

PRAYERS FOR OUR COMMUNITY AND THE WORLD

- Global Companion of the Month – Guatemala. -

Formed at the height of violent conflict in Central America, SEMILLA seminary challenges its students to live the gospel message of peace, justice, and compassionate service in their congregations and communities. Read more: <https://www.mennonitechurch.ca/article/IWCompanionoftheMonth-Dec2025>

From MCIS - Prayer Request - That this Christmas season be a reminder to all of us to spread love instead of hatred, spread compassion instead of violence, and offer deep listening instead of denialism. May homes be found for those who are houseless, those missing be found alive and well, and those in despair find the embrace of community.

- Prayer Request from Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission

Let us pray for the people affected by instability and violence in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, including members of 10 Mennonite Brethren churches who have been forcibly displaced or confined to their homes, lacking food and basic supplies. May God intervene to bring peace to this region and raise up people of goodwill to provide emergency humanitarian aid during this critical time.

Christians in Palestine are entering the Advent season with great trepidation. In Gaza, military incursions and blockage of aid continue. In the West Bank and East Jerusalem, settler attacks are increasing with impunity. Let us pray for resilience, hope, and bold witness in the face of genocidal violence and ethnic cleansing.

--MC Canada Palestine-Israel Network

- Please pray for peace and wisdom for government and military leaders in Thailand and Cambodia as tensions escalate with land mines and aerial bombardments in the region.

- Tom and Christine Poovong are asking for your prayers as they again host evacuees. In the city of Ubon Ratchathani, where Tom and Christine live, they have been told to be on stand-by for possible evacuation.

From the Pastor

Greetings!

We have entered the season of Advent. This is a season of hopeful longing and anticipation, as we move toward the light of Christ breaking forth into our dark and weary world. Hope, Peace, Joy and Love will be our themes for the Sundays of Advent.

There is a Tree of Hope set up in the foyer again this year. The AMC Kids will be carrying out a special project throughout Advent, and you are encouraged to bring spare cash/change along every Sunday to contribute to their collection. Help work for change in our world by bringing your change to church!

Advent 1 (Nov 30)

On First Advent, \$189.15 was collected and donated online to Roca de Refugio. This amount went towards food and water for immigrant families.

Advent 2 (Dec 7)

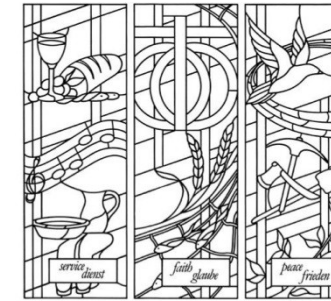
Last Sunday, \$133.95 was collected for MCC's Clean Water project. The funds raised over weeks 2-4 of Advent will be brought to MCC all together after Dec 21 and allocated to the projects we've designated each week to.

Advent 3 (Dec 14)

A gift of JOY - \$140.85 for MCC's Chicken & Ducks project was raised on Third Advent!

Advent 4 (Dec 21)

A gift of LOVE - The AMC Kids cash/coin collection for Fourth Advent is being diverted to another project... Over the last weekend a young mother died suddenly in the neighbouring Roseau River Anishinabe First Nation. We have the opportunity to show care and support by providing food and monetary donations to the family of the victim, whose name is Lishonta Standish-Laroque. All donations to the Kids Giving Project this coming Sunday will go towards Meat, Cheese, & Fruit trays (to be ordered from Co-op) that will be delivered to Roseau on Monday or Tuesday along with other donations from Steps Toward Reconciliation. * STR received a request to help by donating specific food items for the wake. If there is money left over after purchasing meat, cheese & fruit trays, it will be put onto a grocery gift card and given to the family.



Altona Mennonite Church

Worship Service 11:00 am

VOLUME LXIV No.45

December 21, 2025

4th Advent – Love

GATHERING

Prelude *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming* arr. Whitworth
In the Bleak Mid-Winter (Rosetti) arr. Innes
Love Came Down at Christmas (Rosetti) Irish carol

Welcome and Announcements

Hymn VT 215 Oh, How Shall I Receive Thee

Call to Worship

Opening Prayer

Advent Candle Lighting

Advent Hymn VT 255 Love Came Down at Christmas

LISTENING and LEARNING

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 7:10-16

AMC Kids Giving Project/ Reflection

O du froehliche – arr Diane Bish

Hymn STS 11 No Wind at the Window (sung to HWB 194)

Scripture Reading: Matthew 1:18-25

Sermon Erika Enns Rodine

RESPONDING

Hymn VT 258 Love has Come

Sharing and Congregational Prayer

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: Ang Enns C:204-324-4046

Past Moderator: Loren Braul: 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 211 Hope is a Candle (vs. 1&2)

Advent Benediction (inspired by 1 Peter 4:5, Hebrews 13:8)

There is a world out there that is oversupplied with theories and technology, but drastically undersupplied with hope. You however, like Christ, are tomorrow's people, those who know the future is pregnant with promise and hope.

This same Jesus comes again with glory, to judge the living and the dead.

Go and live out your hope graciously and courageously.

This same Jesus comes again with glory, to judge the living and the dead.

The grace of Christ Jesus who is the same today, yesterday and forever, will lead you to the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, and then take you on to those tasks and joys which will prepare you for the greater glory which is to come.

Amen!

Hymn VT 211 Hope is a Candle (vs 3,4&5)
Postlude

Worship Leader: Elaine Loewen
Advent Readers/Candlelighters:
Marge Friesen, Marnë Mireau Friesen
Musician(s): Edna Zacharias
Technician: Nathan Loewen

WORSHIP & MEETING EVENTS AT AMC

Dec. 21 – 7:00 pm Longest Night Service at AMC
Dec. 24 – 6:30 pm Candlelight Christmas Eve
Dec. 25 – church rental
Dec. 28 – 11:00 am Worship Service – “Sweater Sunday”
Theme: carol singing and readings for the Sunday after Christmas
Worship Leader: Lori Hiebert *Musician(s):* Loren & Lori Hiebert *Technician:* Kevin Neufeld
January 4 – 11:00 am Worship Service – Erika Enns Rodine
January 25, 2026 – AMC's AGM after the service, bring a lunch

Birthdays: December 22 – Robert Martens, Karly Wiebe;
December 25 – Don Enns, Taylor Wiebe; December 26 – Mick Mierau Friesen; December 28 – Edna Zacharias

AMC ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The Christmas Eve Candlelight Service (6:30pm) is being planned and presented by Ray and Marilyn Houser Hamm, featuring guest musician Tamara Franz. This is Ray & Marilyn's Christmas/Farewell gift to AMC.

- We are invited to join the **Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church for their Christmas Day** service which begins at 10:30 am. If you wish to be part of a volunteer choir, please meet at 9:30 am in the sanctuary. Edna Zacharias is the organist for the morning.

- **AMC Custodians:** After many years of faithful service, Dale and Sandra have decided to hang up their mops, set down the vacuum and put away the plunger for the last time. This means AMC is actively looking for new custodians. If you would like to apply for the job, please email your intentions to altonamennonite@gmail.com. Or, if you know someone who might be interested have them send their contact details and a brief statement why they might be chosen to clean the church. For more information, please contact Trustee Dan Kehler.

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

From the Treasurer:

- Thank you for what you have given these past 11 1/2 months. Please continue to make donations to AMC through e-transfer (amchurchdonations@gmail.com), online bill payments through Access Credit Union, and the offering plate at the back of the sanctuary.

Budgeted Revenue & Donations— \$150,863.00
Donations/Revenue as of December 17th--- \$136,247.00
December 31st is the end of our fiscal year and we have just under three weeks to continue to donate. We need to donate \$14,616.00 in order to meet our budget. If we are able to meet our budget in this way, we can donate the 4th quarter donations to the organizations we support, and move savings back into a discretionary fund.

Thank you for all of your donations this year and for your prayerful consideration as we continue this practical part of being church together.

COMMUNITY AND LOCAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Altona Palliative Volunteer team will be hosting their annual service of bereavement **“The Longest Night Memorial Service” on Sunday December 21, 2025 at 7:00 pm** at

Altona Mennonite Church. If you are grieving the death of a family member, friend, or any other loss, you are invited to attend.

- Preparations are underway for the **2025 Altona Community Christmas Dinner**. The Dec. 25th meal will be held this year from 11am to 1:30pm at the Rhineland Pioneer Centre and is open to everyone. This is not a fundraising meal however if there are proceeds they will go to the Rhineland Empty Stocking Fund.

Cheques can be made payable to Altona Community Christmas Dinner and collected at the church or accepted at Access Credit Union. e-transfers can be made to altonachristmasdinner@gmail.com
To volunteer for some preparation before the 25th and on Christmas Day, e-mail: altonachristmasdinner@gmail.com

CONFERENCE or MCC RELATED ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Camps with Meaning** Summer Leadership applications are open. www.campswithmeaning.org/staff

- **MCM is hosting Winnipeg's ecumenical service** that begins the 2026 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. January 18, 7:30pm at First Mennonite Church. Consider joining the choir, which will rehearse at First Mennonite January 4 and 11, 6:30pm. It would be great to have strong MCM representation for this!

PRAYER AND PRAISE

- Jean Tarnick is back in her room at Eastview Place. She is finding the days long as she is not moving around much, and would welcome visitors.

- Norma Enns, Erika's grandmother, was transferred back to the Altona hospital. She is in the Palliative suite there.

- Bev Barton requests prayer as she recovers from her knee replacement surgery.

- We pray for the seniors in our congregation:

Marianne Braun at Eastview; Bill Loewen and Elizabeth Falk at the Gardens; Harry & Susan Klassen at Golden West, and others who are not named.- We pray for all who are living with ongoing health concerns.

- We pray for those who are grieving, for those whose mental health and physical health make employment and daily life a struggle, for those in transition/who have moved to a new home. We pray for the family care-givers.