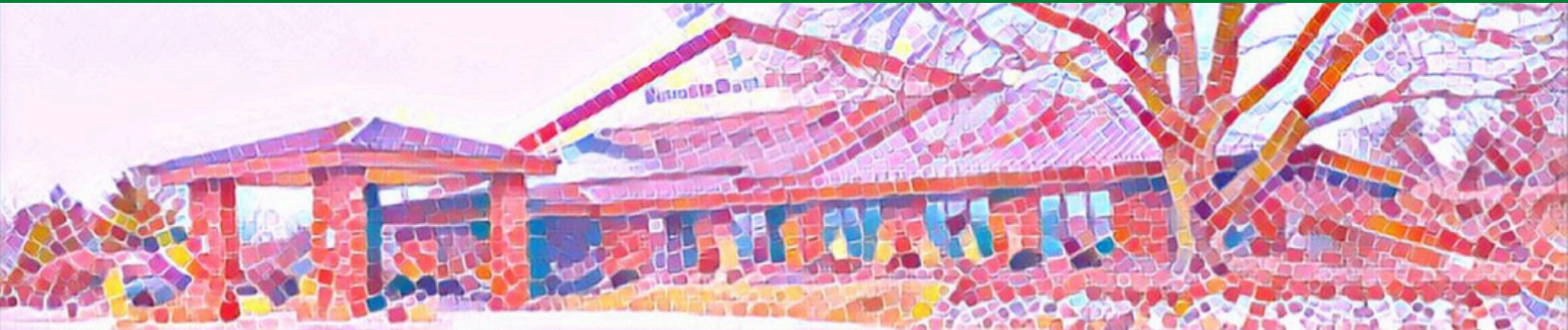


THE MIDWEEK



WORSHIP THIS SUNDAY 9:30 AM

This Sunday, Kevin Chupp will preach a sermon titled *Oh Brother!* using Acts 9:1-19a.

The story of Saul's conversion is a vivid and dramatic transformation. The shift from being a murderer that targets a specific religious group to a being called as a leader within that group is perhaps more surprising than the seemingly supernatural blindness and healing that accompanied this event. But where is the power in this story? What fuels this transformation? How can we imagine facilitating such change among those who are our enemies?

After Worship

Adult CE

Rooms 5 & 7

Children & Youth CE

Pre-K-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

Tuesday, April 28 from 6-8pm

Our next volunteer night at Midwest Food Bank (MFB) is April 28 from 6-8pm. MFB wants us to sign up two weeks ahead of time to facilitate their project planning, so if you think you will go, **please sign up as early as possible using [this link](#)**. If you have any questions, please contact a member of the Outreach Commission.

From the Outreach Commission

Give soap full of hope: Help MCC collect bars of soap in April & May

Mennonite Central Committee provides soap to hospitals, orphanages and refugee camps in countries where soap is expensive or difficult to source. There is a need for soap beyond what is supplied in kits. MCC Great Lakes invites you to take part in a special collection of bath soap and laundry soap throughout April and May. **Soap collected at MCN will be delivered to the MCC Drop Off Site at Metamora Mennonite Church.** Thank you for limiting your generosity to the items listed below. Learn more [here](#). If you have any questions, please contact a member of the Outreach Commission.

Bath soap specifications:

NEW bars of soap

- 85g (3oz) or larger
- Please leave in wrapper.
- Please keep in mind that hotel soaps are too small.

Laundry soap specifications:

NEW bars of laundry soap

- Brands such as Fels Naptha®, Sunlight® or Zote®
- Please leave in wrapper.
- Homemade laundry soap blocks of 150g (5oz) or larger are acceptable.

Shared by Mennonite Central Committee Great Lakes and the MCN Outreach Commission

Meeting Community Needs

- It's not only gas prices that are on the rise, but energy costs, food costs, etc. Many in our community are stretched thin financially in this time, so we are eager to find ways to respond to growing needs. Outreach Commission continues to be aware of opportunities for support.
- At our April 12th meeting, we decided to contribute \$500 to the Mount Pisgah Baptist Church Food Pantry (which is the destination for our food donations gathered at the church).
- We also wanted to share the request from Normal Township for donations to their General Assistance and Emergency Assistance Programs which help support people who aren't able to meet their basic needs or are in danger of eviction or loss of utility services from overdue bills. If you are interested, you can write a check to Normal Township General Assistance (304 E Mulberry St, Normal, IL 61761), or find out more [here](#). You can also see a flyer in the atrium at the church.

From the Outreach Commission

The newest edition of Central District Conference's monthly Connector publication is now available to read [here](#). In this Earth Day issue of the Connector we hear from two congregations about their experiences with outdoor worship services. There are also articles about the recent discussion on Article 19 at the Mid-Year Gathering, a new book from Mennonite Action, and a yard sign campaign by a congregation in Virginia, along with the latest edition of Doug's Mug. If you would like a paper copy, they will be available to take from the Library Table soon.



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

30 years ago, in February 1996, David Foster Wallace released *Infinite Jest* to critical acclaim, quickly thrusting the Illinois State University professor into the public eye. But what does that have to do with Mennonite Church of Normal? In December 1996, Wallace held a reading from that book at Goshen College at the urging of Meg Poag, an MCN member who was a student at Goshen. Wallace was close with the Poag family, but he seemingly only attended worship at MCN a handful of times, and was apparently quite bothered by the King James English version of 1 Corinthians 3:11 that hangs on the West wall in the sanctuary. You can read more about this in Ervin Beck's 2012 article, [David Foster Wallace Among the Mennonites](#). *Do you have a factoid to share? Send it to: kevin@normalmennonite.org*



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.



Sharing of Joys and Concerns



MCN IS ASKED TO BE IN CONTINUED PRAYER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES AT CARLE BROMENN MEDICAL CENTER—OUR PARTNER IN HEALING FOR 2026



Birthdays & Anniversaries



CELEBRATING LIFE'S MOMENTS AT MCN

This Week at MCN



A BRIEF LOOK AT THE CHURCH CALENDAR:

Wednesday, April 15

9:30 am Wednesday Morning Book Group

1:00 pm Quilting

Thursday, April 16

7:00 am Next Man Bible Study

9:30 am Women's Bible Study

Monday, April 20

7:00 pm Spiritual Gifts Discernment Team (Zoom)

Tuesday, April 21

3:00 pm Pastoral Team (Zoom)

Wednesday, April 22

9:30 am Wednesday Morning Book Group

1:00 pm Quilting



Roots of extractivism webinar

Wednesday, April 15 at 6:00 pm CDT

Join Mennonite Central Committee and Creation Justice Ministries for a webinar titled *Roots of extractivism and the moral call for transformation* on April 15 at 6:00 p.m. CDT. The current exploitation of land, water and communities for mining, oil and gas drilling, and other forms of extracting natural resources is rooted in a 15th-century church doctrine promoting colonial conquest. This 90-minute program will explore the roots of the extractivist economy, create space for reflection on our own complicity, and showcase examples of alternative ways of living and working. Speakers include Sarah Augustine, a Pueblo (Tewa) woman who co-founded the Coalition to Dismantle the Doctrine of Discovery; Ryan Juskus, an assistant professor at Notre Dame who specializes in the connection between theology and environmental justice; and a small panel sharing examples of alternative economies. **Register for the Roots of extractivism webinar [here](#).**

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

Pride Pathways: Suicide Prevention for LGBTQ+ Communities and Allies

Tuesday, April 21 from 11:30 am - 1:00 pm

702 W. Chestnut Street Bloomington, IL 61701

Pride Pathways: Suicide Prevention for LGBTQ+ Communities and Allies is a 90-minute presentation designed to deepen understanding of how suicide impacts the LGBTQ+ community. This program is intended for LGBTQ+ individuals and allies interested in fostering supportive, inclusive, and affirming environments that promote LGBTQ+ mental health. Participants will be able to: describe how suicide affects the LGBTQ+ community, recognize suicide risk factors, protective factors, and warning signs, identify how to create protective environments for LGBTQ+ communities at home, school, and work, start a conversation with someone they're concerned about, and identify LGBTQ+ suicide prevention resource. A lunch will be provided. **Register [here](#).**

Shared by the Prairie Pride Coalition

An Introduction to Centering Prayer Workshop

Saturday, May 16, 2026 9:00 am to 12:00 pm

East Bay Camp, 24248 Ron Smith Memorial Highway, Hudson, IL 61748

Registration closes Wednesday, May 13

All are invited! Feeling drawn to a closer relationship with God? Join us to learn this simple method of silent prayer to help you deepen your relationship with God. We will present the method of Centering Prayer, practice two periods of Centering Prayer and explore the benefits of Centering Prayer in ordinary life. Workshop cost: \$20.00 or Good Will Offering (covers materials and camp fee). There will be Four Continuing Workshop Sessions to support you as you begin the practice. **To register or for more information: CICOfriends@gmail.com.**

A Year Later: Reflecting on Anabaptism at 500

Last year, Anabaptist groups around the world celebrated the 500th anniversary of Anabaptist beginnings, symbolically associated with the first adult baptisms in Zurich, Switzerland, on January 21, 1525. Here in North America, MennoMedia led the way. On January 21, 2025, some 800 people gathered in Goshen, Indiana, for a festive program of singing, reflection, and thanksgiving as we officially launched the Anabaptist Community Bible. Several days before the event, Anabaptists from around the world connected on-line with the 90-hour “Global Anabaptist Bible Read-a-Thon,” as hundreds of voices read through the entire Bible, from Genesis to Revelation. And in the months that followed, MennoMedia went on to publish a resource booklet, two devotionals, three children’s books, a catechism for new believers, and a new global history of the Anabaptist movement as our contribution to “Anabaptism at 500.” With some distance now from those milestone celebrations, we pause to reflect on the significance of the 2025 commemorations. What stands out in your mind from the year gone by? What will linger as we move forward into the 501st anniversary of Anabaptist beginnings? **Read the rest of John D. Roth’s, Anabaptism at 500 Project Director, reflection [here](#).**

Widen the circle of our heart and our awareness

In a Menno Snapshot for Mennonite Church USA, in “Widen the circle of our heart and our awareness,” MC USA’s Executive Director Glen Guyton reflects on his recent trip to Minneapolis and challenges the church to expand its compassion, deepen its cultural humility and actively embody Christ-centered love in a divided world. **Read Glen Guyton’s Menno Snapshot for Mennonite Church USA [here](#).**

Making comforters connects volunteers with each other and the world

Harrisburg Brethren in Christ holds Great Winter Warm-up event.

Volunteers at Harrisburg Brethren in Christ Church (HBIC) linked hands around the handmade comforter they just completed to pray for the person who would receive it. Then the bell tinkled and volunteers clapped as they added the blessed blanket to the pile they were donating to Mennonite Central Committee (MCC). People from the Pennsylvania church, whose members represent about 35 countries, and friends from the community and neighboring churches gathered at the event on Feb. 27 and 28 for a common purpose: To send comfort to people around the world who are living with poverty or violence. “I think this is caring for the people that Jesus talked about, the least of these,” says Kim Mumper, the refugee comforter project coordinator for HBIC. She continues paraphrasing Jesus’ words in Matthew 25: “If you care for the least of these, you’re caring for me (Jesus). I think that’s just the bottom line.” Across the U.S. and Canada, people are making comforters in their homes, sewing groups or large-group activities as part of MCC’s Great Winter Warm-up challenge to make 10,000 comforters before March 31. The Harrisburg group added 28 toward the goal. MCC sends these comforters and more to people around the world. In 2025, MCC shipped 39,616 comforters to communities in Canada, Malawi, Palestine, Ukraine, the U.S. and Zambia. **Read the rest of Linda Espenshade’s blog post for Mennonite Central Committee [here](#).**

Why church unity?

The Bible contains more than 100 Scriptures emphasizing church unity. So why do those who believe in Jesus tend to struggle with being unified? Recently, I was on a learning tour in Accra, Ghana, with a group of African American Mennonite leaders invited to connect and build unity with fellow African church leaders. Our group had representatives from Mennonite Church USA, LMC and Mosaic Mennonite Conference. We were hosted by Dr. Thomas Oduru, president of [Good News Theological Seminary](#) — a Mennonite Mission Network partner — and we worshipped at different congregations. I felt right at home worshipping at Trinity Chapel, the [Ghana Mennonite Church](#) headquarters. Pastor Francis Dzivor, president of the Ghana Mennonite Church, delivered a powerful and thought-provoking message about Jesus' Last Supper. Ghana is a majority-Christian country, primarily because of the influence of Western missionaries in past centuries. Beginning in the 1920s, locally led congregations, including successful African-Initiated Churches emerged and have continued growing today. As we drove south from Accra to Cape Coast, we saw several churches of different denominations dot the landscape. This was encouraging, but I wondered if nonbelievers would see disunity or different biblical interpretations causing church splits. But is disunity always negative? The Anabaptist movement resulted from a necessary church split, right? **Read the rest of Wil LaVeist's blog post for Mennonite Mission Network [here](#).**

JoinMen: A conversation with Isaya

A few weeks ago, I was in downtown Goshen for a midday meeting and encountered high school students marching to the Goshen courthouse square in protest of ICE. I was moved to see so many young people taking prophetic public action. Many of them were youth I recognized from nearby Mennonite congregations. One of the youth was Isaya Magatti, a high school junior who attends Assembly Mennonite Church and is part of the Mennonite Youth Fellowship (MYF) group. The next day I saw him and several other MYF members in photos from the march included in our congregation's weekly prayer and sharing email. On a number of occasions, I've had a chance to hear Isaya read Scripture aloud and make announcements in Sunday morning worship. His maturity, sincerity, prophetic voice, and heart for justice are noteworthy. It being Black History Month, I felt it could be a good opportunity to hear from a teenager who identifies as a Black male and possibly write an article for our Mennonite Men newsletter. I reached out to Isaya's father, Tobias, to see about interviewing Isaya, and I was grateful that he and Isaya agreed. **Read the rest of Jon Zirkle's article for Mennonite Men [here](#).**

The gates at the entrances of West Bank cities: division and daily hardship

Across the occupied West Bank including major cities like Hebron (Al-Khalil), Nablus, Ramallah, and many towns and villages, Israeli forces have significantly increased the installation of heavy metal gates and military checkpoints at entrances to Palestinian communities. These gates have become symbols of fragmentation, control, and hardship in the lives of ordinary Palestinians. **Read B.O.S's blog post for Community Peacemaker Teams [here](#).**

Pasadena church looks back on ordeal by fire

California congregation is working to host Mennonite Disaster Service recovery efforts one year after wildfires. Rob Muthiah was preparing to teach a membership class at Pasadena Mennonite Church one day in October when he thought to reach for a familiar tool, the *Martyrs Mirror*. Then he remembered his copy of the book, which famously describes the death by burning of many early Anabaptists, had itself been turned to ash. That was one of many reminders of loss for Muthiah and his wife, Lisa, one of three families in the church whose homes burned to the ground in the Eaton Canyon fire, which destroyed more than 9,000 structures in neighboring Altadena in January 2025. When evacuation alert systems failed, one church family learned they were in danger only by being awakened by the noise of panicking neighbors around 3 a.m., just half an hour before their home would go up in flames. At least four other families suffered extensive smoke damage and toxic infiltration that kept them from returning to their homes for months. More were evacuated, sometimes more than once, and were homeless for days. The fire, which took three weeks to fully contain, marked the beginning of a challenging year for the Pasadena congregation, bookended by services of remembrance and lament. **Read the rest of Doreen Martens's article published by the *Anabaptist World* [here](#).**

Everybody's Theology Matters: The Images of God Project

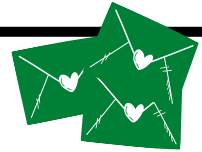
A couple of years ago, I joined a fellowship through the University of Birmingham, funded by the John Templeton Foundation, as part of the Psychology Cross-Training for Theologians initiative. The fellowship encourages theologians to engage psychological and qualitative research methods to consider theology from multiple vantage points. I found myself asking a simple question with significant implications: What might this kind of perspective reveal when the theologians are people with intellectual disabilities? That question led to the *Images of God* project. I collaborated with 11 Christian adults with intellectual disabilities across Ontario, inviting them to reflect on God and faith through arts-based practices. Participants took photographs that reminded them of God, kept journals, created collages within shadow silhouettes of their heads, and spoke with me about their faith and how they understand themselves. **Read the rest of Keith Dow's blog post for the Anabaptist Disabilities Network [here](#).**

Service reminds us that even the smallest acts bear holy fruit

In San Francisco, I work for Eviction Defense Collaborative (EDC), an organization which helps tenants facing eviction to stay housed. My role is in the legal clinic, which involves conducting intake interviews for tenants, drafting legal documents for clients to file, and later, referring their case to an attorney for representation in court. Before MVS, I did not have any prior experience working in the legal sector. Even so, I figured that after a few weeks, I would get the hang of it. After all, I was a fast learner... right? I was surprised at how long it took me to learn how to do my job. Each client who came through the door had a slightly different situation which required specific documents and legal defenses for their case. Furthermore, because eviction cases generally take several months to resolve, it took a while for me to see what a case might entail from start to finish. Even now, I am still learning how to do new things. **Read the rest of Bella Kephart's blog post for Mennonite Mission Network [here](#).**

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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

- 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; 574-315-2579
- Lauren Satchwell: Pastoral Team Lead & Pastor for Administration Commission,
Discipling Commission, & Vision Team;
lauren@normalmennonite.org; 309-830-6827

Commissions and Teams Contact List

Past Midweeks

Commission, Team, & Committee Members

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!

Work Order & Purchase Request Forms

Facility Use Agreement

Item Check-Out Request Form

Commission Meeting Minutes

Structure Documents
