THE MENNONITE CHURCH OF NORMAL | NOVEMBER 18, 2026

THE MIDWEEK



WORSHIP
THIS SUNDAY 9:30 AM

This Sunday, Kevin Chupp will preach a sermon titled *Who Wore It Best?* using Isaiah 2:1-5.

Isaiah's hope for transformation is profound, and his vision overlaps with others. Micah repeats the vivid image of turning swords into plowshares. The prophet Joel goes the other direction and imagines plows being turned into swords. *What does Isaiah have to say to the other two prophets? What is the role of metaphor and imagery in the work of justice? What is the shape of our own hope?*

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



Alternative Gift Fair

Last Day: this Sunday, November 22

A gentle reminder that Sunday will be the last day for the Alternative Gift Fair. Please put that extra check in your wallet or purse now, so you have it on Sunday. Let's bless the world with our gifts!

Shared by the Outreach Commission

Christmas Decorations



This Sunday, November 22

The church decorating committee would appreciate anyone who could help them dismantle the present decorations, and carry out the Christmas trees and put them in place and any other heavy objects this Sunday, November 22, directly after the service. Thank you so much!

Shared by Vivian and Nancy

Multifaith Thanksgiving Service

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.**



Church Office & Building Closed

Next Tuesday-Friday, November 24-27

The church building and office will be closed Tuesday through Friday (November 24-27) next week. Thank you for your understanding! **Please note:** the Midweek will be sent out on Monday next week, so the deadline to submit items for next week's Midweek is 8 am on Monday, November 23.

Shared by the Church Office



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 $40, *The Upper Room Daily Devotional* (delivered quarterly) for $9.30, 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 Wednesday, December 7th.**

From the Church Office



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 and the Zoom link that we will be using. 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.**

Shared by the Worship Commission

Special Advent CE for All Ages on December 6

Sunday, December 6

On December 6th, we'll have a special intergenerational Sunday School experience with Advent tangram puzzles, singing, and fellowship! This is the only CE experience that will be offered on that day. To help Discipling Commission prepare materials for the event, please sign up all members of your family on this **Sign-Up Genius**. We hope you can make it!

Shared by the Discipling Commission

Kay Yow Cancer Fund – Screening Mammograms at No Cost for Eligible Patients in McLean County

The Kay Yow Cancer Fund and Carle Health have partnered to provide funding for patients in McLean County to receive screening mammograms at no cost to those who are eligble. This funding will be available over the next two years (starting April 2026) and will be aimed toward increasing breast cancer awareness and encouraging screenings. Many underserved patients in our community experience challenge such as limited awareness about the importance of mammogram screenings, insufficient insurance coverage, and difficulties accessing convenient medical care. Together, we hope to help mitigate those challenges with the use of this funding. **Click here to view a flyer for more information about eligibility requirements, how to register, and location information.**

Shared by the Congregational Care Committee

Autumn Foliage – Kindness, Justice, Walking with God

I accidentally sent the wrong slides to Lydia for the Call to Worship last SundayI They were photos I put together for AllSaints two years ago which were similar but not all the same photos. They worked out okay, but did not fit as well with the readings that I shared about kindness & justice. **Here** is the correct Call to Worship if you would like to view it.

Shared by Joe

This Week at MCN



A BRIEF LOOK AT THE CHURCH CALENDAR:

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

Thursday, November 19
7:00 am Next Man Bible Study
9:30 am Women's Bible Study
2:00 pm Worship Commission (Zoom)

Sunday, November 22
7:00 pm Adult Choir

Tuesday, November 24
All Day Church Building & Office Closed
3:00 pm Pastoral Team (Zoom)

Wednesday, November 25
All Day Church Building & Office Closed
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



Those Serving This Week





Aurora and her garden are thriving in harsh conditions

When you give a gift through MCC's Christmas Giving Guide, you change someone's life.

Aurora Ibáñez's garden isn't just a place for plants and vegetables to come to life, it's also a place that gives life to her. She started her garden in El Alto, Bolivia, many years ago with support from MCC partner Fundación Comunidad y Axión (Foundation for Community Action). Over the years she's come to know the joy of working with vegetables, holding them in her hands and feeling them. For Aurora, the soil she so carefully tends is more than sustenance; it is resilience, resistance, dignity and hope. Her garden has played a vital role in carrying her through sickness, immense poverty and other hardships. In Bolivia, women like Aurora have often borne the pressures of rising food prices and constant scarcity. In the barren, dusty landscape of El Alto, where only potatoes and other root vegetables thrive, greenhouses like Aurora's became tools of transformation. With her garden, Aurora can cultivate not only food security, but also healing, agency and peace within families and communities. Transformation like this is made possible through gifts in MCC's Christmas Giving Guide. When you buy the gift of a garden for a loved one, you're setting up people like Aurora for long-term success. **To learn more visit mcc.org/Christmas.**

Shared by Mennonite Central Committee

Chorus Against the Merger: Take Action against the NDAA!

Thursday, November 19 at 7 pm CT

After decades of near complete dominance in U.S. politics, Israel's connection to the U.S. military industrial complex became ironclad. But over the last few years, Israel's genocide in Gaza awakened the U.S. public to this disastrous use of U.S. weapons. Israeli politicians now acknowledge they have "lost the U.S." Merely days ago, Trump announced U.S. aid to Israel would stop: but this is a smokescreen. Rather than require regular approval of the U.S. Congress to supply Israel with more bombs, the NDAA would lock the U.S. into a permanent military partnership with Israel. It's time for us to respond as Mennonites, fellow Christians, and friends. We're launching our **"Chorus Against the Merger" toolkit today**, with everything you need to know to organize an action, and we encourage you to **attend the Peace School Training on November 19th, 7pm CT.** I joined Mennonite Action's Palestine Solidarity Committee not only because I care about Palestinian lives, but also because U.S. complicity requires us all to speak out and resist it. It is hard to overstate the danger of this legislation. Not only would it ensure more violence and bloodshed for Palestinians and other people in the region, but it would also entrench an occupier ethos within the U.S. military and police. This legislation must be stopped!

Shared by Mennonite Action

Caring for those who care deeply about the planet

Small talk isn't on the agenda at a Climate STARR training. Instead, participants introduce themselves by answering the question: "How is your heart?" This opens the door for sharing about the psychological effects of climate change. The purpose is "not to try to convince anybody of anything," said Carolyn Yoder, who developed the training with others in the Climate STARR Collaborative. Rather, it's to "normalize the anxiety and the emotions" in connection to the climate crisis and find meaningful action. Emerging research shows climate anxiety and distress are rising around the world. A landmark 2021 study of 10,000 young adults in 10 countries, published in The Lancet Planetary Health, revealed climate change is psychologically damaging for multiple reasons. Many young adults live in constant fear of natural disasters and environmental changes. They also experience feelings of betrayal and abandonment when government leaders and older adults fail to address the crisis. Participants in the study reported chronically high levels of fear, worry, anger, grief, despair, shame and guilt. "Although painful and distressing," the authors say, "climate anxiety is rational and does not imply mental illness." The problem is when those emotions aren't processed adequately and translated into action. **Read the rest of Sierra Ross Richer's article published by the *Anabaptist World* here.**

The resistance of Grassy Narrows First Nation

Jenny, an organizer with SURJ and the Grassy Narrows Solidarity Group, joined a CPT delegation to Turtle Island three years ago. Since then, she has found ways to continue to support the people of Grassy Narrows. Here she reflects on lessons she learned and ways settlers can get involved in dismantling settler colonialism. **Read Jenny Coles's blog post for Community Peacemaker Teams here.**

Brokenhearted

A fractured past sparks a lover's quarrel.

"This country can only be loved with a broken heart." These poignant words were spoken six years ago on the 75th anniversary of the end of World War II in Europe. They came from the mouth of Frank-Walter Steinmeier, the president of Germany. He acknowledged his country's "fractured past, with responsibility for the murdering of millions and the suffering of millions. That breaks our hearts to this day." I've reflected on and quoted the German president's words over the past few years while teaching world and U.S. history to undergraduates at a Catholic college in Brooklyn, N.Y. I have urged my students to think of their own encounter with our nation's often-painful, sometimes-inspiring past and present as carrying on what William Sloan Coffin called "a lover's quarrel with their country, a reflection of God's lover's quarrel with the world." The contrast between our ideals and our deeds is impossible to deny and hard to face without eyes that fill with tears. As Anabaptists in the United States ready ourselves for the nation's celebration of the 250th anniversary of our Declaration of Independence, we should do so with broken hearts. And, as "good patriots" — in Coffin's words — we should carry on a lover's quarrel with our nation's past and present, not letting ourselves become "uncritical lovers" or "loveless critics." **Read the rest of J Robert Charles' article published by the *Anabaptist World* here.**

Carlos and Carla Wiens give healthcare lectures to traditional Mennonite communities in Bolivia

From May 11 to 15, Dr. Carlos Wiens and Carla Wiens visited and gave healthcare lectures to the Mennonite colonies of Valle Verde, Nuevo México, Valle Hermoso and Nueva Esperanza, located between San José de Chiquitos and Quimome, in Bolivia. We (Johan and Monika Harder) accompanied Carlos and Carla Wiens and brought not only knowledge but also encouragement, closeness and hope to many families. These were intense days, filled with service, teaching and Christian love. The topics addressed very real and urgent needs: disease prevention and detection, allergies, fungal infections, leprosy, the 10 most common types of cancer and other key issues for the wellbeing of families. Each presentation was an opportunity to sow knowledge that can save lives. These talks were aimed especially to those who are responsible for healthcare in these communities. The response from Mennonites in these communities was extraordinary. The welcome was warm, sincere and full of gratitude. Eighty-seven people traveled from distant locations, spending several hours on the road just so they wouldn't miss the lectures. In a gesture that spoke volumes about the existing interest and need, four participants even took taxis from very remote colonies just to be able to attend. **Read the rest of Johan and Monika Harder's article published by the *Anabaptist World* here.**

Items for the Midweek

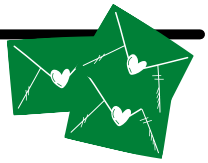


Please send items to be included in the Midweek to the Church Office no later than **8am on Wednesday**. Thank you!

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