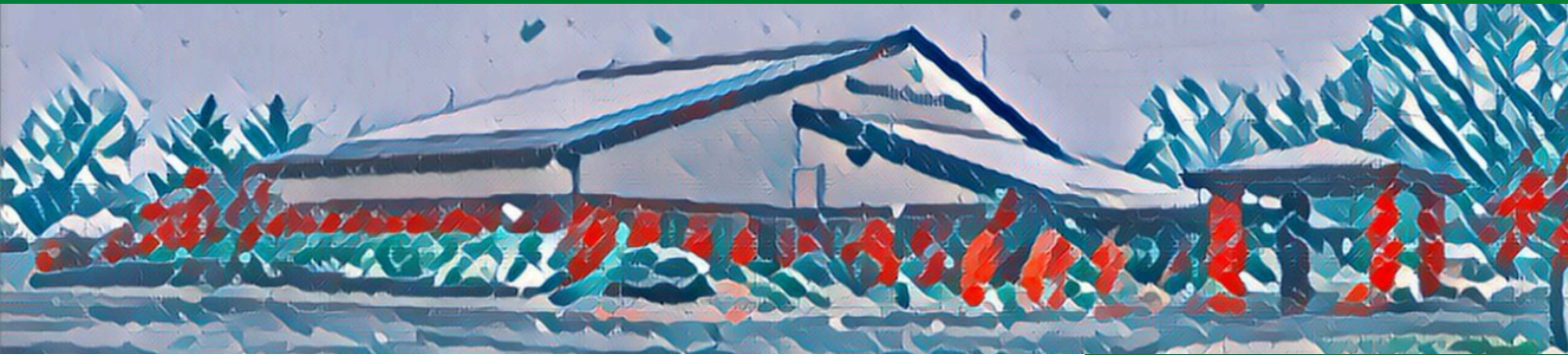


THE MIDWEEK



WORSHIP THIS SUNDAY 9:30 AM

This Sunday, Lynette Miller will preach a sermon titled Dynamic Duo using Ezekiel 37:1-14.

The passage in Ezekial is a familiar one with its valley of dry bones. A prophecy to the house of Israel, promising restoration, holds some clues for injecting hope into the desolate and barren places in ourselves and our broken world, hungry for restoration.

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 Baking

Sunday, December 7 after church

On December 7th, MYF and JMYF-ers (6th - 12th grades) are invited to stay after church for devotions (during the SS hour), cookie baking and lunch. We'll plan to be done by 1:00 or so. The cookies we bake will be frozen for a congregational / family event on December 12th: Cookies and Caroling. On that night, the pre-baked cookies will be brought out for attendees to decorate and package before being dispersed in groups for cookies and caroling. After caroling, we'll meet back at the church for hot drinks, cookies, and conversation. We're very hopeful that your child will be able to join us for cookie baking and lunch on December 7th! Please let me know if you have questions!

From the Discipling Commission



Adult CE

The Adult Christian Education quarter will begin this week with a study called, "In God's Good Image: How Jesus Dignifies, Shapes and Confronts Our Cultural Identities". The description states, "Looking to the example of Jesus, author J. W. Buck offers practical insights into how cultural identity fits into our walk as Christians. Jesus teaches those formed by majority culture to humbly embrace their identity as they foster space for others. And he empowers those from minority cultures to resist pressure to assimilate in unhealthy ways and instead live into their God-given identity. God dignifies our culture and wants us to shape it to look more like Jesus." Come join us as we learn to be more like Jesus in our home culture, in our heart language, and to understand how our diversity points us to a better expression of God's good image.

From Lynette Miller

Cookies and Caroling



Friday, December 12 from 5:30-7:30

You're invited to participate in a cookie decorating and Christmas caroling event on December 12th from 5:30-7:30. We'll gather at MCN to decorate and package cookies that have been pre-baked for us by MYF / JMYF and then disperse to carol at MRC, the surrounding neighborhood, and perhaps Westminster Village. Afterward, we'll gather back at the church for hot drinks, cookies, and conversation. Please RSVP [here](#). We look forward to singing, sipping, and snacking with you! While no formal dinner will be offered, there will be bread, pb & j, cheese and lunchmeat plus apples and carrots if your child needs a quick dinner before helping decorate cookies!

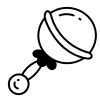
From the Discipling Commission

Call for Music: Singers & Instrumentalists



Wednesday, December 24 at 6:30 pm

The Christmas Eve service is just 3 weeks away! If you are interested in offering a solo or group song for our service, please reach out to Pastor Kevin (kevin@normalmennonite.org). We will continue on our Advent theme (Be Amazed!) but your song doesn't necessarily need to relate to that theme.



Meal Train



CLC Members

The Spiritual Gifts Discernment Team, in consultation with the chair of the Community Life Commission, has called Connie and Jill to serve on the Community Life Commission. Please send any feedback to Janet by **this Friday, December 5**. Thank you!

From the Spiritual Gifts Discernment Team



Periodical Renewals

It's that time of year again -- periodical subscription renewals! Each year the church organizes group subscriptions to three Mennonite publications: [Rejoice!](#) (a quarterly devotional) by Menno Media for \$38, [The Upper Room Daily Devotional](#) (delivered quarterly) for \$9.29, and [Anabaptist World](#) (16 issues) for \$49. This gives everyone the opportunity to subscribe these publications with a discounted rate through the church office. If you would like to **renew**, **begin**, or **end** a subscription to **one or more** of these publications, please contact Lydia in the church office at 309-452-6622 or church@normalmennonite.org before **this Monday, December 8th**.



Companion Congregation



We have an introduction to our companion congregation in the form of a letter. You can read that [here](#). Also be sure to check out the visual symbol they sent! Spoiler alert! It's a puzzle! It will be ready to assemble in the atrium along with a description of its significance in describing that congregation. In case you're curious, we sent them was a stethoscope, symbolizing our historical connection to this community through the Mennonite Hospital and Mennonite College of Nursing as well as our ongoing commitment to healing in our community and world as described in our Vision Statement.

From Pastor Kevin



SMAP SMAP SMAP SMAP SMAP

The Student Mutual Aid Program (SMAP) continues to support two students this year: Frank and Emma. The Mennonite Church of Normal will make the next payment for the Spring semester by the end of December. If you pledged or would like to support this program please send your money to MCN with SMAP in the memo. Thanks for your continued support of this program!

From the SMAP Committee: Annette, Katie, and Darvis



We would like to thank everyone for their enthusiastic support of our Alternative Gifts Fair, especially the families and Pre-School to First Grade Sunday School class for creating the engaging and very informative booths, Randy and Glenn for accompanying "The Twelve Days of Christmas," and Pam, Adam, and Wyatt for helping manage the check-out tables. At a time when our congregation has been very actively supporting several other outstanding projects, you nevertheless very generously supported this year's Alternative Gifts Fair, raising \$12,829, \$2800 more than last year's also very successful Fair! Thank you all! The total raised for Mennonite Central Committee was \$9,090, for Alternative Gifts International \$3739. For MCC, the leading projects were Sewing Machines for Bangladesh, Gifts of Hope where needed most, and Wells in Mozambique. For AFI, they were Changing Lives Two Wheels at a time, Namibia and Zambia, Warm Meals and Warm Beds USA, and Food and Healing for Ukraine's Refugees. Overall, counting funds from both MCC and AFI projects, Wells for Water in Mozambique and South Sudan raised, and Sewing a Path out of Poverty in Bangladesh and India raised. The full results of the fair will be posted in the Outreach Commission minutes Google Drive folder next week. Every single gift to our Fair will help bring comfort and joy and new hope, somewhere in our world. Blessed Christmas!

Mark and Meredith, for the Outreach Committee

Vision Team Member



Following nomination from the congregation, SGDT has called Joe to serve on the Vision Team. Joe has accepted this call. SGDT is pleased to announce that the Vision Team for 2026 is all set: Ben steps into the Chair role, Helen continues her term, and Amy and Joe begin their terms.

From the Spiritual Gifts Discernment Team

CDC Connector



The newest edition of Central District Conference's monthly Connector publication is now available to read [here](#). In this last issue of the year, we learn about our new church safety coordinator, Gestalt pastoral care, how to age well as a congregation, and much more! If you would like a paper copy, they will be available to take from the Library Table soon.



MCN 50th Factoids

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

On December 12th (5:30-7:30), we will have the opportunity to carol and give cookies to those who open their doors to us. That is a nice idea for any group, but did you know that practice has a long tradition here? As we were finishing the MCN building during Advent 1980, many families caroled and shared plates of cookies with the message written on them, "Your new neighbor, the Mennonite Church."



Birthdays & Anniversaries

CELEBRATING LIFE'S MOMENTS AT MCN



This Week at MCN



A BRIEF LOOK AT THE CHURCH CALENDAR:

Wednesday, December 3

9:30 am Wednesday Morning Book Group

1:00 pm Quilt Project for Home Sweet Home Ministries

7:30 pm Discipling Commission (Zoom)

Thursday, December 4

7:00 am Next Man Bible Study

9:30 am Women's Bible Study

6:30 pm Administration Commission

Sunday, December 7

7:00 pm Adult Choir

Monday, December 8

5:00 pm Outreach Commission

Tuesday, December 9

3:00 pm Pastoral Team (Zoom)

Wednesday, December 10

9:30 am Wednesday Morning Book Group

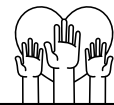
1:00 pm Quilt Project for Home Sweet Home Ministries

7:00 pm Community Life Commission (Zoom)

7:00 pm Fellowship Committee (Zoom)



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.



Ethiopians cancel hosting 2028 world assembly, MWC leader says

Amid 'rumors and falsehoods,' MKC also ends its partnership with AMBS.

Ethiopian Anabaptist leaders have decided not to host the 2028 Mennonite World Conference assembly after conflict blew up on social media over links to North American churches that accept same-sex marriage, said César Garcia, Mennonite World Conference general secretary, on Nov. 26. "Due to the internal conflict, the church of Ethiopia doesn't consider it a blessing to host the assembly in 2028," Garcia told AW in an interview. "We are sad for that, but we understand the conflict the church is experiencing now, and we want to be a blessing for the church. In a Nov. 23 statement, the executive committee of the Meserete Kristos Church — the Ethiopian Anabaptist church, with more than 514,000 baptized members, the world's largest Mennonite conference — said that "associating with a conference that includes churches supporting homosexuality contradicts the core beliefs of our church."

The MKC has also ended its joint master's degree program with Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary. MKC leaders announced this decision in their Nov. 23 release, and AMBS confirmed it in [a Nov. 24 statement](#). "In the last two months, a wave of misinformation has spread through social media in Ethiopia, targeting the partnership between MKC/S [MK Seminary] and AMBS and creating a volatile and challenging environment for students and church leaders," said David Boshart, AMBS president, in the statement. ". . . With deep lament, [MKC leaders] informed us that MKC has permanently suspended the program — not due to any loss of goodwill between MKC and AMBS, but because the spread of misinformation has created risks for their leaders and students and threatened the unity of the church." **Read the rest of Paul Schrag's article published by the *Anabaptist World* [here](#).**

Camp Friedenswald Winter Camps

Registration for Camp Friedenswald's Youth and Family Winter Camps is now open! **Learn more and register [here](#).**

Faith history in many forms

German scholar comfortable with Anabaptism's contradictions and tensions.

Covering five centuries of Anabaptist history in one book is no small feat. In Anabaptism's 500th anniversary year, Astrid von Schlachta, a German historian, has stepped up to the challenge. An English translation of *Anabaptists: From the Reformation to the 21st Century* was published in late 2024 by Pandora Press. Publisher Maxwell Kennel edited Victor Thiessen's translation, which is Volume 10 in Pandora's Anabaptist and Mennonite Studies series. Kennel said von Schlachta's European approach to the span of Anabaptism's expressions and movements complements and contrasts with Troy Osborne's *North American Radicals and Reformers: A Survey of Global Anabaptist History*, published last year by Herald Press. "Troy's book is roughly chronological, while Astrid's is thematic, and both attempt to cover all 500 years up to the present," Kennel said. "*Anabaptists* has an interesting chapter at the end on Mennonites and the arts, which you don't see covered so much by historians." **Read the rest of Tim Huber's article published by the *Anabaptist World* [here](#).**

Take a seminary course this spring!

Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary's distance-friendly options include Biblical Foundations for Peace and Justice; Christian Attitudes Toward War, Peace and Revolution; Doing Theology in the Anabaptist Tradition; Faith Formation and Spirituality: Adults and Seniors; Numbers: Encountering Wilderness; Spiritual Practices: Play and Rest; and more. In-person courses are also available. Nonadmitted students get 50% off their first two courses for credit. Courses run Jan. 13 – May 1; sign up by Jan. 5. **Click [here](#) to learn more and register.**

Malawi just one of the destinations reached by MCC meat-canning efforts

Mennonite Central Committee meat canners started the 2025-26 canning season in October with strong motivation. Three of the four-member crew have met people in Malawi — prisoners and refugees — who needed the canned meat MCC's partners distributed. The fourth member of this year's crew is new. Every year, a group of three to four young men accompany MCC's mobile cannery to about 27 locations in 10 states. In each place, they work with hundreds of local volunteers to preserve chicken, turkey or pork in cans and pack them for shipping. MCC had 519,316 cans of meat to send to those in need throughout the world by the end of last canning season in April. MCC took the canners on a learning tour to Malawi in May so they could see the impact of their work. **Read the rest of Linda Espenshade's article published by the *Anabaptist World* [here](#).**

Conflict transformation: A spiritual imperative

In a Menno Snapshot for Mennonite Church USA, Lorraine Stutzman Amstutz, MC USA denominational minister for Peace & Justice, reflects on lessons learned from this summer's MC USA's Women's Summit on rest and resilience. **Read Lorraine Stutzman Amstutz's Menno Snapshot for Mennonite Church USA [here](#).**

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Church of the Brethren and others condemn changes to refugee program

The Church of the Brethren and other members of Church World Service condemned White House efforts to abandon the U.S. Refugee Program in [an Oct. 22 statement](#). The program is a public-private partnership that churches helped form in 1980. The statement notes the current presidential administration is seeking to drastically reduce fiscal year 2026 refugee admissions goals to the lowest level in history and exclude vulnerable populations. **Read the rest of the *Anabaptist World* article [here](#).**

Anabaptist Community Bible

From, MennoMedia and Everence, the Anabaptist Community Bible app is available to download now on the App Store or Google Play. **Search: Anabaptist Community Bible.** Free for iOS and Android, this app features:

- Full Common English Bible (CEB) text
- Notes from Anabaptist scholars & 600+ Bible study groups
- Book intros + 365-day reading plan
- Articles from Everence on faithful stewardship
- A community-first approach to Bible study

MDS involvement at former residential school "gives hope" for the future

The former Mohawk Institute Residential School in Brantford, Ont., where youth from across Canada served in 2019 as part of a Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) summer youth project, officially opened on Sept. 30, 2025. A total of 74 youth from Mennonite churches in Ontario and B.C. served at the former school through the project, which was a partnership between MDS Canada, the MCC Indigenous Neighbours Program, and the Woodlands Cultural Centre which operates the school as a living museum to tell the story of how residential schools impacted Indigenous people in Canada. **Read the rest of John Longhurst's article for Mennonite Disaster Service [here](#).**

What are today's politics of peace?

Nobel Prize winner aligned with harmful policies.

The Nobel Peace Prize was awarded this month to Venezuelan politician María Corina Machado for her “tireless work promoting democratic rights for the people of Venezuela and for her struggle to achieve a just and peaceful transition from dictatorship to democracy,” according to the awarding committee. While this might sound like proper recognition of a leader seeking justice and peace, deeper questions arise from this decision. What are the politics of peace in today's world? International politics are moving along two distinct currents. On one side, there is a global agenda of privatization, military intervention, natural resource extraction, mass deportations, denial of climate change and the widening of socioeconomic inequality — all sustaining the expansion of capitalist economies. On the other is an opposing vision: prioritizing public investment and social welfare, pursuing demilitarization, conflict prevention, protecting human rights of immigrants and vulnerable communities, developing green energy, promoting dialogue and solidarity between nations and reducing the gap between rich and poor. **Read the rest of Juan Moya's article published by the *Anabaptist World* [here](#).**

Welcome to Checkpoint 160

In August, CPT Reservist Maggie Hindley returned to Al Khalil/Hebron after a few years. She reunited with those she'd met before, and reflects on the changes in their daily lives after two years of war in Gaza. **Read Maggie Hindley's article for Community Peacemaker Teams [here](#).**

How do you create peace when everyone wants a piece of the forest?

Get a glimpse inside Cambodia's vast Prey Lang Forest and hear how trainings offered by Mennonite Central Committee's local partner are equipping community members with skills to peacefully confront those carrying out illegal logging and other forms of environmental degradation in the forest. **Watch the video story [here](#).**

MC USA launches “Reimagining” initiative with discussion guide and churchwide survey

Mennonite Church USA launched a “[Reimagining MC USA](#)” web portal Nov. 4 with an invitation for constituents to engage in dialog about the future of the church and give input via a churchwide survey. The portal includes information about the Reimagining initiative, including the charter for a Structure Review Task Force, and the project's two-year timeline leading to a structure proposal at the next Delegate Assembly in July 2027. The MC USA Executive Board envisioned the restructuring process in late 2024 “to reimagine a framework that maintains the interconnectedness between the church's various entities and better responds to current and future needs.” **Read the rest of the *Anabaptist World* article [here](#).**

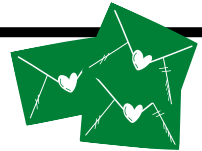


Staff Contact and Building Open Hours

<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

Our Members in Care Facilities

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



Past Midweeks

Commission Meeting Minutes

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

Facility Use Agreement

Work Order & Purchase Request Forms

Item Check-Out Request Form

Commissions and Teams Contact List

Structure Documents
