



**Mennonite
Church
of Normal**

A congregation of
Mennonite Church USA

Offering Christ's peace to hearts, homes, community and world

December 23, 2015

MIDWEEK CONNECTION AT MCN

Today's Chuckle

Did you hear about the St Michael's Primary School nativity play?

Two children are dressed as Mary and Joseph, and they are on their way to the inn at Bethlehem.

Meanwhile on the other side of the stage, a lad in a shepherd's outfit is on a mobile phone. He is calling the inn to make a reservation.

Happy Birthday!

Deborah Spacek 12/24
Mary Kauffman 12/25
Joelle Friesen 12/27
Paul Watkins 12/30

Happy Anniversary!

Guilford & Eve Zook (61)
12/26
Rick & Connie Yoder (38)
12/28
Lisa & Frank Jablonski (14)
12/29
Holly & Randy Zehr (14)
12/29

Prayer Requests

Prayer is requested for:

*Health concerns for:

- *Cal Hubbard
- *Jordan Spacek
- *Russ Oyer
- *Peggy Moore

*Meghan Reha MCC
volunteer in Bangladesh.
*Matt & Deb Hickman as
adoption process moves
forward slowly.

*If you have a prayer concern
for which you would*

Worship with us this Sunday, December 27

The scripture for the worship is **Luke 2:8-14** and the title of the sermon is *Open Hearts on Display*. Pastor Schrag asks, "Would you wish for yourself an experience like the shepherds? Why or why not?"

Christmas Sunday is a joyful celebration with extra singing and all of our choirs. Worship will be extended and Christian Education classes shortened a bit. Dismissal from Christian Education will be the usual time.

Reclaiming Christmas: Hear with New Ears. See with New Eyes. For most of us The Christmas Story is very familiar. We've seen it in artwork and heard it told or sung for most of our lives. It might even seem ho-hum. But even though this sacred Story seems to remain much the same year after year, our lives do not. For some among us, and for our world, this year has been full of hardship. Our worship this Advent Season is an invitation to see and hear the Christmas Story anew! What might we see, or what will we hear this Christmas that is Good News in our needy lives and in our hurting world?

Sharing Time By Pastor During Christmas Season. We look forward to celebrating Advent and Christmas as a church family. We especially enjoy all the carols and holiday music. In order to include these musical treasures in worship during Advent and Christmas, the Worship Committee is asking that all Sharing Time items be put in writing and given to Pastor Tim *before the service*. Blue slips of paper are in a basket on the Entryway table for this purpose. Or you may send him an email. Pastor Tim will share all items for prayer each week prior to the Congregational Prayer.

Serving this Sunday

Greeters	South—Larry & Louise Reeser West—Amy Reiman
Welcome Table	Alice Swift
Ushers	Steve Stenger; Meredith Satchwell Ryan Miller; Chellie Miller
Worship Leader	Barbara Gillespie
Accompanist	Jenell Ulrich
Song Leader	Cindy Ropp
Children's Time	Pastor Jane Roeschley
Scripture	Barbara Gillespie
Sermon	Pastor Tim Schrag
Technology	Caleb Augspurger
Toddler Nursery	Need Volunteer
Preschool Nursery	Darvis King

MCN Events This Week

Thur Dec 24	Christmas Eve Service 6:30 pm
Sun Dec 27	Pre-Service Prayer 9:00 am Worship 9:30 pm

This Week at 805 S Cottage

The Church Office will be closed December 24 & 25.

appreciate the prayers of your church family, please call the church office at 452-6622 or email Lynn.

Conference Newsletters

[Click the link](#) to read the current *Heart, Soul, Mind & Strength*, IMC Conference Ministers Michael Danner & Kim Lltwiller's weekly message to IMC churches. Also, the latest copy of [Missional Crossroads](#) is available. The CDC Focus is available [here](#) and the CDC Reporter [here](#).

Partners in Healing

Mennonite Church of Normal join with other churches in the area to pray for various sections of Advocate Bro Menn Medical Center and Advocate Eureka Hospital. This month MCN is asked to pray for the Obstetrics Unit at Advocate BroMenn.

Please call the church office if you or someone in your family is hospitalized. Due to HIPAA regulations, persons may be hospitalized for several days before your pastors are aware of a need for pastoral care.

Voice of the Day

Want to keep Christ in Christmas? Feed the hungry, clothe the naked, forgive the guilty, welcome the unwanted, care for the ill, love your enemies, and do unto others as you would have done unto you."— Steve Maraboli

Memorial Service A memorial service for Jerry Musselman will be held at Mennonite Church of Normal at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, December 26. A fellowship meal follows, to which all are invited. Persons able to bring a salad or dessert should contact Marge Weaver by Thursday morning. Memorials may be designated for Camp Menno Haven.

Looking Ahead

Mennonite Disaster Service Trip, March 20-26, Bastrop, TX. Our congregation has reservations for up to 20 volunteers to work in Bastrop, TX. Bastrop is located in central Texas, 30 miles South East of Austin. The most destructive wildfire on record in Texas destroyed 34,000 acres in Bastrop County in September 2011. Approximately 1600 homes were burned in that county. Reports are that half of the homes were uninsured or underinsured. Nearly 12 percent of the population lives below the poverty line. Sleeping for volunteers at this site will be in bunk trailers, 5 persons per trailer, so "groups" of 5 men and 5 women would work out perfectly (Holy Spirit, help, please.) David Harnish will be bringing a few students from Flanagan High School. Please let Pastor Jane know if you can go, too!

Save the Date Spring 2016 Women's Retreat, April 22-23, at Menno Haven Camp and Retreat Center. Women of all ages are invited to come away together for a time of Bible study, reflection and fellowship. Details and registration information coming soon! Retreat co-sponsored by Illinois Mennonite Conference and IL Mennonite Women.

58th Annual Illinois Mennonite Relief Sale March 18-19, 2016 Interstate Center - Bloomington, Illinois The Relief Sale Board would like to encourage early donations for various booth areas. During this Christmas season, please consider making a gift to the Relief Sale to help those in need in 60 countries of the world. The list of suggested donation items is on the Atrium Bulletin Board.

Annual Relief Sale Distress Supper First Mennonite Church Of Morton February 9, 2016 - 6:00 P.M.

Please Note

Pastoral review of Tim Schrag as Lead Pastor of MCN The Church Board has completed the review of Pastor Schrag as Lead Pastor of the MCN with input from the congregation. As a result of that review, the Church Board recommends unanimously and enthusiastically that Tim Schrag be affirmed as Lead Pastor at MCN for a 5-year term beginning Aug. 1, 2016. A congregational vote on this appointment will occur at the end of the worship service on January 31, 2016.

Letter on escalating violence to Mr. John Kerry In November of 2015 MCC signed a letter, along with seven other international NGO and faith based organizations, to be delivered to US Secretary of State, Mr. John Kerry. The letter is a response to the increased violence in Palestine and Israel since the beginning of October. MCC and the other signatories of the letter request meaningful and just measures to address the root causes of the violence. We believe that the US must play a pivotal role in bringing about a just peace. The [letter](#) can be viewed at the MCC Palestine website.

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