

Introduction to our Advent series

The Advent Season is typically associated with a season of joyful anticipation. As children we may remember the countdown beginning, perhaps with an Advent calendar with a chocolate for every day. Decorations and lights come out of the closets and a whole new repertoire of music finds its way into our ears in anticipation of a season of joyful festivities. We look forward to celebrating the birth of Jesus. While this year's pandemic restrictions may keep us all closer to our homes than we would like, preparations for Christmas are nonetheless appropriate.

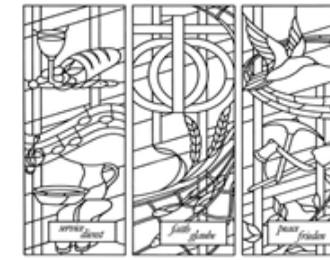
This year's Advent theme, "On the Road . . ." conveys not only a contemplative anticipation but it elicits a sense of movement. It then begs the question: What are we moving towards? Does the movement end at Christmas? The birth of Jesus, Emmanuel—God with us, opens for us a new era of God journeying with us and we journeying with God along the road of faith and faithfulness. In preparation for such a journey, we begin with opening ourselves in **readiness** to new understandings and a willingness to **repent** and leave behind attitudes and priorities that obstruct our movement. This opens us to visions of the possibility of **restoration** and justices in our world as we finally approach the manger with the full **revelation** of the child. Such revelation indeed calls for **rejoicing** on Christmas Day. How will this revelation guide our steps into a new year as we continue our journey on the road? In the midst of this year's pandemic, let's allow prayerful contemplation to prepare us for the revelation of God's love manifest in the child. And then, individually and as a congregation, let's consider how we can continue to make this love manifest in our world, guided on this road by the **radiance** of Epiphany and Emmanuel –God with us!

Altona Mennonite Church Vision

God calls us to be followers of Jesus Christ and by the power of the Holy Spirit to grow as communities of grace, joy and peace so that God's healing and hope flow through us to the world.

Purpose

*We seek to know God through Jesus, the center of our faith.
We seek to follow God in community, through worship, fellowship, and interpreting the Scripture from a Christ-centered point of view, in the Anabaptist tradition.
We seek to obey God by working toward peace and reconciliation, in the spirit of Jesus, reconciling all people to God, to each other, and to the world around them.*



Altona Mennonite Church

Sunday School – Adults & Children: 10:00 am
Sunday Worship Service: 11:00 am

VOLUME LIX No.45

December 6, 2020

On the Road...to Repentance

Welcome

Call to Worship - Isaiah 40:1-11

(an excerpt from Handel's Messiah)

Hymn STS #4 Rejoice, rejoice, the Savior comes
Monologue (based on Mark 1:1-8) – Dan Kehler

Hymn HWB #183 On Jordan's banks the Baptist's cry
Children's Story – Amahl and the Night Visitors – part 2

Announcements

Prayer

Lo How a Rose (Hildie Regehr)

Hymn HWB #178 Come, thou long-expected Jesus
Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13

Sermon Through the Desert of Repentance

Hymn HWB #184 Hark! The glad sound!

Benediction

Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13

Speaker: Dave Regehr

Worship Leader:

Music: Dave & Hildie Regehr

Sound: Nathan Loewen

AMC Contact information:

Interim Pastor: Dave/Hildie Regehr: H: 204-327-5216 C: 204-324-3948

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Custodians: Dale/Sandra Klassen: H:204-324-1475 C: 204-324-7458

Altona Mennonite Church is on Treaty One Territory.

Worship & Meeting Events at AMC

Dec. 9 Worship Committee meeting

Dec. 10 Leadership Council meeting

Dec. 13 Third Sunday of Advent online service

Theme: On the road...to Restoration *Speaker:* Dan Kehler

Scripture: Isaiah 61:1-4; Psalm 126 OR Luke 1:46b-55; 1

Thessalonians 5:16-24; John 1:6-8. 19-28 *Worship Leader:*

Elaine Loewen *Musicians:* Loren & Lori Hiebert *Sound:* Greg or Lorraine Heinrichs

Dec. 20 Fourth Sunday of Advent online service

Dec. 21 Longest Night – we remember from our homes

Birthdays: December 9 – Loren Hiebert; December 10 – Perry Batchelor; December 11 – Tracy Bergen

AMC ANNOUNCEMENTS

- When you go to our church website, you will notice that it looks quite different. Thanks to Kevin Neufeld for setting it up!

- If you have pictures of how you are celebrating Advent, please send them to this email address, and they will be added to the gallery.

- An order for Rejoice! Devotional guides will be made by the end of this month. If you have not been receiving it and would like to start, please let Lori Hiebert know soon. The cost for the year (4 quarterly guides) is \$48, payable to AMC in whatever form you use.

- Thank you to all of you who have rediscovered the alternative ways of donating to AMC since we've had to cancel in-person worship. Our audio services have been great to keep us connected to AMC, but it's not the same as seeing each other. Our pastors and a few others are working to set up the facility to video record our services, which will add to our connection. Thankfully a Grant will help offset costs, but we still have our regular expenses, and are currently \$9,000 into our Line of Credit, so please give generously. Thank you.

- Giving is an act of worshiping in the community of God's people as part of our desire to be faithful followers of Jesus, providing healing and hope to those whom AMC feels called to serve. We continue to be a generous people, offering our

resources of time, energy and money to the ministries of our congregation, our conference relationships and our local ministry partners. Remember there are several ways to give: Online through Access Credit Union, (using your 7-digit phone number as your account number), e-transfer to amchurchdonations@gmail.com, or a cheque which you can add to the offering plate on Sunday or mail it to AMC, Box 1237, Altona, R0G 0B0. Thank you.

WIDER COMMUNITY & MISC. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The **CommonWord Book and Resource Centre** continues to serve the broader church community, online, and with curbside pick-up. A rich array of **Christmas gift ideas** include Advent and Christmas-themed books, Christmas cards, stocking stuffers, Sunday School gifts, and more. Visit www.commonword.ca/go/2203 for details. Gift cards are also available.

- Christmas Giving guides now available! Due to COVID-19 restrictions, Christmas Giving guides, gift inserts and greeting cards are available by pre-order only. You can request physical copies of the special gift inserts and cards to be mailed directly to you or arrange a safe pick-up by contacting us at 204-261-6381 or manitoba@mccmb.ca.

PRAYER AND PRAISE

- Pray for Dave & Hildie Regehr as they lead us for a time.

- Pray for Pastor Dan Kehler as he returns half time.

- Harry & Susan Klassen's 2 year old great grandson, Iver Fraser, is back at home and doing well. Surgery to remove the ruptured appendix is pending.

- Jean Tarnick had cataract surgery. She is thankful for the prayers for healing.

- Harv Heinrichs has been diagnosed with Lymphoma. The week of daily treatments went well. Six of eight weekly treatments are completed. Mostly they have gone well, with occasional low points. Still praying for continued strength, healing and good results!

- Pray for Ken & Marianne Braun and Mike Tarnick who are at Eastview.

- Pray for Ken Hamm, who is back at the Altona Hospital. The surgeon is pleased with the latest x-rays. Pray for an appetite and strength. Remember him and his family in your prayers, especially now that visitors are limited or not allowed at all.

- Anne Loewen goes for chemotherapy monthly. Pray for strength, safety and peace.

- Pray for all those for whom mental health makes daily life a struggle. The current situation increases anxiety for many.

- Pray for those who experience physical pain, and for friends and family who help with their care.

- Many of our church family have other family they are concerned about. Pray for healing, strength and calm for all.

Prayer for Our Community

- Pray for ALL the teachers, students and staff as they navigate all the regulations and requirements.

- Pray also for the Health Care Providers.

- Pray for Doug Klassen (MCCanada's Executive Minister) and for church leaders at all levels of our conference.

- Pray for Rick Neufeld and Peter Rempel who are adding the duties of MCManitoba's Executive Minister to their other roles. Michael Pahl will be assuming that position in January 2021.

Prayer for Our World

- **Witness workers responding to deadly typhoon** - Pray for strength and wisdom as PeaceBuilders Community, Inc. (PBCI), together with Witness workers Dann and Joji Pantoj, respond to the disaster of the latest typhoon in the Philippines. Typhoon Ulysses hit the north island of Luzon leaving an entire city submerged with more than 28,000 family homes under water. The PAR teams of Manila and Kalinga are responding. May God's love be shown through them to people in need.

If you would like to add or remove any prayer requests, please contact the church office.