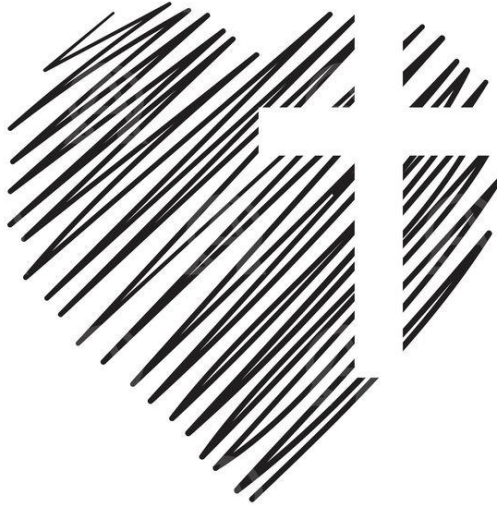


# The Osler Mennonite Church

## April 2025 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  
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Volume XVIII Fourth Edition  
**A WELCOMING COMMUNITY FOR PEACE**  
**Following Jesus on the Path of Reconciliation**

## Luke's Little Life Lessons

So far this year my Newsletter contributions have been centered around various thoughts I have had about Anabaptism in recent months to commemorate the 500<sup>th</sup> year of Anabaptism. So far, I have reflected on my experience leading a Bible study for the Anabaptist Community Bible and some thoughts on Baptism. This month I am reminded about how vast the world of Mennonites and Anabaptists as a whole is.

At ADS this year the guest speaker was Fanosie Legesse, who is the Intercultural Missions Minister in Mennonite Church Eastern Canada. In the region where Fanosie works, many of the churches are first generation Canadian congregations. He himself started his life journey in Ethiopia and has been a Canadian for almost 20 years. His speaking at ADS was the highlight of the weekend for me.

At the start of his message he asked if he could use the floor microphone instead of the one on the stage of the RJC gym. It was a good thing he did, because he would have fallen off the stage had he stayed up there. Fanosie moved around as he spoke with an immense amount of passion (and volume). I am fairly tuned into the world of preachers, and I admittedly felt nervous when he started speaking. I have seen countless videos of preachers speaking passionately and loudly into the microphone, only to say hurtful things that don't seem to be very well thought out. I think of preachers like Mark Driscoll who scare me more than inspire me with their rhetoric. This was different. This was a uniquely Anabaptist message in every sense. Fanosie talked about the Apostle Peter, and the transition Peter had to make in his thinking. Peter like most people desired to see the temple rebuilt, to see his nation restored, and to see the priesthood reinstated. Fanosie's message was something along the lines of: the past is gone. If you want the temple, it is in the followers of Jesus. The priesthood is in the followers of Jesus.

I talked to Jeanette Hanson the next day (she is the director of International Witness). I let her know I had never heard a Mennonite sermon like that. I asked if Mennonites from different cultures frequently deliver sermons like that. She said absolutely, and I was reminded about how small my world and understanding of Mennonites truly is. It can be easy to homogenize the Mennonite experience to one context. Fanosie's message was a great reminder of how vast the body

of Christ is within our Anabaptist context, and I felt inspired and challenged by his message. I also felt my assumptions about what it means to be Mennonite challenged and stretched in the most positive way possible.

(I would encourage folks to watch Fanosie's message. It is on the Mennonite Church Saskatchewan Youtube channel labelled "MC Sask ADS 2025 Friday Evening, March 7". His message starts at around 45 minutes.

**Album Recommendation:** *Boys and Girls* by *Alabama Shakes* is a funky, wonderful and thoughtful album. The opener **Hold On** is a reminder to keep going in this life, and **Hang Loose** is a very fun song that reminds me to not take things too seriously.



# CANADIAN FOODGRAINS BANK

## A woman's wisdom shapes a better future

“I was looking at my own grown vegetables with my tearful eyes,” says 33-year-old Sokhina Hasda, overjoyed to see the fruits of her labour after learning how to produce home-grown food for her family.

Sokhina lives with her husband, their two children, and her mother-in-law in Gorbari village of Dinajpur, located in northern Bangladesh. Her husband was the sole earner in their family, but his limited income as a day labourer made it difficult to fulfill their family's needs. Because of this, Sokhina and her family couldn't maintain a healthy and nutritious diet – only eating rice, potatoes, and small portions of vegetables.

To support people like Sokhina, Foodgrains Bank and Nazarene Compassionate Ministries Canada funded a three-year agriculture and livelihoods program for 6,400 people (1,400 households), implemented by local partner Bangladesh Nazarene Mission.

Nearly 85 per cent of people living in this region depend on agriculture for their livelihoods and household food consumption, yet cannot produce enough food year-round due, in part, to small land sizes, and lack of knowledge on improved agricultural practices. Gender inequalities create an added burden for women, who struggle to access cash and are less supported to make financial decisions.

Through the program, Sokhina took the opportunity to join a Self-Help Group (SHG). She participated in weekly meetings, started to save money, and received training on various issues, including vegetable home gardening, how to cook low-cost nutritious food, and poultry rearing training. This encouraged Sokhina to take out a loan from her SHG and start a new business to benefit her family.

“In the past I used to provide rice and mashed potatoes to my children almost everyday, because I was not aware of food diversity,” she says. “But now, I can provide them with diverse food items which are also

nutritious and delicious too. We, the older persons in our family, also consume these vegetables.”

“I will dedicate my vegetable garden for the family consumption, and the poultry farm will be for our family economic solvency, so that I can be benefitted from both ends.”

*This story was originally published in the 2025 Winter edition of Breaking Bread.*

## MDS NEWS

I must say, I rather like Mike Myers recent message to Canadians to keep our ‘elbows up.’ For those who don’t know, it’s a reference that brings to mind Gordie Howe, an NHL player who was famous for using his elbows when he went into the corners during a hockey game. It’s a reference to fighting back when things are getting rough out there.

Things are getting rough out there for Canadians. Politically, it seems that our cross-border friendship has become a bit shaky. Should we put our elbows up? As Anabaptists and pacifists, I would argue that we should — but probably very differently than Gordie Howe did.

Back in 1998, Walter Wink wrote a book called *The Powers That Be*. He writes very insightfully about powers and systems that can be political, economic, social or religious. All of them can take on a life of their own and do tremendous harm.

What I like best about Wink’s writing is his perspective on what we ought to do in response to these powers. It is to follow the way of Jesus — who faced the superpower empire of his day by inviting us to love our enemy, go the extra mile (when conscripted by a Roman soldier to carry his gear) and to take on the role of the lowliest servant (the one to wash the feet of guests).

In these last few weeks, I have observed the way of Jesus in Canadian volunteers heading to help our neighbours in the U.S. Not a single scheduled volunteer cancelled because of current tensions with ‘the powers that be.’ Every one of them put their elbows up... to lift rafters, drywall and paint. Elbows up to clear airport security, make and serve food, and wave goodbye to new friends made. Elbows up to hang a towel on their arm as they take up the washbasin in Jesus’ name.

Thank you for sharing Christ’s love in uncertain times,

**Ross Penner**

Executive Director

MDS Canada

**Building back better**

Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) volunteers rebuilt a house for Owen Collings and his wife Patsy Gessey in Lytton, British Columbia, last year. It was unlike any house MDS volunteers had built in Canada before.

Volunteers worked with a customized house plan and upgraded building materials to meet a new local building code and to construct the home in a “spirit of fire resiliency,” a commitment made by the couple and MDS Response Coordinators.

**People of Planada start to smile again**

It started raining, and at first the water was just up to the curb,” she said. “I didn’t want to leave—I had my mother here, two cats, my mother’s two cats, and Charlie. He is my best friend.”

She tried to sleep but by the wee morning hours, the sheriff was knocking on her door: they had to get out.

You can read more by going to the MDS website.

## **Mennonite World Conference**

Dear Friends

“So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; look, new things have come into being! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and has given us the ministry of reconciliation.” 2 Corinthians 5:17-18

In this time of preparation before Easter, we call you to stand in solidarity with our members through prayer and rejoice in peacebuilding efforts around the world.

Check out the website [info@mwc-cmm.org](mailto:info@mwc-cmm.org) more information about participating in Renewal 2025 in Zurich, both on the ground and from home.

—Kristina Toews, Chief Communications Officer

### **Prayers of gratitude and intercession**

MWC’s General Council (the decision-making body made up of delegates from each national member church) and Global Anabaptist Networks are meeting in the weeks before and after the 500th anniversary event. This year also marks the 100th anniversary of MWC. Pray for the preparations for this event. May our time together help us live into our vision to be a communion () of Anabaptist-related churches linked to one another in a worldwide community of faith for fellowship, worship, service, and witness.

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The policies of Donald Trump, the president of the USA, have had significant socio-political and economic impacts. Economic growth is slowing down and the burden on society is becoming heavier, which also has a direct impact on church life.

Global climate change is causing unpredictable weather turbulence, causing various natural disasters in almost all countries in our region.

—Agus Mayanto, regional representative, Southeast Asia

## **Mennonite Church Canada's Emissions Reduction program**

*There will be a celebration event for the 2024 Emissions Reduction Grant during Earth Week - on **April 23 at 7pm CT (on zoom)**.*

*We received a grant to replace our water tank and they want to share our congregation's story with the nationwide church.*

Also, Osler's story is now live on the MC Canada news feed!

[Osler Mennonite Church Charts Path to Reduced Carbon Emissions - Mennonite Church Canada](#)

## **Jesus Cancels His Amazon Account** *by Tania Runyan*

I should have done it a long time ago,  
when they shipped a single mustard seed

wrapped in seven layers of plastic  
inside a box big enough for a cedar of Lebanon,

or when they delivered my chisel and plane,  
again, to the wrong carpenter's shop

with a brazen doorstep photo to prove it.  
I managed to live a literal eternity

without one-clicking my way  
through every tunic, millstone, and wine cask,

and, verily, I can do it again.  
There is something so freeing

about buying locally sourced sparrows:  
looking the shopkeeper in the eye

as we nod and brush hands.  
Sure, those birds cost more than two



for a penny, but their feathers shine brighter,  
they fly a little higher, and I've got more

important things than money to save.

*Thanks Patty for this contribution*

## LECTIONARY PASSAGES FOR APRIL

### **Apr 06, 2025 Fifth Sunday in Lent**

First reading: Isaiah 43:16-21

Psalm: Psalm 126

Second reading: Philippians 3:4b-14

Gospel: John 12:1-8

### **Apr 13, 2025 Liturgy of the Palms**

Psalm: Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29

Second reading: Gospel: Luke 19:28-40

### **Apr 13, 2025 Liturgy of the Passion**

First reading: Isaiah 50:4-9a

Psalm: Psalm 31:9-16

Second reading: Philippians 2:5-11

### **Apr 14, 2025 Monday of Holy Week**

Gospel: Luke 22:14-23:56 or Luke 23:1-49

First reading: Isaiah 42:1-9

Psalm: Psalm 36:5-11

Second reading: Hebrews 9:11-15

Gospel: John 12:1-11

### **Apr 15, 2025 Tuesday of Holy Week**

First reading: Isaiah 49:1-7

Psalm: Psalm 71:1-14

Second reading: 1 Corinthians 1:18-31

Gospel: John 12:20-36

**Apr 16, 2025 Wednesday of Holy Week**

First reading: Isaiah 50:4-9a

Psalm: Psalm 70

Second reading: Hebrews 12:1-3

Gospel: John 13:21-32

**Apr 17, 2025 Maundy Thursday**

First reading: Exodus 12:1-4, (5-10), 11-14

Psalm: Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19

Second reading: 1 Corinthians 11:23-26

Gospel: John 13:1-17, 31b-35

**Apr 18, 2025 Good Friday**

First reading: Isaiah 52:13-53:12

Psalm: Psalm 22

Second reading: Hebrews 10:16-25 or Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9

Gospel: John 18:1-19:42

**Apr 19, 2025 Holy Saturday**

First reading: Job 14:1-14 or Lamentations 3:1-9, 19-24

Psalm: Psalm 31:1-4, 15-16

Second reading: 1 Peter 4:1-8

Gospel: Matthew 27:57-66 or John 19:38-42

**Apr 20, 2025 Easter Vigil**

Old Testament Readings and Psalms - Genesis 1:1-2:4a and Psalm 136:1-9, 23-26 - Genesis 7:1-5, 11-18; 8:6-18; 9:8-13 and Psalm 46 - Genesis 22:1-18 and Psalm 16 - Exodus 14:10-31; 15:20-21 and Exodus 15:1b-13, 17-18 - Isaiah 55:1-11 and Isaiah 12:2-6 - Baruch 3:9-15, 3:32-4:4 or Proverbs 8:1-8, 19-21; 9:4b-6 and Psalm 19 - Ezekiel 36:24-28 and Psalm 42 and 43 - Ezekiel 37:1-14 and Psalm 143 - Zephaniah 3:14-20 and Psalm 98 -

New Testament Reading and Psalm - Romans 6:3-11 and Psalm 114 -

Gospel - Luke 24:1-12

**Apr 20, 2025 Resurrection of the Lord**

First reading: \* Acts 10:34-43 or Isaiah 65:17-25

Psalm: Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24

Second reading: 1 Corinthians 15:19-26 or Acts 10:34-43

Gospel: John 20:1-18 or Luke 24:1-12

**Apr 27, 2025 Second Sunday of Easter**

First reading: \* Acts 5:27-32

Psalm: Psalm 118:14-29 or Psalm 150

Second reading: Revelation 1:4-8

Gospel: John 20:19-31

**May 04, 2025 Third Sunday of Easter**

First reading: \* Acts 9:1-6, (7-20)

Psalm: Psalm 30

Second reading: Revelation 5:11-14

Gospel: John 21:1-19

**April Birthdates**

5 – Anna Neufeld
12 – Olivia Martens
13 – Keith Boldt
15 – Julie Bergen
18 – Garry Boldt
18 – James Tataryn
26 – Eugene Penner
27 - Jeremiah Bird
28 – Lucy Friesen
28 – Edna Zacharias (86)

**Mennonite Historical Society of Saskatchewan**

**Annual General Meeting**

Saturday, March 29, 2025

at Bethany Manor in the Fellowship Centre

9:30 a.m. – Business session

11:00 a.m. – Workshop – Bill Wiebe – Cemetery Research

Noon – Lunch available - \$20/person

1:00 p.m. – Film “Where the Cottonwoods Grow”

Everyone Welcome

# CALENDAR

**Sun. Mar 30 – 10:00 am Alex Tiessen speaking**

11:15 am Visioning Session with Tim Nickel

Noon – Pizza Lunch followed by a final session

**Sun. Apr 6 - 10:00 am George Janzen speaking – *loose change Sunday***

11:10 am Karla Koehn MCC Sask

Mon. Apr 7 – 7:00 pm Executive mtg

**Sun. Apr 13 – 10:00 am Julie Bergen speaking – Palm Sunday**

Thurs. Apr 17- 6:00 pm Maundy Thursday Supper/Service

**Sun. Apr 20 – 10:00 am Luke Bushman speaking – Easter Sunday**

11:00 am Potluck Brunch Group C-M

Wed. Apr 23 – 7:00 pm Emission Reduction Event via Zoom

**Sun. Apr 27 – 10:00 am Katherine Bretecher speaking**

Tues. Apr 29 – 4:30 pm Worship mtg @ John's house

