



**WORSHIP WILL BE AT 10 AM AT MENNO
HAVEN CAMP & RETREAT CENTER
FOLLOWED BY LUNCH, FUN, AND
FELLOWSHIP!**

There will be no worship at 805 S Cottage
this Sunday.

Elizabeth Miller will preach a sermon titled
Bearing witness in global Anabaptist stories using
Deuteronomy 15:7-15 & Matthew 5:13-16.

Jesus told his followers, "You are the light of the
world," expecting that their witness to the way of
Christ would be visible to others. Today we will
reflect on some stories from the global
Anabaptist communion that can help us see
Anabaptist witness from new angles, even as
those stories can serve to strengthen our own
witness.

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



Menno Haven Sunday

This Sunday, August 10th

MCN is gathering for a worship service at [Menno Haven](#) on August 10th at 10 am. There will be no worship at 805 S Cottage on August 10th.

From the Community Life Commission

Elizabeth Miller



Elizabeth Miller will be preaching the sermon this Sunday. Elizabeth is the Director of the Institute for the Study of Global Anabaptism & Assistant Professor of History at Goshen College. Her academic training includes a BA in history from Goshen College and an MA in theological studies from Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary. Most recently, Elizabeth and her husband, Neil Richer, completed a five-year term with Mennonite Central Committee as program directors for Colombia-Ecuador. During a previous term of service with MCC in Colombia, Miller researched the history of the Colombian Anabaptist-Mennonite churches. She recently published her book *Desde el Principio Anabautistas: La Historia de las Iglesias Menonitas y Hermanos Menonitas en Colombia, 1946-1975* (MCC / Editorial Gente Nueva, 2022).



Congregational and Pastoral Team Review

Deadline: Wednesday, August 13

Based We need your voice! Please participate in Mennonite Church of Normal's Congregational and Pastoral Review, a crucial process to support the functioning of our church. The first step is the google form evaluation survey linked below. Information gleaned from this will help to inform the 2nd stage: guided listening/storytelling group sessions, which will take place during the CE hour on August 31 (and another date yet to be determined).

Please complete the evaluation survey linked [here](#) by Wednesday, August 13.

There will also be paper versions of the evaluations available to complete in the church office. Our process this year is drawn from MC USA's process outlined in the document entitled: "[Pastoral/Congregational Review: The Appreciative Way](#)." Our pastor team to be reviewed includes Kevin Chupp and Lauren Satchwell. As this will be Kevin Chupp's 3rd annual evaluation, this process will be followed by a recommendation and congregational vote on whether Kevin will be called to serve another term. Your voice matters! Thank you in advance for your participation. If you have any questions, you can reach out to a member of the Vision Team (Shelly, chair; Helen, Shannon, Ben).

Shared by the Vision Team



Sunday, August 17

Recently it was announced that Lynette Miller will be stepping down from her interim role with the Pastoral Team on August 17th. Lynette was called to join a newly forming interim pastoral team in the fall of 2021. Through these years, Lynette has been an invaluable member of the Pastoral Team, consistently demonstrating her ability to listen to the Holy Spirit, work through the structural setup with the Discipling and Community Life Commissions, take copious notes for the Pastoral Team, and obviously so much more. Lynette plans to remain an active member of MCN, this change allowing her more time for endeavors by which she's been called. She plans to continue leading the Women's Bible Study as well as teach Sunday school this fall. We plan to honor her work during our worship service on August 17th. The Vision Team invites you to share your affirmations of Lynette's ministry, they can be sent to Shelly.

Shared by the Vision Team



Ismael Released

Thank you to all who sang "Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying" in solidarity of Ismael, a member of First Mennonite Church of San Francisco. By the grace of God, Ismael has been released from detention. Mennonite Action Network noted that the church "exercised all the right skills to quickly facilitate Ismael's release." Mennonite Action Network will be launching a weekly September online training for churches to acquire those skills. MCN Outreach Commission is supporting this activity.

From Lynn and the Outreach Commission

MCC School Kits



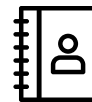
We continue to collect school supplies for Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) this Sunday. There is a table for drop off. **Please pay attention to the type of supplies required, MCC wants special items.**

The list is as follows:

- 4 Spiral notebooks. 8.5 X10.5. 70 sheets in each notebook
- 8 new unsharpened pencils
- 12 colored pencils in a box
- 1 large eraser
- 4 new black or blue ballpoint pens, not with separate lids
- 1 ruler, flexible, with 30cm.

If you have a problem finding rulers or pencil sharpeners we can order online. We need people to sew bags. We are glad to provide the fabric. Contact Louise. If you do not want to shop and prefer to donate money, we can order for you. Lets get this project going, but we need your help!!!! Contact Louise with any questions.

From Louise



We are working on finalizing the picture directory we had photography for last Fall. One of the last steps is to send in an up-to-date roster to publish at the back of the picture directory, and we need everyone's help with that.

At the back of the sanctuary, you will find a copy of the most recent roster the office has. **Please take a couple of minutes to review your entry for accuracy.** If there are any corrections, please send them to church@normalmennonite.org or write the correction into the copy in the building. If you are reviewing the copy in the building, please place a check mark next to your listing if everything is correct.

Now is also the time to request your information remain out of the photo directory if you wish. Please email the office at church@normalmennonite.org if this is the case. Thank you all for your help making this a complete and accurate directory!

From the Church Office

Summer Sermon Series



ANABAPTISM
at FIVE HUNDRED

In light of the celebration of 500 years of Anabaptism, we will spend this Summer together in worship reflecting on some of the central convictions that have guided Anabaptists through the centuries with an eye toward how we have changed and what might be next. Here is the outline of where we are going:

- July 20-August 3: Community
- August 10-24: Simplicity
- August 31: Hope

If you would like more information, you can find a more detailed outline [here](#).



Birthdays & Anniversaries

CELEBRATING LIFE'S MOMENTS AT MCN



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.



This Week at MCN



A BRIEF LOOK AT THE CHURCH CALENDAR:

Wednesday, August 6

1:00 pm Quilt Project for Home Sweet Home Ministries

Thursday, August 7

7:00 am Next Man Bible Study

7:30 pm Discipling Commission (Zoom)

Friday, August 8

10:00 am Hands All Around Quilt Guild Stash Sale

Sunday, August 10

10:00 am Worship at Menno Haven (no worship at 805 S Cottage)

Monday, August 11

5:00 pm Outreach Commission

Tuesday, August 12

3:00 pm Pastoral Team (Zoom)

Wednesday, August 13

1:00 pm Quilt Project for Home Sweet Home Ministries

6:00 pm Administration Commission



TRANS KIDS TODAY: BOOK TALK AND SIGNING WITH AUTHOR NICO LANG

Wednesday, August 27

★ 2:30-4PM: CAMPUS EVENT
Center for Visual Arts, Room 149
Illinois State University
468 W. Beaufort St., Normal IL 61761

★ 6:30-8PM: COMMUNITY EVENT
Community Room 1
Bloomington Public Library
205 E. Olive St., Bloomington, IL

These events are sponsored by:

Is it communion or just sparkling cannibalism?

The God who sees and saves is not daunted by my smallness and doubt.

"I love precision of language. I love sharing with others how their language could be more precise. (Others do not love when I share how their language could be more precise.) As a lover of precise language, I'm aware that 'if it's not from the Champagne region of France, it's not actually champagne; it's just sparkling wine.' That's not just a fun fact, but a format that nerds use to frame jokes. Maybe not jokes, but humorous criticism. One such criticism that uses this format is, 'If you don't actually care about the wellbeing of all Americans, it's not actually patriotism; it's just sparkling nationalism.' I recently came across one of these humorous criticisms that made me stop and think: 'If it's not a full meal freely offered to the poor, then it's not communion; it's just sparkling cannibalism.' It's a joke. But is it right? Are there conditions that would make communion simply 'sparkling cannibalism'? Is there a wrong way to receive communion?" **Read the rest of AJ Delgadillo's article for the *Anabaptist World* [here](#).**

Calling all young artists and writers

Anabaptist World is excited to announce the launch of *A Dangerous Faith*, an online and printed zine for youth and young adults with content written by them and for them. This seasonal zine will launch in Fall 2025 with the theme "Responding in Faith," drawing inspiration from Matthew 4:18-22 (Jesus calls the first disciples). We want contributions from you! We are looking for young people of faith who are passionate about justice and advocacy. We are interested in reflections, poems, songs, and visual art pieces. How does your search for justice impact your faith? How does your faith inform your activism? Share your perspective as we seek inspiration for the journey ahead. Saying 'yes' is an act of faith – especially as we step into the unknown. Maybe there is something in us calling to respond, or maybe we are the only ones available to answer the call. Saying 'yes' can lead us on a journey of transformation. The first Anabaptists took a risk when they said 'yes', and responded in faith to their convictions. As we celebrate 500 years of Anabaptism by reflecting on the past and the roots of Anabaptist beginnings, we also reckon with where we are today and how we live into tomorrow.

- When have you said 'yes' in faith? What have you learned along the journey? What gifts/passions have you discovered along the way?
- What do the faith-led responses of the first Anabaptists call us into?
- Can you name an Anabaptist who has been inspiring to you? Why is this person inspiring?
- Where do you want to see Anabaptism grow in the next 500 years?

Submission deadline: August 30th, 2025. To share your submission, fill out [this short form](#). *A Dangerous Faith* is a collaborative project of Anabaptist World, The Coalition to Dismantle the Doctrine of Discovery, Mennonite Action, and Anabaptist Climate Collaborative. P.S. To get the latest news on *A Dangerous Faith*, [sign up for our newsletter](#), where you'll learn about future calls for submission, publishing updates and exclusive bonus content.

Shared by the Anabaptist World

Portable gas stoves make cooking safer for displaced Gazans

Mohamed* and his wife have been living in a tent for over a year, ever since the Israeli military destroyed their house in Gaza. Cooking over a fire has been their only option while they have been displaced. After their son was born, they were forced to heat up bottles for him over the fire, including in the middle of the night. Because of a distribution from Mennonite Central Committee's local partner in Gaza, they now have a portable gas stove they can use instead. The gas stove is safer to use than an open fire, Mohamed says, because the fire attracts unwanted attention from the military. "A lot of people were targeted because they lit a fire at night," he says. They are among 700 recipients of portable gas stoves that Al-Najd Developmental Forum (Al-Najd) distributed in April. Al-Najd purchased the stoves in Gaza with funds from MCC. Most Palestinians in Gaza had gas stoves in their houses before this war but have been forced to use open fires for cooking and heat while they are displaced. Gas stoves are expensive, and people have few job options due to the ongoing Israeli blockade and bombardment of Gaza. **Read the rest of Mennonite Central Committee's article published by the *Anabaptist World* [here](#).**

Sparkling Peace

"How will the world change if we do not question it?" - Kate DiCamillo. The average toddler asks anywhere between 100 to 300 questions per day. It has been awhile since I had a toddler, but I completely believe this statistic. Even as a teacher of elementary students, I hear the constant 'Why?' or 'How?' and the all-consuming, 'When is lunch?' It is a natural, beautiful thing to question, and no one does it better than children. Often, we adults are struck with questions out of the mouths of these babes that we just cannot wrap our heads around, nonetheless try to answer them in a way that will make sense to literal, logical young minds. Where do I begin? How can I make this make sense? Will my answer be sufficient? How can we be a safe space for children and youth and their many, many questions? Especially when their questions are filled with such heavy things offered from the world around us and within us? [Sparkling Peace](#), co-authored by myself and Teresa Kim Pecinovksy, was written with the hope that we can begin or continue to offer these spaces and conversations, specifically when it comes to gun violence. Gun violence is an unfortunate prevalence in our lives, and we are often caught between wanting to shield or prepare our next generations. Where do we begin? How can we make this make sense? Will our answers be sufficient? We invite you to begin at the beginning. With a broken window." **Read the rest of Hannah Martin's blog post for Mennonite Women [here](#).**

Extending the Anabaptist trail

Bold women and warring peasants emerge from history's shadow as Austrians keep the faith. One can plan an Anabaptist history tour and still discover surprises, especially in a big anniversary year. On May 22 in Salzburg, Austria, just two blocks from the hotel where American Mennonite tourists were staying, a banner outside Kirche St. Andrä (St. Andrew's Church) announced an exhibit on Täufergeschichte in Österreich (Anabaptist History in Austria). The title: "Brennen für das Leben" (On Fire for Life). The topic: 500 years of Anabaptism. "Who knew?" said tour co-leader Mary Sprunger, professor of history at Eastern Mennonite University. "It looks to be sponsored by the Austrian Anabaptist Historical Society." An Anabaptist exhibit in a Catholic church? To the Americans, it was surprising. To an Austrian? "Being here is a miracle," said Peter Brandes, a Salzburg Baptist pastor who helped organize the exhibit. **Read the rest of Paul Schrag's article for the *Anabaptist World* [here](#).**

Turning waste into walls

Reusing plastic as building material is a work in progress.

There is something therapeutic about stomping on a plastic container and hearing the crunch of the milk jug or salad clamshell crumpling underfoot. For a group in Taos, N.M., that gathered to build walls out of waste in the summer of 2020, crushing plastic by foot was more than a therapeutic exercise. It was an act of resistance during a nationwide recycling crisis. Five years later, the Repurposing Plastic Project is at a crossroads. RPP was born in 2019 when plastic recycling in the region was put on standstill. Like many municipalities across the United States, Taos had relied on the pipeline of recyclable plastics to China as the solution to dealing with its plastic waste. **Read the rest of Sierra Ross Richer's article for the *Anabaptist World* [here](#).**

Entrapment stew and murderous aid

"You're probably seeing the same near-daily murders I'm seeing. At food aid sites in Gaza, Israeli soldiers and drones are murdering people as they come to get food in the midst of a famine. It reminds me of a far less deadly (but still treacherous) entrapment stew in scripture. I keep reading the words of people in Gaza faced with a much more impossible, cruel, hopeless choice: Get in line for food and get shot or stay home and starve. I'd like to say to Netanyahu or an IDF soldier, 'You certainly cannot actually be murdering people who came to the place you told them to come to get the food you're considering letting them have, after decades of blockades and imprisonment and destruction of economy and agriculture.' I mean, it's way more outrageous than Jacob's stew. Let's read this story as a cautionary tale about exploitation and contractual relationships. If Jacob's needs truly couldn't be met within the tradition of first-son-gets-the-most, then it's time to interrogate that tradition, not dupe the older brother." **Read the rest of Anna Lisa Gross' article for the Anabaptist World [here](#).**

In Awe of God's Creation: Mennonite Men Visits Oregon

"Back in March of 2025, I took Amtrak to visit parts of Western Oregon as a Mennonite Men representative. I wanted to build connection and witness what God is up to in the Pacific Northwest. One of the unifying experiences of the Northwest: trees! The train took me through Glacier National Park where snow still covered the trees before arriving to the hazelnut groves, Douglas fir, Oregon white oak, and cherry trees of the Willamette Valley. In advance of the trip, I made contact with the conference minister of Pacific Northwest Mennonite Conference, several area pastors, and some friends and others I knew personally. One of my known destinations from the outset was to visit Salem, Oregon and catch up with folks at Zena Forest Products, an inspiring company that practices sustainable forestry while making beautiful wood products. Mennonite Men's JoinTrees program has awarded Zena and the Deumling family for their planting of Oregon white oak, a tree species that's so important to forest health and ecosystems of the Northwest but has long been neglected or choked out in part by the overplanting of conifers. Though slow growing, Oregon white oak is stunning in its glory, its mature white oak trees often covered in moss and lichen." **Read Jon Zirkle's blog post for Mennonite Men [here](#).**

Scraps from discarded gun cases transformed into unique work of art

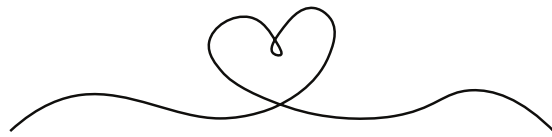
Anabaptists have long loved Isaiah 2:4, the verse about beating swords into plowshares and learning war no more. But in the 21st century, most war is not being waged with swords, and most plowing is done from the seat of a tractor. So how might Mennonites turn metaphorical swords into metaphorical plowshares at Follow Jesus 25? By making art with recycled gun cases. Led by Lisa Longacher, vice president for advancement at Hesston College, the youth seminar Arms2Art: Collage-Making with Recycled Gun Cases was packed on Wednesday morning, with over 160 people in attendance. The room was overflowing with youth and adults alike, with latecomers sitting on the floor in order to participate. **Read Greta Lapp Klassen's blog post for Mennonite Church USA [here](#).**

Turning weakness into strength

For spiritual director Ruth Johnston, contemplation is easier than action. In a blog post, she shares how her friend and spiritual director helped her put her contemplative writing into action. **Read Ruth Johnston's Menno Snapshot for Mennonite Church USA [here](#).**

Finding my femininity

In a blog post for Mennonite Church USA's ongoing [Learn, Pray, Join: Undoing Patriarchy series](#), As a child, Hannah Geiser felt the need to hide the feminine side of herself, so she could excel at soccer, but as she grew, she realized that she was hiding part of herself. **Read Hannah Geiser's Menno Snapshot for Mennonite Church USA [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

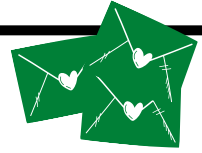
Work Order & Purchase Request Forms

Facility Use Agreement

Past Midweeks

Our Members in Care Facilities

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



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!

Commission, Team, & Committee Members

Commission Meeting Minutes

Item Check-Out Request Form

Commissions and Teams Contact List

Structure Documents