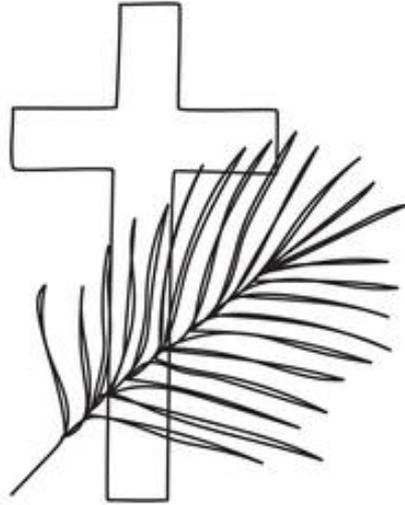


# The Osler Mennonite Church

## March 2026 Newsletter



### **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***

Osler Mennonite Church  
[oslermcoffice@sasktel.net](mailto:oslermcoffice@sasktel.net)

<http://www.oslermennonitechurch.org>

2<sup>nd</sup> Ave. P.O. Box 129  
Osler, SK S0K 3A0  
306-239-2133

Volume XIX      Second Edition

**A WELCOMING COMMUNITY FOR PEACE**

**Following Jesus on the Path of Reconciliation**

## From Brad's Desk:

I have mentioned previously my affinity for the writings of Buddhist monk, Thich Nhat Hanh. I have found much overlap between his teaching and the Christian and Anabaptist emphasis on peace and love in Christ. Recently, I was reflecting on some teaching from a Buddhist group founded by Thich Nhat Hanh. It is as follows:

***Non-Attachment to Views:** Aware of the suffering created by attachment to views and wrong perceptions, we are determined to avoid being narrow-minded and bound to present views. We are committed to learning and practicing non-attachment to views and being open to others' experiences and insights in order to benefit from the collective wisdom. We are aware that the knowledge we presently possess is not changeless, absolute truth. Insight is revealed through the practice of compassionate listening, deep looking, and letting go of notions rather than through the accumulation of intellectual knowledge. Truth is found in life, and we will observe life within and around us in every moment, ready to learn throughout our lives.*

I appreciate the humble and curious spirit that is encouraged here; the openness to learning from others. It is a posture that promotes compassion rather than indifference, listening rather than talking over, deep looking rather than ignorance or quick judgment, openness rather than closed-mindedness. This resonates with what I am learning about peacemaking in following the Christ. How different would our world and faith look if we all approached life with this spirit of humility, compassion, and curiosity? May we all stay curious and continue learning and growing as we seek to live as peacemakers in the way of Christ.

Let me know if you have any questions,  
Brad

## Luke's Little Life Lessons....

Celebrating the chaotic, the spontaneous, and the unpolished. I am personally passionate, about doing things that I am not good at. Things that I might never be “good” at. I have trouble carrying a tune, but I love singing. As a child I spent my soccer games picking flowers, and my hockey games making snow angels, but I love sports. I don't know anything about art, but I like making art. I often think that this world is too perfect. Too polished. I worry that people will never try a new thing, because they don't feel “They are good enough”. How can someone get better if they feel scared to begin?

Typically, at our youth retreats, we have paid some musicians to come and lead the worship band for the youth. This year we tried to get a high school band that had practiced together to come. When that fell through, our music team became any youth with an instrument and a love for music. No practices, just 2 electric guitars, a bass, an accordion, some people to sing and do actions. The youth did a phenomenal job stepping into a role that was more refined in the past.

I hope that we as a church are always providing these opportunities. I know we love our perfectly tuned singing and our well-crafted sermons. Hopefully we are always making room for something less polished. Letting a wide range of abilities flourish and be celebrated. Not just when we are “good enough” to be on the stage, but celebrated during our process of growth.

**Album Recommendation:** This month I would recommend **Wish You Were Here** by *Pink Floyd*. It is one of my favourites!

## MDS CANADA

Dear Church,

I hope you and your congregations are doing well. We have some exciting changes coming to our office next week as Ross Penner retires as our Executive Director and Reynold Friesen steps into the role. As part of Reynold's first week, some of us in the office will be travelling to Pennsylvania to participate in the MDS U.S. Annual Celebration (Feb. 26-28). We welcome your prayers in these times of transition.

We are also pleased to share the February edition of *On the Level* with you. Feel free to share the newsletter with your networks!

Thank you for your ongoing service to MDS as a Church Contact Person (CCP)!

Moses Falco  
Operations Manager, MDS Canada

Hi friends,

It's my last On The Level as I prepare to retire in just a few weeks. These days, I'm constantly flooded with incredible memories of my time with MDS. There are just too many to list. But as I reflect on ten years in this role, I think of:

- A ride in 2015 with new MDS'ers Peter and Susan Thiessen who were wondering what exactly God might have in mind? A decade later, we know more than we did. Lots of story to go!
- When Frank Hoover said to me in my first week of work, "that's because we leave our differences at the door for the sake of the mission."
- When we signed a job card for Lorraine in Fort McMurray and she said, "can I become a Mennonite?"

- When 5 years after building a house for a very skeptical client in the Yukon, she wrote a letter to us indicating, “I don’t think I ever said thank you in the way I wanted to.”
- Being sent out with a volunteer named Shatara (an agnostic) to cut down some burned trees that posed a hazard to our build. I later learned the PD had wanted to ask this volunteer if he had ever met an executive director who was willing to get his hands dirty like that? (He hadn’t.)
- Being chauffeured from the Shuswap to Kamloops airport on a Can-Am Spyder driven by Elvira Wiebe (first time she had ever done such a thing).
- Canada-US joint board meetings to revise our vision, mission, and values statements.
- Laughing - with staff, with board chairs on our regular checkup calls, at project sights, and celebration gatherings.
- The countless stories of volunteers who saw God at work. Wow! Just, wow!
- The number of times I have been moved to tears by watching MDS (Jesus’ hands and feet) do what we do.

May the story (and the memories) continue!

Ross Penner

Executive Director, MDS Canada

### **Volunteers Needed**

People in Denare Beach, Sask. are looking forward to the arrival of Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) volunteers this year.

“When MDS offered to help, it was a no brainer,” said councilor Karen Thomson of the village, which was hit by a wildfire last summer. “There are lots of people with no insurance or under-insured. All they want is to be back home.”

MDS has volunteer opportunities for you!

Go to the MDS Website to see the full list of volunteer opportunities.

Contact [volunteer@mds.org](mailto:volunteer@mds.org) or call 1-866-261-1274 with any questions or to schedule a week.

# Canadian Foodgrains Bank

## Grief, Survival, and Hunger

In the rugged mountains of Bamyan, Afghanistan, lives Ghulam\*, a 65-year-old man whose life has been shaped by profound loss, enduring hardship, and remarkable resilience.

Twenty years ago, Ghulam lost his first wife Aqila\* to a sudden heart condition, leaving him and their infant son, Hussain Dad\*. With the support of family, Ghulam later remarried, had three more children with his second wife Sabira\*, and spent years working long hours doing day labour to provide for his growing family.

But in 2014, tragedy struck again when his eldest son – who was only in his early twenties – suffered a fatal heart attack. For Ghulam, the grief of losing his son was overwhelming, and the immense mental stress contributed to the loss of his vision.

With Ghulam no longer able to work, Sabira sought out any employment opportunities she could. However, despite occasionally finding work as a labourer earning approximately \$80 CAD per month, employment was limited, and most nights her family survived on nothing more than dry bread and water.

“I collect twigs and scraps from the market to burn during the harsh winters of Bamyan,” says Sabira. “But there was no way to provide enough food. The shopkeepers wouldn’t offer us credit because they knew we couldn’t repay it. There were nights my children cried themselves to sleep from hunger. I felt helpless as a mother, unable to provide even the most basic necessities for my family.”

Through a project implemented by Presbyterian World Service & Development’s (PWS&D) local partner in Afghanistan, the family received five monthly transfers of approximately \$55 CAD. This critical financial support allowed them to purchase essential food items that sustained their family for weeks at a time.

“For the first time in years, my children went to bed with full stomachs,” Sabira says. “It may sound like a small thing, but for us, it is everything.”

Beyond providing immediate relief, the project helped restore dignity to their family during a time of hardship, says Ghulam, giving them hope for the season ahead.

“I may have lost my sight, but I can still feel the warmth of this kindness. It has given my family the opportunity to live again.”

## **Greetings Friend!**

We welcome 2026 with thankful hearts, and perhaps renewed in our awareness of the things we may take for granted, such as good health, meaningful work, and opportunities to deepen relationships. It’s clear that Canadians were moved to respond generously in a year where many around the world have struggled. We want to say a heartfelt ‘Thank you!’ to the thousands of people in SK (and across Canada) that supported our mission to help end global hunger in 2025. Like the Pomedli family that stopped by our booth at Crop Production Show in January.

For a clear and inspiring picture of the global impact Canadians are having through our work, take a moment to review our latest Annual Report, or view our end-of-year thank you video from the supporter relations team (that’s us!) to our supporters, member agencies, government, and international partners. We are truly blessed to be working together with you all in a common mission to be a Christian response to hunger and suffering for the most vulnerable people around the world.

At this time of year when many churches have/are observing Epiphany, we also recognize the long-standing Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, focused this year on the words of the Apostle Paul in Ephesians chapter 4 (NLT), “For there is one body and one Spirit, just as you have been called to one glorious hope for the future. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, in all, and living through all.”

May we all be blessed with growth and wonder of God’s character, will, and ever-extending love.

## **Opportunities to learn and engage in SK**

**Aberdeen Mennonite Church** - February 15: One of Saskatchewan's favourite "no-till" community projects that supports the Foodgrains Bank – hosts a Sunday lunch by donation. This occurs every 3rd Sunday of the month. All in and around the community are welcome to join! Contact Pastor Curtis Wiens at [wiens@gmail.com](mailto:wuens@gmail.com) for more information.

**ZOOM gathering** for all Foodgrains Bank growing project leaders/volunteers and growing partners - March 18: A link will be sent in mid-February, or contact Rick at [saskatchewan@foodgrainsbank.ca](mailto:saskatchewan@foodgrainsbank.ca) for information.

### **Closing prayer, for Christian unity**

Gracious Lord, God of all, Guide for the lost, Light for those in darkness. Our eyes turn to you, hear our prayers.

May the sun of your glory shine forth, giving life and light to all, from the East to the West, and from the North to the South. Let the morning rays of your eternal spring awaken us who await your coming.

O Jesus Christ, Light from the Light, dwell within us, who have come together to worship your holy and precious name. Let your life-giving radiance kindle within us a deeper love for one another. May your brilliant light stir us to ever more flourishing unity. Like diverse flowers in the garden of your Kingdom, may your divine brilliance cause us to bloom in harmony. And so, all as one, may we always joyfully praise and glorify you, and the Father and the Holy Spirit, now and always and unto the ages of ages. Amen. *Adapted from St Gregory of Narek*

Grace and peace to you,  
Rick Block  
Saskatchewan Representative  
Canadian Foodgrains Bank  
Telephone: 306-222-8977  
Email: [saskatchewan@foodgrainsbank.ca](mailto:saskatchewan@foodgrainsbank.ca)

***P.S.** If you want to stay updated on the work of the Foodgrains Bank between newsletters, you can find us on Facebook for updates in Saskatchewan and for general organizational updates!*

# Senate of Canada

## **Canada at a crossroads**

Canada faces stark choices if it is to meet the challenges that seem to grow bigger every day. Arctic security, housing and trade have emerged as some of Canada's most pressing issues -issues that have been carefully studied by Senate committees.

## **A stronger Arctic**

During fact-finding missions north of the Arctic Circle and south to NORAD headquarters in 2022, the Senate Committee on National Security, Defense and Veterans Affairs found that Canada's Arctic is militarily exposed and under resourced. Read the committee's findings and recommendations in its report, Arctic Security Under Threat: Urgent needs in a changing geopolitical and environmental landscape. These concerns were also taken up in a wide-ranging 2019 report — Northern Lights: A wake-up call for the future of Canada — from the Special Senate Committee on the Arctic.

## **House hunting**

Another problem facing Canada is housing: it's scarce and expensive. In January 2026 the Senate Committee on Banking, Commerce and the Economy released a report called Out of Reach: Unlocking Canada's housing affordability crisis that explains how housing has become such a problem and what could be done about it.

In the North, the problem is particularly acute. The Senate Committee on Indigenous Peoples highlighted the link between inadequate housing and high rates of tuberculosis, mental health problems and respiratory infections in a report called We Can Do Better: Housing in Inuit Nunangat.

## **Trading friendships**

If Canada is to diversify its trading relationships, where can we turn? The Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade released a report in December 2025 urging greater engagement with African nations. The report, Canada-Africa: Seizing a strategic

opportunity, recommends making Africa a strategic priority while exploring opportunities for free trade.

Meanwhile, the country's long-term prosperity is threatened by vulnerabilities to our most important transportation infrastructure, a topic that was explored in the Senate Committee on Transport and Communications' December 2024 report, *Urgent: Building climate resilience across Canada's critical transportation infrastructure*.

And don't forget the Senate's reports on internal barriers to trade, including 2016's *Tear Down These Walls: Dismantling Canada's internal trade barriers* and its 2017 follow-up about building internal trade infrastructure called *National Corridor: Enhancing and facilitating commerce and internal trade*.

*Above are just a few pieces from a monthly email we receive from our Senate of Canada.*

## LECTIONARY PASSAGES FOR MARCH

**March 1, 2026** - Second Sunday in Lent

- Genesis 12:1-4a
- Psalm 121
- Romans 4:1-5, 13-17
- John 3:1-17 or Matthew 17:1-9

**March 8, 2026** - Third Sunday in Lent

- Exodus 17:1-7
- Psalm 95
- Romans 5:1-11
- John 4:5-42

**March 15, 2026** - Fourth Sunday in Lent-

- 1 Samuel 16:1-13
- Psalm 23
- Ephesians 5:8-14
- John 9:1-41

**March 22, 2026 - Fifth Sunday in Lent**

- Ezekiel 37:1-14
- Psalm 130
- Romans 8:6-11
- John 11:1-45

**March 29, 2026 – Palm Sunday**

- Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29
- Matthew 21:1-11
- Isaiah 50:4-9a
- Psalm 31:9-16
- Philippians 2:5-11
- Matthew 26:14-27:66 or Matthew 27:11-54

**Monday of Holy Week - March 30, 2026**

- Isaiah 42:1-9
- Psalm 36:5-11
- Hebrews 9:11-15
- John 12:1-11

**Tuesday of Holy Week - March 31, 2026**

- Isaiah 49:1-7
- Psalm 71:1-14
- 1 Corinthians 1:18-31
- John 12:20-36

**Wednesday of Holy Week - April 1, 2026**

- Isaiah 50:4-9a
- Psalm 70
- Hebrews 12:1-3
- John 13:21-32

**Maundy Thursday - April 2, 2026**

- Exodus 12:1-4, (5-10), 11-14
- Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19
- 1 Corinthians 11:23-26
- John 13:1-17, 31b-35

## **Good Friday - April 3, 2026**

- Isaiah 52:13-53:12
- Psalm 22
- Hebrews 10:16-25 or Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9
- John 18:1-19:42

## **CALENDAR**

**Sun. Mar 1 - 10:00 am Brad Schroeder preaching** *2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Lent*

Wed. Mar 4 – 7:00 pm Deacon mtg

Thur. Mar 5 – 11:00 am CMU Explore Class

- 5:45 pm Education mtg

**Sun. Mar 8 – 10:00 am Luke Bushman preaching** *3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Lent*

\*Thur. Mar 12 – 10:00 am CMU Explore Class

**Sun. Mar 15 – 10:00 am Brad Schroeder preaching** *4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent*

Wed. Mar 18 – 11:30 am Lunch at Bethany Manor

\*Thur. Mar 19 – 10:00 am CMU Explore Class

**Sun. Mar 22 – 10:00 am Mark Bigland-Pritchard speaking**

\*Thur. Mar 26 – 10:00 am CMU Explore Class

**Sun. Mar 29 – 10:00 am Luke Bushman preaching** *Palm Sunday*

*\*Note time change*

### **MARCH BIRTHDAYS**

- 5 – John Gascho
- 6 – Erna Funk
- 10 – Micah Guenther
- 13 – Casadi Schroeder
- 21 – Felix Edwards-Buhler
- 23 – Sandra MacArthur
- 26 – Liam Boldt
- 27 – Keeley Buhler
- 28 – Clint Neufeld