THE MENNONITE CHURCH OF NORMAL | NOVEMBER 11, 2026

THE MIDWEEK



WORSHIP
THIS SUNDAY 9:30 AM

This Sunday, Kevin Chupp will preach a sermon titled *Motto or Motor?* using Micah 5:2-5a; 6:6-8.

The book of Micah starts with terrifying images of doom alongside promises that war will become obsolete, all needs will be met, "and no one shall make them afraid." What is path between these scenarios? Micah famously distills God's requirement: "do justice, love kindness, and humbly walk with your God," and we rightly see our marching orders in there. *But how do we hold these things together?*

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



Spending Plan 2027

This Sunday, November 15 at 1 pm

Please take some time to review the 2027 Spending Plan before the hearing this Sunday, November 15th. The intention of sending it out early before the hearing is to give people time to ask any questions you might have before the day of the hearing.

This year, there is both a standard version and a narrative version of the 2027 Spending Plan. Please note that only the Narrative Spending Plan will be presented on November 15, so please be sure to ask any questions about individual line items in the standard version ahead of time.

- You can view the proposed 2027 Spending Plan **here**.
- You can view the Narrative Spending Plan version for 2027 **here**.
- *Pastor/Staff insurance costs have been updated.*

If you have any questions, you are welcome to reach out to Mary by email.

Shared by the Administration Commission: Mary (chair), Heath, Cindy, and Lauren (pastor)



Congregational Meal

This Sunday, November 15 at 12 pm

The Fellowship Committee is planning a potluck for the November 15 meeting. We have divided people by last name to bring the following: **A-H** Sides or Salads. **I-P** Desserts. **Q-Z** Main dish. Please bring enough to feed 8 people, and as always, if you don't like your assigned dish, feel free to trade with someone else. We choose to do potlucks so people will not have to sign up. Thank you for your participation.

Shared by the Fellowship Committee



Advent Evening Prayer

Sundays at 6 pm and Monday-Fridays at 7 pm during Advent

Interested in keeping focused on the deeper meaning of Christmas during the Advent season? You are invited to join in Advent Evening Prayer from the comfort of your home. Each evening Sunday through Friday beginning November 29 you can light the candles on your Advent Wreath and join in the reading. On Sundays we will have Evening Prayer at 6 (to allow for choir practice) and Monday-Friday at 7 pm. During those times we will be using Kate Bowler's 2026 Advent materials. There is a link to a sample below. If 7 pm doesn't suit you, we will be reading from the Advent section of *Black Liturgy* by Cole Arthur Riley at 9 pm. Questions? Contact Lynn.

- Sample of materials for 7 pm. **Day 1: Sunday, November 29**.

Shared by the Worship Commission

Alternative Gift Fair

Sundays, November 15 & 22

The Alternative Gift Fair begins this Sunday. As usual we are partnering with two organizations, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) and Alternative Gifts International (AGI), to provide projects from around the world for giving opportunities. Gift lists are in your mailboxes at church and a children's list is available at the tables in the fellowship area. MCC and Alternative Gifts International catalogs are on the table in the library. Cards are available on the table in the Fellowship area. Please take as many cards as you need but no more.

Shared by the Outreach Commission

November 22 at 3 pm at Bloomington-Normal YMCA (202 St Joseph Dr)



Join the Bloomington-Normal YMCA for a gathering to celebrate unity, gratitude, and community. This special event welcomes all faiths to come together in the spirit of giving thanks as we reflect on the many blessings we share. Enjoy an evening of inspirational messages, music, and fellowship, and leave with a full heart and a sense of connection. Bring family and friends—everyone is welcome! ASL Interpreter will be present and a freewill offering will be taken. **Learn more here.**

Sharing Our Gifts

The "Sharing Our Gifts" slide show will be playing again this Sunday before and after the service and will be available to view in the following Midweek. If you've not sent in a photo yet, please do so! You can email them to the church office at church@normalmennonite.org. We're all eager to see how you are serving in your community!

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**. The November issue of the Connector is full of great stories from congregations around the conference. Emmaus Road Mennonite Fellowship (Berne, IN) recently dedicated artwork for their worship space, St. Paul Mennonite Fellowship (MN) held their final worship service and celebration, and CDC leaders gathered in October the learn about intercultural development. There are also a few important announcements and the latest edition of Doug's Mug. **If you would like a paper copy, they are now available to take from the Library Table.**

Those Serving This Week

Birthdays & Anniversaries

CELEBRATING LIFE'S MOMENTS AT MCN

This Week at MCN

A BRIEF LOOK AT THE CHURCH CALENDAR:

Wednesday, November 11
9:30 am Wednesday Morning Book Group
1:00 pm Quilting
7:30 pm Fellowship Committee (Zoom)

Thursday, November 12
7:00 am Next Man Bible Study
9:30 am Women's Bible Study
6:30 pm Administration Commission (Zoom)

Sunday, November 15
12:00 pm Congregational Meal
1:00 pm Spending Plan Hearing
7:00 pm Adult Choir

Tuesday, November 17
3:00 pm Pastoral Team (Zoom)

Wednesday, November 18
9:30 am Wednesday Morning Book Group
1:00 pm Quilting

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

Advent at Home 2026

Free Prayers, Scripture Readings & Liturgies.

Advent at Home is offered by Mennonite Church USA and MennoMedia to encourage meaningful faith practices during the Advent season. The 2026 guide features Little Liturgies created by The Soil and the Seed Project, a community-supported ministry that nurtures spiritual renewal through music, art and creative resources. You don't need a formal worship service or special materials to get started. Gather with family, friends or a small group, or use the guide for personal reflection. Each week's Little Liturgy follows four simple steps that cultivate "good soil." **Access the Advent at Home resources from Mennonite Church USA here.**

Registration is live for Fabulous Fierce & Sacred 2027

February 12-14, 2027
Early Bird Registration Ends: December 15, 2026

Join with fascinating queer folx and allies for the 2027 Fabulous Fierce & Sacred (FFS) Gathering! This will be a celebration of queer spirituality and creativity, an opportunity to share stories of courage and resistance and to equip ourselves for the ever-continuing work of liberation from ableism, white supremacy, cis-heteropatriarchy, and capitalism. Join us for music and worship, art, fellowship, learning, and community hosted by queer-affirming Anabaptists from Brethren and Mennonite churches and the Brethren Mennonite Council for LGBT Interests. FFS 2027 will be held at La Verne Church of the Brethren in La Verne, CA on February 12-14, 2027. The event begins on Friday at 5:00pm and ends on Sunday at 12:00pm PT. Big thanks to local congregations, Pasadena Mennonite Church and La Verne Church of the Brethren, for their robust hospitality and volunteer support to co-create this FFS gathering! Registration is open now! Register by December 15th, 2026 to be entered into a drawing for *fabulous* FFS prizes! Registration closes January 12th, 2027. **For more information, visit our website.**

Shared by the Brethren Mennonite Council for LGBT Interests

MennoCon'27

July 6-10, 2027

Next July, we'll gather to worship, learn and reconnect at MennoCon '27, MC USA's biennial convention, in downtown Cincinnati. Our home base is the newly reimagined First Financial Center. With room blocks at four nearby hotels, you can pick the stay that suits you. The new convention website is live. **Click here to browse and learn about the experience and ways to get involved.**

Shared by Mennonite Church USA

The walled world, also in Europe

Not long ago, citizens of the European Union were proud of their status as guarantors of human rights and social peace. Upheavals of the past — when economic rivalry and religious differences forced people, including Mennonites, to flee to the New World — had become nothing more than historical events. Postwar European protections for the weak and disadvantaged led to the EU being awarded the 2012 Nobel Peace Prize. Governments had advanced peace and reconciliation, democracy and human rights in a landscape that had known war and religious persecution for much of its history. But things have changed. Just as in the United States, newly arrived people seeking a better life discover that Europe's reputation for upholding human dignity does not match the reality. Many people who work for peace and justice in Europe mourn the loss of a welcoming culture. This was the underlying concern of a workshop I led with Nefeli Belavila on May 16 at the CMERK European Mennonite gathering in the Netherlands. We talked about the work of Community Peacemaker Teams, which accompanies refugees at the EU's borders. These are people who expected to be treated with greater dignity than in the places they fled. **Read the rest of James Jakob Fehr's article published by the *Anabaptist World* here.**

Minati and her son drink to their future together

When you give a gift through MCC's Christmas Giving Guide, you change someone's life.
Minati Kerketta can still remember the first sip of clean water from her new filter. For most of her life, she and her family did not have reliable access to clean, safe water at home or a functional restroom. For Minati, home is Kohinoor Tea Garden, found in the northern, hilly reaches of West Bengal, one of the largest tea-producing regions in the world. When local tea gardens — sprawling plantations — were established, the tea companies that owned the land installed basic plumbing infrastructure and provided simple on-site housing for laborers. As the tea industry has declined, maintaining those plumbing systems has not been a priority. Minati knew of the benefits that clean water and a functioning restroom would bring. But many families, who had gone without these amenities for so long, had little reason to know how practices like open defecation, improper handwashing and drinking contaminated water could spread illness. Through a local MCC church partner, Little Flock Fellowship, families like Minati's received portable terra cotta water filters, which filter out bacteria and contaminants. Safe water access couldn't have come at a better time for Minati, as she was growing her family. "When I became pregnant... I was able to stay healthy, and I safely gave birth to a healthy child," she says. Stories like Minati's are made possible through gifts in MCC's Christmas Giving Guide. When you buy the gift of clean water for a loved one, you're setting up people like Minati for long-term success. **To learn more visit mcc.org/Christmas.**

Shared by Mennonite Central Committee

Exhibition features Pennsylvania Dutch paper arts

An exhibition of distinctive paper arts from the cultures known as Pennsylvania German and Pennsylvania Dutch is on display through Oct. 30 at Penn State University Libraries' Eberly Family Special Collections Library. "Paper Paradise: Three Centuries of Pennsylvania German Fraktur and Scherenschnitte" features holdings from the collections of highly decorated calligraphic Fraktur and intricate Scherenschnitte (scissor cuts). These works often depict nature in intricate, symmetrical designs, with examples on display ranging from the 18th century the present. Highlights include a 1748 copy of Martyrs Mirror, a decorated songbook with music and lyrics handmade in the Ephrata community in 1789 and examples famous Fraktur artist Johann Adam Eyer from around 1790. The exhibition also includes work by contemporary artists Emily Decker, Patrick Donmoyer, Harriet Mether Rosenberg and Lynn Sommer. **Read the rest of Penn State University Libraries' article published by the Anabaptist World here.**

Journals of a pilgrim in his homeland

Stanley Green is the retiring executive conference minister of Pacific Southwest Conference for Mennonite Church USA. He attended a South Africa Just Peace Pilgrimage from September 9-14, 2026. A South African native, he offered his own unique perspective in the form of a series of posts on his Facebook page throughout the trip. Green was executive director of Mennonite Mission Network from 2002-2020. **Read Stanley Green's reflection published by Mennonite Mission Network here.**

To worship in spirit and truth

A nonbelieving friend recently attended a Catholic service for the first time since childhood and described herself as “enthralled with the long-forgotten but completely remembered beauty of the Mass.” She spoke of the gold vestments, candles, incense and back-and-forth singing, contrasting it with Protestant services she had experienced, which she perceived as “a cold, lifeless box.” Growing up in a conservative Mennonite church, I had the opposite experience. The interior of our sanctuary was starkly simple. We had clear glass windows, one of which overlooked the neighboring farm. During the sermon, I could gaze out that window and let thoughts of God float out to meet fields and sky. The prayers in our church were unplanned, reflecting the lives and personalities of the people who prayed them. The first time I attended a liturgical service, with a minister in a robe reading the same words other ministers were reading in other churches, I felt cold. While my initial response to “high-church” ritual was distrust and discomfort, an Anabaptist writer of similar background, Anna Graber (In Search of Healing), describes her visit to Catholic Mass as something she longed for, drawing her body and not just her mind into worship. Like Graber, many evangelicals are making a loop toward liturgies and visual, tactile religious experiences. I, too, have come to understand this desire, especially after reading Old Testament law, where God gives worship instructions that appeal to every human sense. The Israelites were to use color, incense, trumpets, bitter herbs. Their use of sensory experiences — as for the Catholic child — must have cemented the worship of God into their very bodies. But I can also appreciate my Anabaptist forebears’ dedication to simplicity and to never making an icon to represent an unseeable God. Perhaps the high-church worship tradition attempts to say that God is great and to lift our minds from our mundane selfishness, while the Anabaptist tradition attempts to say that God is humble and lives in our hearts. **Read the rest of Lucinda J. Kinsinger’s article published by the *Anabaptist World* here.**

When the land burns, who is left to face the fire?

Devastating wildfires have spread across Greece, worsened by government failure to invest in real prevention and rescue infrastructure. As the government aims to open a new detention centre in the middle of a forest, CPT Aegean Migrant Solidarity condemns its determination to place detainees in harm's way. **Read CPT Aegean Migrant Solidarity’s blog post for Community Peacemaker Teams 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

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

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!