

The Osler Mennonite Church

June 2024 Newsletter

faith
— OVER —
fear

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 XVII Fifth Edition

A WELCOMING COMMUNITY FOR PEACE

Following Jesus on the Path of Reconciliation

Pastor Patty's Ponderings

Summer is called a whole season of Pentecost in the church calendar. It's neat to think about the Holy Spirit all summer long. We will sing our favourite Spirit songs. I've been inspired by *Loving Our Own Bones* by *Julia Watts Belzer*, a rabbi and disability/2SLGBTQ+ advocate. Her book has generated a trilogy of sermons and biblical work on creating a more accessible world that I will use this summer. I will also use *Life Worth Living* by *Miroslav Volf* and *Holy Unhappiness* by *Amanda Held Opelt* to guide us the rest of the summer.

Summer is a welcome season for having a more relaxed schedule at church with no Sunday school and no committee meetings. We can generate that time into relaxed backyard "church outside of church" gatherings like summer book club, summer singalongs and outdoor movie night in August. Deacons will continue with coffee after church and Second Sunday Lunch Bunch at the Osler Restaurant for connection also.

This is my last summer being paid to party so I want to make it a good one. Nearing the end of a 35-year career, I've begun going through files and gifting books to younger ministers. Sorting has been a physical process parallel to my spiritual one of thankfulness for the opportunities I've had in ministry here in Osler, Rosthern, Minneapolis and Portland. I welcome prayer for the next stage of my life as I look forward to rest and reflection and learning how to play the ukulele and accordion better! Let's also be in prayer for the Pastoral Search Committee as they begin their sorting process for the next stage and opportunity of our congregational life.

MORE Pastor Patty's Pondering - Proposal to move OMC baptism teaching position from 1985 Mennonite Confession of Faith's 23 articles to 7 Shared Convictions of Mennonite World Conference 2006. Other MC SK pastors and congregations are moving towards a more global, more concise yet more broad, more updated document of shared convictions. What do you all think of the following?

By the grace of God, we seek to live and proclaim the good news of reconciliation in Jesus Christ. As part of the one body of Christ at all times and places, we hold the following to be central to our belief and practice:

1. God is known to us as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, the Creator who seeks to restore fallen humanity by calling a people to be faithful in fellowship, worship, service and witness.
2. Jesus is the Son of God. Through his life and teachings, his cross and resurrection, he showed us how to be faithful disciples, redeemed the world, and offers eternal life.
3. As a church, we are a community of those whom God's Spirit calls to turn from sin, acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord, receive baptism upon confession of faith, and follow Christ in life.
4. As a faith community, we accept the Bible as our authority for faith and life, interpreting it together under Holy Spirit guidance, in the light of Jesus Christ to discern God's will for our obedience.
5. The Spirit of Jesus empowers us to trust God in all areas of life so we become peacemakers who renounce violence, love our enemies, seek justice, and share our possessions with those in need.
6. We gather regularly to worship, to celebrate the Lord's Supper, and to hear the Word of God in a spirit of mutual accountability.
7. As a world-wide community of faith and life we transcend boundaries of nationality, race, class, gender and language. We seek to live in the world without conforming to the powers of evil, witnessing to God's grace by serving others, caring for creation, and inviting all people to know Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord.

In these convictions we draw inspiration from Anabaptist forebears of the 16th century, who modeled radical discipleship to Jesus Christ. We seek to walk in his name by the power of the Holy Spirit, as we confidently await Christ's return and the final fulfillment of God's kingdom.

Adopted by Mennonite World Conference General Council March 15, 2006

Pastor Patty's Picks

Broadchurch BBC DVD series - I love Olivia Coleman from The Crown paired with David Tennant Dr. Who in a beautiful Wessex ocean view setting.

Where the Falcon Flies by my favourite Canadian adventurer *Adam Shoalts* was another spell binding read about his paddle to the Arctic. Bittersweet by *Susan Cain* who also authored the liberating *Quiet* about introverts, also liberates us to feel the bitter along with the sweet of life.

Caregiver guilt is common, and stressful

Caregivers often have very high (and often unfair) expectations for themselves. That can add a significant amount of stress and guilt to an already tough job, reduce your quality of life, and make it harder to care for your older adult. Dr. Barry J. Jacobs, an AARP caregiving expert, has years of personal experience caring for his mother. In his article, he shares 5 useful tips to reduce the guilt that caregiving often causes.

5 tips for reducing caregiver guilt

- 1. Don't aim for guilt-free caregiving:** Guilt is part of who we are as caregivers. There will always be a difference between what we are truly able to do and what we think we should be doing, which causes guilt. Work to accept the fact that it's not realistic to do everything. That will help reduce those feelings of guilt.
- 2. Give up the fantasy of rescuing others:** It's tempting to think that if you can provide the absolute best care, your older adult will make a miraculous recovery. This sets an unrealistically high standard. Aging and serious health conditions won't stop affecting your older adult even if it was possible to be the most amazing caregiver of all time. We should aim to do our best, but keep our goals realistic and consider the reality of our older adult's health situation.
- 3. Maintain balance:** We have multiple people and relationships in our lives – parents, children, siblings, spouses, and friends. Being a caregiver can take up a majority of our time and energy, but it's still important to find ways to maintain our social connections. This balance is essential for emotional health.
- 4. Tolerate ambivalence:** Having negative feelings is a natural part of the caregiving experience. It doesn't mean that you don't care about your older adult – it just means you're human. After all, haven't you had

moments of annoyance or anger toward them before you became their caregiver? Beating up on yourself for having negative thoughts, like resentment, anger, or irritation, simply isn't fair to yourself and causes extra stress.

5. Find other motivations: When we feel guilty, we often force ourselves to do things we don't want to do. That ends up making us resentful. What helps to reduce guilt and stress is to work on being motivated by positive feelings, like wanting to provide care because it's important to us.

Another Day to Consider

Jesus said, "Consider how the lilies grow."

All morning long
in the garden
the big drowsy bumble bees are kissing the open faces
of the expectant sunflowers
while they sway and waddle in the breeze.

Jesus said, "Consider the ravens."

All afternoon in the forest
the speckled starlings are harvesting acorns and hickories.
The green nuts are falling
in a percussion of leaf cymbals and bass drum drumming
of the dappled earth,
with an occasional out of rhythm hi-hat ricochet
off the tin roof of the empty woodshed.

Jesus said, "Ask and you will receive."

All evening in the orchard
the fuzzy drunk peaches
are toppling off their tiny branches

and rolling about on their ample selves,
offering their sunny sweetness back to the earth
and anyone capable of asking and receiving.

Jesus said, "Seek and you will find."

All night long
in the grasslands of the meadow
a small lone cricket is singing
a searching song of buzzing desire.
A seeking song of yearning, a paper whisper of being found.

Jesus said, "When your eyes are good, your whole body is full of light."

As I am sleeping,
the long night yields
to the slow insistence of the new day
waking up.

Another day to consider.
Another day to ask and to receive.
Another day to seek and to find.
Another day to be awake.

For when your eyes are good, your whole body is full of light.

Rain.....

The explanation of rains, it's abundance and lack of rains and the God or gods that control or command it has changed over time and now with better understanding of technology I have a new theory. To the gods for whom a thousand years is like a day....etc. when they sleep may be years and when they wake the prayer request like emails just pile up. Then when filling orders they fill those orders all at once. Or Matthew 13:12 may still apply for Christians which I believe for holds for weather. "Whoever has will be given more and he will have in abundance. Whoever does not have even what he has will be taken away from him... Wilf just enjoying another inch of rain and glowing in God's blessings. Wilf Buhler

Luke's Little Life Lessons

During May long weekend, the youth from Mennonite Church Saskatchewan braved the cold nights of Shekinah for our annual youth retreat. While we typically do this retreat in the Timber Lodge during the winter, unforeseen circumstances led 19 youth into the unheated cabins during May long weekend. It was a fantastic retreat filled with conversations, games, and good food.

The theme for the weekend sessions was “Experiencing Jesus”. Each person who spoke offered up a reflection about what it meant for them to experience Jesus. I was given the opportunity to share a little bit about what my experiences with Jesus have meant to me. I shared two stories. One story that focused on how Jesus has affected my outward experience with the world around me, and one story about how Jesus has affected my inward understanding of myself. I shared how Jesus has inspired me to take on a posture of forgiveness in the midst of anger, and how Jesus has given me assurance in the midst of anxiety. I always appreciate speaking opportunities, because it usually means that I have to think deeply about something, so that I can share about it. If you journal, I would encourage you this week to jot down what “Experiencing Jesus” means to you.

I hope June is a good month for everyone who reads this Newsletter! -Luke

Album Recommendation: In the summer months I like to listen to laid back, “beach sounding” music. The Baltimore duo “Beach House”, makes perfect music for reading a book on a hot summer day. I recommend their album “Teen Dream”.

Upcoming Youth Events:

June 1st - Laser Tag (or other paid activity)

June 7th - Preparations for Sunday School Picnic

June 9th - Leading Sunday School Picnic

June 15th - MCC Relief Sale June 15th - Youth and Families of Youth

Wind Up at Martens-Funk Farm

June 20th- Mega Menno @ RJC Musical Event

Did you know?

The OMC Church Library – is probably the best stocked library in any Saskatchewan church! Besides having a large variety of books in all topics for all ages, it also has:

- Sermons printed and archived in binders
- Meetings *of all* church meetings filed in a separate binder
- Mennonite Periodicals such as:
 - Saskatchewan Mennonite Historian
 - Canadian Mennonite Historian
 - MDS – Behind the Hammer
 - MEDA – Marketplace
 - Perservings
- Local History
- Reference Books

***And* Did you know?**

We actual have an Archives! Thanks to a few dedicated volunteers, our older documents and pictures have been carefully organized and placed in boxes and stored in our church *attic aka an upstairs space behind the balcony*. Each door has an index noted on it for content and each box is indexed for easy reference.

The office computer also has a handy list of the categories saved.

Foodgrains Bank Saskatchewan Updates

Greetings Friend!

A heartwarming 'Hello' to each of you who subscribes to and engages with us through this newsletter. We hope the longer and warmer days offer you a fresh opportunity to cultivate and care for that which is entrusted to you. I (Rick) am a bit behind in my spring yard and garden preparation, in part due to some international travel. A month ago, Jacque and I travelled to the Dominican Republic to celebrate our 50th birthdays and our 20th wedding anniversary ☺.

I also had the privilege of travelling to Wolaita Soddo, Ethiopia, to participate in a Foodgrains Bank partner gathering for the new Nature+ program and visit some families who are now in their 3rd season of applying a full suite of conservation agriculture practices. I intend to write a couple of articles in the coming months about this important work and the incredible capacity of our local partners.

Whether the Dominican Republic or Ethiopia, in both of these beautiful locations, what was most inspiring was to meet people in whom I saw God's word being lived out (never fully, but with humble sincerity). In a greeting, an act of hospitality, a question of curiosity, in worshipping together, and in sharing with others what was available. Maybe I needed a reminder that while it may seem like corruption and greed are having their day, Christ's example of a compassionate and generous life quietly sustains families and communities all around the world.

As a supporter of the Foodgrains Bank (in its various avenues of support through praying, giving, learning and advocating) YOU TOO are part of this vibrant network that seeks to alleviate suffering caused by poverty and hunger. We invite you to take some time to read the diversity of news and updates included below. And, as always, if you are interested to engage directly with us to learn more about the work of Foodgrains Bank, please give us a call at 306-222-8977 or email us at saskatchewan@foodgrainsbank.ca

A CULTURE of Learning!

Here's a relevant and timeless quote from Benjamin Franklin: "Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn." That seems to be fairly accurate, at least with what we observe in our work of engaging Canadians to help end hunger. The learning curve and its lasting impact might be most evident through the experiences of Learning Tour participants, both while they are on tour AND as they share their experiences with others in their home community and region.

The recent learning tours to Malawi and Nepal have enabled a handful of SK supporters to share more fully about the impact of our network of

passionate people and agencies. And it's exciting to see their learning 'fall as seed and take root' with others, as was the case with Wendy Paulson, who shared about her experience in Malawi with all those gathered at the Strasbourg Growing Project Community Breakfast. One detail is that Wendy (and her husband Lyle) became supporters of the Foodgrains Bank through the storytelling of Jim and Eileen Ewert, who had been on a learning tour to Haiti back in 2018! Kudos as well to the project leaders at Strasbourg for being bold and creative to serve a ration meal for the community breakfast (below, right), tangibly highlighting the reality of emergency food assistance and its humble yet life-saving impact

Learning tour participants often share at Foodgrains Bank events or spaces where we are invited to offer a more global perspective on hunger. The Naicam-Spalding Growers Project held its annual spring supper on April 9th to start their 26th year. Over 80 guests enjoyed a delicious meal before gathering to hear and learn more about this year's project and the international work of the Foodgrains Bank. The group thanked everyone who gave time and energy for this year's harvest, especially Harvey Jackson for all his years of service, and celebrated with an inspiring video of all the work that was done this past year. This project involves many community members and contributes annually to six different member organizations! Roberta Pronteau from Tearfund Canada was present and provided helpful insights about the conservation agriculture work their local partners have been doing in Ethiopia.

This is only part of their Newsletter – go to their website for more...

Peace to you,

Rick & Jacquie
Saskatchewan Representatives,
Canadian Foodgrains Bank

MDS NEWS

Hi Church,

Last week I had the privilege of attending an MDS (US) Board retreat in Pennsylvania. During one of our devotional times, attendees were asked to share a “life verse” with some explanation as to why the verse was significant to them. Our diversity was reflected in response. Some indicated they had never heard the phrase “life verse” before, and others were familiar with this reference to a verse or passage that guides one’s life journey.

I have such a verse. It comes from The Message (a paraphrase version of the Bible) in Matthew 11:28-30. One line in The Message has guided me for a good few years now: “Learn the unforced rhythms of grace.” I shared that verse on a Friday morning.

On Sunday morning, I got a call from my sister Carol. We are planning the memorial service for our younger sister Kathryn, who after a long journey with muscular dystrophy, left her earthly home for her heavenly one. Carol informed me that the passage Kathryn requested for her memorial was from Matthew 11:28-30, and it was to be from The Message. I hadn’t known that this was also a favourite passage of hers.

On Sunday afternoon, Carol texted me. She had been in church that morning and was surprised that the sermon was... from The Message... and Matthew 11:28-30.

When I observe MDS volunteers, I observe a faith in action that is well described in this passage; rest, work, grace, keeping company with Jesus, living freely and lightly. I love this about our volunteers. My invitation is to continue to pursue a life of service that looks like this:

“Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you’ll recover your life. I’ll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won’t lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you’ll learn to live freely and lightly.” (Matthew 11:28-30, The Message)

Ross Penner
Executive Director, MDS Canada

Baptism Class of 1959



Back row (l to r): Henry Wiebe, Cornie Guenther, Art Friesen, *Rev. Jacob H. Pauls, *Marge Peters, *Aeltester J. C. Schmidt, Elmer Froese, Jake Buhler, *Dick Wiebe.

Front row (l to r): Frieda Guenther, *Evelyn Ens, Nettie Friesen, Mary Pauls.

*persons passed away.

The preparation was in the form of catechism classes that took place on Sunday afternoons from about 2:00 to 4:00 pm for 8 weeks prior to baptism. Rev. Jacob Pauls taught the classes and occasionally Peter Kruger assisted. Aeltester Schmidt conducted the actual baptism on a Sunday morning. A small amount of water was poured from a clear glass pitcher onto each head, as each candidate knelt. After the baptism he took their hand and said ‘*Stehe auf Bruder or Stehe auf Schwester.*’ (Stand up my brother or sister)

Rev. Pauls (age 22), was minister from 1938 to 1964 at OMC. During those 25 years, he did not baptize candidates - the Aeltester did that. In 1965 Walter Franz (also 22 years old) became the new minister and he baptized the next baptism class. In 1964 the Church Conference reorganization and the office of Aeltester was eliminated.

Thanks Jake Buhler for the photo and the above information.

LECTIONARY PASSAGES FOR JUNE

June 2, 2024 - Proper 4

- 1 Samuel 3:1-10, (11-20) and Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18
- Deuteronomy 5:12-15 and Psalm 81:1-10
- 2 Corinthians 4:5-12
- Mark 2:23-3:6

June 9, 2024

- 1 Samuel 8:4-11, (12-15), 16-20, (11:14-15) and Psalm 138
- Genesis 3:8-15 and Psalm 130
- 2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1
- Mark 3:20-35

June 16, 2024

- 1 Samuel 15:34 - 16:13 and Psalm 20
- Ezekiel 17:22-24 and Psalm 92:1-4, 12-15
- 2 Corinthians 5:6-10, (11-13), 14-17
- Mark 4:26-34

June 23, 2024

- 1 Samuel 17:(1a, 4-11, 19-23), 32-49 and Psalm 9:9-20
or 1 Samuel 17:57-18:5, 18:10-16 and Psalm 133
- Job 38:1-11 and Psalm 107:1-3, 23-32
- 2 Corinthians 6:1-13
- Mark 4:35-41

June 30, 2024

- 2 Samuel 1:1, 17-27 and Psalm 130
- Wisdom of Solomon 1:13-15, 2:23-24
or Lamentations 3:22-33 and Psalm 30
- 2 Corinthians 8:7-15
- Mark 5:21-43

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Join the Walking Club – Fridays 9:00 am starting from church and walking for an hour. Coffee/water is served at 10:00 am.

John Gascho still has various cards available for purchase at \$3.00 each. The proceeds will be to assist a local student attending RJC this coming fall.

SUMMER CALENDAR

Sun. June 2 - Beethoven's Ode to Joy by Patty Friesen

Sun. June 9, 10:00 am Outdoor Service led by youth picnic provided by deacons - bring lawn chairs
- SS teacher and grad recognition

-we will also be celebrating Harry & Eva Martens' 60th ann.

Weds. June 12, 7:00 pm Backyard Book club

- Linda and Lyle's (accessible) deck at Bethany (Unit #6)
(Pull of the Stars - books on lobby table)

Sat. June 15, 11:00 am to 3 pm MCC Sale - Forest Grove Church

Sun. June 16 - Don Froese preaching

(former interim pastor Mount Royal)

Weds. June 19, 7:00 pm Summer Singalong Bethany Courtyard

Sat. June 22, Menno at Pride Parade, 12:00 University Bridge

Sun. June 23 - Patty Friesen preaching *God on Wheels*

RJC Highschool graduation celebrations

Sun. June 23, 1:30 pm Shower for Katherine & Dakota

(*cash basket for future household purchases*)

@ Dick & Kathy's backyard – 142 Willow Crt

Sun. June. 30 - Terry Stefaniuk speaking

Mon. July 1, 11:00 Osler Parade, OMC Ice Cream & water

- talk to Kaytee about volunteering

June Birthdates

- 2 – Helena Peters (89)
- 2 – Becca Bushman
- 4 - Wilf Buhler
- 6 – Joe Guenther
- 7 – Pete Sawatzky (92)
- 8 – Ben Buhler
- 8 – George Janzen
- 8 – Russ Friesen
- 12 – Rhonda Gascho
- 12 – Zac Stefaniuk
- 14 - Tony Funk
- 18 – Alexander Edwards Buhler
- 25 – Margaret Boldt (89)
- 26 – Lynette Janzen
- 26 – Melanie Boldt
- 26 – Tena Sawatzky (91)
- 27 - Dayna Stefaniuk
- 29 – Karl Martens
- 30 – Patty Friesen

Anniversaries

Some milestone anniversaries of active members of OMC

Doug & Diana McKinnell – August 28	20 years
Scott & Candice Buhler – August 14	25 years
Rob & Brandee Borne – August 28	25 years
Dave & Joanne Feick – August 4	40 years
Doug & Adeline Cox – June 1	50 years
Jim & Margaret Dyck – October 11	55 years
Harry & Eva Martens – June 10	60 years
Bill & Anna Peters – August 1	60 years
Jacob & Junko Friesen – April 29	65 years
Pete & Tena Sawatzky – October 23	70 years

Some milestone may have been missed....

The Long View

It helps, now and then, to step back and take the long view.
The kingdom is not only beyond our efforts,
it is beyond our vision.

We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction
of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work.
Nothing we do is complete,
which is another way of saying that
the kingdom always lies beyond us.

No statement says all that could be said.
No prayer fully expresses our faith.
No confession brings perfection.
No pastoral visit brings wholeness.
No program accomplishes the church's mission.
No set of goals and objectives includes everything.
That is what we are about:
We plant seeds that one day will grow.
We water seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise.
We lay foundations that will need further development.
We provide yeast that produces effects beyond our capabilities.
We cannot do everything and
there is a sense of liberation in realizing that.
This enables us to do something, and to do it very well.
It may be incomplete,
but it is a beginning, a step along the way,
an opportunity for God's grace to enter and do the rest.
We may never see the end results,
but that is the difference between the master builder and the worker.
We are workers, not master builders,
ministers, not messiahs.
We are prophets of a future not our own.
Amen.

Written by Bishop Ken Untener of Saginaw
Often attributed to Monseñor Oscar Romero