

The Osler Mennonite Church

January 2025 Newsletter

do everything
in Love

1 Corinthians 16:14

Our Statement of Purpose

The purpose of Osler Mennonite Church is to be a supportive community in which people can meet God through worship and fellowship.

We seek to teach
an Anabaptist understanding of scripture,
led by the Spirit to imitate Christ in word and deed.

We strive to nurture faith and discipleship,
committing ourselves individually and corporately
to respond to the needs of others.

*We gather on Treaty Six Lands, Nehiyaw Territory,
and the Homeland of the Métis*

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Volume XVIII First Edition

A WELCOMING COMMUNITY FOR PEACE
Following Jesus on the Path of Reconciliation

Pastor Patty's *Last Ponderings...* on Epiphany and Retirement

In January, while it is still dark, we enter the 6 weeks of Epiphany light until Lent starts Ash Wednesday, March 5, 2025. Epiphany meaning “manifestation” or “appearance” celebrates the revelation of God’s glory and salvation to all nations of the world. It commemorates the magi coming from a distant land to worship Jesus and it calls us to join in God’s global mission. Light is a central symbol, anchored in both the guiding star and the dawning of God’s self-revelation to individuals in this year’s lectionary in the gospel of Luke. We begin with

Sun. Jan. 5 - Len Rempel, Mennonite Church Saskatchewan Executive Minister, leading us in a study of creeds, confessions of faith and the 7 Shared Convictions of Global Anabaptists in our 500th year which we hope to adopt as OMC teaching tool for new members.

Sun. Jan. 12 - Baptism of Jesus with baptism, new members and communion.

Sun. Jan. 19 - Rosthern Junior Choir will be ringing in the new year for us and they want to be fed. Bring lots for potluck. A-B please help set-up and clean-up.

Sun. Jan. 26 - Anabaptism 500th Birthday Party and Hymn Sing with birthday cake, coffee and Dutch Blitz to follow.

I am deeply grateful for the past 10 years serving at Osler Mennonite Church. I began at Thanksgiving 2014 after working at the Mennonite Nursing Home in Rosthern for 5.5 years. I was glad for a closer commute and a smart, good-looking, intergenerational congregation. The first year had drama with local pushback on us hosting Matt and Craig’s wedding but we survived all that and moved on to host MC SK ADS that year. Over the next 10 years, we baptized 6 new members, married 6 couples and buried 24 loved ones. We grew our green energy conscience and youth ministry through stellar youth ministers like Terri Lynn Friesen, Nora Pederberg and Luke Bushman. We served at Friendship Inn and strengthened our faith education through interesting topics SS forums in the sanctuary like MAiD, dementia and suicide,

outreach through a community garden, and opening our communion table to children.

I feel like my strengths in leadership were rubber-arming people into volunteerism they were actually good at and trying to keep a pulse on current cultural and religious themes. I enjoyed preaching and all our amazing singing in worship and our awesome potlucks. The pandemic felt like a set-back on all our movement forward but we survived and dug deeper into faith and appreciation for our community. Most of our community came back and we increased our on-line worship attendance. We look forward to celebrating our 500th Anabaptist anniversary this year.

Our challenges moving forward are continued intergenerational community building and church building use for our larger community. I trust God will lead us to another strong partnership with a new pastor - even if I am a hard act to follow:)

How do I squeeze all the juice out of retirement? asks Dr. Riley Moynes in this Ted Talk. https://youtu.be/DMHMOQ_054U. I've been processing this question as I prepare to leave not only 10 years at OMC but a 35-year career in ministry. Dr. Moynes says the first year will feel like vacation - doing what I want when I want but then in a year I will get bored. It's hard to imagine but I'll willing to find out! He says in Phase 2 I will feel loss and feel lost. I will feel loss of routine, identity, purpose along with eventual physical and mental decline. Already? In Phase 3 I will experiment by trial and error and find my new jam. Phase 4 is where retirees are at their happiest and most purposeful in being of service to others. He assures me that I can't get to Phase 4 without going through the loss and feeling lost. Shoot.

Let's pray for each other in this year of transition. With much love and respect for who we are together in Christ, Pastor Patty

Quote: We don't receive wisdom; we must discover it for ourselves after a journey that no one can take for us or spare us. – *Marcel Proust*

Luke's Little Life Lessons

In December I preached two sermons, one for OMC and one for NPMC. While they followed the advent lectionary, neither had a cheerful tone. I also wrote in the December newsletter a reflection about Joy to the World and O Come, O Come, Emmanuel. A lot of what I put together simply came from reading the leader's resources about the scriptures for December. I didn't give it too much thought, other than noticing that the advent theme "Together on the Journey" seemed to have a more somber tone. As I prepared for my joy sermon, it felt like I just kept hearing sad news about the people around me. A friend in the hospital after a near death experience. A relative struggling with mental health. A friend whose newborn nephew passed away. Another friend whose child was diagnosed with cancer. It all felt very heavy, and those thoughts from that week have stuck with me.

As I prepared a sermon about hope and joy, and hosted Christmas events for my job, I felt like I was living inside of two opposing ideas. God is good, and bad things happen. I felt like God was good when I saw the laughter at the youth Christmas, and the community at the Christmas banquet. And yet bad things seemed to keep happening. How can those two truths coexist? It is a frustrating question that has been asked throughout time. If God is good, why do they let bad things happen? I still don't have a good or helpful answer. I have often tried to just live in those opposing ideas. To appreciate the good, and let it help me survive the bad.

Often things that were meaningful in our younger years come up in hard times. While I was trying to process living in a world with so much good, and so much bad a song I used to listen to kept playing in my mind. I haven't listened to Vice Verses by Switchfoot in a long time, and back when I did, I didn't understand the lyrics well. Jon Foreman, the band's lead singer describes it as a song about "the polarity of life" with the song title being about writing verses in an attempt to understand this polarity.

Here are a few lyrics that played in my head as I processed the joy of Christmas, and the pain of those around me.

Vice Verses by Switchfoot

“Where is God in the city life?
Where is God in the city light?
Where is God in the earthquake?
Where is God in the genocide?
Where are You in my broken heart?
Everything seems to fall apart
Everything feels rusted over
Tell me that You're there

I know that there's a meaning to it all:
A little resurrection every time I fall
You got your babies, I got my hearses
Every blessing comes with a set of curses
I got my vices, got my vice verses
I got my vice verses”

Album Recommendation: Ambient 2: The Plateaux of Mirror *by Brian Eno*



**“If I send my prayer as a text message,
will I get a faster reply?”**

CANADAIAN MENNONITE Magazine

I'd like to send a year-end note celebrating how Canadian Mennonite is digging deep to create articles that challenge and inspire us and help build up our community of faith.

That's true, but it isn't what keeps me up at night.

The reality is that CM is facing a financial crisis, and I'm not exaggerating. It's hard to say, but I also want you to know our situation. In this digital age, it turns out that the regular, old postal mail is critical to our existence.

As a digital subscriber, you received our December issue but more than 5,000 households across Canada are still waiting for their copy to arrive by mail.

CM Waterloo staff took matters into their own hands, delivering print copies to local churches for pick-up. For most print readers, however, the advent issue is still waiting in the dark.

Our fall appeal letter is also stuck in transit. The timing could not have been worse. You have heard other charities speak similarly. CM is facing a \$70,000 shortfall because those year-end donations cover the gap between subscription and advertising revenue and expenses.

Mail will soon be moving again but we're still facing a shortfall in our 2024 budget. Would you help us through this crunch with an online donation today.

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Tips for Visiting Someone with Dementia Over the Holidays (or anytime!)

Many people find holidays stressful as well as rewarding. This can also be true for people living with dementia. Common features of a holiday gathering—large groups of people, new places or faces, and loud, frequent noises—can sometimes make someone with dementia feel anxious and overwhelmed. So what can you do to make a holiday visit more comfortable and enjoyable for someone living with dementia? Here are some tips:

1. Plan your visit during a convenient time

While many holiday gatherings can take place later in the day and at night, this can be tiring for someone with dementia. Instead, consider scheduling your visit in the morning or in the middle of the day. This helps the person you're visiting feel fresh and rested. Every person living with dementia is different, so check with caregiver or others who visit about what's best.

2. Plan for smaller, more personal interactions

More interactions mean more stimulation—though social activity is a good thing, the extra stimulation can become overwhelming, especially for people in the later stages of dementia. If you're coordinating with other family members or friends, have one person visit at a time rather than having everyone go at once. That way, the visit will be easier and more enjoyable for the person living with dementia.

3. Understand a person's dementia, and how it may have progressed

A person's abilities will change at different times as their dementia progresses. Different types of dementia also have different types of symptoms. Try to understand in advance what may have changed since the last time you visited. Check with their caregiver if needed. Planning a meaningful visit and using caring communication will help you connect.

4. Bring children

Children love holidays, and that joyful energy can easily spread to people with dementia. Just make sure to explain to the children before the visit what dementia is and what they should expect.

5. Check about pets, and bring if suitable

Pets can provide comfort and fun for many people with living with dementia. They can also help provide a connection, especially for people who may have trouble communicating. But it's important to check first if bringing a pet is suitable into their living environment.

6. Bring gifts and items that have meaning to them

When deciding what to bring to the visit, look for items that have meaning to the person with dementia and what their interests have been in the past. Holidays can also be a good time to look at family photo albums and videos. They can help a person with dementia remember past events, and it's a shared experience that everyone in the room will enjoy.

7. Make the environment calm and peaceful

Wherever your visit takes place, do your best to provide a comfortable setting for the person living with dementia. One of the easiest ways to make the environment more welcoming is to reduce or remove sources of background noise. Turn off the TV, turn down the music and close the door. Also, try to use soft, warm lighting that won't strain the eyes. Doing so will help make the visit more peaceful and allow the person living with dementia to focus.

8. Find activities to do together

Find an activity you can do together that speaks to the person's talents and abilities. A fun and festive activity could be baking their favourite holiday treats or decorating the tree, or going for a walk if it is safe to do so. You can also participate in holiday gatherings in the long-term care community where they live.

9. Get the person involved in decision-making

Speaking of participation, keep in mind that the activities you're planning should be ones that the person is interested in doing. Once you have a list of activities in mind, ask the person living with dementia what they think. By encouraging the person you're visiting to make decisions about how to spend time together, you can enhance their independence and self-esteem. Generally, it's a good idea to limit the choices. Try asking, "Would you like to watch a movie or sit here and chat?" If that is too much choice, try "yes/no" questions such as "Would you like to watch a movie?"

10. Don't rush

Though it's best to keep your visit short, it's important not to rush through the visit either. If you're feeling stressed, the person living with dementia will feel it as well. Pacing the activities throughout the visit will help you both feel relaxed. If the person you are visiting would rather have quiet time, respect those wishes. Remember, not all communication has to be verbal for it to be meaningful.(www.alzheimer.ca)

MDS NEWS

Hi Church,

“For what I received I passed on to you....”

I Cor 15:3

A couple of days ago, my wife said to me, “I’d like you to make your mom’s Christmas (sweet) bread again this year.” It has been a few years since I’ve done this and, as soon as she said it, my mouth started watering. My parents passed away many years ago now, and I frequently reflect on the rich traditions they passed down to me. Some of them have to do with Christmas. Even more of them have to do with faith, hope, love, and service.

Last week I was in Lititz where all sorts of trainings were taking place: Leadership, Office Managers, Cooks, and Construction. My goal was to consider how we might bring Construction training to Canada (all the other trainings have happened in Canada at one time or another). As I watched all these trainings happening simultaneously, I found myself sitting back and reflecting on the great need for more training and more leadership back when I began with MDS (2015). As I watched the staff in Lititz run these trainings, I have to say, I was amazed at the work MDS Volunteer Training Specialist Gabby Bomberger and the volunteer team are doing. The dream of more trained leaders is being realized!

My other reflection was about how appreciative I am of our MDS Canada “parents”—MDS in the U.S. We have benefited in countless ways from the traditions passed down from MDS. It is the most natural thing in the world for me to go and observe how MDS is doing Construction training, before we embark on hosting our own.

As you host your Christmas gatherings and include the faith and traditions that have been passed on to you, may you know the hope, peace, love and joy that has been passed onto us because of Jesus’ coming. Have a blessed Christmas.

Ross Penner
Executive Director
MDS Canada

CANADIAN FOODGRAINS BANK

Greetings Friend!

What are some of your best memories of 2024? As we look back through our newsletters from this past year we celebrate many things, here are a few highlights:

The **courage and ingenuity of Canadian Foodgrains Bank partners** who continue to provide support to our program participants amid grave, insecure, and heart-wrenching circumstances.

The **generosity and compassion showed by Saskatchewan donors**, including community growing projects and growing partners who harvested over 4000 acres in efforts to end global hunger.

All the people from throughout Saskatchewan who took the **opportunity to learn about why people are food insecure** and how we as Canadians can respond.

The renewal of our **core grant partnership with the Canadian government** and the willingness for folks to continue to advocate for change.

The opportunity for **new staff and volunteer ambassadors** from all over Canada and in Africa to join the Foodgrains Bank network in this good work, and for those we remembered who left us this year.

The **blessings that came as we prayed together** with church communities on World Food Day and at our monthly staff prayer meetings.

Gratitude for all the program participants in the 35 countries we worked in this past year, for their resilience and determination to feed their families.

As we conclude this year, we also find ourselves in a new Advent season. As noted on our website, “Advent is a season of waiting and reflection, **a time to prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ and to renew our hope in God’s promises.**”

Rapid response preparation

As Canada moves toward a federal election, it’s possible some party leaders or MPs will criticize Canada’s aid program, suggesting that Canada should cut aid or that aid should be aligned with the platform of a Canadian political party. Foodgrains Bank supporters are already contributing their own time and money to overcome hunger, and many have told us how important it is that the Canadian government contributes its fair share also. If politicians attack aid, we’ll be encouraging Foodgrains Bank supporters to let them know about the importance of Canada’s role in developing countries. If you’d like more information about this opportunity or other advocacy initiatives, please contact me.

Closing

The messenger of the covenant in whom you delight - indeed, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts - Malachi 3:1

Wishing you and your family a blessed and peace-filled Christmas season.

- Rick & Jacquie, Ezra, Hilary

This is only a small portion of their Newsletter. To read the full issues, go to <http://www.foodgrainsbank.ca>

LECTIONARY PASSAGES FOR January

Jan 06, 2025 - Epiphany of the Lord

First reading: Isaiah 60:1-6

Psalm: Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14

Second reading: Ephesians 3:1-12

Gospel: Matthew 2:1-12

Jan 12, 2025 - Baptism of the Lord

First reading: Isaiah 43:1-7

Psalm: Psalm 29

Second reading: Acts 8:14-17

Gospel: Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

Jan 19, 2025 - Second Sunday after the Epiphany

First reading: Isaiah 62:1-5

Psalm: Psalm 36:5-10

Second reading: 1 Corinthians 12:1-11

Gospel: John 2:1-11

Jan 26, 2025 - Third Sunday after the Epiphany

First reading: Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10

Psalm: Psalm 19

Second reading: 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a

Gospel: Luke 4:14-21

Feb 02, 2025 - Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany

First reading: Jeremiah 1:4-10

Psalm: Psalm 71:1-6

Second reading: 1 Corinthians 13:1-13

Gospel: Luke 4:21-30

CALENDAR

January 2025

Epiphany Lunch with the Pastors - Fri. Jan. 3, 12:00 p.m. Bethany Dining Hall for all interested OMCers, including those not living at Bethany. Lunch ticket \$14.25. Please let Patty know for reservation and if you need a ticket. What a way to start the New Year with your favourite Mennonite ministers!

Epiphany Sunday

Jan. 5, 10:00 am. Creeds, Confessions and Convictions by Len Rempel
11:11 SS Forum in Sanctuary - more on
The 7 Shared Convictions of Global Anabaptists by Len Rempel

Baptism Sunday

Jan. 12, 10:00 am Baptism and New Members sharing
-with joy we receive Nora Bergen-Braun, Noah, Casadi and Brad Schroeder!

Jan. 19 10:00 am Rosthern Junior College

11:00 Potluck – *bring lots we're feeding lots of teens!*

Sun. Jan. 26 Anabaptism's 500th birthday. Birthday cake with 500 on it for 11:00 coffee time and Dutch Blitz and Crokinole in the gym!

And into February....

Sunday February 2, 10:00 a.m. Wading In –

Pastor Patty's Retirement Sermon

11:11 Forum: Enneagram Part 2 Wings and Triads with Amanda Dodge. Join us for a study of our personality understandings and how we function in life and on church committees. OMC library books and other resources on lobby table. Please also check-out www.enneagraminstitute.org and Richard Rohr's work on the spiritual components of Enneagram.

12:00 Osler restaurant lunch with Amanda

Saturday February 8, 9:30 a.m. Annual General Meeting

Sunday, February 9 Patty's last Sunday

11:11 am Patty's Roast – special coffee time in MPR

Sunday, February 16, 10:00 a.m. Chris Buhler preaching

Sunday, February 23, 10:00 a.m. Dave Feick preaching

RJC announces the addition of Grade 9!

In response to parental and student requests, and in an effort to expand and enhance our school program and mission, RJC High School is pleased to announce the addition of grade 9 for the 2025/2026 school year.

Grade 9 is the natural intake for most high schools in the province, and an increasing number of students and families have requested this program. We are excited to now provide this opportunity for our students.

Grade 9 students will be welcome in our dormitory, and will be fully incorporated into our existing programs in athletics, the arts and community leadership. Supplemental and additional opportunities will also be added specifically for grade 9, including the Grade 9 GROW initiative, in keeping with our grade-based approach to teaching the whole child.

Offering grade 9 has been a consideration of the RJC Board of Directors for many years, and we are excited to now expand our program to include grade 9 students.

For more information visit our website at rjc.sk.ca, or contact the school to speak with our President, Ryan Wood, our Principal, David Epp, or our Admissions Director, Alex Tiessen. To learn more about the Grade 9 GROW program visit rjc.sk.ca/grow. To experience firsthand what RJC has to offer, join us at our Open House on January 17, 2024.

Hi all,

This is very exciting. When I was in Grade 9 in 1944-45, RJC (German/English Academy) offered Grade 9, so this is a return to what had been the case in earlier years. I attended RJC that year. Our family lived close to Osler and Osler did not have Grade 9 that year. The boys' dorm was not operational at that time. Some boys stayed at a home just

outside Rosthern, and 6 of us stayed in a home in Rosthern just south of the Post Office. It was referred to as the "White House"

The three major teachers were K.G. Toews, Principle, who taught physical sciences and math, Peter P. Rumble, called P Squared by students who taught social sciences. The quote I remember him saying was "education makes a good person better, but does not make the person". David Paetkau was the music and choir person. I was not musical, so I did not rate very well with him. K.G. as we students called K. G. Toews, became professor of Education at the University of Regina. At the time of his tenure it was the University of Saskatchewan, Regina Campus. When I joined the U. of R. as professor in social work in 1971, I had the privilege of being his colleague.

Some people may think living away from home at the age one is in Grade 9 is questionable. It so happens that I was age 12 in the Fall of 1944. Even though we lived close to Osler, in those days we did not go home each weekend. I was home for the Christmas break and Easter break. It was a very good experience.

For grades 10 and 11, Osler had high school so I was at home. But when in Grade 12, Osler did not offer it, so I came back to RJC for 1947-48. The boy's dorm had been built in the meantime so I stayed at the boys dorm that year.

It is interesting. My dad, Cornelius M. Driedger attended the German English Academy (now RJC) in 1908. Dad had attended school in the Old Colony tradition. His parents were progressive. GEA (German English Academy) had a program to upgrade persons with the Old Colony education into the provincial education credentials, which is the program he took. RJC has a tradition of responding to the educational needs in our communities, and it is good to see this continuing.

Otto Driedger, Regina.

January Birthdates

- 4 – Brandee Borne
- 11- Candice Buhler
- 14 – Scott Buhler
- 18 – Kevin Boldt
- 20 – Garry Harms

History of Crokinole

The earliest known crokinole board was made by craftsman Eckhardt Wettlaufer in 1876 in Perth County, Ontario, Canada. It is said Wettlaufer crafted the board as a fifth birthday present for his son Adam, which is now part of the collection at the Joseph Schneider Haus, a national historic site in Kitchener, Ontario, with a focus on Germanic folk art. Several other home-made boards dating from southwestern Ontario in the 1870s have been discovered since the 1990s. A board game similar to crokinole was patented on 20 April 1880 by Joshua K. Ingalls.

Crokinole is often believed to be of Mennonite or Amish origins, but there is no factual data to support such a claim. The reason for this misconception may be due to its popularity in Mennonite and Amish groups.

The game was viewed as a rather innocuous pastime – unlike the perception that diversions such as card playing or dancing were considered "works of the Devil" as held by many 19th-century Protestant groups.