

Annual Reports – 2014

Mennonite Church of Normal
805 South Cottage Avenue
Normal, Illinois 61761

Annual Congregational Meeting

Sunday, January 18, 2015

1:00 p.m.

Agenda

- 1) Call to Order and Opening
- 2) Pastoral Report
- 3) Acceptance of Church Reports
- 4) Financial Stewardship
 - a. Report on 2014 Spending Plan results
 - b. Approval of 2015 Spending Plan
- 5) Reports to Congregation
 - a. Encouragement and support for high school youth (2-3) and younger adults (2-3) to attend MWC July 21-26, 2015 in Harrisburg, PA.
 - b. Some Church Board activities over the next months
 - i. Review of the Pastoral Evaluation process and timing
 - ii. Review of the Leadership Selection process and timing
 - c. Other
- 6) Heartland Head Start Affirmation
- 7) Comments and Announcements
- 8) Adjournment

Staff

Senior Pastor – Tim Schrag

Associate Pastor – Jane Roeschley

Associate Pastor – Matt Hickman

Administrative Assistant – Lynn Reha

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Congregational Meeting January 19, 2014

Chairperson Lotus Hershberger called the meeting to order at 1:02pm. For an opening he read Isaiah 40:28-31 and Philippians 2:1-5. The renewed energy we are promised is used to work for and with those around us, seeking the best for the other. After a prayer, the business meeting began.

Pastoral Reports

Tim – It was a great encouragement to him, to read the 2013 annual reports booklet, from front to back, and to note that despite a year of some distractions for him personally and professionally, church business moved along seamlessly.

Jane – Continues to appreciate the support of the congregation.

Matt – Reiterated the experience of youth convention in Phoenix, the joy of five baptisms, and stepping in during Tim's sabbatical. Making plans for fall, and the influx of eight youth into MYF.

Acceptance of Annual Reports

Correction to committee roster – Tim Kauffman is serving his first term on Fellowship; Connie Reeser-Hall's term ends in 2015. Steve Stenger moved that the annual reports be accepted; Rick Satchwell seconded. Motion passed.

Financial Stewardship

Gail Fisher, outgoing FS Chairperson, reported that we ended the year with a deficit of \$1935.55. It is fully covered by a surplus in the Unrestricted Net Assets, which had a positive balance at year's end.

The committee is aware that our HVAC system is aging, and will likely be our next major expenditure down the road.

Rick Satchwell moved that the 2014 Spending Plan be accepted; Steve Stenger seconded, motion passed.

Campus Enhancement Plan

Eric Miller shared the overall plan for the campus study which has been almost two years in formation. Using congregational input, a committee appointed by the church board presented their findings to the board. A landscape architect was hired to draw up plans which were studied by the Church Board. After their input, a final concept plan was drawn up for presentation to the congregation at this time.

The playground is moved from its location on the south lawn, to the corner by the Head Start classroom. In the near future, Head Start will be required by DCFS to erect a 6-foot fence. To avoid the appearance of a "fortress" on our front lawn, it seems best at this time to relocate the playground.

A copy of the plan will be on display in the atrium. Members are encouraged to look it over.

Deep Roots, New Growth

This is a conceptual, or idea, document. It is not an action plan. There are not many details at all on the changes that the Board is suggesting might be made. An action plan is yet to come. Congregational insights are sought to help the Board work this out.

The DRNG study began a year ago. There are many voices represented in this document, representing many hours of work. The Board has worked on this, but congregational voices are also reflected here, from a variety of meetings in several settings.

The agenda for the annual business meeting is full. This being the case, the Church Chair is calling for a work session two weeks from today, to offer a venue for generating ideas and specifics from which to build the action plan. Read and ponder carefully for two weeks, and bring your responses and questions for clarification, and your ideas for implementation.

The memo is attached to these minutes. Lotus led the attenders through the memo, from front to back.

Lotus pointed out that current Board membership is out of compliance with our Constitution. Two of the Board members are not the committee chair, but rather a designated representative from the committee; a third committee has no representative at all on the Board.

Two weeks from today everyone is invited to come for discussion. On Tuesday, an email will be sent out with the memo as an attachment, allowing everyone to read and be prepared to bring questions, comments and wisdom to the meeting on February 2.

Associate Pastor Evaluation (Hickman) – On January 14 the Church Board approved the process for this review; forms have been distributed to a select group, due January 31. If others would like to offer their feedback, that is welcome. There will be instructions in Wednesday's Midweek Connection.

Administrative Assistant Position – Sue Schrag has submitted her resignation as administrative assistant, as soon as a suitable replacement can be hired, but no later than June 30, 2014. Lotus solicits ideas for how to proceed with this new hire.

Head Start Affirmation – Not only do we have a classroom where two classes meet regularly, serving 34 children and their families, Head Start also uses our facilities regularly for training sessions and other meetings.

Outgoing committee members – Jenell Ulrich (church chair); Mary Jantze (treasurer; continuing as assistant treasurer); Tina Hubbs and Rachel Zehr (Fellowship); Nancy Fisher and Darvis King (CE); Chellie Miller and Brian Harmon (YM); Ruth Haney and Glenn Busenitz (FS); Barry Weaver (Pastoral Council); Mike Company and Marge Weaver (Worship).

We are encouraged to keep the new committees in our prayers in 2014.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:52 pm. Lotus closed with prayer.

Minutes by Sue Schrag

Annual Congregational Meeting Work Session – February 2, 2014

Church Chair Lotus Hershberger called the meeting to order. As a light lunch was eaten, discussion began around each table. The first topic was the proposal for regional groups; secondly, proposed changes to the composition of the Church Board.

Regional Groups

What is a “regional group”? We get consistently high marks for friendliness. Where we falter is in taking the next steps, and more fully integrating new people. The idea is to assign everyone to smaller “neighborhood groupings” for making immediate connections among themselves in structured ways, with appointed and trained leaders to give guidance and oversight.

A regional group is not a large “small group.” Nor would a regional group function as a fellowship group.

We have a history of people who join our congregation, but slip out “the back door” a few years down the road and are barely missed. The hope is that regional groupings would help to better integrate such people more fully into the life of the church.

- What problem/s are we trying to solve?
- Is there anything we can or need to do differently to enhance what we have?
- New people are coming in, and what happens to them? This is a concrete way of making connections.
- The congregation needs to own this if it is going to work.
- Small groups have been attempted, with mixed results.
- The purpose is to be a neighborhood, or a connection, for both new people and longtime members, much like what the Mennonite Residential Community does for its residents.
- A regional group assignment pushes many of us out of our comfort zones.
- A regional group, with one contact person, wouldn’t necessarily meet on a regular basis, nor would its members necessarily have much contact with each other. The organizational requirement is for leaders who make the connections and give guidance to their group and its members. Every group would independently conduct itself as it wishes, within general parameters.
- The need for depth, and the need for networking, are both recognized. Regional groupings will not alleviate the deep need we feel for depth of relationship and connectedness. Their purpose is for connections on a different level, for a different purpose.

Deep Roots, New Growth – Questions about common vision and purpose, and congregational ownership moving forward. How do we tap into strengths, and move forward? It is important that there be trust among us in the decision-making process.

What is OUR VISION? We can’t build another building. What draws us together, to create community for this congregation as a whole?

Composition of Church Board

- A flow chart would be helpful, to understand the current structure and possible alterations

- The possibility of Board composition not including committee chairs
- We ran out of time. This issue requires more discussion, and participants hope this happens before proceeding further at the Board level.

The process by which issues are considered in the congregation has changed over the years. This is a natural progression, as time passes. If we are thinking of changes for the next generation, persons from that generation need to be involved.

Who is “the congregation”? The 302 members? Those who come on Sunday morning? Those who attend business meetings? Who do we mean, when we refer to “the congregation”?

It is a given that we will never all agree about everything. But we are not afraid of ideas. Let’s get the ideas out on the table and look at them in terms of discernment. How do we do this in the best way we can, in preparation for the generations to come?

Jane dismissed us with prayer.

Minutes by Sue Schrag

Congregational Work Session May 4, 2014; make-up session May 6, 2014

Chairperson Lotus Hershberger called the meeting to order. He welcomed all present (51 persons; 8 persons Tuesday evening). He read Philippians 1:3-6 and Isaiah 40:28-31, and offered an opening prayer.

The discussion centered around Board discernment re congregational leadership structures, following a year's worth of work in 2013, which was called *Deep Roots, New Growth*. See the blue sheet entitled *Work Session on Congregational Leadership*.

Lotus presented some history and data to set the stage. Our constitution has been changed several times since first written in 1977, the most recent in 2009. Some changes were mostly cosmetic in nature, but for the most part they were substantial. Some reflect outside events (e.g., the GC/MC merger), but mostly they reflect internal changes.

A major concern at this time is the make-up of the Board, and the continuity of participation. From 1998 until the present time (sixteen years), 48 persons have served on the board. One-third served one year, another third served two years; only two persons served more than 5 years in that period of time. Even persons who have served longer periods of time have tended toward scattered one-year terms. Our constitution would permit Board members to serve up to four years. Many years, at least half of the Board is new. Lotus pointed out that it takes time to learn the ropes as a new Board member, and with our recurring pattern of many one-year terms means this happens repeatedly. Among other organizations, terms of service vary from 3-5 years, with the option of repeating two or three times.

In some sense, change is in the wind. Staff changes are imminent. A new AA is on the immediate horizon; two of our pastors are either 60, or nearly 60. Looking at the years just ahead, this would seem an appropriate time to consider making some changes to the nature of our church board and its function. Rather than a program board, the vision is for a Board that will work more closely with long-range planning and overall vision, focusing on the overarching leadership and direction of our church's missions and ministries. Staffing needs, integration of our stated core values into worship themes and education, our place in the community, denominational issues, are some examples of the variety of issues that arise without a good place to process at this time. Asking Board members to focus on such tasks, without the added duties assumed as committee chairs, seems like a big enough job.

There was considerable affirmation for the ideas as read. Questions or concerns included:

- Does this as a whole spread responsibility out? The answer is "Yes."
- Does this imply additional responsibility for LSC? For the committee chairs?
- Remove pastors from the list of "collaborators"? Cluster leaders?
- Should the slate be distributed ahead of the November meeting?
- How do we encourage the discernment of spiritual gifts?
- Prospective Board members should be church members for a predetermined amount of time before being considered.
- Is the Board a purely visionary body, or would there be administrative functions as well?
- How will the work of the committees be coordinated? There may still need to be some structure for coordination, or checks and balances.

- There is an inference that committee chairs and Board members are perhaps subject to less, or more narrow, discernment than are the potential committee members.
- There is already a wide variety of tasks and roles performed and filled by our members. Does this potentially add to those?
- Policy issues belong to a governing board (e.g., child protection).
- Should there be changes to how the five members of the Leadership Selection Committee are chosen? General discernment, and “the lot”?
- The affirmation of those beginning terms, and the thanking of those who have served, could be more “public” (not just at the annual meeting).
- Include church offices held on name tags?

The meetings were each dismissed with prayer.

Minutes by Sue Schrag

Congregational Meeting November 16, 2014

1. Church Board Chair Lotus Hershberger opened the meeting with reflections on the themes of stewardship, leadership and community, read from Romans 12 and offered a prayer.
2. Financial Stewardship Chair Doug Ulrich introduced the group to the 2015 proposed budget. Doug and other Committee Chairpersons responded to questions as needed. The group reviewed the budget through a PowerPoint presentation. It was noted that the congregation will be asked to approve the budget through a vote at the January congregational meeting. The narrative budget accompanies these minutes. The narrative budget had been electronically distributed on Friday, October 31.
3. Leadership Selection Committee Chair Cory Culbertson presented the proposed new slate of committee members and chairpersons. They are listed on below (Leadership Selection Committee Section). The new slate was affirmed.
4. Church Board Chair, Lotus Hershberger, presented the appointments by the Church Board including possible delegates to the MC USA convention in Kansas. The eligibility of one person was questioned. The list of proposed appointees along with some openings is below. It was also noted that this year there more than the usual number of church conferences to attend with both Mennonite World Conference meeting in PA as well as MC USA conference in Kansas is session this year. These are in addition to the usual Central District and Illinois Conference meetings. The question of whether there should be support for persons asked to attend these as delegates was raised. If so should this be part of the Spending Plan or through fundraisers? Due to lack of time this issue will be discussed in another setting.
5. Pastor Tim Schrag noted the Nov 12, 2014 Wednesday session with conference ministers as well as others involved in conference leadership. Since that session is available on recording, there will be a second opportunity to here that discussion on Tue, Nov 19. These have to do with the issue of sexuality, which will likely be on the agenda at the MC USA meeting in Kansas in July.

Respectfully submitted by Lynn Reha

Area of responsibility	Continuing Church Board Appointees	New Church Board Appointees
Student Mutual Aid Program (SMAP)	Katie Driscoll Mary Dyck Darvis King Shannon Unzicker	Chellie Miller Mark Roeschley
MRC Board of Directors	Gerlof Homan Bob Kauffman Julie Musselman	Terry Wiebenga
Leadership Selection Committee (LSC)	Stephanie Company Rick Yoder	To be filled in January
Cemetery Committee	No new appointments needed this year	

Senior Pastor

2014 was a year of significant transition for Mennonite Church of Normal.

Part 1. These ‘big picture’ events are listed in chronological order.

- A. The decision to call Pastor Matt Hickman to a third term, this one for 5 years. I see this as a continuing major investment in the ongoing nurture of children, youth, and families of our congregation. This provided an opportunity for each pastor to step back and consider what will work best for us as a pastoral team moving forward. My role as lead pastor has been clarified, and I trust this will enhance the ministry of all three of us.
- B. The transition from Sue Schrag to Lynn Reha as administrative assistant. I would use the word ‘remarkable’ in two ways. First, I thank Sue for having done a remarkable job of serving the congregation over the past 6 years. But secondly, I think Lynn has been remarkable in how quickly and effectively she has been able to move into this role. Lynn has done this despite the personal tragedy she and Rick experienced with the accidental death of their son Matthew.
- C. The implementation of Area Clusters. Pastor Jane and I share oversight of this ministry, with particular focus on encouraging and equipping Area Cluster leaders. I am most grateful for Jane’s contributions to this ministry. I am also grateful for the gifts of each of the leaders. Already there have been multiple instances of fellowship, networking, and personal care flowing from this arrangement.
- D. The congregational decision to change the constitution. The changes will not take effect until 2015, so time will tell if and how this will bear fruit. From my perspective, this is the culmination of the Deep Roots, New Growth process in which I had considerable investment of time and thought. The strong vote of affirmation of the constitutional change seemed to validate the process of discernment which was used, as well as the outcomes.

Part 2. The customary rhythms of congregational life continued. These included sad goodbyes to deceased members, joyous dedications of newborns, baptisms, warm welcomes to new congregational attendees and fond farewells to those departing. Additionally, congregational life involves encouragement, teaching, prayer, counsel, comfort, fellowship, fun, and consolation. Sometimes my pastoral role is to take the lead. Much more often I watch appreciatively and (I hope) encouragingly as congregational members themselves manifest Christ’s love.

In general, my roles of preaching, administration, and pastoral care continued without substantial change.

Part 3. I find myself looking ahead to 2015 watching (with optimism) the following.

- A. The functioning of our new leadership structure, especially the church board
- B. The role and activities of the Area Clusters
- C. The ability of our congregation to transition from a season of inward focus, to more emphasis on being missional. I note the calls which came at congregational meetings for a larger congregational missional project, with perhaps a desire that this be local. I am most curious what God will reveal to us.
- D. Finally—more than ever before—I believe a powerful God is paying attention to our particular congregation. If we will in turn worship God, and seek His face, I believe we will find abundant life, which will result in fruitful discipleship. I myself am committed to such worship and attentiveness. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve MCN, and for the support offered to me and Sue.

Tim Schrag

Associate Pastor of Worship and Lay Ministries Report 2014

This half-time ministry continues to focus on the weekly and seasonal rhythms of worship, on supporting lay ministries, and on other tasks such as pastoral care and administration. I work closely with Outreach Committee, Worship Committee, Leadership Selection Committee, Pastoral Council and Church Board. **Seeing the many way God calls and uses persons in our congregation** is one of the very special joys of ministry for me.

- **Special events** this year included the Bluffton University Shining Through concert in March, IWU Piano Quartet concert, and the Ministry Recognition Sunday for Wayne and Lois Hochstetler upon their retirement from Mennonite Mission Network. A Sunday afternoon **Puppy Party** in July brought 50-some folks out to our farm!



- Our **Bridge of Hope Mentoring** friendship ministry drew to an unexpectedly close when “our family” relocated to Michigan. There were very good and rich experiences and blessings --as well as a challenges in that endeavor-- in which we all saw God at work. We all discovered more about ourselves, the phenomenon of friendships outside our normal circles, and the challenges of leaving homelessness. It is a hope that MCN will have another Mentor Group sometime in the future.
- I led an **adult CE elective this summer** based on the Sunday worship scripture passage. Over the course of the summer a variety of individuals participated. I typically preach once a year.
- In April I visited Bluffton University as **Minister-in-Residence**, speaking in the weekly Chapel service. I was one of the congregational delegates to **Central District annual conference** in Madison, WI in June and am **serving as the Chair of the CDC Ministerial Committee**. My term on the **Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary Board** concludes this coming May and I have been appointed to the Bluffton University Board of Trustees beginning after MCUSA Convention in July.
- Walking with **persons in need of pastoral care** due to changes in their lives, loss and grief, desiring spiritual direction, or simply needing a listening ear continues to be a deep and holy privilege. Mark and I have also received much care this year from our congregation. **Thanks.**
- Serving as **pastoral mentor to Melika Hershberger in the JOURNEY program** was a rich privilege. The formal JOURNEY experience for Melika drew to a close this summer, but we will continue seeing fruit from that for many years to come. I led a Worship Leaders Orientation and we recently welcomed one of our youth in the role of **Sunday morning Worship Leader!**
- I participated with 4 others persons across MCUSA in a **peacemaking spiritual practices** exercise led by Jason Boone of the MCUSA Peace and Justice Support Network. The goal is to help identify spiritual practices peacemakers can cultivate. PJSN is finding there is a growing call for spirituality resources in their work with congregations.
- **Administrative tasks** are a necessary undergirding of the work of ministry. In my office those tasks include scheduling meetings and people, writing references, filing reports, writing articles, ordering supplies, making phone calls, email, and routine ministry planning.

- A highlight of the year that brings a new burst of joy and energy for me came about in our launch of the Area Cluster Groups across the congregation. Along with Pastor Tim, I help to **give support to the Cluster Leaders in their ministries.** It is work I love, and seeing the way God is at work in our Clusters is a tremendous joy!

Jane Roeschley

**Matthew D. Hickman, Associate Pastor of Youth and Family Life
Annual Report 2014 in Limerick Form**

I underwent a term review;
affirmed with a sigh and a whew.
I was not rejected,
was instead reelected.
So my family remains in the pews.

Each week I teach Sunday School,
giving youth good biblical tools.
Should one fall asleep,
lacking Saturday sleep,
we wake them before they can drool.

MYF traveled far to Kentucky,
our fingers and toes got quite mucky.
With MCC SWAP,
learned the tools in the shop;
found we are comparatively lucky.

Junior high winter camp is quite nice,
except when one gets stuck on the ice.
Without taking a spill,
Sherriff led down the hill.
Took another route, not trying twice.

Every so often a group needs some help,
through a microphone they wish to yelp.
I put up v-ball nets,
so the players can set.
I like helping out the wee whelps.

I preach several times in the year,
so God's people the Gospel will hear.
Do not keep to yourself,
nor place it up on a shelf,
for the Kingdom of Heaven is near!

Pastoral care is quite like an art,
with folks, showing Jesus' heart.
In spite of the tensions,
never told, neither mentioned,
God's Spirit from us ne'er departs

Membership Statistics

Membership as of January 1, 2014		302
Members gained by Letter of Transfer		0
Members gained by Transfer		6
Sarah Nichols	April 6	
Emily Petri	April 6	
Erin Ripley-Gataric	April 6	
Courtney Yoder	April 6	
Elfriede Massier	May 25	
Larry Schrader	May 25	
Members gained by Affirmation of Faith		1
Aaron Petri		
Loss of Members by Transfer		(2)
Bambi Desch Lee Morrison	May 18	
Gretchen Knapp	Dec 2	
Loss of Members by Death		(4)
C.J. Dyck	January 10	
Alice Jiles	March 12	
Jeannie Nafzinger	March 25	
Franzie Loepp	May 18	
Membership as of December 31, 2015		303
Marriages		
Sophie Charles and Henry Dick	August 30	
Births		
Jace Michael Hoffman to Phil & Kristy Hoffmann	June 4	
Hayden Olivia Yoder to Reuben & Courtney Yoder	June 14	
Child Adoptions		
Bryce Donovan Kenneth Nester Nevaeh Marie Christine	June 30 (Date of Adoption) By Stephanie and Duane Nester	

Officers, Committee Members, and Appointments for 2015

* indicates committee chair for the year

Committee or Position	Continuing Members	Persons Affirmed to start 2015 Term
Church Chairperson		Lotus Hershberger
Treasurer		Adam Augspurger
Assistant Treasurer		Mary Jantze
Church Board		Stephanie Company (2015) Eric Miller (2016) Cindy Ropp (2017) Larry Schrader (2015) Rick Satchwell (2017) Mary Ann Watkins (2016)
Christian Education Committee	Bess Desch (2015) Beth Reeser (2015)	Annette Harnish (2016) Marcia Rossi (2016)
Fellowship Committee	Mary Engel (2015) Tim Kauffman (2015) * Connie Reeser-Hall (2015)	Leroy Loepp (2016)
Financial Stewardship Committee	Linda Clemmons (2015) Gail Fisher (2015) Rick Yoder (2015)	*Doug Ulrich (2016)
Outreach Committee		Ardys Serpette (2016) *Phil Dick (2016) Rick Reha – 2016 Gerlof Homan (2016) Dorothy Zehr (2016)
Pastoral Council	Judy Hershberger (2015) Hazel Yoder – 2016 Steve Stenger (2017)	*Keith Unzicker (2018)
Worship Committee	Louise Reeser (2015) Randy Zehr (2015)	Elfriede Massier (2016) *Cindy Ropp (2016)
Youth Ministry Committee	Lauren Satchwell (2015) *Todd Kettering (2015)	Darvis King (2016)

The Leadership Selection Committee members in 2014 were Cory Culbertson (Chair), Roelie Homan, Lisa Jablonski, and Shelly King. Pastor Jane Roeschley is the staff liaison for this committee.

Church Board Report for 2014

The Church Board for 2014 consisted of continuing members Gail Fisher, Connie Reeser-Hall, Annette Harnish, Judy Hershberger and Eric Miller along with new members Cindy Ropp and Lotus Hershberger, Church Chairperson. For openings the first several months we heard personal stories of how we found ourselves at the Mennonite Church of Normal from each of the members as well as the pastors.

As the year began, in addition to the usual issues, there were four major agenda items facing the Board: 1. Beginning implementation of the campus enhancement plan. 2. Pastoral review of Associate Pastor Matthew Hickman. 3. Discernment and implementation of the results of the Deep Roots New Growth study of the past two years. 4. Filling the Administrative Assistant position given the resignation of Sue Schrag to take effect not later than July 1, 2014.

For the campus enhancement plan a number of trees were planted in the spring and there were continued conversations with Head Start about the possibility of relocating the current playground equipment to the northwest corner of the building. Questions of sufficient space, costs of moving the equipment as well as the required fence to surround the new space were explored. Later in the fall we learned that the current equipment does not meet current DFSC standards and presents a liability for the church. At the November board meeting it was decided that the equipment will not be relocated but will be removed as soon as possible.

The pastoral evaluation proceeded in the usual manner with input from selected congregational members, all members of the board, other pastoral staff and from Matt's self-evaluation. The Board examined carefully all of this information and recommended that Matt be offered an additional term. The congregational vote occurred on March 9, 2014 and as a result of that vote Matt was offered a five-year term ending in 2019.

The hard work of the Church Board over the past two years came to a conclusion at the end of 2013 with a set of ideas that needed additional discernment and possible implementation. There were two major areas of discernment and plans. One was the idea of regional cluster groups and the other was significant change in the current constitution having to do with the structure of the church board. The Board thought long and hard about these issues, sought additional congregational input at congregational meetings and work sessions and, reviewed and revised plans in light of the voices in the congregation. As the result of this discernment cluster groups were formed and were in operation by early fall. Proposals for changes in the constitution were drafted and revised and brought for a congregational vote on Oct 5, 2014. The vote affirmed changes that will be implemented Jan 1, 2015.

The fourth item was the resignation of the then current Administrative Assistant. A Selection Committee was formed, position description developed, application process outlined, etc. The position announcement was made in March, applications were received, sorting and checking of references completed, interviews conducted and a final selection was made. On May 24, 2014 it was announced that Lynn Reha would become the Administrative Assistant at the MCN on July 1, 2014.

As part of their usual work, the Board continued to review minutes and respond to questions from the Committees as they arose, make appointments as needed, tried to anticipate needs for upcoming conferences and events, reflected on what we heard from church members, etc.

On a personal note, I want to thank the board members for their hard work on many tough tasks, for their willingness to express their points of view and work with the new guy on the block, me.

Given the changes in the way the board is formed, all of the current Board members are completing their terms on the Board as representatives of major committees. Although two will join the 2015 Board, they are there in different roles.

Submitted by Lotus Hershberger, Church Chairperson

Pastoral Council Annual Report for 2014

The Pastoral Council meets regularly on the first Thursday of each month. Details about the work of the Council are summarized in the Pastoral Council brochure that is distributed to each church family and is available in the church office. The list of care includes the following: Offering counsel, prayer and personal support for our pastors; Assisting the pastors and parish nurse with caring for our church family; Checking in with individuals and families throughout the year about their personal and spiritual needs; Praying regularly for all who worship at MCON; Coordinating congregational mutual aid; Considering requests for baptism and church membership; Encouraging the development of leaders in the congregation; Planning adult Christian education; planning and serving in the rituals of congregational life; and participating in pastoral reviews and discussion of personnel matters as requested

The Council has prepared and served communion each time presented during the church year, has given mutual aid to those in financial need various times as needed, and has assisted others with financial needs in times of church functions held at other locations.

Pastoral Council members this year were Hazel Yoder, Judy Hershberger, Steve Stenger, and Roger Clemmons. The council met each month with Lead Pastor Tim Schrag, Associate Pastor Jane Roeschley, and Associate Pastor Matt Hickman. Judy Hershberger served as Chair of the Council while Roger Clemmons served with SOOP during the first quarter of the year. Keith Unzicker will be welcomed to the Council in January of 2015.

Parish Nurse Marge Nester met periodically with the Pastoral Council to offer updates and care concerns for members of the congregation.

We continue seek God's guidance as we serve and nurture the members and attendees of the Mennonite Church of Normal. I have found it a great privilege to serve the congregation in this way.

Submitted by Roger Clemmons, Chairperson

Worship Committee

The Worship Committee shall, in conjunction with the Pastors, give oversight to the worship life of the congregation. – MCN Committee Handbook

Committee members include Jane Roeschley/pastoral staff, Cindy Ropp/chair, Lynn Reha, Randy Zehr, and Louise Reeser.

The focus of our work this year included:

- hosted Piano Quartet – connected to us through Illinois Wesleyan University. This recital was wonderfully attended and appreciated.
- hosted Shining Through – Bluffton College group – March 2. We partnered with Youth Ministry Committee to include the youth at a “meet and greet” with the singers.
- Lent – we facilitated the use of the denomination Lenten materials while adding some material of our own, focusing on the theme “Encountering God: What we have witnessed...” This included original dramas that were performed by a team of lay persons.
- hosted a luncheon for those who participated in the Lenten dramas to discuss further opportunities for drama in our worship
- relocated the choral materials to the upper level of the mezzanine and re-worked the closet in the MYF room for costume and cloth storage
- supported Junior Choir with an end-of-the-school-year pizza party and bowling
- discussed at length ways in which we can support all those involved in Sunday morning worship
- Advent and Christmas – we created our own materials for this season, based on scriptures suggested in the denomination Advent/Christmas materials

The work of the Worship Committee often lies in organization. It is through the gifts of so many others who beautifully share during our worship that our services breathe life. We are grateful for your willingness to partner with us.

~ to paraphrase a bit...when in our worship God is glorified, and adoration leaves no room for pride, it is as though the whole creation cried alleluia!

Cindy Ropp, Chairperson

Christian Education Committee

The Christian Education committee was comprised of Bess Desch, Annette Harnish, Beth Reeser, Marcia Rossi, and Pastor Matt Hickman.

We sponsored a well-received Three Kings Extravaganza during the Sunday school hour for the third consecutive year. It was rescheduled due to inclement weather and took place Feb. 9. Children's Sunday school classes participated as well as others from the congregation who chose to share varied talents. The C.E. committee provided refreshments in between church and Sunday school.

Family Fun Night was held Feb. 7. Connie Yoder prepared the meal, Rick Reha served as music leader, and Pastor Matt provided the worship theme on Hezekiah. It was fairly well-attended but being only one evening was disappointing for some. We are looking at adding more evenings in 2015.

More than twelve children made use of the student passport program to help defray costs for summer camp.

Our Noisy Offering for 2013-14 was split between two organizations: Mennonite Mission Network for Northern Ireland (Jan.-May) and Walk In, Bike Out (June-Aug.).

Summer Sunday school classes were condensed into three classes. Volunteers from the congregation filled in so the regular teachers could have a break. One Sunday was spent at Sugar Grove Nature Center, coordinated by Louise Reeser and Marcia Rossi, and another Sunday the two older classes enjoyed a "Music Sunday" organized by the Culbertson family.

Our Sunday school classes are growing! One class was added this fall so that we now have five classes (3-year-olds, 4-year-olds, Kdgn./1st grade, 2nd/3rd, and 4th/5th). The new "Shine" curriculum is being used by all classes.

Many, many thanks to our dedicated teachers, helpers, prayer partners, and nursery helpers for making our Christian Education classes something our children greatly look forward to each Sunday!

Annette Harnish, chair

Fellowship Committee

Members of the Fellowship Committee for 2014 were Mary Engel, Leroy Leopp, Tim Kaufmann and Connie Reeser-Hall. Pastor Tim Schrag served as Staff Representative.

Fellowship Committee continues to seek out ways for our membership to actively engage in connecting with each other despite our geographic diversity. Toward that end, a number of events were held throughout the year:

- Winter Retreat at Camp Friedenswald, organized by the Nester and King families.
- Third Sunday Fellowship dinners to increase fellowship time among members of the church. Some of the special meals were: potlucks, finger foods, bake potato buffet following the “Relief” sale, Easter brunch and fall favorite recipe.
- Annual church picnic was held at Menno Haven led by Keith and Shannon Unzicker.
- Families with young children organized by Shelly King provided various activities throughout the year.
- Surprise Luncheons in December.
- Committee recruited volunteers through the year to have some fun with kitchen cleaning.
- Coffee Hour following the church service coordinated by Leroy Loepp.

Fellowship Committee looked for ways to include others from the congregation in leading an event (summer church service), working in the kitchen cleaning or serving coffee after the church service.

Connie Reeser-Hall, Chairperson

Financial Stewardship Committee

As usual the Financial Stewardship Committee (FSC) had a busy and productive year. The largest portion of our time consists of maintaining and, as necessary, upgrading our “physical plant”. We also monitor the finances of our church and prepare the Annual Spending Plan. It is work that keeps us constantly busy. Following are highlights of our year-

- 1) The upgrades to the sound system and the new AV booth were completed. Thanks to all who helped and volunteered with this project.
- 2) Twelve new native trees were planted on our campus by Accent Nature. This was paid for with money from various Memorial Funds accounts.
- 3) The main office copier lease expired in 2104 and we purchased a “re-conditioned” copier to replace it. We decided that purchasing was much less expensive than the lease we currently had.
- 4) Our committee spent almost one entire day cleaning out janitor closets in the church. They looked so much better when we were done!
- 5) The plantings and old shrubbery on the south side of the church were replaced with all new landscaping done by Accent Nature. We received a lot of positive comments on this change.
- 6) Church “deep-cleaning”. A number of groups helped with the annual church cleaning. We do continue to struggle finding enough volunteer help to get these jobs done. If this continues we may be forced to pay an outside service to complete this work.
- 7) John Reimer volunteered to repair a large number of our oak sanctuary chairs. Thanks John!
- 8) Roger Clemmons did some major repairs on the Nursery bathroom. Thanks Roger!
- 9) Outdoor playground equipment. We spent many hours working on a plan to move the playground equipment owned and used by HeadStart on our campus. After much work it was determined that moving the equipment will not be feasible given new standards in place for safety. We are currently working with HeadStart on a solution to this problem.
- 10) David Warfel volunteered to complete a lighting analysis of our Atrium lighting needs. We will be replacing the atrium lighting in 2015 and expect to see huge benefits from this. Thanks David!

Our committee structure will not change in 2015. Members of the committee will be: Adam Augspurger (Treasurer), Linda Clemmons, Gail Fisher, Lynn Reha (Staff), Doug Ulrich and Rick Yoder.

Doug Ulrich, Chairperson

Outreach Committee

Members of the Committee: Joe Haney, Rick Reha, Ardys Serpette, Deb Stenger and Jane Roeschley, staff

Outreach Committee met monthly except for Feb and June.

Business this year included:

1. Collections of Welcome Kits for Labyrinth Outreach to Women, sweatsuits for the Compassion Closet at Advocate BroMenn, Relief Kits for MCC Iraq, coats for Jesus House.
2. Identifying Congregational Coordinators for the MCC Relief Sale.
3. Discontinuing MCN involvement in Downtown Block Party.
4. Bridge of Hope Mentor Group completion.
5. Shelving for Immanuel Health Center
6. Financial assistance re: Comforters project for Washington tornado survivors, Living Water Church Nepalese ministry, new VORP program, Labyrinth Outreach, Jesus House, Ebola work in west Africa, and elevator for Plow Creek Church.
7. Plans for March 2015 MDS Trip to Jamestown, CO

Submitted by Jane Roeschley

Youth Ministry Committee

The youth programs at MCN continue to thrive and grow as we have been blessed with consistent youth attendance and participation as well as caring and devoted sponsors/leaders. 2014 was a busy year for Youth Ministry Committee as a lot of time and energy was devoted to preparing our high school youth and sponsors to attend the SWAP (Sharing with Appalachian People) service trip in Hindman, Kentucky and the junior high youth to attend the Know Jesus conference in Goshen, IN. A special thanks goes out to Leo and Bess Desch, who accompanied the MYF on the SWAP trip and provided excellent guidance and leadership.

Additional highlights of the year included:

- MYF New Year's Eve lock in at the church
- JMYF and MYF winter retreats at Menno Haven (including an adventurous van ride for the JMYF)
- Creative MYF fundraisers which included: Farm cookout at Fishers', Sunday brunch at Larry and Elfriede's, 'Taste of Scotland' gourmet dinner at Gillespies', Dress for Less wardrobe seminar by Julie Musselman, Relief Sale breakfast help and recycling, Henry and Sophie Dick wedding and Bluffton meal
- JMYF fall kickoff retreat at Menno Haven
- JMYF and MYF volunteering at Midwest Food Bank
- MYF providing supplies for, and assembling, homeless kits for Jesus House as well as preparing and serving a meal
- Acquisition of new classroom bibles as well as additional room enhancements for Jr High SS

Both JMYF and MYF continue to meet weekly and the regular number of positive interactions and relationship-building activities which occur are too numerous to mention.

Youth Ministry Committee expresses its deep gratitude for your prayers and support for our youth activities during 2014. In addition, the committee thanks those who have served during the year and will continue to serve in 2015:

Chris & Cory Culbertson, Shannon Unzicker and Lydia Wilson – JMYF sponsors

Pastor Matt Hickman, Tina & Jeremy Haab and Mike Company – MYF sponsors

Laura Dick and Peter Roth – Junior High Christian Education

Pastor Matt Hickman – High School Christian Education

I also want to thank Pastor Matt Hickman, Peter Roth, Lauren Satchwell and Todd Kettering, who faithfully served on Youth Ministry Committee this past year. I am grateful for your wisdom, dedication and caring attitudes.

Eric Miller – Chair

Peace and Justice Committee

It is not true that we must accept inhumanity and discrimination, hunger and poverty, death and destruction—
This is true: I have come that they may have life, and that abundantly.

It is not true that violence and hatred should have the last word, and that war and destruction rule forever—
This is true: Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder, his name shall be called wonderful councilor, mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of peace.

It is not true that we have to wait for those who are specially gifted, who are the prophets of the Church before we can be peacemakers—

This is true: I will pour out my spirit on all flesh and your sons and daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions and your old men shall have dreams.

Let us see visions of love and peace and justice. Let us affirm with humility, with joy, with faith, with courage: Jesus Christ—the life of the world.

From "Advent Credo," by Daniel Berrigan, S.J.

The principal focus of your Peace and Justice Committee this year has been our effort to see a Victim Offender Reconciliation Program reestablished in McLean County. To this end, the committee met with the State's Attorney, hosted a meeting of community supporters, assembled a Board, and provided start-up funds for Articles of Incorporation and training materials for mediators. Laura Dick, a past Coordinator of VORP, did yeoman work in guiding the Committee and providing support materials.

In other actions, your committee:

- Provided opportunities for worshippers to sign petitions to our Senators and Representatives in Congress advocating reasonable gun controls, and also petitions for a constitutional amendment for an independent commission to redraw Illinois legislative districts every ten years (after the Census), rather than leaving this to the political party in power at that time, which typically leads to gerrymandered districts. This effort is continuing in Illinois.
- Hosted a booth at the Illinois Relief Sale, where we offered MCC literature on peace and justice issues, and also the Anti-Gerrymandering Petition, which many visitors were eager to sign.
- Attended Chapter meetings of Illinois People's Action, and testimony before the McLean County Board of Appeals on a proposed oil well near Danvers. We testified against supporting new investment in the chief driver of climate change, fossil fuels.
- Attended the MCC Great Lakes Annual Gathering in Arthur, IL on May 3rd. A Ministry Moment the next day, using an MCC Action Alert on the screen, showed the congregation how easy it is for us to contact our U.S Senators and Representatives in response to MCC Alerts.
- Hosted IPA Staff Person for Latino Outreach Jenn Carrillo for an adult Sunday School class on illegal immigration issues. The broad interest in her class encourages us to provide an opportunity for her to address a larger church gathering.
- Had letters sent to all parents of MCN high school students, reminding them of their right to ask that their children not be recruited at school by military recruiters.
- Asked the church library to subscribe to Charity Watch's *Rating Guide*. This rigorous analysis of how charities spend their funds will shock and anger many people. The purpose is to ensure that funds we give to charity each year actually go to alleviate suffering, and not to unethical individuals for their personal wealth.
- Disbursed the funds entrusted to us by the church as follows:

\$300 to Illinois People's Action (annual membership)

\$1000 in student prizes for winning essays in our Annual Peace Essay Contest

\$200 to Forever Friends, which brings Jewish and Arab youth from Israel to Bloomington/Normal each summer, for a two-week program of mutual discovery.

\$200 to MCC for their work with Palestinians on the West Bank.

\$1000 to the Amos Shakya family. Amos, pastor to the Nepalese/Bhutanese refugees at Living Water Community Church in Chicago, is awaiting a change in his immigration status so that he can be paid for his work.

\$300 for start-up expenses for VORP.

I would like to thank our Committee members for their dedication and hard work this past year: John Bertsche, Heath Brandon, Phil Dick, Gerlof Homan, Joe Jantze, Abby Warfel, and Glenn Wilson. Our best thanks to Pastor Tim Schrag for his invaluable counsel. As several members are leaving the committee, we hope that others in the church will feel led to join us.

Meredith Schroeer, Chairperson

Wellness Committee

The Wellness Committee has been active on a monthly basis with a number of continuing issues as well as some new areas being explored. The members represent a number of different personal and professional perspectives. They are Marge Nester, Deb Stenger, Bess Desch, Vivian Hubbard, Leah Roeschley, Sophie Charles and Ron Ropp.

Again, two very successful blood drives were held. Marge has been instrumental in setting these up and making contacts. This ministry impacts many lives and we have a good response from community people who appreciate the Church's outreach.

The Nurses' Week breakfast and "Blessing Service" was highlighted by Dr. Janet Krejci, Dean of the Mennonite College of Nursing speaking. A memorial service was held on Memorial Sunday remembering loved ones from our past. And a brief service was held at the Church Cemetery during Work Day. The Church Manual on Death Preparations is being updated and will be presented again early in 2015.

The Wellness Committee also maintains the Wellness Bulletin Board with focus on different issues each month. We invite people to check out the health issues being talked about each month. Marge also facilitated a class in the Spring Quarter on "Singleness" that was appreciated. The Wednesday evening sessions on "Love is an Orientation," lead by Pastor Tim was also successful. Blood pressures on the first Sunday of the month still provide preventive care for individuals.

Leah Roeschley is inviting persons to offer different dietary and lifestyles they have tried for an evening class option around the kitchen, which we mostly use for "traditional" food preparations. We are also looking for other Sunday School electives that deal with health and healing.

One of the areas that has been on our list of concerns is support for caregivers. Some of the Cluster Groups are picking upon needs in this area. Ron has been working with the Anabaptist Disabilities Network which we hope to highlight in the coming year. We are also looking for ways to enhance other wellness issues as part of our Church's ministries.

Respectfully submitted, Ron Ropp, Chairperson

Parish Nurse

Much of my report is the same from year to year because much of what I do remains the same. Since I strive to keep the details confidential, I will share about my role. I hope this will be helpful for those who are new to MCN, or have had less contact with the Parish Nurse.

I am a caregiver in a congregation of many caregivers. Our congregation is blessed with many who are active in this way. The Pastoral Council and the Wellness Committee work side by side with me to tend caregiving needs among us. I appreciate their support and counsel. I appreciate hearing of needs that you may see. And, I appreciate those who reach out to sisters and brothers when a need is apparent.

In response to a calling that I sensed of a way to continue to use my gifts after retirement from hospital nursing, I attended a 40-hour Parish Nursing course in 2003 and was commissioned by the Church to serve in 2004. I formally retired from nursing in 2005. The affirmation of my nursing ministry within our congregation is ongoing.

Along with visits to persons in the hospital and at home after hospitalizations, I accompany individuals to medical appointments when asked. Additionally, I can provide information and referrals to help make decisions regarding personal care or the care of a family member.

The Parish Nurse oversees the taking of blood pressures on the first Sunday of the month. Twice per year I chair the Red Cross blood drive held in our church. You will note in the Wellness Committee report what their activities have been this year. As a member of that committee, the Parish Nurse assists with assignments as made through them.

I am only a phone call away if you have a question or need someone to be an extra "ear" or a support at a doctor's appointment or an E.R. visit. Please let me know if you are facing a surgery or a crisis so I can assist in any way that would be helpful.

Many are available to provide transportation to appointments, but if you have difficulty finding someone for this, feel free to check with me.

I want to know in what ways I can help you in your journey to better health. There are many ways we can help each other if we work together. With the development of Cluster Groups, I see the Cluster leaders as persons who will assist in our efforts to meet the caring needs of our congregation. If you are unable to contact us directly, you can ask them to translate your needs to the pastoral staff or to me if there are ways that we can assist you. We are here to serve you.

Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you. 3 John 1:2

Marge Nester, Parish Nurse

Mennonite Women

Mennonite Women meets at 9:30 AM on the second Monday of each month, January to May, taking a break during the summer months, then again September to December. Attendance varies from 12-15 persons each meeting. Our time is used for projects, fellowship, devotions, and prayer. Most supplies are donated, and finished items go to Mennonite Central Committee, to be used where most needed.

This year our women's group:

- Cut blocks and knotted comforters for MCC, usually completing one each month
- Knit child-size sweaters
- Sent Labels for Education to Hopi Mission School in Arizona
- Cut, sewed, and filled 43 school kits
- Measured 82 whole yards of fabric to be sent for the mission field
- A large hand quilt was donated to the Illinois Relief Sale in March.
- Peeled, cooked and prepared apples to be used for pies for the Relief Sale
- Invited other contributions for the Relief Sale

We take an offering at each meeting, and have paid:

- Shipping for school kits to MCC
- Mennonite Women USA
- Donation for Meadows Home Fall Fest
- Membership dues to Meadows Home Auxiliary/Volunteers
- MW USA for *Timbrel* subscriptions
- Donations were sent to the CDC and IMC Women's Conferences.

Following tornados in the area, a project evolved in November which we called the Comfort Project. The entire congregation was invited to help make comforters for persons who lost their homes. Outreach Committee made a sizeable donation. At the end of the year, 30 comforters were completed. The project will continue in 2015.

Members of our group are active at the Meadows Home, and often carpool to activities there. The Spring Luncheon, Family Picnic, Bake Sale(s), Fall Fest, and Holiday Tea are favorites. We also host the Resident Birthday Party in September, providing entertainment and snacks. In addition, some members attend the Fall Women's Retreat at Camp Friedenswald, and Sister Care meetings whenever they happen.

Officers for 2015 include Rachel Zehr, President, Wilma Dyck, Vice President and Diane Wiman, Secretary/Treasurer. A Vice President will be appointed.

Aldine Combs, President

Planned Giving Committee

This Committee, established in 2010, is composed of the Church Chair, Lead Pastor, Chairperson of Financial Stewardship, and two persons appointed by the Board. At the end of 2010 the Committee distributed to all members of the congregation a brochure entitled “Planned Giving Fund” which outlines the structure and plans for handling endowment as well as other planned gifts to the Mennonite Church of Normal.

Included in the brochure was a statement of purpose for a Planned Giving Fund at the Mennonite Church of Normal. Such a fund is

- To provide for the receipt of gifts both for purposes of endowment and other planned gifts by having a plan that is coordinated with our total stewardship ministry.
- To promote faithful Christian stewardship of all resources, present as well as accumulated, by encouraging personal wills and estate plans that reflect concern for and participation in God’s work through our congregational ministries.
- To encourage gifts of accumulated assets and to enhance the mission of our congregation beyond that which is supported through regular giving.

Although the Committee did not meet during 2014, they stand ready to speak with individuals or small groups about endowments, bequests and other planned giving. Contributions and plans for contributions are welcome at any time. The Committee welcomes questions, inquiries and conversations about the idea of planned giving, why one might or might not consider such and who could assist one in working out the details of such gifts.

Lotus Hershberger, Chairperson

Library

The mission of the Mennonite Church of Normal Library is to offer resources to enrich the lives of the church family and enhance the ministries of the congregation. Special emphasis is placed on Mennonite history and thought, and peace issues.

The library is in transition; the collection is being culled and a number of books have been pulled from the shelves. When books are pulled, the cards for each book must be removed from the card catalog file. Each book has a title card, author card, a shelf list card and probably a subject card.

During 2014, a number of books were purchased or donated. Pastor Matt Hickman has been ordering new books for the library. A number of replacement books have been purchased, thanks to a special grant authorized by our Financial Stewardship Committee. Seventy-five books were processed for circulation, and there are others remaining to be processed.

During 2014, 175 adult books, 85 children's books, 14 youth books and 3 DVDs were checked out.

Aldine Combs, Librarian

Junior High Youth Group 2014

Average / Maximum Attendance



Content

Bible-related	90%
Games	10%
Food	10%
Fun	100%
Singing	15%
Boring	0%

*Percentages may not total to 100% due to rounding. Or something.

Typical Supplies Needed



Narrative Scripture Coverage, Year-To-Date

ACTS 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28
 MARK 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16

Overheard



Schedule



Acrostified

Joy
 Unique
 Noisy
 Imaginative
 Original
 Rambunctious
 Happy
 Interesting
 Giddy
 H...

Thanks to the junior high youth group members for contributing graphics and text to this year's annual report

Homebuilders

Homebuilders is an informal group which meets at the MRC Community Building on the fourth Sunday evening of the month at 7:00 p.m. (September through March, except December).

Persons attending are invited to suggest programs that would provide enriching experiences for the group.

Attendance is usually between 20 and 35 persons. We had another good year with a wide variety of interesting programs.

Programs in 2014 were:

- * Energy Efficiency for Congregations, by Aaron Petri
- * A talk by Jason Chambers, McLean County State's Attorney about the challenges of his office.
- * From war-torn Germany to the Land of Corn and Soybeans, by Juergen Schroeer
- * Campaign for U.S. Congress in the 18th District, by Darrel Miller
- * Ascent to Alaska. A bicycle Pilgrimage from Missoula, MT to Denali National Park, by Joe Culpepper
- * Aphids: It's a female World, a Virgin Birth, and other Miracles

Everyone is invited to attend the programs.

Gerlof and Roelie Homan, Coordinator

Cemetery Trustees

This year's agenda included issues of maintaining and planning for the Cemetery. The Trustees met for the annual session May 18 to discuss maintenance issues of mowing and upkeep. Leroy Loepp agreed to continue to mow the Cemetery with some support from Trustees when needed. The Trustees include Phil Dick, Mary Jantze, and Clarence Oyer. These terms run through 2015. The terms for John Reimer, Steve Stenger and Ron Ropp run through 2018.

Maintenance issues also include trimming trees and removing an old stump and volunteer mulberry trees. The old center planting was cleared of weeds and debris and planted with grass in preparation for the new center design.

The center memorial design has been decided upon with a large stone dug out of the area in the 1850's that will hold a plaque describing the history of the cemetery. Unfortunately, the contractor who has contracted to do the center walk has been unable to get to the project. But our plans are to complete the project early next spring. If you have questions about the project, contact Ron or one of the Trustees.

Some seventy nine lots have been sold to date and copies of the Policies and procedures are available along with the cost and availability of plots from Clarence Oyer, Sec. or Ron Rop, Chairperson.

Ron Ropp, Chairperson

Student Mutual Aid Program (SMAP)

The most visible part of the SMAP program is perhaps the fund-raiser held each summer. Again this year we gathered in Eric and Chellie Millers backyard June 8, 2014 to enjoy the beautiful evening of games, food, fellowship and pledging. We quickly raised more than the \$26,000 which, added to our reserves of \$18,383, exceeded the amount needed to support our four returning students. Jenna Lee and Joelle Friesen were returning to Goshen College as junior and sophomore, respectively. Going back to Bluffton University were Chris Haab and Jacob Love, as sophomores. Costs were modest this year but could be significant in years to come when more youth are eligible to attend.

Care packages were not sent out this fall as is usually the case. We as a committee have changed the timing this year to coincide with another calendar event! All college attendees from our congregation will be remembered, just at a different time.

The Committee of Mary Dyck, Darvis King, Shannon Unzicker, Paul Watkins, Connie Yoder, and I are indeed grateful to each of you again for all you support in this wonderful opportunity.

Gail Fisher, chair

Mennonite Church of Normal
Balance Sheet (UNAUDITED)
Consolidated – January – December 2014

BANK ACCOUNTS	1050	
CHECKING ACCOUNTS	1100	
General Ckg-Busey Bank	1110	31,822.25
SAVINGS ACCOUNTS	1200	
Money Mkt-1st St.Bk-0.35%	1210	158,610.79
Subtotal Bank Accounts	1050	190,433.04
TOTAL ASSETS		<u>190,433.04</u>
RESERVE FUNDS	2099	
PAYROLL DEDUCTS PAYABLE	2050	244.90
SPECIFIC PURPOSE FUNDS	2100	
SMAP Fund	2103	22,414.82
Cemetery Fund	2104	15,401.65
Mennonite Women	2105	561.25
Ministerial Prep Fund	2106	80.01
CPT Trips Fund	2108	4,553.17
Organ/Piano Maint. Fund	2129	10,857.75
Subtotal Specific Purpose Funds	2100	53,868.65
OTHER DESIGNATED FUNDS	2300	
Cap Imprv & Repair Escrow	2302	53,989.77
Sunday School Offering	2305	777.73
Missional Giving Fund	2306	5307.42
MYF Fundraising Reserve	2308	6396.74
Campus Enhancement Escrow	2311	5198.35
Mutual Aid-Miscellaneous	2320	9751.53
Reserve Fund	2330	38,807.70
Accr'd N-Local First Fruits	2350	2130.00
Planned Giving Funds	2356	0.01
Misc. Designated Funds	2361	1741.75
Subtotal Other Designated Funds	2300	124,101.00
MEMORIAL FUNDS	2400	1517.58
Subtotal Reserve Funds	2099	179,487.23
TOTAL LIABILITIES		179,732.13
NET ASSETS		
Unrestricted Net Assets	3110	10,700.91
TOTAL NET ASSETS		10,700.91
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		190,433.04

Mennonite Church of Normal
FUNDS RECEIVED AND DISBURSED IN ADDITION TO BUDGET

	Balance 01/01/2014	Funds Received	Funds Disbursed	Balance 12/31/2014
SPECIFIC PURPOSE FUNDS				
Student Mutual Aid Program (SMAP)	16,044.18	45,643.04	(\$39,272.40)	22,412.82
Cemetery Fund	14,051.71	1402.44	(52.50)	15,401.75
Mennonite Women	0	1913.93	(1352.68)	561.25
Ministerial Preparation Fund	80.01	0.00	0.00	80.01
CPT Trips Fund	4,553.17	0.00	0.00	4,553.17
Organ / Piano Maintenance	10,819.28	540.07	0.00	10857.75
Subtotal – Specific Purpose Funds				53,868.65
OTHER DESIGNATED FUNDS				
Capital Improvements & Repair Escrow	43,876.44	16,668.11	(6554.78)	53,989.77
Camperships	305.00	295	(600)	0
Sunday School Offering	343.71	470.51	(36.49)	777.73
Missional Giving Fund	6,286.81	20.61	(1000)	5307.42
Equipment Escrow	1,608.78	51.36	(1660.14)	0
MYF Fundraising Reserve	3,241.11	4225	(1069.37)	6396.74
Mutual Aid – Miscellaneous	9,471.84	5361.05	(5081.36)	9751.53
Reserve Fund	38,670.25	137.45	0.00	38,807.70
Planned Giving Funds	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.01
Miscellaneous Designated Funds:				
Periodicals	583.03	1,212.60	(2,073.40)	(277.77)
Comfort Project	1300	500	(1213.61)	586.39
Relief Sale Quilts	100	3450	(3550)	0.00
Alternative Gifts International	0.00	4,683.50	(4,683.50)	0.00
MCC – Alternative Gifts	0.00	15066	(15124.30)	(58.30)
Funeral and other Meals	0.00	685.49	(678.66)	6.83
MYF seed money	97.00	0.00	(97.00)	0
Sunday school offering - Head Start	531.57	0	472.30	59.27
HAAQG and Wild Ones A/V	0.00	390	(330)	60.00
Campus enhancements	246.23	0	(223.30)	22.93
Miscellaneous	0.00	2286.75	(2398.75)	(112)
VORP	0	1000	127	873
Menno Haven bunk room +retreat	0	944.40	863.00	81.40
Peace and Justice Project	0	500	0	500
Subtotal – Misc Designated Funds				1751.75
Subtotal- Other Designated Funds				124101.00
MEMORIAL FUNDS				
Richard Diveley	1,470.00	0.00	(1,470.00)	0
Earl Kaufman	853.33	0.00	(853.33)	0
Helen Patton	740.00	0	(740.00)	0
Jeanette Colter	2,895.00	0	(2,895.00)	0
Douglas Poag	640.00	100	(740)	0
Jeanne Oyer	290.00	0	(290.00)	0
Timothy Spacek	370.00	0	(370.00)	0
Junior Bartels	850.00	0	(850.00)	0
CJ Dyck	0	75	(75)	0
Alice Jiles	0	1567	(1567)	0
Jeannie Nafzinger	0	2230	(712.75)	1517.25
Subtotal – Memorial Funds	\$2,943.33	\$5,765.00	(\$600.00)	1517.25
Unrestricted Net Assets				10,700.91
HSA—payroll deductions payable				244.90
TOTAL FUNDS Received & Disbursed				190,433.00

Mennonite Church of Normal
Income and Expense Statement (UNAUDITED)
January 2014 – December 2014

	2014 YTD	% of Spending Plan	2014 Spending Plan	2015 Proposed
INCOME				
Unified Spending Plan	\$482,742.56	0.00%	\$0.00	\$0.00
Tapes/CD's Sold	20.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00
Use of Church Building	3,555.55	0.00%	0.00	0.00
Janitor Svc - Head Start	3,323.48	0.00%	0.00	0.00
Janitor FICA - Head Start	254.31	0.00%	0.00	0.00
Janitor Supps -Head Start	1,181.44	0.00%	0.00	0.00
Waste Pick-up -Head Start	650.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00
TOTAL INCOME	491,727.34	0.00%	0.00	0.00
EXPENSES				
MUSIC AND WORSHIP				
Honorariums	\$100.00	25.00%	\$400.00	\$400.00
Worship Materials	898.00	89.80%	1,000.00	1,000.00
Music License&Sbscrtptns	195.00	97.50%	200.00	200.00
Projects	80.36	40.18%	200.00	200.00
Junior Choir	0.00	0.00%	150.00	150.00
Choir Music/Accompanist	417.24	104.31%	400.00	400.00
Organ/Piano Tunings	1,310.00	109.17%	1,200.00	1,245.00
Subtotal Music and Worship	3,000.60	84.52%	3,550.00	3,595.00
EDUCATION				
S. S. Materials	1,747.58	77.67%	2,250.00	2,250.00
S. S. Supplies	138.02	69.01%	200.00	250.00
Nursery Staff Person	3,056.11	81.50%	3,750.00	3,500.00
Nursery Supplies	0.00	0.00%	50.00	50.00
Family Fun Night	332.27	83.07%	400.00	400.00
Teacher Training	0.00	0.00%	50.00	50.00
Teacher Appreciation	103.44	51.72%	200.00	200.00
Subtotal Education	5,377.42	77.93%	6,900.00	6,700.00
YOUTH MINISTRY				
MYF - Activities	6,227.65	107.37%	5,800.00	7,100.00
MYF - Transportation	2,072.68	65.80%	3,150.00	3,200.00
Christian Education	444.86	111.22%	400.00	400.00
Sponsor Training	0.00	0.00%	100.00	100.00
JMYF - Activities	3,393.69	77.13%	4,400.00	3,400.00
JMYF - Transportation	1,520.37	184.29%	825.00	825.00
Discipleship Materials	235.45	117.73%	200.00	225.00
Youth Ministry Comm.-Misc	73.82	24.61%	300.00	300.00
Youth Pastor Misc	382.76	109.36%	350.00	350.00
Subtotal Youth Ministry	14,351.28	92.44%	15,525.00	15,900.00

Mennonite Church of Normal
Income and Expense Statement (UNAUDITED)
January 2014 – December 2014

	2014 YTD	% of Spending Plan	2014 Spending Plan	2015 Proposed
CHURCH BUILDING				
Janitor Service	13,847.27	115.39%	12,000.00	13,000.00
Janitor FICA	1,048.73	113.99%	920.00	1,000.00
Janitor Supplies	1,743.29	108.96%	1,600.00	1,600.00
Maintenance&MinorRepairs	7,434.05	185.85%	4,000.00	5,000.00
Equipment	4,554.37	91.09%	5,000.00	5,000.00
Utilities	-184.88	0.00%	0.00	0.00
Electricity	5,744.44	82.06%	7,000.00	7,000.00
Natural Gas	7,124.36	158.32%	4,500.00	5,000.00
Water & Sewer	2,388.73	108.58%	2,200.00	2,200.00
Waste Pick-up	1,503.92	107.42%	1,400.00	1,800.00
Telecommunications	3,094.13	123.77%	2,500.00	2,500.00
Subtotal Utilities	19,670.70	111.77%	17,600.00	18,500.00
Insurance	9,658.00	96.58%	10,000.00	10,000.00
Snow Removal	2,904.00	223.38%	1,300.00	1,300.00
Cap Imprv & Repair Escrow	17,085.16	103.55%	16,500.00	16,800.00
Mowing & Ground Care	5,188.39	207.54%	2,500.00	2,500.00
FSC Miscellaneous	0.00	0.00%	125.00	125.00
Campus Enhancements	5,000.00	100.00%	5,000.00	5,000.00
Subtotal Church Building	88,133.96	115.14%	76,545.00	79,825.00
FELLOWSHIP				
Fellowship Supplies	729.52	145.90%	500.00	500.00
Church Dinners	639.77	85.30%	750.00	1,150.00
Miscellaneous	756.63	168.14%	450.00	450.00
Subtotal Fellowship	2,125.92	125.05%	1,700.00	2,100.00
STAFF AND ADMINISTRATION				
Salaries	181,159.09	101.29%	178,850.00	185,909.20
FICA	2,391.85	110.22%	2,170.00	2,386.80
Pension	16,467.30	92.07%	17,885.00	17,066.93
Life, AD&D, & LTD Insurance	1,305.66	107.02%	1,220.00	1,624.32
Medical Insurance	17,300.61	101.23%	17,090.00	20,142.84
Car Allowance (mileage)	3,282.73	93.79%	3,500.00	3,500.00
Continuing Ed/prof. Exp	3,480.56	74.85%	4,650.00	4,400.00
Conference Expense	260.49	74.43%	350.00	2,000.00
Health Savings Account	8,710.72	94.58%	9,210.00	8,210.72
Office Expenses	3,200.14	106.67%	3,000.00	3,000.00
Direct Giving Fees	973.16	81.10%	1,200.00	1,200.00
Subtotal Staff And Administration	238,532.31	99.75%	239,125.00	249,440.81
CONGREGATIONAL NURTURE				
Adult CE Materials	518.82	69.18%	750.00	750.00
Library	354.66	59.11%	600.00	600.00
Movie License	0.00	0.00%	225.00	225.00
Camperships	1,080.00	110.77%	975.00	975.00

Mennonite Church of Normal
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January 2014 – December 2014

	2014 YTD	% of Spending Plan	2014 Spending Plan	2015 Proposed
Pastoral Council	383.21	76.64%	500.00	500.00
Wellness	50.00	28.57%	175.00	400.00
Laity Training	677.59	77.44%	875.00	875.00
Cluster Group Support	0.00	0.00%	0.00	1,400.00
Subtotal Congregational Nurture	3,064.28	74.74%	4,100.00	5,725.00
FIRST FRUITS - LOCAL				
Outreach	3,724.59	41.38%	9,000.00	9,000.00
Indigent Assistance	154.01	30.80%	500.00	500.00
Peace and Justice	1,715.00	57.17%	3,000.00	3,000.00
Subtotal First Fruits - Local	5,593.60	44.75%	12,500.00	12,500.00
FIRST FRUITS: NON-LOCAL				
Mennonite Mission Network	43,380.00	100.00%	43,380.00	44,247.60
IL Mennonite Conference	14,256.00	100.00%	14,256.00	14,541.12
Central District Conf	14,256.00	100.00%	14,256.00	14,541.12
Menn Education Assoc MEA	14,772.00	100.00%	14,772.00	15,067.44
Menn Central Comm MCC	3,744.00	100.00%	3,744.00	3,818.88
Menno Haven Camp	3,888.00	100.00%	3,888.00	3,965.76
Camp Friedenswald	3,888.00	100.00%	3,888.00	3,965.76
Maple Lawn Homes	1,740.00	100.00%	1,740.00	1,774.80
Meadows Mennonite Home	1,740.00	100.00%	1,740.00	1,774.80
Christian Peacemaker Teams	1,740.00	100.00%	1,740.00	1,774.80
MennoMedia	1,740.00	100.00%	1,740.00	1,774.80
Menn Disaster Service MDS	1,740.00	100.00%	1,740.00	1,774.80
Ministry Support	4,533.00	73.92%	6,132.00	6,000.00
Corinthian Plan Mutual Aid	19,419.03	96.32%	20,160.00	22,366.92
Subtotal First Fruits: Non-local	130,836.03	98.24%	133,176.00	137,388.60
TOTAL EXPENSES	491,015.40	99.57%	493,121.00	513,174.41
EXCESS INCOME\EXPENSES	\$711.94	-0.14%		

Financial Statements prepared by:
Lynn Reha, Administrative Assistant
Adam Augspurger, Treasurer

2015 Spending Plan:
Doug Ulrich, Chair
Financial Stewardship Committee

Mennonite Church of Normal Narrative Budget for 2015

With deep gratefulness, the Financial Stewardship Committee acknowledges your generosity in 2014. Your gifts have been an investment in God's Kingdom, and have borne much fruit. We anticipate much fruit-bearing in the year to come. This narrative budget frames our stewardship intentions in terms of anticipated, continued fruitbearing in 2015.

Worshipping: \$51,617

In worship the gathered body enters into God's presence and opens itself to the source of its being. Worshipers are formed into a faithful covenant community as they respond to stories of God's acts in human history as recorded in the Bible, by their experiences of God's love and power in their lives and corporately, and through their hope in the present and future reign of God. Currently our gathered community averages 188 worshipers per Sunday.

Planning worship services, writing sermons, coordinating volunteers and conducting weddings, funerals and other special services, all require significant time on the part of our pastors. This category also includes expenses for music and choirs, instrumental maintenance, bulletin preparation, communion supplies, seasonal decorations for our worship space, and honorariums for guest speakers.

Learning (Christian Formation): \$85,733

The 2011 Discernment and Direction (D&D) document prioritizes our congregational desire to form persons toward mature Christian discipleship. We believe Christian discipleship is a lifelong journey of growth and spiritual renewal.

Christian formation has been identified as the overall goal of programming for children, youth, and their families. Currently we have six children's Christian education classes (32 students), a junior high class (12 students), a senior high class (18 students), and a variety of adult classes (average attendance 40-50). The costs for curriculum and other supplies, teacher training and appreciation, pastoral staff time, other educational activities such as the church library, and professional childcare on Sunday mornings are included in this category.

Junior and senior high youth group activities fall under Christian Formation. This year, in addition to regular activities, senior high students and adult leaders will travel to the Mennonite Church USA youth convention in Kansas City, MO. They will attend winter youth retreat at Menno Haven in January.

The junior high group has weekly meetings throughout the school year. They will attend winter youth retreat at Menno Haven in January. In the Fall, the group has a kick-off retreat with sponsors at Menno Haven.

The D&D document states that we will emphasize spiritual renewal in our congregational programming, as we plan for speakers, retreats, and small group curriculum.

A significant mutual aid effort, not included in the total for this category, is the **Student Mutual Aid Program** (SMAP). Since 1977 Mennonite Church of Normal has covered tuition costs for MCN students attending Mennonite colleges and universities. By now well over 100 young persons have benefitted. During 2015, we will be supporting five students, including Joelle Friesen (So-Goshen), Jenna Lee (Jr-Goshen),

Jacob Love (So-Bluffton), Chris Haab (Bluffton), Meredith Satchwell (begin August 2015) and possibly one more.

Caring: \$84,797

As human beings, we yearn to belong. We enter into, and are nourished by, relationships through which transformation into Christ-likeness occurs (one-to-one, group or family, school, camp, congregation, regional, denominational). As we learn to trust, forgive, give and receive counsel, and care for others, our community takes on the character of Jesus. The Pastoral Council, together with our pastors, has primary responsibility for this aspect of congregational life.

Pastoral care for persons who are transitioning from one life stage to another or who are facing health, relational or other types of crises, is ongoing. But caring for the fellowship goes beyond individual or interpersonal challenges; it includes pastoral oversight of the overall functioning of the church body. Examples could include staff supervision, equipping of our many volunteers, and staffing of the various committees.

The Wellness Committee looks for ways to support wellness initiatives advocating for the health of the whole person. Fellowship activities nurture and encourage community life.

The Administrative Assistant in the Church Office provides a variety of services to congregants and committees, including compiling reports throughout the year, publishing the Midweek weekly, programming the electronic sign, and keeping our website up-to-date, to name a few.

Area Clusters are providing new avenues to strengthen the Mennonite Church of Normal community. We offer hospitality to each other, (especially newcomers), celebrate life events, and offer assistance and encouragement to each other in times of need.

A significant portion of your giving is not included in our budget, but is nonetheless a major ministry of the congregation. The **Mutual Aid Fund** is administered by the Pastoral Council. With prayerful discernment, they are able to disburse funds to our brothers and sisters with financial needs beyond their personal resources.

Reaching Out: \$181,503

Our congregation's work extends far beyond our doors. By supporting denominational ministries of the Mennonite Church USA, we participate in the work of the wider church, not only in this country but around the world. For example, we have offered financial support to the Living Water Community Church in Chicago, which has a ministry to Nepalese immigrants. Efforts are also being made to develop personal relationships with members of this congregation.

We support other Mennonite-related organizations, including church camps and nursing homes. Additionally, we support local ministries and organizations, such as Bridge of Hope, Home Sweet Home Ministries, Immanuel Health Center, the Jesus House, and more. We have provided classroom space free of charge to the local Head Start program since 1991. Our pastors serve as our representatives to a variety of denominational and community organizations, and offer pastoral care and support on occasion to individuals from the wider community.

We participate in the Corinthian Plan, through which our staff receives health coverage. A portion of the premium is “mutual aid,” thereby providing assistance to 75 pastors in Mennonite congregations which struggle with the high cost of healthcare. It is included in this category.

Bricks and mortar (Administration and physical plant): \$109,524

Our church grounds, worship and fellowship spaces, classrooms and offices, and their contents, are essential to our ministries. The D&D document states that we will “make full strategic and missional use of our campus.” It is indeed a biblical obligation to care for our facility and grounds, stewarding these resources wisely and carefully. We anticipate investing in our campus in 2015, as per our completed campus use study and landscape architect plans.

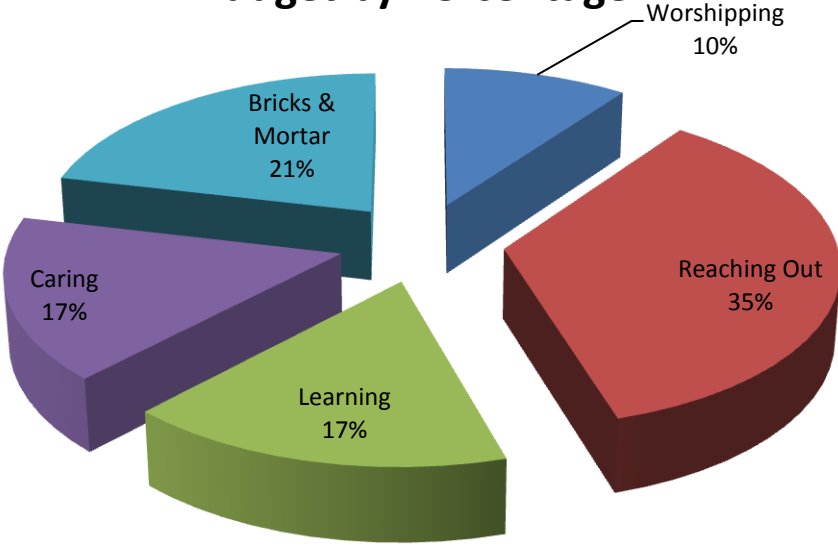
The custodian keeps the building clean and ready for use by our committees, choirs, book study and youth groups, as well as the Central Illinois Mennonite pastor peer group, the local quilt guild, Wild Ones native plant society, Head Start, and others. Utilities, insurance, equipment maintenance and upgrades, and services like snow removal and grounds care, are all part of providing a safe, functional and fruitful environment in which to meet our obligations as Kingdom workers.

Expenses in this category could be parsed out in finer detail into the four previous categories. Here are two examples:

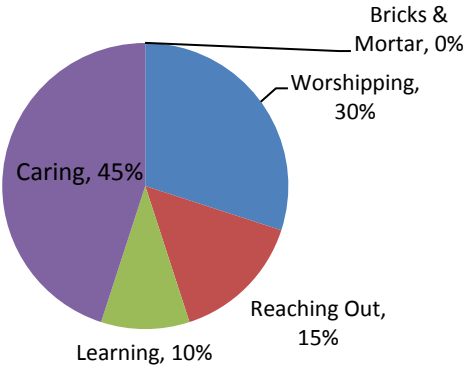
- Paper and copying costs for events outside of Sunday morning worship, including staffing and utilities. These are *Reaching Out* expenses.
- Turning on the lights, and heating or cooling our building every Sunday morning could be included in *Worshipping*, as well as costs for the weekly worship bulletin.

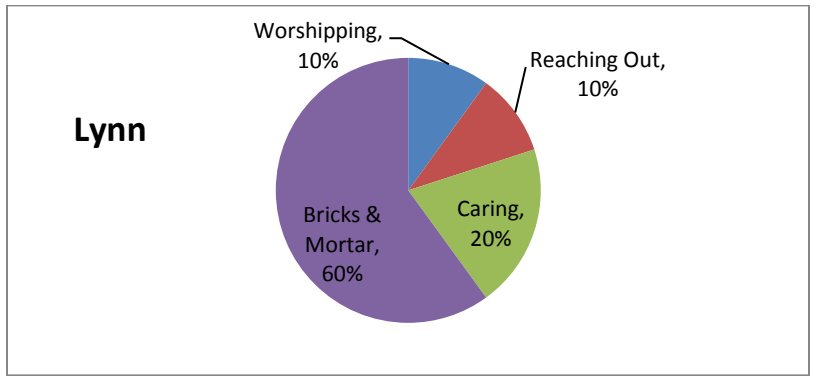
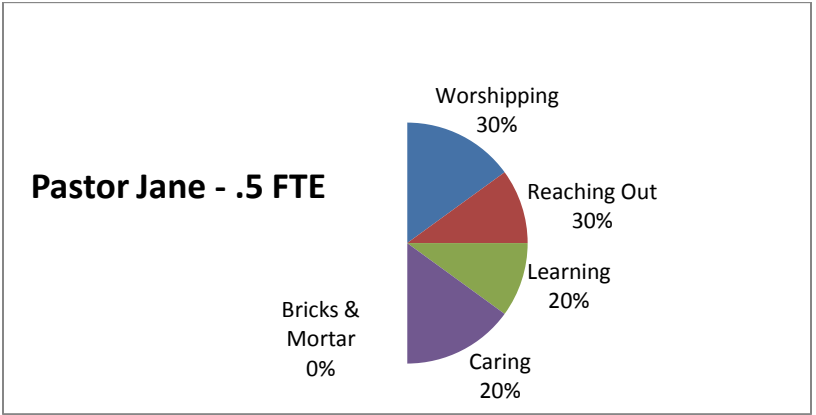
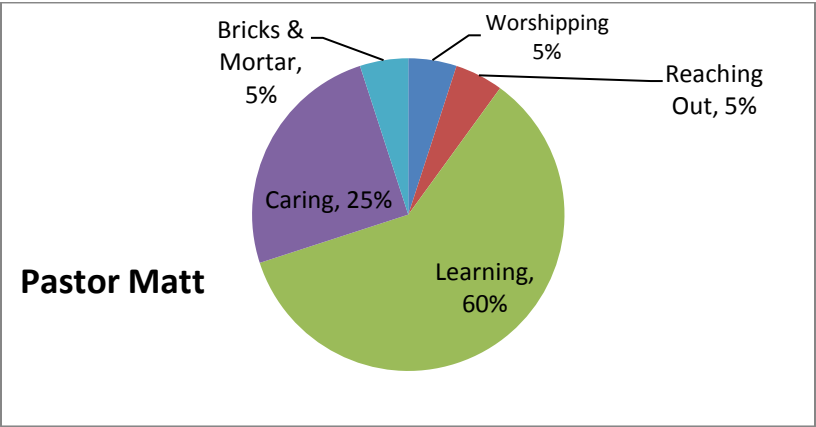
TOTAL: \$513,174

2015 Budget by Percentage



Pastor Tim





Mennonite Residential Community (MRC) – 2014

Members of the 2014 MRC Corporation Board include: Hazel Yoder, (vice chairperson), Ruth Zimmerman, Loren Moshier (treasurer), Gerry Schrock (secretary), Andy Reeser (chairperson), Gerlof Homan, John Gundy, Julie Musselman and Bob Kauffman. Five members of the board are appointed to five-year terms by the Mennonite Church of Normal (MCN). Four members are elected to four-year terms by the MRC Residents Association.

Major events for 2014 include:

- The last 2 building roofs have been replaced from the original construction of MRC.
- New residents Marilea White (Unit 120) and Mary Alice & Lee Hertzler (Unit 111) were welcomed to the MRC.
- Ruth Zimmerman and Loren Moshier completed their terms on the board. MRC is very appreciative for all the guidance they provided to the community.
- Marilea White (Resident's Association) and Terry Wiebenga (MCoN) will be joining the Board in 2015.
- Thanks to Manny Oyer, Tim Kauffman, Larry Reeser, and Paul Watkins for the maintenance of the MRC; Larry Reeser and Paul Watkins for management expertise; and Lotus Hershberger and Linda Clemmons for handling financial matters.
- The MRC Board is thankful for an active and healthy group of residents to serve.
- Many times community members provided assistance to their neighbors.

Applications to reside in the MRC are received on a regular basis. Highest priority is given to members of the Mennonite Church of Normal. Second in priority—retired pastors and missionaries; third—Mennonites from surrounding churches; and fourth—members of the community with similar values.

Ask MCN board members for additional information regarding the community.

Andy Reeser, Chairperson

Heartland Head Start

In 2015 Heartland Head Start will be celebrating 50 years of Opportunity. Our program was one of the pilot programs for Head Start and we are still going strong 50 years later. Part of the reason for our success is because of the generosity of the Mennonite Church of Normal, you have hosted one of our classrooms for approximately 23 years. We are so lucky to have the opportunity to have our classroom in such a lovely place. The children have large areas to learn and play, indoors and outside. Many children and families have benefitted from the services our program offers, because your church has cared. With that being said, I would like to say “**Thank You.**”

The mission of Heartland Head Start is to enhance the lives of eligible families in McLean and Livingston Counties in Central Illinois.

Heartland Head Start provides an inclusive preschool program designed to improve each child’s quality of life, learning and health, while providing services that empower the entire family along with their communities. Heartland Head Start utilizes staff, parents and community resources to provide services in the areas of education, mental and physical health, disabilities, nutrition and social behaviors for our children and their families.

Along with our regular pre-kindergarten curriculum, we have special events throughout the year, for our families to enjoy with their child. We have a day each month when we invite families into our classroom to do some activities with their child. We will have a day in which Dads will be invited to do special activities with their child, as well as a day for Moms; these days will be more special.

The classroom at Mennonite Church of Normal serves 34 children, ages three, four and five years, and their families living in the town of Normal. Our teaching team this year includes, Grecia Palomor, classroom/kitchen aid. Grecia joined our team in October. Jennifer Whitman, teacher assistant and Aimee Wright, lead teacher complete our teaching team. Jennifer and I have worked together for several years and this is our second year at this site. Rebecca Letteri is the Family Resource Advisor for our classroom. Rebecca has been assigned to this site in the past, as an FRA, but it has been several years. I have been with Heartland Head Start for 10 program years and just want to say that this is one of the best facilities I have had the opportunity to teach/ be assigned to. The building itself, as well as the people who we see are truly a blessing each day.

Finally, I would like to extend an invitation to each one of you to join us. If you have a special talent to share, or would simply enjoy reading to a small group of children, you are welcome to do so. Thank you, readers and volunteers, for all you do for us! Our classroom is a better place because of you. Our children’s literacy, language, and social skills have improved because of your efforts. Together, we *can* make a difference in a child’s life.

Aimee Wright, Lead Teacher

