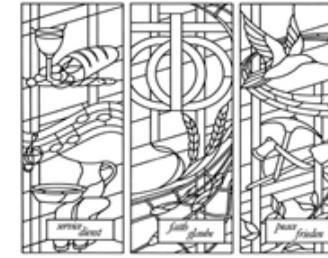


## Introduction to our Advent series

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

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

VOLUME LIX No.48

December 25, 2020

## *On the Road...to Rejoicing*

### Gathering

Prelude *Break Forth, O Beauteous*

Hymn STS #1 Praise the One who breaks the darkness

Words of Welcome

Hymn VT #252 Go Tell It on the Mountain

Call to worship Adapted from Psalm 148:1-4, 13

Leader: Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord from the heavens;

**People: praise the Lord in the heights!**

Leader: Praise the Lord, all God's angels; praise the Lord, all God's host!

**People: Praise the Lord, sun and moon; praise the Lord, all you shining stars!**

Leader: Praise the Lord, you highest heavens, and you waters above the heavens!

**People: Praise the name of the Lord; God's glory is above earth and heaven.**

**All: Praise the Lord!**

### Listening

Scripture: Isaiah 61:10–62:3; Psalm 148;

Special Music - "Do Not Be Afraid"

Scripture: Galatians 4:4-7; Luke 2:1-20

#### AMC Contact information:

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

[dhregehr@gmail.com](mailto:dhregehr@gmail.com)

Pastor: Dan Kehler [amcpastordan@gmail.com](mailto:amcpastordan@gmail.com) 204-324-6773

Secretary: Lori Hiebert: C: 204-324-5952

[altonamennonite@gmail.com](mailto:altonamennonite@gmail.com)

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

*Altona Mennonite Church is on Treaty One Territory.*

Hymn HWB #210 Good Christian friends, rejoice  
Monologue (based on Luke 2:22-40)  
Hymn HWB #212 O Come, All Ye Faithful  
Message Great Joy Pastor Dan Kehler

### Responding

Prayer

Hymn HWB #318 Joy to the world,  
vs 4 after the benediction

Benediction

Postlude

**Worship Leader:** Lori Hiebert

**Monologue:** Sarah Sawatzky

**Music:** Lori & Loren Hiebert, Dave & Hildie Regehr, Crystal Kehler, Kevin Neufeld

Special Music: Mary Costen, Ainsley & Felice Mariani

**Sound:** Kevin Neufeld

### Worship & Meeting Events at AMC

December 27 – no service this Sunday

January 3, 2021 service on-line

*Theme:* On the Road...to Radiance *Speakers:* Dave Regehr

*Scripture:* Isaiah 60:1-6; Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14; Ephesians 3:1-

12; Matthew 2:1-12 *Worship Leader:* Ray Hamm *Musicians:*

Dave Regehr, Hildie Regehr *Sound:* Greg/Lorraine Heinrichs

January 6 7:15 pm Worship Committee

January 10 Sharing Sunday "Where are you on the road?"

January 15 Reports for the AGM due

January 17 service on-line

January 20 7:30 pm Leadership Committee

Feb. 7 Projected date for an AGM

**Birthdays:** December 25 – Don Enns, Taylor Wiebe;  
December 26 – Mick Mierau Friesen; December 27 – Elfie Krahn;  
December 28 – Edna Zacharias; January 2 – Nancy Ratzlaff

### AMC ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **From the treasurer:** Thank you for your generous donations throughout the year. We continue to invite your generosity; in order to meet all expenses and send our donations, we still need \$16,000 before the end of the year. You may contribute online if you bank at Access (using your 7-digit phone number as your account number) make an etransfer to [amchurchdonations@gmail.com](mailto:amchurchdonations@gmail.com), or send or bring a cheque to AMC (Box 1237) or Norma Thiessen's house, at 148 4th Ave. SW in Altona. Thank you again.

### WIDER COMMUNITY & MISC. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Christmas at CMU Highlights!** Enjoy the music of the season and be drawn into the spirit of Advent with a curated selection from Christmas at CMU. Go to [www.cmu.ca/christmas](http://www.cmu.ca/christmas) for more.

- **Mennonite Church Manitoba invites applications for two positions:** Financial Services Assistant (.75 FTE) and Administrative Assistant (0.5 FTE) to start ca. February 1, 2021. These job descriptions are posted on the Mennonite Church Manitoba website. Please submit application letter and resume to Peter Rempel, Interim Administrator, at [office@mennochurch.mb.ca](mailto:office@mennochurch.mb.ca) by January 10.

### PRAYER AND PRAISE

- Pray for Pastor Dan Kehler, and for Dave & Hildie Regehr as they together lead the church.

- Harv Heinrichs is grateful for your prayers. His weekly treatments for lymphoma are now done.

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

- Ken Hamm was discharged from the Altona Hospital on Sat Dec 12. He is very happy to be back home after being in the hospital for almost 3 months. His discharge could only happen because he was progressing in his strength to walk and move about in a walker. Also his appetite is coming back so this really helps in getting his strength back. He is still quite limited and family is stepping in to help. The OT and homecare are involved in helping Ken get his independence back as much as possible. Pray for continued healing.

- 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 isolated from family back home** - As many of us here in Canada celebrate Christmas distanced from family, pray for International Witness workers and their families as they celebrate, while also distanced. Several of the workers have given up scheduled trips back to Canada to see family in the last year in order to keep working in their country of ministry. Pray that we all experience God's promise of Emmanuel.

- **Prayer for church and leaders in Ethiopia** - Please continue to pray for the situation in Tigray, Ethiopia. Pray for unity within the Meserete Kristos Church that includes all ethnic groups in Ethiopia. Pray for safety for the Eritrean refugees in camps in that area. Pray that God's peace will reign and that leaders will be given wisdom to act for the good of all.

- **Bethlehem hard hit by absence of tourism during pandemic** - As we sing and read about Bethlehem this season, pray for the ministry of Bethlehem Bible College. Pray for the people of Bethlehem, hard hit by the absence of tourism in this time of COVID-19. Pray that once again the message of peace will be proclaimed across the hills.

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