

THE MIDWEEK



WORSHIP THIS SUNDAY 9:30 AM

This Sunday, Kevin Chupp will preach a sermon titled *A Revolution of the Heart* using James 1:19-27.

In lieu of a typical sermon, this Sunday we will hear from a panel of people who have engaged with the work of activism (whether reluctantly or gleefully) and reflect on the experiences of feeling called to action by a God who is at work with us.

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



Period Action Day

MCN will continue collecting donations for Period Action Day and Period. @ ISU at the back of the sanctuary this Sunday. View suggested products to donate [here](#). Learn about the national organization [here](#).

Shared by the Outreach Commission



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

FreedUp Financial Planning Class



Oct 19 through Nov 23 during the Sunday School hour

The Community Life Commission has teamed up with Everence to offer the **FreedUp Program**, a six-week financial stewardship planning class during the Sunday School hour. The FreedUp program is a way to get your finances in order – and gain a deeper faith perspective on money.

When: Oct 19 through Nov 23 during the Sunday School hour

What to Expect:

Weekly Commitment: One hour each week using the FreedUp app (on your cell phone) and completing activities in a small workbook prior to Sunday morning.

- Sunday Mornings: Structured group discussions based on what you learned and worked on during the week.
- Personalized Approach: The program adapts to your current financial situation—whether you're struggling, stable, or secure.

Cost:

- The cost is \$19.
- Couples can participate together for one fee, but each person will receive their own workbook and have separate app access.

Interested in joining or learning more? Contact: Lotus by **this Friday, Oct 10**

From the Community Life Commission



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](#).**

MCN 50th



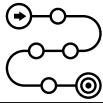
On September 26, 1976, First Mennonite Church (Normal) and Bloomington Mennonite Church met separately one final time and voted unanimously to merge to form Mennonite Church of Normal. After that came our building and many other accomplishments, moments of celebration and grief, and acts of service and 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 Wednesday, 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!



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.



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. More information will be coming!

From the Outreach Commission

IL 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 start **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. Prayers for our 68th Illinois Relief Sale, scheduled for March 20 and 21, 2026, as well as the procuring of auction items will be deeply appreciated. God bless you for your faithfulness!



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



MCN 50th Factoids

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

In the 1970's women began to follow their pastoral callings in the Mennonite church. Emma Richards in 1973 (MC) and Marilyn Miller in 1976 (GCMC) were the first ordained in the Mennonite denominations that became Mennonite Church USA. In 1979, Mennonite Church of Normal hired Margaret Richer to be the Director of Christian Education. Beyond Christian education, she was encouraged to follow her gifts in worship planning, preaching, and pastoral care. Her title was changed to Minister of Christian Education to honor her calling. She now goes by Mag Richer Smith, and she has retired after decades in pastoral ministry. She and her husband Bob are members of Berkey Avenue Mennonite Fellowship in Goshen, IN. You can read a recent article by Mag [here](#), and you can learn more from the Mennonite Women's History Timeline [here](#).



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 12** – Activists – James 1:19-27
- **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



Sharing of Joys and Concerns



Those Serving This Week



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.

This Week at MCN



A BRIEF LOOK AT THE CHURCH CALENDAR:

Wednesday, October 8

9:30 am Wednesday Morning Book Group

1:00 pm Quilt Project for Home Sweet Home Ministries

1:00 pm Community Life Commission (Zoom)

1:00 pm Fellowship Committee (Zoom)

Thursday, October 9

7:00 am Next Man Bible Study

9:30 am Women's Bible Study

7:30 pm Administration Commission (Zoom)

Sunday, October 12

Monday, October 13

All Day Church Office/Building Closed for Indigenous Peoples' Day

Tuesday, October 14

3:00 pm Pastoral Team (Zoom)

Wednesday, October 15

9:30 am Wednesday Morning Book Group

1:00 pm Quilt Project for Home Sweet Home Ministries



What shall we do with our grief and outrage?

Here's the thing: While every human heart has the capacity for hatred and violence, no human heart can contain them. Hatred and violence are universal acids. They eat away every heart in which they are stored. So, what is a Jesus-follower to do? I think the answer comes to us from the Apostle Paul. In times like these, he encourages us: "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" (Romans 12:21). Only good can conquer evil. It is not possible to overcome evil with evil. It is not possible to overcome hate with hate or darkness with darkness. **Content warning: gun violence. Read the rest of Steve Griffin's article published by the Anabaptist World [here](#).**

Mennonite Action: Picket and Pray

Wednesdays in October on Zoom from 11-11:30AM CT

This past Wednesday, as I remarked with surprise that it's already October, I found myself suddenly welling with tears. What began as a simple remark about the swiftly changing seasons hit my heart with an overwhelming intensity. "It's October 2025," I repeated to myself. October 2025. For two years, we have livestreamed a genocide of our beloved Palestinian siblings in Gaza. I write to you today with grief, rage, and determination. I pray that all of us in this movement continue to find ways to take action for the people of Gaza, which is why Mennonite Action is joining our friends at Christians for a Free Palestine and Kirkridge Retreat and Study Center for a weekly 30 minute Zoom call for shared spiritual practice. We will be rooted in the Christian tradition and action to end the genocide and for a Free Palestine. Join us for Picket and Pray: Weekly Spiritual Practice and Action for Palestine, Wednesdays on Zoom from 11-11:30AM CT. **Click [here](#) to register.** Our time together will include a short program of check-in, prayer, and a collective digital action. No matter where you live, your age, ability, experience with activism, or level of risk you can take, these calls are for you. We invite you to join us and invite your friends and loved ones. For the past several weeks, I have been so inspired by our comrade, [Paul Reid, who has been part of the Global Sumud Flotilla](#), and whose safe return to the U.S. we are still awaiting. It's a reminder to me that there is a space for all of us in this movement, and we must remain steadfast in the action we are called to take. Most of us aren't on the flotilla, but there is a space in prayer and communal action for us. I hope you'll consider joining.

P.S: We are grateful for the ways we are constantly learning from many movements and communities. These weekly calls were inspired by action hours led by Jewish Voice for Peace, American Friends Service Committee, Sabeel, and others. We also draw the name from Kirkridge Retreat and Study Center's original tagline in 1942 "Picket and Pray" as this group of Christians hungered for a place to take political action and hold spiritual practices together in community.

In peace, Anna Johnson, Mennonite Action Michiana

The Spiritual Journey: Five-Week Short Course

Do you long to deepen your ministry of presence? This five-week short course explores the arc of the spiritual life, both in one's own journey and in preparation for compassionately guiding others on theirs. Move beyond a purely internal focus to examine the role of justice and action as integral parts of spiritual practice. Online: **Mondays, October 27 – November 24, 5-7pm CT.** Take as a stand-alone class or as a part of the [Justice-Forward Spiritual Direction](#) certificate program. **Register [here](#).**

Shared by Eastern Mennonite Seminary

CPT stands in solidarity with those sailing to break the siege of Gaza!

Read Community Peacemaker Team's statement on the Israeli interception of the Global Sumud Flotilla [here](#).

Upcoming MC USA Webinars

- **Ask Us Anything - Town Hall Meeting on Zoom:** Tuesday, Oct. 14 at 6 p.m. CT. Join MC USA Executive Board and staff, as we listen, share and respond to questions about our relationship with Mosaic Mennonite Conference. Register [here](#).
- **Navigating Change: Health Coverage in 2026:** Thursday, Oct. 16 at 1 p.m. CT. Join us for an interactive Zoom meeting exploring upcoming changes in the health coverage market and what they could mean for your premiums in 2026. In the second half, we'll talk about changes to The Corinthian Plan for 2026 and answer questions. This event is open to all. Presenters: Duncan Smith (Director, The Corinthian Plan), Ingrid Friesen Moser (Wellness Coordinator, The Corinthian Plan) and guests Denise Henke (Everence TPA Sales and Service Assistant) and Patrick Tibbs (Groupcare Operations Manager, Everence). Register [here](#).
- **Living With The New Prevention & Accountability Resource: A Guide for Congregations:** Monday, Oct. 27 at 6 p.m. CT. Join Mennonite Church USA's Safe Church ministry for an online training webinar based on Part 1 of MC USA's new Prevention and Accountability Resource, approved by delegates at the July 2025 convention. Designed for pastors, church leaders and congregational teams, this session will provide practical guidance to help congregations create safer spaces and stronger systems of accountability. The webinar will feature MC USA's Michael Danner, associate executive director for Church Vitality, with Nancy Kauffmann, interim denominational minister for Church Safety, serving as host. Prevention & Accountability. Register [here](#).

Ethiopians need more than passive piety

In a nation fractured by war, where women's bodies have become battlegrounds and bulldozers have destroyed houses in the name of "development," Ethiopia's Meserete Kristos Church faces a reckoning. As the world's largest Mennonite denomination, MKC has long cultivated a culture of devout discipleship — three-hour Sunday services, fervent weeknight prayers and an unwavering commitment to making disciples. However, in the face of state violence, sexual violence as a weapon of war and mass displacement, the church's silence echoes louder than its sermons. [A July 28 press release from MKC](#) offers a glimmer of hope. In it, the church boldly calls for peace between the government of Ethiopia and the Tigray People's Liberation Front, urging an end to inflammatory rhetoric, international accountability for the Pretoria Peace Accord (which ended the Tigray war in 2022) and responsible media engagement. This statement demonstrates MKC's potential to embody the prophetic voice Ethiopia desperately needs. But why is such public leadership the exception rather than the pattern? A few months ago, MKC published an article by ordained minister Kebede Bekere and MKC President Desalegne Abebe affirming that "meeting the physical needs of people is part of God's reconciliation work in the world." They rightly asserted that the church's humanitarian and development efforts are grounded in spiritual conviction. But I am calling the church to go further: to confront the systems that perpetuate poverty and oppression. **Read the rest of Hasset Shimeles Hailu's article for the *Anabaptist World* [here](#).**

Nurturing Anabaptist Roots Together: Mennonites and Baptists Together

October 23 from 12 pm to 4 pm at Lombard Mennonite Church

Come join us at Lombard Mennonite Church for a special event focused on nurturing our Anabaptist roots together. This gathering will bring Mennonites and Baptists together to explore our shared history, values, and beliefs. It's a great opportunity to learn from each other, build connections, and strengthen our community. Don't miss out on this unique chance to deepen your understanding of our faith traditions and grow together in unity. We look forward to seeing you there! Lunch is provided for free, but if you feel moved to donate to offset costs, you may. **Learn more and register [here](#). View a flyer [here](#).**

Shared by Central District Conference

'Make the problem into the solution'

Gleaners' food-rescue program diverts surplus produce from farms to people in need.

Mashed Potatoes, meat loaf and salad were on the menu at the Light on Main Street weekly community lunch in Hanover, Ont., the day Lydia Dyck and Suraiya Foss-Phillips attended in June. The two young farmers were there to meet neighbors and see first-hand where the eight pounds of potatoes they gleaned that week ended up. Dyck and Foss-Phillips run a food rescue program that diverts surplus produce from farms to people in need. Looking around her in the noisy dining hall, Dyck was pleased to see people from all walks of life enjoying the potatoes together. "Wow," she thought, "this is a real community-building event." Getting food to people who need it is at the heart of her and Foss-Phillips' mission. So is connecting people to build more resilient communities. **Read the rest of Sierra Ross Richer's article for the *Anabaptist World* [here](#).**

CAME: Twenty-five years of solidarity at the border

Earlier this summer, CAME (Centro de Atención al Migrante Exodus), the migrant shelter in Agua Prieta, Sonora, Mexico, celebrated its 25th anniversary. Established in 2000 by the Sagrada Familia Catholic Church, CAME has undergone several changes to meet the needs of the migrants who come to Agua Prieta. Originally located at the church, it moved to a larger location in 2021. Initially, hosting Mexican men sent back from the US by Border Patrol, CAME later received families and single people from Mexico, Central and South America, Cuba, and Russia who were waiting to request asylum in the US. When it began, it provided food and shelter; it now offers emotional, psychological, educational, and social support as well. The anniversary event lasted for five days and celebrated the accomplishments of CAME, the support of Sagrada Familia, and the contributions of the many volunteers and other organizations that have worked at the centre over the years. Beginning with a mass at the church on Sunday and ending on Thursday with a banquet at the shelter and the unveiling of a new mural, the celebration also included panel discussions, testimonials, and the premiere of Exodus. This film shows the work at CAME within the context of the underlying causes of Mexican migration. **Read the rest of Community Peacemaker Teams' blog post [here](#).**



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
<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

Items for the Midweek



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
