

Prayers for the World

- As we lament the ongoing hostility between Israelis and Hamas, let us continue to pray for those working for a future that ends the deep and longstanding injustices that lie at the root of the crisis. The Palestine-Israel Network has provided prayers of lament and intercession:

<https://www.mennonitechurch.ca/article/16090>

- **Praise God for volunteers in South Korea** - Join Bock Ki Kim and Sook Kyoung Park, Witness workers in South Korea, in praising God for volunteers who spend time in training and volunteer facilitating circle process in Restorative Justice in school and community settings through the Chuncheon Community Peace Centre, South Korea.

- **Bethlehem Bible College** continues its ministry despite the violence going on around it. Join them in prayer for peace.

- Please pray for the international community gathered in Dubai at COP 28 - for decisions that serve the vulnerable and enlivened vision for a world no longer dependent on fossil fuels. Pray for activists and diplomats and lobbyists and leaders to be moved by God's Spirit! To organize or find a prayer vigil near you, check out <https://fortheLoveofcreation.ca/cop28-unite-act-deliver/>

From the Pastor

Advent Greetings!

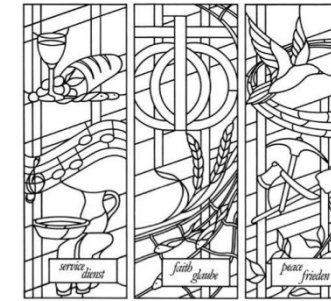
The theme for this year's Advent worship series is *How Will We Know?* The planning committee who wrote the material for Leader Magazine wrote the following in their introduction to the Advent resource packet: "*We observed together that too often, questions in the church are cast aside, and those who ask them are left feeling alone and lonely. But Advent is a time to lean into our questions. To wonder and wander and wait together for the Messiah, the Christ child, the Light.*"

Taking inspiration from the Advent hymn 'Poor of the Earth', which repeatedly asks "How will I know?", the planning committee decided not to look for definitive answers or platitudes, but instead lean into the ways that our faith invites us to sit together, to discern the times, to watch and wait, and to trust that we will know when we know, and that even when we have questions and doubts, God is still with us; still then, God is working.

Each week the theme expands the 'How will we know?' question, and the children's features will bring in our senses as we explore our questions, preparations, and waiting during this season.

The visuals on stage are minimal – you will notice the tree is not even in the sanctuary! (Forgive us) The manger is the centerpiece, and as we move from darkness to light throughout the 4 weeks, the candlelight will grow progressively. We hope the sights, sounds – and even tastes and smells – offered over the next 4 Sundays will foster an atmosphere of wonder this Advent.

This week we pray for Seeds Church here in Altona. We give thanks for the work being done in that space with The Community Exchange, providing social and material support to others, and fostering a network of friendship and belonging.



Altona Mennonite Church

Worship Service 11:00 am

VOLUME LXII No.44

December 10, 2023

How will we know...what now?

Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

Hymn STS 1 Praise the One who breaks the darkness

Call to Worship / Prayer of Invocation

Leader: Do not ignore this one fact, beloved,
that with God one day is like a thousand years,
and a thousand years are like one day.

High voices: God is not slow, as some think of slowness,

Low voices: but is patient with us,

People: not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance.

Leader: The word of our God will stand forever.

People: How shall we live while we wait for salvation?

(pause)

All: Together we wait.

Advent Candle Lighting

One: Come, Emmanuel.

The world is now ready, the field is still uneven,
Yet we watch and prepare to see God's glory revealed,
together.

AMC Contact information:

Pastor: Rev. Erika Enns Rodine C: 204-963-5764

Office Hours: Tuesday to Friday, 9 am – 4 pm

Email address: erika.altonamennonite@gmail.com

Secretary: Lori Hiebert: C: 204-324-5952 Church: 204-324-6773

Office Hours: Thursday 9:00 am to Noon

Email address: altonamennonite@gmail.com

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Moderator: Loren Brault: C: 204-995-5347

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

Altona Mennonite Church is on Treaty One Territory.

~candles are lit~

**All: A spark of peace lights the way -
Despite our fast-fading courage,
We will follow the voice calling us in the wilderness
toward Shalom.**

Children's Story
Offering for the church and the Food Bank
Hymn VT 212 Comfort, Comfort, O My People
Scripture Reading Isaiah 40:1-11; Mark 1:1-8
Sermon Erika Enns Rodine
Hymn VT 223 Bless'd Be the God of Israel
Pastoral Prayer
*Lord in your goodness, we give thanks.
Lord in your mercy, hear our prayers.*

Benediction
Hymn VT 220 Prepare the way

Worship Leader: Lori Hiebert
Musicians: Loren & Lori Hiebert
Candle Lighter(s): Sylvia Klassen
Scripture Reader: Ann Kroeker
Technician: Kevin Neufeld

WORSHIP & MEETING EVENTS AT AMC

Dec. 12 – 4:30 pm Leadership Committee Meeting
Dec. 17 – 11:00 am Worship Service
Theme: How will we know...what's next?
Scripture: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11; Luke 1: 46b-55; 1
Thessalonians 5:16-24; John 1:6-8, 19-28 *Speaker:* Greg
Costen *Worship Leader:* Erika Enns Rodine *Musicians:* Mary
Costen, Marilyn Houser Hamm *Technician:* Nathan Loewen
Dec. 19 5:00 pm Piano recital
Dec. 21 – 7:00 pm Longest Night Service
Dec. 24 – 11:00 am Worship Service – Erika Enns Rodine
- 6:30 pm Christmas Eve Service
Dec. 31 – 11:00 am Worship Service – Music Morning led by
the Hieberts

Birthdays: Dec. 10 – Perry Batchelor; Dec. 11 – Tracy
Bergen; Dec. 16 – Elizabeth Falk

AMC ANNOUNCEMENTS

- During advent we will be collecting non-perishable food items for the Rhineland Area Food Bank each week during the offering time. Financial donations welcome. Please contribute items from this list of essentials. AMC Youth will collect during the offering time.
Canned vegetables Canned meat & fish
Canned soups, vegetable, chicken noodle, tomato
Canned fruit Canned beans in tomato sauce
Pasta, KD, Mr. Noodle & pasta sauce Rice (small bags)
Oatmeal & non-sugar cereals Peanut butter
Juice (powdered)

- A reminder that the **10:30 am AMC Coffee** sign up sheet is on the wall near the office door. Feel free to volunteer!

WIDER COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Youth For Christ is in need of more baking for their breakfast program at Miller.** They bring around 100 - 140 baked items every Wednesday and their stock is running low. If this is something that interests you please let them know or you can simply stop in. Someone is typically in the office between 9:00 - 4:00 during the week, but feel free to call or email to ensure someone is in. Muffins, cookies and loaves such as banana bread go over really well. Thank you! You can email Kendra at kendra.fehr@yfc.ca.

CONFERENCE or MCC RELATED ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **MCI is seeking a host family for a male student** in gr. 12 from Hong Kong. Hosting dates are Dec. 15-17th and Dec. 22-Jan. 7th. There is a \$600 stipend available for hosting over the Christmas break to help take care of our students. For more information, please reach out to mci@mciblues.net or call 204-327-5891.

- **December 15 or 16 - CMU Festival Chorus** and the WSO perform Handel's Messiah on Friday, December 15 and Saturday, December 16 at 7:30 PM at Knox United Church. Purchase tickets at my.wso.ca/events/messiah2023.

- **December 17 - Faith and Life Choirs Christmas Carol sing "My Soul Magnifies the Lord"**. Sunday December 17, 2023. 3:30pm at Bethel Mennonite Church. Featuring poetry by Sue Sorensen and monologues by Arlyn Friesen Epp.

- MCM Winter Retreats.

New MCM Winter Retreat for ages 22-30. Camp Assiniboia Feb 2-4., MCM Youth (All Ages) Winter Retreat . CA Feb 23-25. More info coming soon, but contact Kathy at kgiesbrecht@mennochurch.mb.ca if you need more info.

- **Choose gifts that change lives.** Sometimes the best gifts are ones that you can't simply pull off a shelf. This Christmas, we invite you to explore all the ways that you can share gifts of comfort and joy for the world. Visit mcc.org/Christmas to see what gifts would delight your loved ones and inspire them to see the change they could spark across the globe.

PRAYER AND PRAISE

- We continue to pray for the Mullet family in Thompson. Jon and Abigail both required surgery in Winnipeg after a car accident. Claire and Felicity were in the car but unharmed.
- We pray for Anne Kehler, Dan's mom. She is in the hospital after a fall causing a broken hip and is confined to her bed.
- Pray for Erika Enns Rodine, Josh, Freya and Sigga.
- We pray for the seniors in our congregation: Marianne Braun who is at Eastview; Jean Tarnick who is in her suite at Gardens on Tenth Manor, Bill Loewen at The Gardens, Harry & Susan Klassen at Golden West, Marlene Plett at Katherina Courts and others who are not named.
- We pray for those who are grieving.
- We pray for those whose mental health and physical health make employment and daily life a struggle.
- We pray for the family care-givers.
- We pray for those in transition/who have moved to a new home.

Prayers for Our Community

- Pray for all teachers and students as they learn and teach.
- Pray for all the Health Care Providers.
- Pray for the church leaders at all levels of our conference.
- Pray for MCI.
- Praying for MCM congregations: Pray for Grace Mennonite Church in Steinbach as they move through some significant transitions in the coming months: long-time pastor Mel Letkeman is retiring, Kathy Koop is joining as an interim pastor, and they are engaging in a consultation process about who they are and where God is leading them.