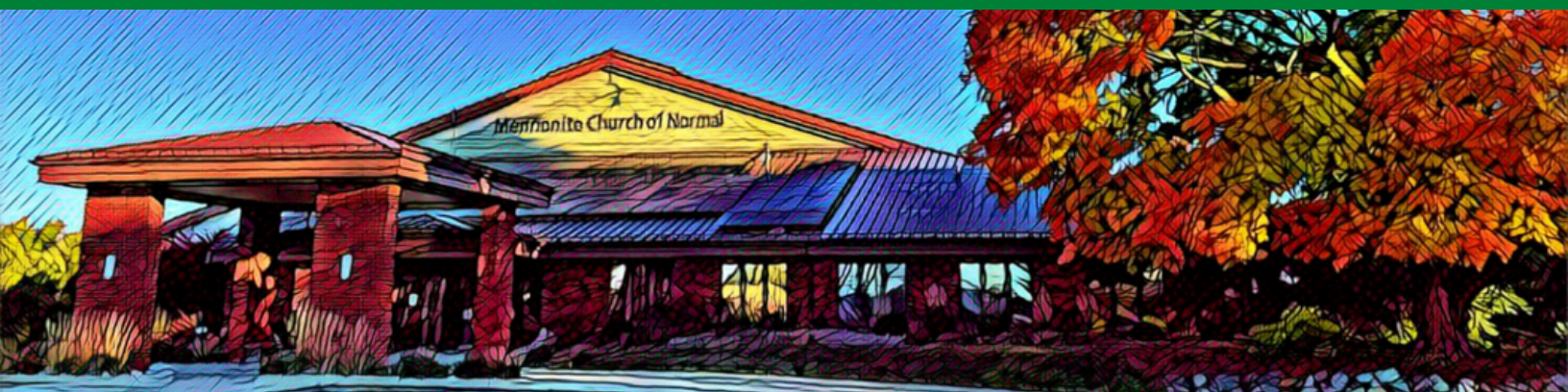


THE MIDWEEK



WORSHIP THIS SUNDAY 9:30 AM

This Sunday, Kevin Chupp will preach a sermon titled *Whither Water?* using Exodus 14:5-7, 10-14.

As the fleeing Israelites are trapped at the edge of the sea, they are confronted by rosy retrospection about their enslavement and begin asking Moses why he had led them to their death. Moses' response is not to defend his leadership, but to defend Yahweh, who has promised their deliverance. How does their tone change on the other side? What kind of trust is realistic? What kind is reckless? What kind of deliverance do we anticipate?

The service will be live streamed on YouTube at this [link](#).
The bulletins get posted under the Worship tab of our [website](#).

After Worship

Adult CE

Rooms 9 & 12

Children & Youth CE

Pre-K – 4th Grade

Room 11

5th – 8th Grade

Room 8

9th – 12th Grade

Rooms 5 & 7



**Mennonite
Church
of Normal**

A congregation of
Mennonite Church USA



Communion This Sunday



This Sunday, October 4

We will celebrate Communion in worship this Sunday with Kevin Chupp leading. In preparation, we are all encouraged to engage in self-examination of both our relationships with God, and with others. We also receive specially designated gifts for our Mutual Aid Fund on Communion Sundays as a means of assisting others in need through being the Body of Christ. There will be a special basket in the back of the sanctuary for those funds. If you would like to take communion at home, please contact Kevin Chupp.



Oak Flat Presentation

This Sunday, October 4 at 5 pm

On Sunday, Oct. 4, Meghan will share the about her experiences at Oak Flat (AZ) and other work she is doing with the Dismantling Coalition. Come learn history and updates. All are welcome at the Mennonite Residential Community's Community Building at 5pm.

Shared by the Community Life Commission

New Sunday School Class: God's Spirit/Our Stories

Beginning this Sunday, October 4

Do you ever wonder how members of our congregation discovered their spiritual gifts? Well, you can find out by coming to this class. Barry and Janet will co-facilitate a Sunday School Class titled God's Spirit/Our Stories. Each week they will interview a person or a couple about their stories regarding their spiritual gifts, and you can ask them questions too. This class also ties to our 2026 church theme of Connections. As we hear and affirm each other's stories we deepen our connections with one another. You are welcome to join Barry and Janet for as many Sundays as possible for this eight-class series. It will be held October 4, 11, 18, 25 and November 8, 15, 22, 29.



Meal Thank You

Thank you for all the wonderful desserts you brought for Sunday's celebration meal. Thanks to David for the special cookies with our emblem.

From Louise
p. 2

The Story of the Mennonite College of Nursing

**Saturday, October 10 at 10 am Illinois Mennonite Heritage Center
675 State Route 116, Metamora, IL 61548**

Join the Illinois Mennonite Heritage Center for "Pioneers in Healthcare Keepers of the Flame: The Story of the Mennonite College of Nursing" presented by Marry Ann Watkins, MS, RN; Catherine Miller, EdD, MS, RN, FAADN; Susan Blystone, MS; and Gail Lamb, EdD, MS on Saturday, October 10 at 10 am. Lunch will be served and donations are appreciated. RSVP to Lori at (309) 303-6950. **View the flyer [here](#).**



Connections Across 50 Years

Due Monday, October 12

If you have been putting off writing something for the collection of stories we are compiling (Connections Across 50 Years), now is the time to get pen to paper! We have extended the deadline to **October 12th**, which is quickly approaching. We would still love to have more personal or historical stories, and you can find more information including some samples [here](#)—or see the unedited preview of the book near the timeline in the atrium. Send your submissions to kevin@normalmennonite.org.

Non-perishable Food Donations for Worship

Sunday, October 18

World Food Day is October 16th this year. In our worship service October 18th, we will be using resources provided by Mennonite Central Committee to find inspiration in stories of resilience and innovation, and spiritual nourishment in worship. To commemorate this World Food Day, you are invited on October 18th to bring non-perishable items that will be dedicated to the Widow's Cruse during the service and then make their way to Mt. Pisgah's weekly food bank.

Midwest Food Bank Volunteering



Thursday, October 22 from 6-8 pm

Our next volunteer night at Midwest Food Bank (MFB) is October 22 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



Youth Mentorship Program

Families with children in grades 6-12 are welcome to seek a spiritual mentor for their child as part of MCN's Youth Mentorship program. Please contact Holly if you have questions or would like to participate in this program.

Shared by the Discipling Commission

Dementia Friendly Communities Workshop

Sunday, November 1 during the CE Hour

On November 1, Kathryn Johnson, Community Liaison for East Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging will share with us about Dementia Friendly Communities. Since most of us at MCN know someone with dementia, please plan to attend this important teaching and Q & A time on November 1. Kathryn has been invited by the Congregational Care Committee. Below is a description of the information that will be shared: *Dementia Friends is a global awareness initiative aimed at educating the public on how to better support people living with dementia and family caregivers in their communities. Unlike professional clinical training, this session is designed for everyone, from students to neighbors, and focus on small, actionable steps. Participants learn fundamental facts about dementia, such as it not being a normal part of aging and that it is possible to live well with the disease. After the session, participants become a "Dementia Friend" by committing to one practical action, such as being more patient in public or visiting a friend living with dementia."*

Fall Sausage Sale



Sign-Up Ends: November 1

Pick Up: November 22

The Illinois Mennonite Relief Sale is having a fall sausage sale! One pound bulk and one pound link packages of fresh sausage is for sale for \$6.50 per pound. Pre-orders will be taken from October 4 through November 1 via a sign-up sheet in the atrium. If you wish to extend the invite to order for those outside of church, folks can order [here](#). We will have the sausage ready for pick up on Sunday, November 22. Payment will be due at the time of pick up if not paid when pre-ordered.

Save the date and remember in prayer our 69th Illinois Relief Sale, scheduled for March 19 – 20, 2027. It's not too early to procure auction items!

Midwest Food Bank

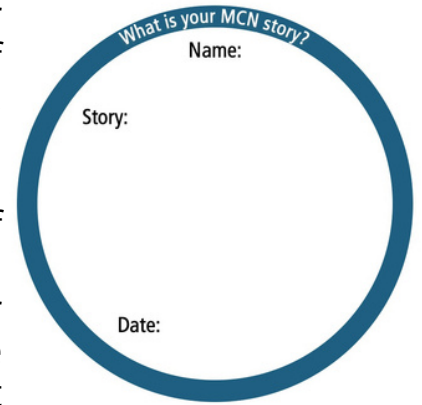


Thank you, Normal Mennonite Church Group, for your service project last week! Your group worked together to provide 2100 families with a bag of crackers just in time for soup season! That is amazing work in just a couple hours! We appreciate your support and hope we can count on your group to continue to support us by sharing your experience with your friends and family. If you post about your experience, please follow us, leave a review and mention us on our [Facebook Page](#). Please consider continuing to support us outside of the warehouse by giving financially... a dollar donation can turn into \$35 of food for someone in need. Check out our 3,400 Hope Pack Challenge! We are seeking sponsors for each child (\$68 year) that we provide weekend food for. To track our progress and sponsor a child, please visit and share [this link](#) with your team, friends and family to help us meet this important goal. We look forward to your next service project!

From Midwest Food Bank and shared by the Outreach Commission

MCN Timeline

On the North side of the atrium, you can see a 16-foot banner that displays the timeline of the history of Mennonite Church of Normal. It is not only large for the sake of being easy to read, but because we hope to build on it. There is space between some of the benchmark events for all of us to add our own points of interest to the timeline. You can simply grab one of the little circles provided, write whatever personal event you'd like—the time you joined us, a milestone like a wedding or baptism, a favorite experience, or whatever else you imagine (and the date)—and stick it directly on the banner wherever it fits. We hope this will be a fun way to revisit memories together the weeks surrounding the celebration weekend, but we can keep adding things for the rest of the year!



Those Serving This Week



Birthdays & Anniversaries

CELEBRATING LIFE'S MOMENTS AT MCN





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

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, September 30

9:30 am Wednesday Morning Book Group

1:00 pm Quilting

7:30 pm Vision Team (Zoom)

Thursday, October 1

7:00 am Next Man Bible Study

7:30 pm Discipling Commission (Zoom)

Tuesday, October 6

3:00 pm Pastoral Team (Zoom)

Wednesday, October 7

9:30 am Wednesday Morning Book Group

1:00 pm Quilting

Let's come together to make a difference for the Menno Haven Ministry

**MENNO HAVEN'S
FALL WORK DAY
OCT 31**

Meet at 8:00 am at Lakeview Lodge
Work projects end at 4:00 pm
Breakfast & Lunch are included!

WE NEED HELP WITH:

- ✓ Wood splitting
- ✓ Moving Picnic Tables
- ✓ Cleaning Windows
- ✓ Cleaning out gutters
- ✓ Spreading Mulch
- ✓ and more...

RSVP www.mennohaven.com/work-day sheena@mennohaven.com
815-255-4649

Grappling with AI as faith-based communities

A little over a year ago, [I \(Josh\) shared about the tension I was feeling in regards to Artificial Intelligence](#) (AI) as a result of my consistent engagement with it as Mennonite Central Committee's website coordinator. In the year since then, AI has only become more pervasive and ingrained (sometimes [in the most bizarre places](#)). My roles in church work and digital communication have kept me immersed in an ongoing conversation that has made me extra-sensitive to the impacts of these changes, as well as the importance of nuance. This has caused me to realize that there are issues that faith-based groups should be grappling with when it comes to AI. Here are five. **Read the rest of Alisha and Josh Garber's article published by the Anabaptist World [here](#).**

Children as Docents in a World of Wonder

Wednesday October 14 at 1 pm Central Time on Zoom

How might our engagement with children of all abilities and animals (specifically horses in this presentation) awaken in us wonder? In what ways can engaging in wonder enrich our ways of knowing and our ways of witnessing to the ongoing creative and redemptive work of God in the world? Benjamin Conner, Ph.D., is Professor of Practical Theology directs the Center for Disability and Ministry at Western Theological Seminary in Holland, MI. The Center exists to support ministry leaders of all abilities in nurturing and receiving the gifts and contributions of persons with disabilities through formational opportunities including theological education, consultation, forums, and publications. For nearly two decades Ben served with Young Life, including working with Capernaum, Young Life's work with youth with disabilities, and serving on the Capernaum mission-wide committee. NOTE: If you register and do not receive a confirmation email from Zoom, please check your spam folder. **Click [here](#) to register.**

Shared by the Anabaptist Disabilities Network

September E-memo: Upcoming Events

- **Announcing the 28th annual High School Essay Contest:** Our 28th annual [high school essay contest](#) is open for submissions! This year's topics are climate and peace, immigration, and conscientious objection. Submissions are due February 26, 2027, to your nearest MCC regional office. One grand prize winner will be awarded \$1000, with honorable mentions receiving \$250.
- **Every third Thursday: Borderlands and beyond: Monthly charlas with MCC (virtual):** The MCC U.S. Immigration Network facilitates casual virtual monthly charlas to engage with MCC's community partners, programs and leaders working in the U.S.-Mexico borderlands and beyond. [View the program calendar, previous recordings and register.](#)
- **Oct. 30-Nov. 1: The art of being creatures: A gathering for peace, climate and advocacy (Winnipeg, Canada):** [Applications](#) are being accepted for this international Anabaptist-led gathering of young adults and those who support the next generation of faith and climate leaders. If you are between age 18 and 30 and excited to explore the topic of peace, climate and advocacy with others, please [apply by Sept. 25](#) for one of 10 spots (travel, food and lodging fully covered).
- **Nov. 4-6: MCC UN Office student seminar:** During [this annual event](#), undergraduates from Anabaptist colleges and universities in Canada and the U.S. engage with United Nations diplomats, MCC experts, and global peacemakers to explore how the UN can foster peace amid today's pressing global conflicts. To learn more, read [this article](#) about last year's seminar.
- **Nov. 6-7: Waging peace summit:** MC USA, along with Mennonite Mission Network and Mennonite Central Committee U.S., will host the Waging Peace Summit at Forest Hills Mennonite Church in Leola, Pennsylvania. Rooted in Anabaptist faith values, the two-day gathering seeks to bring together Christians to explore faithful responses to war, political polarization, nationalism and violence. Keynote speakers: Shane Claiborne and Joy Metzler. More details can be found [here](#).

Shared in the [Mennonite Central Committee U.S. National Peace & Justice Ministries September E-Memo](#)

My brothers are laying down their lives

In 2024, I went on a healing journey, praying with Indigenous communities across the country. I live with multiple sclerosis and daily pain. My friend and colleague asked me, "If you believe in prayer, why don't you pray for healing?" I had to think about this. My friend asked me to consider taking a journey across the country to pray for my healing, together with Indigenous people. This felt so audacious. Together we struggle for justice and reconciliation. Each community has its own needs and concerns. Who am I to ask that their prayers would focus on me? But my friend was persistent, and I did travel across four states and 3,000 miles to pray with multiple communities across multiple tribes. Many of the young men who prayed with me in 2024 are now putting their bodies in the way of drilling at their most sacred site, Pe'Sla. In 2016, Lakota tribes put land in trust that they had purchased at Pe'Sla to be sure it would be protected and preserved for cultural use. A two-mile buffer zone was put in place around the sacred site, with a memorandum of understanding between the tribes and the National Forest Service. In violation of that agreement, at least 10 exploratory drilling sites are within the buffer zone. As I write this at the beginning of May, many of the young men who prayed for me and with me are chaining themselves to the drilling equipment as they sing their prayer songs. As people of faith, how are we to respond? When the vulnerable are exploited by the mighty, where are we to stand? And how must I respond, when my brothers are calling for allies across the country and across the world to join them as land protectors? **Read the rest of Sarah Augustine's article published by the *Anabaptist World* [here](#).**

Jesus meant what he said – a conversation with Sarah Augustine

Sarah Augustine's name may be familiar to you. She is an Indigenous Mennonite published author, scholar, advocate, organizer, and speaker — and one who dares to take the teachings of Jesus seriously. [In a recent conversation with me](#) on MCC's podcast Undercurrents, Sarah brought those teachings to bear on some of the most urgent questions facing people of faith today: What does the gospel actually demand of us — not just spiritually, but economically and politically? And where does our security truly come from? Pointing to Luke 4:18, Sarah roots the ministry of Jesus firmly in the tradition of the Hebrew prophets. In her words: "Jesus is coming to fulfil the prophecy of these prophets who were calling on a society to embody justice. Jesus came to liberate the poor. And he's very clear about that." She pushed back against the tendency to soften that message — to limit Jesus' concern for prisoners and the oppressed only to cases we find sympathetic. Jesus was not offering conditional liberation: "He says, 'Release for the prisoner and freedom for the oppressed.' Not [just] if it's a cause that I agree with and it makes sense from my point of view. He's saying freedom for the oppressed and the announcement of justice, the just reordering of human systems." From there, the conversation turned to something equally challenging — the myth of individual security through personal wealth. **Read the rest of Ken Ogasawara's blog post for Mennonite Central Committee [here](#).**

Everence Toolkit

Read Everence's Fall 2026 edition of their Toolkit [here](#). (Also available [en Español](#).)

Congolese award winner works for peace amid violence

MCC announces winner of Michael J. Sharp Global Peacemaker Award

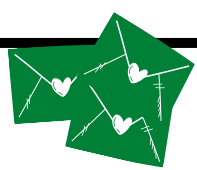
In the eastern provinces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DR Congo), where the earth holds minerals the world craves, the people who live off food grown in the rich, dark soil and raise families amid the lush, green hillsides are perpetually in danger. Hundreds of armed groups operate here – many of them attacking, robbing, raping and murdering people in their quest for power and money from mineral resources. In addition, mining operators forcibly remove people from their farmland, devastating it along with nearby forests and rivers. But that's not the whole story. Many Congolese people are working within this reality to encourage peace and insist on just treatment for their people. Programme de Paix et Reconciliation (PPR; Peace and Reconciliation Program) is among them. Starting in 2007, PPR staff and volunteer facilitators would risk their lives as they walked miles into the forest to encourage leaders of armed groups to demobilize, disarm and reintegrate into civilian life. Many combatants and their families returned to Rwanda, where the Rwandan government supported their reintegration process. Church and village leaders from rural areas helped PPR to initiate contact and build relationships with the combatants. To honor PPR's peacebuilding work, which currently focuses on mining justice, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) awarded PPR the 2026 Michael J. Sharp Global Peacemaker Award. The annual award, announced on Sept. 21, the International Day of Peace, recognizes and encourages courageous peacemakers throughout the world. **Read the rest of Linda Espenshade's blog post for Mennonite Central Committee [here](#).**



Our Members in Care Facilities



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



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!

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