

- Poovongs mentor leaders in food production

Pray for the development of sustainable, organic food production by small groups and families in Thailand, who are part of Friends of Grace Church Association. Pray for Witness workers Tom and Christine Poovong as they help develop both spiritual and income-generation leaders in this ministry.

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

Prayer for Ukraine, by Rick Cober Bauman, Executive Director of MCC Canada.

Loving God, Creator of all peoples and source of all love.

We are saddened.

We are saddened by the unleashing of horror and destruction in Ukraine.

We are angry.

We are angry that lives are shattered, homes are levelled, and innocence is trampled.

We are dismayed.

We are dismayed that again the guns of war have drowned out the talks for peace.

And we pray.

We pray that hard hearts of conquest will be softened.

We pray that the very best practices of peace will prevail among leaders.

We pray gratefully that your Spirit of healing and hope is present

For victims suffering,

For soldiers fighting,

For leaders deciding.

And we are committed.

We are committed as your people, as disciples of your gospel of reconciliation, to wage peace as we are able in Ukraine, and in all your good and lovely creation.

All this we pray in the name and healing spirit of Jesus.

Amen.

From The Pastor:

Imprecatory Psalms – a response to the war in Ukraine

I've always struggled with what are called Imprecatory Psalms. These are the psalms that call on God to enact justice when evil seems to have the upper hand. An example is Psalm 7:14–16, "Behold, the wicked man conceives evil and is pregnant with mischief and gives birth to lies. He makes a pit, digging it out, and falls into the hole that he has made. His mischief returns upon his own head, and on his own skull his violence descends" (ESV). But now I am beginning to see their place in scripture.

This week, pictures of the bombed apartment of a 96 year old holocaust survivor were making the rounds on social media. You have to look hard to see what little remains of this innocent elderly person. Another picture shows a father holding the blond hair of his son who lies lifeless on a gurney with a shroud stained red with blood covering his body. All of this suffering caused by one man's ferocious appetite for power mixed with paranoid delusion railing against a country that has no desire for war.

The imprecatory psalms name evil. They are a reminder that people of great power are capable of unconscionable acts of evil. We see this in Ukraine where Russian President Putin is destroying the lives of the weak with apparent impunity. A response is needed when we are so graphically reminded that this is the world we live in. Our hearts cry is for judgment. Our souls rail against the wickedness. We wonder why God does not act to bring justice when we see such horrific malevolence. Imprecatory Psalms give us words to express our anger and name our indignation. They give us a means to articulate our confused and conflicted feelings. They are an outlet for prayers that we might not ordinarily pray. They allow truth to be manifest in our lives that is difficult to hear. In them we find our hope; that God has not abandon God's beloved creation and whose work in the world is as real as the evil we witness.

Thus, I weep for all who suffer the devastation of war with the Psalmists;

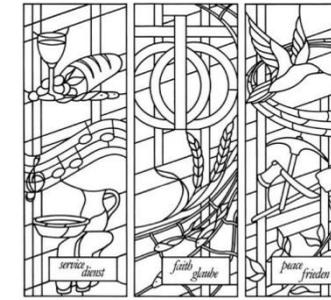
Hear my cry for mercy as I call to you for help,
as I lift up my hands toward your Most Holy Place.

Do not drag [them] away with the wicked, with those who do evil,

who speak cordially with their neighbors but harbor malice in their hearts.

Repay them for their deeds and for their evil work;
repay them for what their hands have done

and bring back on them what they deserve. Psalm 28:2-4



Altona Mennonite Church

Worship Service 11:00 am

VOLUME LXI No.13

March 27, 2022

Fourth Sunday of Lent

"From Exceptionalism to Inclusion"

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord." -ISAIAH 55:1

Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

Hymn VT 42 Could It Be That God Is Singing

Call to worship:

Leader: Together we seek the way of God,

People: rejoicing that we are new creations in Christ.

Leader: From a human point of view, we demand what is ours,

People: but through Jesus we learn that all share in God's inheritance.

Leader: Let us join God's feast,

People: where all celebrate together.

All: Let us live out God's way of inclusion.

Prayer of invocation

Hymn VT 377 New Earth, Heavens New

Welcoming New Members: Julia Thiessen and Susie Fisher

Hymn VT 797 We Are People of God's Peace

AMC Contact information:

Pastor: Dan Kehler amcpastordan@gmail.com 204-324-6773

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

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Custodians: Dale Klassen 204-324-7458 Sandra Klassen 204-324-1475

Altona Mennonite Church is on Treaty One Territory.

Scripture Reading: Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32; 2 Corinthians 5:16-21

Sermon When Grace seems Inappropriate Pastor Dan Kehler

Hymn VT 653 Nothing is Lost on the Breath of God

Scripture: Psalm 32

Lenten Prayer of Confession: (Isaiah 55 adapted)

Leader: Holy One, we seek you while you may be found.

People: We call upon you while you are near.

Leader: Have mercy on us, O God,
for our thoughts are not your thoughts
and our ways are not your ways.

People: Forgive us for thinking we deserve special treatment. Lead us to radical inclusion.

Leader: As we walk with Christ on this Lenten journey,
let us see your way more clearly

All: and follow your way more faithfully.

Prayers of the People

Hymn VT 809 Sing a New World into Being

Benediction

Worship Leader: Ang Enns

Musicians: Loren & Lori Hiebert

Recording: Dale Klassen

WORSHIP & MEETING EVENTS AT AMC

April 3 11:00 am Worship Service – 5th Sun. of Lent
Theme: From Scarcity to Abundance *Scripture:* Isaiah 43:16-21; Psalm 126; John 12:1-8; Philippians 3:4b-14 *Speaker:* Dan Kehler *Worship leader:* Elaine Loewen *Musician(s):* Loren Braul, Marilyn Houser Hamm *Recording:* Nathan Loewen
April 5 7:15 pm Worship Committee Meeting
April 10 11:00 am Worship Service – Palm Sunday
April 15 10:30 am Good Friday service with Communion
April 17 Easter
April 24 11:00 am Worship Service

Birthdays: March 30 – Susan Klassen; April 2 – Vic Penner

Anniversaries: March 28 – Loren Braul & Lori Dueck

AMC ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **AMC Needs You...** to join the Worship Committee as they are in need of two members! AMC also needs you to join the Recording team. If you have any questions regarding either of these important opportunities or are willing to get involved right away, speak to Pastor Dan regarding the worship committee or Kevin Neufeld regarding the recording. THANKS!

- As we are in the first quarter of our year, please remember that a new budget will be presented at our AGM. You may contribute online if you bank at Access Credit Union (using your 7-digit phone number as your account number), make an e-transfer to amchurchdonations@gmail.com, or send a cheque to AMC (Box 1237, Altona, MB, R0G 0B0). Thank you for your continued generosity.

WIDER COMMUNITY & MISC. ANNOUNCEMENT

- **Join MCC in response to the crisis in Ukraine.** Russian military forces have invaded Ukraine with active shelling, airstrikes and other hostilities targeting cities across the entire country. For the latest updates on MCC's relief response, visit mcccanada.ca. Join us in [prayer](#) and donate at mcccanada.ca/ukraine.

- **Registration is open for all of our camps** – day, overnight, farm, outtrip, ADV – we are so looking forward to being together this summer!

Staff and volunteer applications are also available – we need you too. www.campswithmeaning.org

- **Camp Assiniboia** invites applications for the "Facilities Manager" position. Visit www.campswithmeaning.org/news for more info.

- **Leaders of Mennonite Church Canada** are calling on the members, congregations and regional churches of Mennonite Church Canada to respond to the **climate emergency**. This document (available at www.mennonitechurch.ca/climate-action) includes six initiatives that "reflect our working commitments as a nationwide church."

Also included is a recommended reading list – <https://www.commonword.ca/go/2809>.

- **Good Friday through the Senses - Stations of the Cross** involving taste, touch, smell, sound, and sight. Choose from multiple 2 hr blocks, April 15 and 16 at the MCM Office. Visit www.mennochurch.mb.ca/events for more info and free registration.

PRAYER AND PRAISE

- Jean Tarnick is back in her own apartment! Pray for a smooth transition as she navigates back to home life with added homecare.

- Please keep Mark Sawatzky in your prayers. He was discharged from the hospital and is back home. We hope and pray things will go well. Pray also for Sarah and Murray who are here.

- Steven Wiebe is requesting prayer for him and his family. He is very concerned about Emily and how she lives with her disability. Also the family is still going through emotional struggles at the loss of Tim.

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

- 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 people they are concerned about. Pray for healing, strength and calm for all.

PRAYER FOR OUR COMMUNITY

- Pray for all teachers and students in our community.

- Pray for all the Health Care Providers.

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

- Pray for Michael Pahl, our MCManitoba's Executive Minister.

PRAYERS FOR THE WORLD

- Please pray for the people in Ukraine. They were invaded by Russia. They also continue to deal with rampant COVID-19 cases as well as rising inflation making access to basic goods and services more difficult and more expensive.

- **Witness workers on the move** - Witness workers Lakan and Lakambini are moving to a new home in the Philippines, after living and ministering from the same location since 2014. Pray that their new space will be adequate for their needs and a blessing to their ministry.

- **China experiences another wave**- Another wave of COVID restrictions is sweeping across China, resulting in the closing of small house churches. Pray that leaders will have wisdom to know how to care for the believers and to encourage them to love and peaceful living in a difficult time.