

PRAYER AND PRAISE - continued

- 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.

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.

- **Mennonite Churches in Burkina Faso are courageous witnesses of Christ's way of peace**- All of the Protestant churches in Burkina Faso were asked to contribute "war effort money" to their government. As a Peace church, the Mennonite churches could not accept this, so they sent two church leaders to explore other options which didn't support military efforts. The Mennonite churches were given permission to contribute their portion of funds to work with the displaced and traumatized people in the country. Thank you for your prayers for the Mennonite Church in Burkina Faso, as they continue to be a courageous witness of Christ's way of peace.

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

From the Pastor

Advent Greetings!

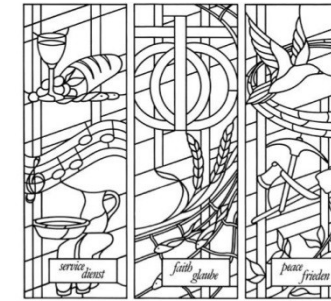
The theme for this year's Advent worship series is *How Will We Know?* The planning committee who wrote the material for Leader Magazine wrote the following in their introduction to the Advent resource packet: "*We observed together that too often, questions in the church are cast aside, and those who 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 St Julian's Table in Beausejour. They joined MCM last spring, and are a dual affiliated church with MCM and the Anglican Church. We pray for St Julian's as they celebrate Christmas this weekend, and ask for God's blessing in the year ahead as they serve the wider Beausejour area. We also give thanks for their presence in our area conference, and the diversity they bring!



Altona Mennonite Church

Worship Service 11:00 am

VOLUME LXII No.46

December 24, 2023

How will we know...why me? Why not me?

Prelude *O Holy Night* edited by Bish
The First Noel arr. Bish

Welcome & Announcements

Hymn VT 254 O du fröhliche (Oh, How Joyfully)

Call to worship

Leader: God sent the angel Gabriel to a young woman in Nazareth named Mary. He said to her,

"Greetings, favored one! God is with you."

High voices: But Mary was perplexed by Gabriel's words,

Low voices: and pondered what sort of greeting this might be.

Leader: The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, for you have found favor with God."

People: Like Mary, we're also ordinary. Will God really work through us?

(pause)

All: Together we ponder

Advent Candle Lighting

Leader: Alleluia the Christ child comes,

And we await his birth.

Let us throw off our distractions,

And allow the chaos to settle.

Let us watch for the signs,

AMC Contact information:

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

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

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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.

And listen to the messengers.
Let us stand on tiptoe,
And shout aloud and sing.
Something new is emerging,
Something new is being birthed.

~candles are lit~

Hymn VT 217 Hark! the Glad Sound!
Scripture Reading: 2 Samuel 7:1-11

Special Music
Children's Story
Offering for the church and the Food Bank
Lo, How a Rose e'er Blooming arr. Whitworth
Scripture Reading: Luke 1:26-38
Hymn VT 221 The Angel Gabriel Called Mary Blessed

Sermon Erika Enns Rodine

Hymn VT 258 Love Has Come
Sharing and Congregational prayer

Benediction

Leader: Together we ponder.

People: We're so ordinary. Will God really work through us?

Leader: Do not be afraid! Nothing is impossible with God. Go, for the mighty one has done extraordinary things, and holy is God's name!

Hymn VT 260 On this Great Day of Days
Postlude *Praise Ye the Lord of Hosts* Saint-Saens; ed by Bish

Worship Leader: Andrea Hildebrand
Musicians: Marilyn Houser Hamm, Nancy Ratzlaff
Scripture Reader: Ray Hamm
Candle Lighters: Bill Loewen, Kim Batchelor
Technician: Loren Braul

Birthdays: Dec. 25 – Don Enns, Taylor Wiebe; Dec. 26 – Mick Mierau Friesen; December 28 – Edna Zacharias

WORSHIP & MEETING EVENTS AT AMC

Dec. 24 - 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

Theme: How will we know...who knows?

Scripture: Psalm 148; Luke 2:22-40 *Worship Leader:* Lori Hiebert *Musicians:* Loren & Lori Hiebert *Technician:* Dale Klassen

Jan. 7, 2024 – 11:00 am Worship Service – Erika Enns Rodine

Jan. 14 – 11:00 am Worship Service, guest Melanie Neufeld from MCM Mission & Engagement

Jan. 21 – 11:00 am Worship Service -

AMC ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **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

- **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

- **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. visit MCM website or see poster.

- 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 is home recovery from hip surgery. Check in with her.

- 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.