

# The Osler Mennonite Church

## February 2023 Newsletter

God is Love

-1 John 4:16

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

## **Pastor Patty's Ponderings and Pandering**

From Kate Bowler's BlogSpot: "Lent—which begins on Ash Wednesday, February 22 (we will have Ash Sunday, February 19) — marks the forty days leading up to Easter. During Lent, we ask God to show us the world as it really is. It is a chance for the whole church to be on the losing team. A time to tell the truth: Life is so beautiful and life is so hard. For everyone. Easter is coming, yes. But for now, we sit in the ashes of our own broken dreams and broken hearts, knowing that God sits here with us too. Together, might we say: bless this Lent. My hope and prayer is that we can understand that our actual days—pain-filled, lovely, ordinary, garbage—might be blessed. So let's stop waiting for the perfect life. This is the one we have. Let's bless it all. And thank God we get to do it together."

We will be using Kate Bowler's Lenten themes with lectionary reflections and blessings for each week. It dovetails with Mennonite Church Canada's Lenten worship guide: Shaped by Jesus. Like a potter, we are shaped through our difficult as well as our joyful experiences. A potter's wheel will visually remind us weekly of Christ's work in our lives. Fellow congregants will be also sharing weekly how they were shaped by the pandemic as we continue to work at rebuilding community. We also encourage the use of personal Lenten devotions - from Bowler's blog or other resources. This is an intentional season of spiritual reflection and change (turning) as we follow Jesus in scripture towards Jerusalem and the Last Supper, the cross and joyful resurrection.

## **Pastor Patty's Picks**

**The Banshees of Inisherin** movie had stunning Irish scenery and fascinating people. It's strange twist towards a conflicted violent end in a personal relationship reflects the complicated violent national landscape.

**All Creatures Great and Small** Season 3 on BBC is a yummy winter consumption.

**The Good Good Pig** by *Sy Montgomery* was a heart-warming animal story that soothed the soul in reading.

**Iron Lake** by *William Kent Krueger* was a page turning Minnesota murder mystery that honoured it's Indigenous setting and characters.

## **Inspirational Quotes:**

**"Lead from the heart, not the head."** "Always find opportunities to make someone smile, and to offer random acts of kindness in everyday life." "You cannot protect yourself from sadness without protecting yourself from happiness." "The happiness of your life depends on the quality of your thoughts."

*-When you have a dream, you've got to grab it and never let go." ...*

*-"Nothing is impossible. ...*

*-"There is nothing impossible to they who will try." ...*

*-"The bad news is time flies. ...*

*-"Life has got all those twists and turns. ...*

*-"Keep your face always toward the sunshine, and shadows will fall behind you.*

## **Reflection from Luke**

This past weekend our youth had a retreat to Shekinah, alongside the other congregations in MC Sask. I walked away from this retreat sleep deprived and desperately needing to recharge my social battery. More importantly, I walked away from this retreat feeling encouraged, maybe even refreshed. I thought it would be nice for the wider congregation to get a picture of what makes these youth retreats so special. Despite technically being at work for the weekend, there were

several moments of retreat from the stress of day to day life. Our speaker for the weekend talked a lot about mental well being, and social media. Every session started with everyone taking a few minutes of complete silence. Complete silence with no agenda for our thoughts is a very rare thing these days, particularly if you have a cell phone. I rarely have a completely silent and still moment within my day, and I imagine most people are in a similar boat. I enjoyed the silence, and as I took in the panoramic view of Shekinah through the large windows, I thought “Maybe I should do this more”. I think the experience was also impactful for the youth, as they kept asking at each session if they could stay silent for a little longer. Silence is hard to come by these days, you can avoid it rather easily for weeks on end if you wish. I often find silence and stillness intimidating, but seeing our youth take to this practice so well, really encouraged me to look at silence as an important practice. I hope to explore this more in the future, despite silence being a spiritual practice I find particularly difficult. I am thankful for the youth, for giving me self belief that I too can be silent. I hope you also feel encouraged to take moments of silence in the coming weeks!

*Peace with you as you go about your day!*  
*Luke Bushman (he/him)*

## **Mennonite Disaster Service**

Hello Church,  
Big disasters hit the news in a big way. The pictures can be dramatic, the stories harrowing and heartbreaking.

That's what happened in California, where parts of that state received a whole year worth of rain in 16 days. The snowpack in some of the Sierra Nevadas is up to 288% of normal.

Stories like these are dramatic and ominous and stick with us—until another disaster story hits the news and our attention is drawn elsewhere. That's how news cycles work when reporting about disasters. But it's not quite how MDS works.

While we sometimes engage in some of the early response work—mucking out flooded homes or clearing trees and repairing roofs after a windstorm—we are one of the only groups that does longer term repair and rebuilding after disasters. This means we intentionally work not to forget those whose lives were upended by things like floods, tornados, hurricanes, fires or storms.

One disaster in Canada that has disappeared from the news is the fire that burned the town of Lytton, B.C. in 2021. Many people have forgotten about it, but we haven't. We know there were many uninsured homeowners there who lost their houses.

It's taken a long time for the town to be ready to rebuild, and now our B.C. Unit is looking to start work there by building one new house. With new building codes, a new town council, and new regulations, we want to do start with one house to see how smoothly the process goes. After that, we will consider whether a larger response is called for.

We have also not forgotten Cape Breton, Nova Scotia. It was hit by Hurricane Fiona back in September, last year. We worked in the greater Sydney area in the fall, clearing trees and repairing roofs. Some of the houses were so water damaged they need a complete rebuild inside. We are making plans to return there this spring—because we don't want to forget, even when the news cycle has moved on.

*Director of Operations*  
*Mennonite Disaster Service Canada*

Ten weeks, 179 tree clean-up jobs and 28 roof repair or rebuild jobs. That's what 133 MDS Canada volunteers did this fall in Antigonish and Cape Breton, Nova Scotia in response to Hurricane Fiona.

The hurricane struck the province September 24, blowing down thousands of trees and damaging homes. The Cape Breton region of Nova Scotia, where MDS was active, was particularly hard-hit.

Anyone who wants to volunteer can contact *Clara Flores* at [cflores@mds.org](mailto:cflores@mds.org) or 1-866-261-1274.

# Canadian Foodgrains Bank – Saskatchewan Updates

Greetings Friend!

Can we still say Happy New Year?

We hope your seasons of Christmas, New Year, and Epiphany provided rest, joy in giving and receiving of gifts (in their many forms!), and a growing anticipation of the 2023 journey ahead!

**THANK YOU** for supporting us in 2022! With more international hunger crises than ever in recent memory, our member agencies and partners were able to respond with an unprecedented number of food programs. For that, we need to thank you, our supporters, as well as the continued support of the Canadian government. Click on this 3-minute video to hear more from Foodgrains Bank director of international programs Barbara MacDonald, for an encouraging message of our work around the world this past year, together with perspectives from a few locally-based partners.

## **Recognizing 40 years**

2023 marks 40 years of Canadian Foodgrains Bank officially working together to end hunger. We look forward to commemorating this anniversary with you in a variety of ways and hope to see many of you this year.

In the meantime, we've created an easy way for you to share with us your special memories of your involvement with Canadian Foodgrains Bank, with a 40th anniversary online guestbook! Tell us about how you first heard about the Foodgrains Bank, what inspired your involvement, any events you've attended or moments along the way that have impacted you - anything you'd like to share, we'd love to hear.

## **An important question for you, Friend**

Every once in a while, someone will ask a version of the basic question: 'How does the Foodgrains Bank decide where and with whom to work?' It's an important question, and a golden moment to learn more about the workings of international emergency assistance as well as long-term development. So, let's unpack a bit of that question right here for you! Addressing hunger is complex in any context. Principally, our response is based on measured levels of genuine need. The Foodgrains Bank, its

member agencies and their partners, utilize a measurement index called *the Integrated Phase Classification (IPC)* that can help discern the scale of acute and/or chronic food insecurity that is faced by a region/population.

Earlier this year, the Foodgrains Bank published an online article entitled *The difference between a hunger crisis and famine* – in it you’ll find more detail regarding the realities of the 5 levels of food insecurity, and how those realities inform our response.

There are two other essential principles that guide our response. **First**, our work must be impartial – that is, free of any bias with respect to religion, politics, etc. As a Christian response to hunger, we begin with the foundational understanding that all people are created in God’s image, and so we desire to show compassion unto all that are suffering. **Secondly**, as an association of 15-member agencies who connect to their varied partners around the world, we are a broad network with flexibility and capacity to respond to unmet needs. And by working together we can respond effectively to both immediate and longer-term hunger crises.

### **A prayer to begin this year 2023: We Are Called...**

We are called to be people of faith in the midst of the world, and so we mix our worship and our work, our faith and our life.

We know that in the world there are winners and losers, people who have a lot and people who have next to nothing.

We are called to care for our brothers and our sisters, seeking out abundant life for all.

- posted by Rev Gord on his blog, *Worship Offerings*, compiled and offered through the Foodgrains Bank *Praying Through the Christian Calendar* – Lectionary A.

Peace to you,

Rick & Jacquie

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***Editor note: this is only a part of a longer article –for more, go to their webpage <https://web.foodbankscanada.ca>***

## Herald Press

### Invites you to Celebrate Black History Month

In honor of Black History Month, we are offering 40% select anti-racism and social justice titles. Use the code **BLACKHISTORY** at checkout and order before February 28, 2023.

## MennoMedia

Announces recent acquisitions to buy, borrow, special order or access online. Check them out at <https://commonword.ca>

The five hundredth anniversary of Anabaptism in 2025 gives the church a unique opportunity to celebrate and dream. Celebrate with us and add your voice to the first Anabaptist Community Bible.

For more information, see

<https://www.mennomedia.org/anabaptism-at-500/>

Offering a “Risk Like Ruth T-shirt

*This and much more can all be found on their website – check it out!!*





# LECTIONARY PASSAGES FOR February

## **February 2 - Presentation of the Lord**

- Malachi 3:1-4
- Psalm 84 or Psalm 24:7-10
- Hebrews 2:14-18
- Luke 2:22-40

## **February 5 - Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany**

- Isaiah 58:1-9a (9b-12)
- Psalm 112:1-9 (10)
- 1 Corinthians 2:1-12 (13-16)
- Matthew 5:13-20

## **February 12 - Sixth Sunday after the Epiphany**

- Deuteronomy 30:15-20 or Sirach 15:15-20
- Psalm 119:1-8
- 1 Corinthians 3:1-9
- Matthew 5:21-37

## **February 19 - Transfiguration Sunday**

- Exodus 24:12-18
- Psalm 2 or Psalm 99
- 2 Peter 1:16-21
- Matthew 17:1-9

## **February 22 - Ash Wednesday**

- Joel 2:1-2, 12-17 or Isaiah 58:1-12
- Psalm 51:1-17
- 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10
- Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21

## **February 26 - First Sunday in Lent**

- Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7
- Psalm 32
- Romans 5:12-19
- Matthew 4:1-11

## **OMC CALENDAR**

- Feb 1 1:00 pm Education mtg @ OMC  
Feb 4 9:30 am AGM in person or via Zoom  
**Feb 5 10:00 am Patty Friesen speaking**  
11:00 am Deacon's mtg @Patty's office  
**Feb 12 10:00 am Patty Friesen speaking**  
Feb 16 7:30 pm Worship mtg @ Kathryn's  
**Feb 19 10:00 am Patty Friesen speaking**  
Feb 20 7:00 pm Community Connection mtg via Zoom  
**Feb 26 10:00 am Luke Bushman speaking**

## **Youth Announcements**

- February 4th No Youth  
February 11th Youth, 7pm @ OMC  
February 18th Volunteering at Warman MCC Thrift, Time TBD  
February 23rd Mega Menno Ski Trip to Table Mountain  
March 4th Progressive Supper

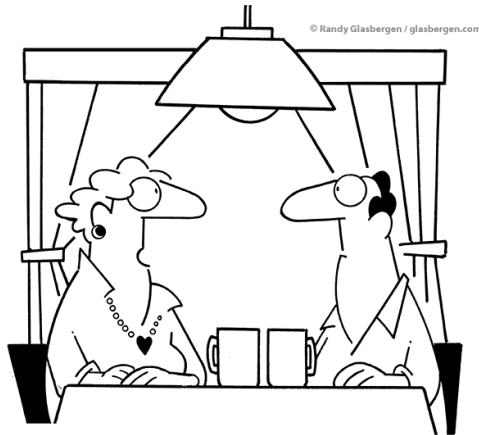
### **Retirement Farewell Party for Richard Janzen**

Monday, February 6, 2023

You are invited to a retirement farewell party for Richard Janzen, celebrating over 30 years of service and leadership in our music program at RJC High School. This event will be held at the Station Arts Centre, in Rosthern, on Monday, February 6, 2023 at 7:00 PM. This will be a come and go event, with a short program at 7:30 PM. We hope to see you there!

## February Birthdates

- 5 – Anna Rehan
- 14 – Walter Tataryn
- 14 – Isa Boldt
- 16 – Nora Bergen-Braun
- 19 – Junko Friesen (86)
- 20 – Glen Grismer
- 25 – Simon Clark
- 27 – Bruce Sawatzky



**"Our love gets deeper and deeper every day.  
That's a nice way of saying we're in a rut."**

## **MCC Connects:**

Join us at the grand opening event for Village Green MCC Thrift on Saturday, February 11 from 10 am-5 pm! There will be light refreshments, draws and special promotions for shoppers, storytelling, as well as a ribbon-cutting ceremony at 2 pm. The new shop is located at 60 33rd Street East in Saskatoon and is now open from Monday-Saturday 10 am-5 pm, 10 am-7 pm on Thursdays.

## **Greetings Blanket Making Groups,**

Thank you all for your hard work and dedication to continue making blankets for MCC. It is always exciting when new blankets come into the office, and I can add them to our shelves.

I would love to try to visit all the groups in Saskatchewan this winter if you would have me, so please let me know if this is a possibility and when would work best for your group. I would love to just come and visit and tie knots with everyone, but I do have some pictures and short stories to tell as well.

I look forward to hearing back from you soon and maybe even seeing you in person as well.

Blessings,

*Karla Koehn*

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