

THE MIDWEEK



WORSHIP THIS SUNDAY 9:30 AM

This Sunday, Jane Roeschley will preach a sermon titled *God is Love!* using Psalm 63:1-8 & Luke 10:27.

The spiritual pathway of focus this week is what Gary Thomas has called Contemplatives – those folks whose connection with the Divine is strongest via the receiving and expressing of love. Since God is love (1 John 4:8), this pathway might be a help to us in considering how it is we best experience God's love to us. And how we might delight in expressing our love to God.

After Worship

Adult CE
Rooms 5 & 7

Children & Youth CE
Pre-K–1st Grads
2nd–5th Grades
Junior High
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

Office Closed



This Thursday & Friday, October 16 & 17

The church office/building will be closed this Thursday and Friday but Lydia will still be available by email. Thank you for your understanding!



Family Fun Night

Friday, October 17 from 5:30-7:30 pm

Please join us for Fall Family Fun Night on October 17 from 5:30-7:30. We'll enjoy a soup and salad supper, songs, a Bible story, and pumpkin decorating. It will be helpful for meal planning / supply preparation if you can RSVP using [this SignUp Genius](#). We can't wait to enjoy this special evening with you. All are welcome!



**Mennonite Church
Blood Drive**

Fellowship Area

805 S Cottage Ave.
Normal, IL 61761

**Saturday, October 18, 2025
8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.**

You can save up to 15 minutes when you donate blood by using RapidPass! Visit RedCrossBlood.org/RapidPass for more information.

Bring a photo ID or your blood donor card, or two other forms of ID.

Come to give blood Sept. 22-Oct. 19 for a \$10
Amazon.com Gift Card by email! See rcblood.org/fall



Anabaptism Goes Global

Saturday, October 18 from 10 am to 12:30 pm

at the Mennonite Heritage Center, 675 State Highway 116 Metamora, IL

The Illinois Mennonite Historical Society welcomes historian Elizabeth Miller as our guest speaker for the IMHGS fall meeting. She is the Assistant Professor of History at Goshen College and head of the Institute for the Study of Global Anabaptism. She is from Central Illinois and has connections to several local Mennonite congregations. There will be a brief business meeting for members, followed by Elizabeth Miller's presentation, Anabaptism Goes Global. A light lunch and time for fellowship will follow. Open to the public. Free admission. Donations accepted. **Learn more** [here](#).

Congregational Vote This Sunday, October 19

This Sunday, October 19

On behalf of the Vision Team, we extend our heartfelt thanks to the congregation for your support and engagement throughout the evaluation process of Pastor Kevin Chupp. Your participation—through surveys, emails, conversations, and listening sessions—provided valuable insights that have guided our next steps in discerning Kevin's continued pastoral leadership at MCN.

After thoughtfully reviewing the congregation's feedback, the Vision Team worked collaboratively with Pastor Kevin to develop a plan that both affirms his strengths and directly addresses his areas for needed growth. Following these fruitful conversations, the members of the Vision Team unanimously recommend **that Pastor Chupp be offered a renewed three-year call to serve as our full-time pastor at MCN.**

Should the congregation approve this recommendation, the Vision Team is committed to supporting Pastor Kevin as he continues to lead from his strengths and pursue growth in the identified areas within his growth plan. A congregational vote on this recommendation will take place following the service, and online, **this Sunday, October 19th.** (A link will be sent out on Sunday for the online vote). Please feel free to send any questions/concerns/comments to a member of the Vision Team (Shelly, Helen, Shannon, Ben)

From the Vision Team

Midwest Food Bank Volunteering



Thursday, November 6 at 6:00 pm

Our next volunteer night at Midwest Food Bank (MFB) is November 6 from 6-8pm. 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



MDS Trip Sharing

October 19 at 5 pm

The Mennonite Disaster Service group who spent a week in West Asheville will be sharing some of their experiences and pictures on Sunday evening October 19 at the MRC Community Building at 5:00. Come and find out more about MDS.

Community Peacemaker Team Delegation

Sunday, November 9 at 7:00pm

Phil shared in Worship that plans have come together for Quinn to be sent on a Community Peacemaker Teams (CPT) to go on a delegation to Palestine. Outreach Commission is able to support him using special funds that were set aside for that specific purpose, and we have been waiting for the opportunity to arise—which has been delayed due to the uncertainty of the situation there. Quinn is planning to join us at MCN on November 9th at 7:00pm to share about his trip. We invite you to pencil that in and we hope you'll join us!

From the Outreach Commission



Alternative Gifts Fair

November 16 & 23

Sunday, November 9, Matt Burgess, Director of Home Sweet Home Ministries, will be sharing with us on the exciting Bridge Shelter Village Project. As the service could not focus on two projects on the same day, the Alternative Gifts Fair will now run November 16 and 23. In the meantime, both Mennonite Central Committee and Alternative Gifts International giving catalogues are available on the library table. Mark has background information and helpful suggestions from AGI for setting up booths on AGI projects. The AGI catalogue is also available online [here](#) and the MCC one is available [here](#). We hope that this additional week will offer additional time for us all to consider setting up a booth to highlight a favorite project to lift up folks struggling in seemingly unsurmountable circumstances around the world. What a difference our help can make!

From the Outreach Commission

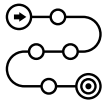
11 Relief Sale Sausage Sale



Once again, if you have been missing Mennonite Relief Sale Sausage it is available right in time for the holidays! Preorder sales for 1lb bulk and 1lb link packages of fresh sausage at the cost of \$6.00 per pound is available **now through November 1** via the sign up sheet in the back of the sanctuary or [our sale website](#). You will also find Relief Sale Coffee for sale on the website. Pick up time will be Saturday, November 22, from 7:00 A.M. until 11:00 A.M. at First Mennonite Church of Morton. Payment will be due at the time of pick up if not paid when pre-ordered by cash, cards, or checks. Ben has offered to pick up MCN orders in Morton and bring them to MCN for local pickup Sunday morning.



On September 26, 1976, First Mennonite Church (Normal) and Bloomington Mennonite Church met separately one final time and voted unanimously to merge to form Mennonite Church of Normal. After that came our building and many other accomplishments, moments of celebration and grief, and acts of service and outreach - among many other things. As we begin our 50th year as a church, we will celebrate this milestone with a Celebration Sunday on **September 27th, 2026**. In preparation, we are looking to form a committee to plan and coordinate the 50th year celebration. If you would like to be a part of this committee, please let Ben or Pastor Kevin Chupp know **by today, October 15**, so planning can begin for events that could begin in January. If you have ideas for how we might celebrate next year, please consider joining the committee or share your ideas with us!



Withdrawing from IMC

Through a vote in June of this year, the Mennonite Church of Normal (MCN) made a decision to withdraw from the Illinois Mennonite Conference (IMC) and affiliate solely with Central District Conference (CDC). A formal letter has been sent to the leadership sharing MCN's discernment process and resulting request to be released (that letter can be viewed [here](#)). The Vision Team (VT) and the Pastoral Team (PT) are coordinating with IMC on a respectful and thoughtful transition process. MCN leadership will participate in a brief "exit interview" with some members of the conference leadership, providing an opportunity to share our reflections and thoughts about our history with IMC. MCN will also plan to invite a representative from the conference to be present with us during a worship service, where we can acknowledge and express gratitude for our shared history and exchange blessings as we move forward. Though specific dates have not been set yet, the intention is to complete this process by the end of December, if possible. We welcome feedback, questions, and reflections from the congregation as we walk through this process together.

From the Vision Team

HSHM The Bridge



Your help is needed for The Bridge! Home Sweet Home Ministries is building a village for the homeless in Bloomington. A new community of tiny homes will provide housing for up to 56 adults. Multiple support services will be available to residents on-site. The Outreach Commission encourages you to support this project. We hope to raise enough funds to support the building of one of the homes (\$13,500). We are planning to hear from Matt Burgess (CEO of Home Sweet Home) in worship on November 9th.

From the Outreach Commission



CDC Connector

The newest edition of Central District Conference's monthly Connector publication is now available to read [here](#). This month's issue of the Connector features stories about an interdenominational VBS in Harrisonburg, VA, a reflection on caring for pastoral wellbeing by Rachel Ringenberg Miller, and an introduction to our new two-year vision statement: Rise Up! Take Courage! If you would like a paper copy, they will be available to take from the Library Table soon.



Period. Action Day



Thank you to all who contributed to the Period. Action Day! We heard that our local group, Period. @ ISU, received over 2,000 products in this year's drive. If you would like to give toward this project, and support period equity, you can still make a donation [here](#).

From the Outreach Commission



Children's Time Books: Pete Seeger

If your kids are interested in either of the books Pastor Kevin shared during children's time on Sunday about Pete Seeger, they have been returned to the Bloomington Public Library and are available for checkout. They are:

- [Stand Up and Sing: Pete Seeger, Folk Music, and the Path to Justice](#), by Susanna Reich and Adam Gustavson
- [The Golden Thread: A Song for Pete Seeger](#), by Colin Meloy and Nikki McClure



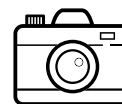
MCN 50th Factoids

Bite-sized pieces of our shared history leading up to our 50th anniversary celebration (September 27, 2026).

Question: Do you know what church this is?

Answer: That is First Mennonite Church of Normal. Founded in 1911, it joined with Bloomington Mennonite Church to form what is now Mennonite Church of Normal in 1976. It was built at the corner of Church St and S. University St. in Normal, but the building is no longer there so you can be forgiven for not recognizing it. This photo is from a remodel/expansion project in 1951 (thanks to the McLean County Museum of History).

Sharing Our Gifts



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. We're all eager to see how you are serving in your community!

From the Spiritual Gifts Discernment Team

Companion Congregation



Even as borders, tariffs, and words have come between the U.S. and Canada, MCN has been invited into a relationship with a "companion congregation" in Winnipeg, Manitoba, called [Hope Mennonite Church](#). In an initial conversation via Zoom, we began imagining ways to connect across borders. In an effort to become more thoroughly acquainted, we are hoping to exchange something with them of symbolic significance this Fall. If you have any ideas or would like to be included in these conversations, please reach out to Pastor Kevin (kevin@normalmennonite.org).

Shared by Pastor Kevin Chupp



Fall Worship: Sacred Pathways

In our worship together this Fall, we will give special attention to the ways in which we relate to God and find ourselves spiritually energized and fulfilled. Gary Thomas' book [Sacred Pathways](#) offers a sort of spiritual typology that imagines nine "pathways" we might find ourselves drawn to in our lives of faith. You can see a video introduction to the topic [here](#). We also hope you will take [the inventory](#) and share the results with the Spiritual Gifts Discernment Team (you can share results with Pastor Kevin in person or email to kevin@normalmennonite.org)

- **October 19** – Contemplatives – Psalm 63
- **October 26** – Enthusiasts – Ephesians 5:15-21
- **November 2** – Intellectuals – Proverbs 1:1-7, 20-33
- **November 9** – Return to Narrative Lectionary



Birthdays & Anniversaries

CELEBRATING LIFE'S MOMENTS AT MCN



Anniversaries



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 (lauren@normalmennonite.org) 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.



Those Serving This Week





Wednesday, October 15

9:30 am Wednesday Morning Book Group

1:00 pm Quilt Project for Home Sweet Home Ministries

Thursday, October 16

All Day Church Office/Building Closed

7:00 am Next Man Bible Study

9:30 am Women's Bible Study

Friday, October 17

All Day Church Office/Building Closed

5:30 pm Family Fun Night

Saturday, October 18

8:00 am Red Cross Blood Drive (sign-up [here](#))

Sunday, October 19

5:00 pm MDS Trip Sharing

Tuesday, October 21

3:00 pm Pastoral Team (Zoom)

Wednesday, October 22

9:30 am Wednesday Morning Book Group

1:00 pm Quilt Project for Home Sweet Home Ministries

6:30 pm Congregational Care Committee (Zoom)



Dutch town seeks Dirk Willems martyr statue

A group is working to bring Dirk Willems back to his hometown. The Anabaptist martyr was born and eventually executed in Asperen, a village in the Netherlands. He became famous to Anabaptists around the world for escaping prison and then returning to rescue his pursuer who had fallen through ice. The price of loving his enemy was reimprisonment, torture and execution by burning at the stake on May 16, 1569. For centuries the most notable memorial to his life and sacrifice was in Martyrs Mirror — the story and picture of Willems reaching out in assistance to his jailer. A life-size bronze statue of the scene was dedicated in 2018 at Mennonite Heritage Village in Steinbach, Man. Plans are coming together to construct a similar statue in the very water where the iconic act took place, about a block away from the shore, but nevertheless notable, Dirk Willems Street. **Read the rest of Tim Huber's article published by the *Anabaptist World* [here](#).**

MCC U.S. National Peace & Justice Ministries E-Memo: Policy Updates

- **U.S. war crime?** In late August the Trump administration moved [military assets including at least 8 warships](#) into the Caribbean Sea. Soon after, the U.S. military conducted an air strike on a speedboat allegedly carrying 11 drug traffickers off the coast of Venezuela. Lawmakers and experts expressed concerns that these executions constitute [war crimes](#), but administration officials indicate they plan to conduct more.
- **Haiti bill passes house:** The Haiti Criminal Collusion and Transparency Act ([H.R. 2643](#)) passed the House of Representatives by voice vote on September 2. If passed in the Senate, the bill would require the State Department to conduct a report detailing connections between criminal gangs and elites in Haiti and impose targeted travel restrictions and property sanctions on those individuals.
- **Pocket rescissions:** On August 28, President Trump sent another [rescissions package](#) to Congress requesting to withdraw \$4.9 billion in foreign assistance. The largest component targets \$3.2 billion of FY2024 development assistance, which includes \$24.6 million for climate resilience. This clawback of funds, like previous rescissions, would negatively impact vulnerable populations. **Take action:** [Ask Congress to support climate resiliency programs in the FY26 budget.](#)

Not what but who

We find the way by walking together in the struggle.

The question grabs me: "What do you fight for?" But my heart pipes up, "That's not my first question!" Rather: "Who do I fight for?" Who has God placed in my path and needs me to stand with them? For a long time now, I have understood myself as an accompanier of people who are struggling. And that includes me. I have learned to let God, through others, come accompany me, too. It is a two-way street. I fight for others who are my kin in God's beloved kin-dom. And I fight with them — for a dignified life as one created in the image of God: for things like stable shelter, enough food and water, safety, access to assistance and the loving support of a beloved community. I live in the borderlands of Mexico and the United States, on the traditional lands of the Tohono O'odham peoples, in Tucson, Ariz. As I write this, Congress has just approved spending taxpayer money for massive increases in Immigration and Customs Enforcement hires and construction of more detention prisons. **Read the rest of Tina Schlabach's article for the *Anabaptist World* [here](#).**

Rifqa Al-Hamalawi wins MCC's Michael J. Sharp Global Peacemaker Award

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) has awarded Rifqa Al-Hamalawi the 2025 Michael J. Sharp Global Peacemaker Award, presented annually to an individual or organization that exemplifies MCC's commitment to peace and justice worldwide. Since October 2023, Al-Hamalawi and MCC's local partner Al-Najd Developmental Forum have distributed humanitarian assistance, including food baskets, bedding, shelter materials, clothing and cooking gas cylinders, to more than 73,000 people in Gaza. **See the difference Al-Hamalawi has made in Gaza [here](#).**

Ask Congress to restore legal immigration pathways and create pathways to citizenship

Background: Since taking office, the Trump administration has restricted and ended numerous legal immigration pathways, including asylum, humanitarian parole, and temporary protected status. Additionally, early in 2025 flights to the U.S. for vulnerable refugees were [canceled](#). Some relatives expecting to reunite with family in the U.S. are still stranded abroad despite rigorous vetting. Hundreds of thousands of people have been affected by these changes. Instead of restricting immigration, Congress should restore legal pathways and create new ones—smart immigration strategies can reduce irregular migration, reunite families, and provide economic opportunities. Reforms should include pathways to citizenship for undocumented immigrants, [over 80%](#) of whom have been in the U.S. for 10 years or longer, and who are members of our communities, churches, and families.

Action: Click [here](#) to ask Congress to restore legal immigration pathways and create pathways to citizenship.

Faith reflection: “For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.” (Matthew 25:35-36 NIV)

Shared by Mennonite Central Committee U.S. National Peace & Justice Ministries

BMC NewsNet | Fall 2025

Read the Brethren Mennonite Council for Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual, and Transgender Interests' Fall 2025 Newsletter [here](#). It includes Denominational News, Seeking Nominations: Queer Leadership Council of MC USA, Resource Highlights, SCN New Members & Job Posting, and a note from BMC's Board of Directors.

Faith Leaders denounce political violence

Clergy across traditions call for peace, civil discourse, and the protection of constitutional freedoms
More than 100 national faith leaders, including Mennonite Church USA Executive Director Glen Guyton, have [signed a letter](#) denouncing all forms of political violence and condemning attacks on free speech and the independence of nonprofit organizations. The statement, released today, warns against the growing normalization of violence and the rise of authoritarian threats to democratic freedoms in the United States. **Read the rest of Mennonite Church USA's press release [here](#).**

Even our dead are imprisoned

In most parts of the world, visiting a grave is a simple, deeply human act. People walk to the cemetery, bring flowers, sit by the tombstone, and whisper their grief and prayers to those who have passed on. For families in Hebron, however, this act of remembrance has become yet another obstacle in daily life under Israeli occupation.

Read the Community Peacemaker Team article [here](#).

Sowing Seeds: J.D. Graber and the Vision for Global Anabaptism

Watch a trailer from Mennonite Mission Network [here](#) for *Sowing Seeds: J.D. Graber and the Vision for Global Anabaptism* by R. Bruce Yoder. *Sowing Seeds* is a biography of Joseph Daniel Graber, a visionary who helped shape Mennonite identity and engagement with the world.

Bolivians celebrate 50th anniversary

Nearly 700 people gathered Feb. 16 in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the *Iglesia Evangélica Menonita Boliviana* (Bolivian Mennonite Evangelical Church). The IEMB emerged from the efforts of Mennonite Central Committee workers, whose Bible study groups planted the seeds of what would become a thriving network of congregations. Their efforts were bolstered by the predecessor agencies of Mennonite Mission Network, which provided support through mission workers from both South and North America. **Read the rest of Mennonite Mission Network and Anabaptist World's article [here](#).**

MCC U.S. leader to retire in 2026

Mennonite Central Committee U.S. executive director Ann Graber Hershberger has announced her planned retirement in July. Hershberger began serving as executive director in October 2020 during a global pandemic and MCC's centennial year. She previously served abroad with MCC and then in board leadership roles. "Ann has been an effective, humble, thoughtful and engaging leader, offering executive and collaborative guidance during a time of significant crises and disasters across the globe and here in the U.S.," said MCC U.S. board chair Emerson Leshner. "Most of all, Ann has been an advocate for the way of Jesus and Anabaptist-centered relief, development and peace activities." Kevin Malamma, MCC U.S. board member and co-chair of the board of West Coast MCC, will chair the search committee. **Read the rest of the article from Mennonite Central Committee and Anabaptist World [here](#).**

Conflict transformation: A spiritual imperative

In a Menno Snapshot for Mennonite Church USA (MC USA), Lorraine Stutzman Amstutz, MC USA denominational minister for Peace & Justice, provides resources for congregational conflict transformation. **Read Lorraine Stutzman Amstutz's Menno Snapshot for Mennonite Church USA [here](#).**



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!

Our Members in Care Facilities

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



Staff Contact and Building Open Hours

<u>Building Open:</u>	Standard Hours: Monday-Friday 9AM-11AM & 1:30PM-3PM Pastor Kevin designated office hours: Wednesdays, 8am-12pm (or call to plan a visit)
<u>Lydia Hedberg:</u>	Office Administrator; church@normalmennonite.org ; 309-452-6622
<u>Rita Munkakusi:</u>	Custodian
<u>Kevin Chupp:</u>	Pastor for Community Life Commission, Outreach Commission, Spiritual Gifts Discernment Team, & Worship Commission; kevin@normalmennonite.org
<u>Lauren Satchwell:</u>	Pastoral Team Lead & Pastor for Administration Commission, Discipling Commission, & Vision Team; lauren@normalmennonite.org

Facility Use Agreement

Commission, Team, & Committee Members

Commission Meeting Minutes

Past Midweeks

Work Order & Purchase Request Forms

Item Check-Out Request Form

Commissions and Teams Contact List

Structure Documents
