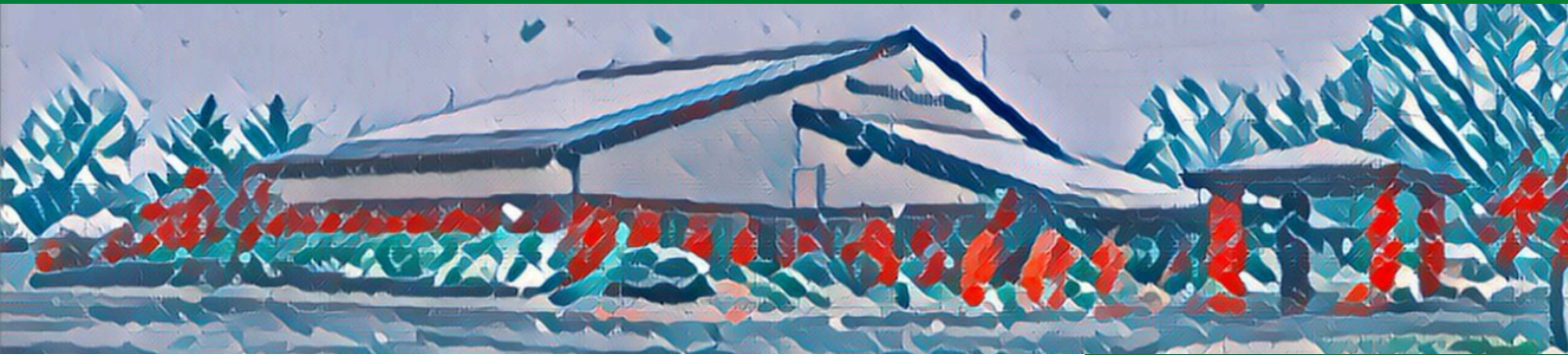


THE MIDWEEK



WORSHIP THIS SUNDAY 9:30 AM

This Sunday, Kevin Chupp will preach a sermon titled *Revisionary Cosmology* using John 1:1-18.

John's gospel is not content to begin with Jesus' infancy (Luke), genealogy (Matthew), or baptism (Mark). Instead, John goes back to the beginning. To truly "be amazed" like John means to go all the way back to the beginning and tell the whole story differently. Just as in Ezekiel and Isaiah, where the "word" interrupts dryness and death, the Word interrupts darkness. How does the word become flesh among us? What is interrupted?

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

Cookie Reception to follow the Christmas Eve Service

Wednesday, December 24 at 6:30 pm

Fellowship Committee is asking for those attending the Christmas Eve Service, to please consider bringing a plate of cookies to share after the service. There will be a few tables in the back to place your cookies before the service, and then everyone can enjoy a small bite afterwards.

From the Fellowship Committee

Building & Office Closed

Noon on December 24 through January 1

The church building and office will be closed from noon on Wednesday, December 24 through Thursday, January 1. There will be no Midweek on December 31st. Thank you for your understanding!

Sharing Our Gifts Photos

Thank you all for sharing wonderful photos of you sharing your gifts! Find a link to the slide show that played before and after the Sunday worship service last Sunday [here](#).

Shared by the Spiritual Gifts Discernment Team

Six-Week Everence Webinar Series: Cultivating Generous Congregations

We are excited to have signed up for the Everence series *Cultivating Generous Congregations* which maps the new landscape of religious giving and stewardship and will provide our congregation with tools to help build a culture of generosity unique to MCN's needs and challenges. The series will be six weeks starting in February. **Learn more [here](#).**

Shared by the Administration Commission

MCN 50th Factoids

Bite-sized pieces of our shared history leading up to our 50th anniversary celebration.

The photo here is a 1954 aerial photo from West Normal shared by [McLean County Museum of History](#), featuring some notable places, including the Holy Cross Cemetery (H). What is not noted? The bottom right is a farmstead where our church building now sits.





This Week at MCN



A BRIEF LOOK AT THE CHURCH CALENDAR:

Wednesday, December 17

9:30 am Wednesday Morning Book Group

7:30 pm Spiritual Gifts Discernment Team (Zoom)

Thursday, December 18

7:00 am Next Man Bible Study

Sunday, December 21

7:00 pm Adult Choir

Tuesday, December 23

3:00 pm Pastoral Team (Zoom)

Wednesday, December 24

Noon Office & Building Closed until January 2

6:30 pm Christmas Eve Service



Birthdays & Anniversaries

CELEBRATING LIFE'S MOMENTS AT MCN



Anniversaries

Birthdays



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.



Trail of Death: A Pilgrimage of Remembrance, Lament and Transformation

May 11-21, 2026

Join Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary for the Trail of Death pilgrimage that remembers the 1838 forced removal of about 850 Potawatomi people from their ancestral homelands in northern Indiana by state and federal militias. Participants in the pilgrimage will enter into a journey of lament over and truth-telling about the violence caused by White settler colonization. This pilgrimage is open to students and nonstudents. Participants may earn three credit hours of graduate study, take the course as auditors, or join the pilgrimage for no credit. We will be tent camping along the way, with camping supplies available to those who need them and options for hotel stays at one's own expense. **Learn more and register [here](#).**

Tell the House "No war with Venezuela"

Background: Since early September, the U.S. has conducted at least 22 air strikes on small vessels off the coast of Venezuela killing a total of 87 people. U.S. officials allege the boats were transporting large amounts of drugs, however they have yet to provide evidence for those claims. [Latin American leaders have accused](#) the U.S. of murdering innocent civilians. Such extrajudicial killings without due process are illegal under domestic and international law. The U.S. has reportedly moved [a substantial number of warships, planes, and personnel](#) into the Caribbean Sea and officials have confirmed [the CIA is present in Venezuela](#). The President and other U.S. officials have [repeatedly threatened](#) to begin striking targets on land. [The history of U.S. intervention in the hemisphere](#) demonstrates that this could lead to more conflict and chaos. While MCC does not have partners in Venezuela, [there are Anabaptist churches](#) — and the prospect of military violence anywhere in the world weighs heavily on our hearts. MCC partners in Colombia and throughout Latin America could also see an increase in migrants fleeing Venezuela if the situation continues to deteriorate. Violence is never a path to stability or long-term peace. A Senate resolution to reassert congressional authority over these strikes was narrowly rejected in October. A new resolution to restrain the strikes ([H.Con.Res. 64](#)) will be voted on in the House of Representatives this week.

Faith Reflection: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God." (Matthew 5:9 NIV)

Action: [Click here](#) to contact your Representatives and urge them to vote YES on H.Con.Res 64!

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

My 'yes' is a quiet megaphone

I said "yes" in the quiet glow of my phone screen. It wasn't a loud, public announcement, but a direct message to a fellow Ethiopian woman — a simple promise: "I will use my platform to share your story." As an Ethiopian woman studying theology and peace studies at an Anabaptist seminary in America, I live in a tension of privilege. I have access to education, safety and a digital pulpit that many of the sisters I advocate for do not. Social media advocacy is not an easy battle. Some have been labeled an outsider, canceled and bashed online. I have watched friends flee Ethiopia under death threats. And in a digital world that tempts us to prize controversy over compassion, advocacy often feels like swimming against the current. But this is the space we have. So, I said yes. **Read the rest of Hasset Shimeles Hailu's article published by the Anabaptist World [here](#).**

Feeding neighbors, building leadership

In Chicago, 19-year-old Andre McKennie is helping his community grow—literally. Through Mennonite Central Committee's Summer Service Program, he transformed the basement of Grace + Peace Church into a thriving aeroponic garden with 14 tower systems that provide fresh produce for neighbors year-round. **Click [here](#) to read more about how MCC is helping young leaders like Andre make a difference!**

For the freedom and dignity of Palestinian people

The deal between Hamas and the Israeli state reminds us of the distance between relief and justice

Many words have been written about the deal of 9 October between Hamas and the Israeli state. Words of celebration from the people of Gaza who hope to take a few breaths, however brief. Words of praise for the political leaders who steered the talks behind closed doors. Words of relief for prisoners and their families who will be reunited after years of separation. Yet, amid these announcements and headlines, it is easy to forget that this agreement is not an end but a fragile pause in a cycle of suffering that has lasted decades. **Read the rest of Shahd Al Junaidi's article published by Community Peacemaker Teams [here](#).**

The comfort zone

I subscribed to a YouTube channel in 2019 called Yes Theory. Their motto, "Seek Discomfort," led them to make videos titled "Abandoned in Paris with no money for 24 hours" and "We took our taxi driver to his dream destination." Along the way, they are intentional about stepping outside their comfort zone to try new things and meet new people — listening to their stories and stumbling upon great adventures. What this highlights for me is our tendency to seek comfort — sometimes because it is easy or because we are scared. However, we are missing out on so much of life if we remain within the confines of our comfort. One way I see this in Mennonite circles is our tendency to avoid confrontation. We sometimes use the illustration of Jesus' "third way" as a path of conflict avoidance more than we recognize or care to admit. **Read the rest of Mackenzie P. Miller's article published by the Anabaptist World [here](#).**

MC USA Webinar Recording

Watch a recording of the October Mennonite Church USA webinar "Living With the New Prevention & Accountability Resource: A Guide for Congregations" in [English](#) or [en español](#).

Maryland church hymn sing celebrates 500 years of Anabaptist diversity

A hymn sing celebrated 500 years of Anabaptism Sept. 27 at Hyattsville Mennonite Church in Maryland. The joyful noise was the high point of the congregation's yearlong celebration honoring Anabaptist history. Eastern Mennonite University's Chamber Singers took part in the event, which highlighted Anabaptism's global diversity. Song selections included "Dhuh Pangeran" (O Prince of Peace) from Indonesia, "We Are People of God's Peace" with lyrics from Menno Simons, Felix Manz's "I Sing With Exultation" and a Cheyenne hymn, "Ehane he'ama" (Father God, You Are Holy). More than 30 congregations were invited to the event, which also included a display of Anabaptist hymnals and a monologue written and performed by Anabaptist historian Kimberly Schmidt about early Anabaptist Agnes Linck of Biel, Switzerland. **Read the rest of Kyla Hanington's article published by the Anabaptist World [here](#).**

How Chicago communities are organizing to counter authoritarianism

As ICE agents and National Guard troops are deployed around the country, community members have responded to keep each other safe—thanks to years of getting to know their neighbors, showing what's possible anywhere. **Read Mary Zerkel's article for the American Friends Service Committee [here](#).**

Shared in the Community Peacemaker Teams' newsletter

Video: Barrier Free Grants

Barrier Free Grants are one way that Anabaptist Disabilities Network helps congregations break down barriers to participation for people with disabilities. We made a video to celebrate the many Barrier Free Grants given in the last several years and the hard work of the recipient congregations to turn their ideas into reality. We hope it inspires you to consider what changes might help make your church more accessible to people of all abilities. **Watch the video [here](#).**

Shared by the Anabaptist Disabilities Network

A Place of Welcome in South Philadelphia

When I arrived at the Indonesian Community Bazaar in South Philadelphia, I was greeted with warm smiles, a cold Thai tea, and a plate of delicious food. Members of Indonesian Light Church ushered me with excitement into the tent where they were selling home cooked food. I was there to present a grant check on behalf of Mennonite Men's Join Hands program that helps congregations purchase their first church building. I was also being welcomed into their circle of hospitality. After the check presentation, Pastor Hendy Matahelemual invited me to tour the nearby building they hope to soon call their own. Since early 2024, Indonesian Light Church, a Mosaic Mennonite Conference congregation, has been renting this South Philadelphia church building on a month-to-month basis with the intent to purchase. Thanks to faithful giving and tireless fundraising—like the bazaar—I learned they are nearly at their down payment goal and expect to close by the end of September 2025. **Read the rest of Brook Musselman's article for Mennonite Men [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!

Commission Meeting Minutes

Staff Contact and Building Open Hours

Building Open:

Standard Hours:

Monday-Friday 9AM-11AM & 1:30PM-3PM

Pastor Kevin designated office hours: Wednesdays, 8am-12pm
(or call to plan a visit)

Lydia Hedberg:

Office Administrator; church@normalmennonite.org; 309-452-6622

Rita Munkakusi:

Custodian

Kevin Chupp:

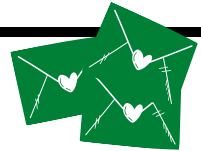
Pastor for Community Life Commission, Outreach Commission,
Spiritual Gifts Discernment Team, & Worship Commission;
kevin@normalmennonite.org

Lauren Satchwell:

Pastoral Team Lead & Pastor for Administration Commission,
Discipling Commission, & Vision Team;
lauren@normalmennonite.org

Our Members in Care Facilities

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



Past Midweeks

Commission, Team, & Committee Members

Facility Use Agreement

Work Order & Purchase Request Forms

Item Check-Out Request Form

Commissions and Teams Contact List

Structure Documents
