

## **Worship Committee report to AGM**

Our worship year was an exciting one! The committee spent time brainstorming themes, contemplating scripture, finding visuals that would provide another way of looking at a theme, thinking of good ways to involve more people—all with the goal to find creative ways to share God's story.

January and most of February held the Lectionary as the focus in our services, with Harold Peters-Fransen covering many of the speaking spots up until Lent. And then the worship committee moved our focus from mostly finding speakers to having Erika be a large part of our speaking schedule. The committee could breathe again! The Lent theme was "Created in the Image of God; Shaped by Jesus." (I think we were all too excited to have a full time pastor to even realize we were in Lent/the wilderness!)

We spent the summer with the theme "Imagine:" and each Sunday had a different focus on God's people imagining – play, rest, being welcomed, faith in community, fellowship, a future of hope, sustainability, naming the truth. The July and September long weekends were more relaxed Sundays, with coffee and visiting as the main disciplines of the morning.

In September we started our Stories that Shape Us series—with Erika leading us through different Old Testament Bible stories. Using the Peace Table book as a resource for a refreshing way to tell and hear the story, all ages were able to connect with and hear in different ways. The children's stories became dramas, and flannel graphs, and singing. Throughout the fall, we also had guest speakers join us from Climate Action Working Group, CMU, and Palestine Israel Network(MCM).

The theme for Advent was "How will we know?" Each Sunday held a different question as we moved toward the light and brightness of the birth of Christ.

The worship committee at AMC cannot do the work of worship services alone—yes, the committee can dream and brainstorm and plan—but there are many elements of worship that we as a congregation cannot take for granted. Thank you to all those who have brought and shared their words in a service – worship leading, scripture reading, preaching, sharing, making announcements. Thank you to the artists in our church family —those who play piano and organ, guitar, hand bells, and to those who song lead. Thank you to the technicians who have had the added responsibility of live streaming. And to those who hand out bulletins and take the offering. Thank you to those who have added flowers and gourds and plants and sculptures and quilts and paintings to our worship visuals. Thank you to the children and youth who so beautifully and dutifully head to the front of the sanctuary for the children's story, reminding many of us of childhood (and the future of the church!). And thank you to all of us who worship at AMC —the vulnerability of sitting together, singing loudly, sometimes crying, sometimes laughing, sharing difficult things and joyful things. These are all integral parts of worship, and we have all contributed to an open and welcoming space for worship at AMC.

Marne Mierau Friesen on behalf of the Worship Committee— Marilyn Houser Hamm, Elaine Loewen, Erika Enns Rodine, Kim Batchelor