

PRAYER AND PRAISE - continued

- 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: Let's pray for Glenlea Mennonite Church as they continue to discern the ways in which God is calling them as a "country church" and a "commuter church" to love their neighbours near and far.

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.

From the Pastor

Advent Greetings!

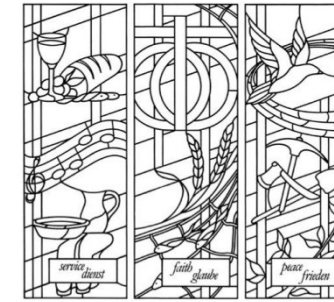
The theme for this year's Advent worship series is *How Will We Know?* The planning committee who wrote the material for Leader Magazine wrote the following in their introduction to the Advent resource packet: "*We observed together that too often, questions in the church are cast aside, and those who 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 Springstein Mennonite Church. We pray for God's blessings upon them this Advent and Christmas, and give thanks for the good work Springstein does in their community and with their furniture program!



Altona Mennonite Church

Worship Service 11:00 am

VOLUME LXII No.45

December 17, 2023

How will we know...what's next?

Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

Hymn VT 218 Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

Call to Worship

Leader: My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior!

High voices: For the Mighty One has done great things for me,
Low voices: and holy is God's name.

Leader: God has brought down the powerful and lifted up the lowly.

People: What will God do next?

(pause)

All: Together we wonder.

Advent Candle Lighting

One: Come, Emmanuel.

Days grow short and to-do lists lengthen.

We watch and prepare, for the Word is coming, full of grace and truth.

~candles are lit~

All: A spark of joy lights the way—

Though the flames flicker against the shadows,

We will rejoice in God's covenant of everlasting love.

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

Website: altonamennonitechurch.ca

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.

Hymn VT 248 It Came upon a Midnight Clear
 Children's Story
 Offering for the church and the Food Bank
 Scripture Reading Luke 1:46b-55
 Hymn (insert) In the Bleak Midwinter
 Sermon The Forever Wait Greg Costen
 Special Music – Now the Heavens Start to Whisper
 Hymn VT 287 Jesus Christ Is Waiting
 Sharing and Pastoral Prayer
 Benediction
 Hymn VT 245 O Little Town of Bethlehem

Worship Leader: Erika Enns Rodine
 Musicians: Mary Costen, Marilyn Houser Hamm
 Scripture Reader: Lori Dueck
 Candle Lighters: Sydney Hildebrand, Freya Rodine,
 Marygrace Rempel
 Technician: Nathan Loewen

WORSHIP & MEETING EVENTS AT AMC

Dec. 19 - 4:30 pm Piano recital
 Dec. 21 – 7:00 pm Longest Night Service
 Dec. 24 – 11:00 am Worship Service – Erika Enns Rodine
Theme: How will we know...why me? Why not me?
Scripture: 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16; Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26; Romans
 16:25-27; Luke 1:26-38 *Speaker:* Erika Enns Rodine *Worship*
Leader: Andrea Hildebrand *Musicians:* Marilyn Houser
 Hamm, Nancy Ratzlaff *Technician:* Loren Braul
 - 6:30 pm Christmas Eve Service
No service at AMC on Christmas Day
 Dec. 31 – 11:00 am Worship Service – Music Morning led by
 the Hieberts
 Jan. 7, 2024 – 11:00 am Worship Service – Erika Enns Rodine

Birthdays: Dec. 19 – Lori Dueck; Dec. 22 – Robert Martens,
 Karly Wiebe

Anniversaries: Dec. 17 – Dan & Crystal Kehler

AMC ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **TONIGHT!!!** Meeting at Jim / Marlene's at 6:30 pm.
 Carolling on Willow Bay from 7 – 8 pm, snacks and visiting
 from 8 – 9

- **From the treasurer:** With the year end in sight, it's time
 for a financial update. First of all, we at AMC have been
 generous in 2023; donations are \$10,000 higher than at this
 time last year. Of course, because we have had a pastor most
 of the year, expenses have also been higher. We have
 donated, not only because of habit and obligation, but with joy
 and hope, knowing that we give, not to maintain institutions,
 but to obey God's call to care for each other and respond to
 needs in the world. We don't give to budgets, but to people,
 as a way of giving to God. Thank you! We'd still like to meet
 our budget, however, which would require about \$25,000 in
 the next few weeks. If you are able to make an extra year end
 gift, please consider giving to AMC.

- 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

- **The Longest Night Memorial Service will be held on**
 Thursday **Dec. 21st** at 7pm at the Altona Mennonite Church
 (267 – 8th Ave NE). If you are grieving the loss of a family
 member, friend, or any other loss, you are invited to attend
 this quiet night of remembrance and candle-lighting, hosted by
 Altona and District Palliative Care Volunteer Team.

- **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 invites you to Buhler Hall on Dec. 21 at 7:30 pm**
for a Christmas Concert! Come hear our choirs and join us
 in singing the Hallelujah Chorus as we celebrate our Saviour's
 birth together! Doors open at 7:00.

- **Mennonite Collegiate Institute invites applicants for a**
High School Science Teacher. This is a term position for
 the 2nd semester (February – June) of the 2023-2024 school
 year with the potential of permanent status. Please send a
 resume and cover letter or any questions you have to principal
 Jennifer Klippenstein at jenniferklippenstein@mciblues.net.

- **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.

- The 2024 John and Margaret Friesen Lecture Series begins
 Thursday, January 18. Titled "Revisiting the Mennonite
 Experience in Ukraine," the two presentations will feature Dr.
 Nataliya Venger, Professor of History and Chair of the World
 History Department at the Dnipropetrovsk University of
 Ukraine. Visit cmu.ca/friesenlectures for more information.

PRAYER AND PRAISE

- We pray for June Schwartz. She fell, and had surgery for
 intertrochanteric hip fracture with rod insertion on Tuesday
 after a fall in her house on Monday.

- We continue to pray for the Mullet family in Thompson. Jon
 and Abigail are on the mend.

- 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