

The Osler Mennonite Church

SEPTEMBER 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
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Volume XIX Seventh Edition

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

From Brad's Desk:

Eyes to See the Christ

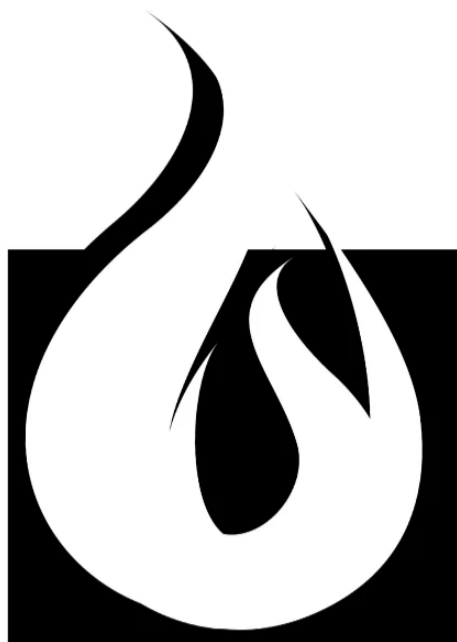
I first came across the poem “As Kingfishers Catch Fire” by Gerard Manley Hopkins in Seminary when Eugene Peterson’s book, *Christ Plays in Ten Thousand Places*, was given us to read. Since that time, it has come back to mind from time to time and I share it here with you along with some reflections:

As kingfishers catch fire, dragonflies draw flame;
As tumbled over rim in roundy wells
Stones ring; like each tucked string tells, each hung bell's
Bow swung finds tongue to fling out broad its name;
Each mortal thing does one thing and the same:
Deals out that being indoors each one dwells;
Selves — goes itself; *myself* it speaks and spells,
Crying *Whát I dó is me: for that I came.*

I say móre: the just man justices;
Keeps grace: thát keeps all his goings graces;
Acts in God's eye what in God's eye he is —
Christ — for Christ plays in ten thousand places,
Lovely in limbs, and lovely in eyes not his
To the Father through the features of men's faces.

As is often the case with poetry, some of the language can be difficult to interpret but the author here seems to be speaking to the reality that the various creations in this world, whether divinely or humanly made, reveal who or what they are by what they do. “What I do is me” he says. From here, Hopkins speaks more directly to humanity and says that a person “acts in God’s eye what in God’s eye he is--Christ—for Christ plays in ten thousand places, lovely in limbs, and lovely in eyes not his”. If we have the eyes to see, the Christ is everywhere, playing in 10,000

places. We are able to catch a glimpse of the Sacred wherever we are, wherever we look. But we need to look. We need eyes to see. This season of fall often sees our lives get busier as we re-enter the school year and all the activities that come with that. During the busyness of our lives, I pray that we could have eyes to see the Christ playing in ourselves, our families, our friendships, our communities, our schools, our workplaces, and in the beauty of creation around us even as it continues its cycle through the seasons.



Luke's Little Life Lessons....

“The Importance of Creativity”

There are some topics that will get me riled up and ranting if I am in a space to speak freely. I usually try to avoid being like this as a pastor, as I don't want to say something I don't mean, or alienate someone who disagrees. This is a newsletter and not a page of my deranged rantings so I won't say more than “my disdain for AI is very evident”. With the recent boom of artificial “intelligence”, I find myself reflecting more and more on the power and importance of creativity.

Every summer I spend a week as the “Bible Leader” at Shekinah, and in this setting the most important skill is not biblical analysis but storytelling. I have frequently brought puppets to Shekinah and done puppet shows every day for the kids. Whether you are a child, a teen or a senior, I will find a way to tell a story with puppets. This year July was filled with some hiking trips with family and church folks, so I did not have time to prepare puppet shows. It was disappointing not to be creative with puppets. Despite lacking my felt-covered-friends, I still found myself using storytelling to communicate spiritual truths. Stories from my life, from the Bible, from the world around me.

Even if you are not prone to embellishment, telling a story involves a certain level of creativity. A story told without puppets still requires creativity. I am a big fan of the parables of Jesus, because there is so much meaning that can be derived from these simple tales. I can hear them countless times, and be drawn to different characters, settings, or lessons. Jesus using parables to communicate with his followers reminds me that creativity is essential to the human experience. It is also a gift from the divine, something we share in common with our creator. Creativity matters. We have different areas of creativity, or maybe even levels of creativity. Even if you are not an artist it is a creative act to problem solve, to fix, to express, and to plan. If you are finding a way to fix a car with zip ties, that is creative. If you are planning an event to bond with others, that is creative. Even the act of trying to describe how you are feeling is a creative action. It is clear to me that creativity is a gift from God, and it is uniquely human. I wonder if our ability to create is part of what makes us “made in the image of God”.

How do you create? What do you create? What part of creativity makes you happy? I would love to hear about people's current creative endeavours. Whether that is solving a difficult problem or making a beautiful piece of art. Keep creating! I am very blessed to sometimes use my creativity for my work at OMC.

Album Recommendation: I think *Dare* by *The Human League* is one of the most iconic synth-pop albums ever made. While I think everyone has heard "Don't You Want Me", the rest of the album is equally catchy and infectious.

SEW WHAT?!

Dear friend,

You are receiving this email because you have donated sewn items to MCC SK Material Resources in the last year, run a blanket making group, or contributed to MCC SK Material Resources in some capacity. I hope this is helpful information! But don't worry you won't get more than 1 a year of these!

Visiting Your Blanket Making Group

I would love to plan a visit to your blanket making group! If you would like me to visit, please reach out! Reply to this email, let me know what day of the week you meet and we will schedule a visit! I'll bring some stories of the work MCC is doing with comforters and we will celebrate your contributions together.

Wholesale Pricing: Did you know you can buy some MCC sewing supplies from the MCC SK office at wholesale prices? We have:

- fleece for \$7/ m
- cotton flannelette for \$5/ m
- fiber fill for \$10.5/ 1 blanket OR \$29 for 3 blankets worth
- roll of Fiber fill ~24 bats for \$185

These items are sold for use in making products for MCC distribution ONLY. The prices listed reflect a small increase, effective September 1, to offset rising costs.

Wanted: Infant Gowns

We are looking for more sewists to sew infant gowns. Our goal this year is to send 600 Infant Care Kits, which means we need 900 infant gowns! Gowns have a cotton flannelette body, bias tape for the collar, rolled hems for the sleeves and bottom and a cotton twill tie. If you're interested, please reach out for a pattern and a sample.

Sew What?! Beginner Sewing Class

Starting **September 4**, I will be teaching a beginner sewing class on Friday mornings, Sew What?! I know many of you receiving this email are expert sewists, but I also know almost every blanket making group has someone that only ties. If they are interested in learning a new skill, please share this information with them. The course has a fee, but all required materials and machines are provided. Course fees also cover the cost of kit packing days where we will pack a hygiene kit and a sewing kit.

Registration is required. Contact MCC and ask for Joy.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Warmly,

Joy Laughren

Interim Material Resources & Event Coordinator
MCC Saskatchewan

MDS CANADA

Dear Church,

As we near the end of summer, our national project in Denare Beach, Sask. is also reaching the home stretch. We are so grateful to all who have volunteered and supported the work happening there.

Unfortunately, we have seen many more disasters this summer. MDS volunteers have been responding to flooding in Ottawa and the Niagara region in Ontario. Our BC Unit has been preparing to do initial assessments after the devastating fires in their province. And we are also setting up our fall project in response to flooding in the Swan Valley of Manitoba. There are many ways to pray for and support the work of MDS.

Announcements

- MDS is planning a response in the Swan Valley region of Manitoba following significant flooding this spring. If you are interested in volunteering in the fall, please add your name to our waitlist and we will be in touch once we know more: <https://volunteer.mds.org/waitlist/265>
- With Grateful Hearts - MDS is hosting three special evenings across Canada to celebrate God's work through MDS. Join us for food, fellowship, music, and to hear stories from Kevin King (retiring MDS U.S. Executive Director). Find more details on our events page: <https://mds.org/event/>
- St. Vital EMC Church, Winnipeg, MB - Oct. 13, 7-8:30pm
- King's Road Church, Abbotsford, BC - Oct. 16, 6:30-8:30pm
- Steinmann Mennonite Church, Baden, ON - Oct. 31, 2026, 7-8:30pm

Hi friend,

“Where does our help come from?”

This is a common question for anyone who has experienced loss or disaster. Where do we turn? Where can we find hope? Who will rescue us?

This is also the question that the psalmist asks in Psalm 121. Gazing into the mountains, the writer asks the same question many of us have asked in our lives; But the writer answers it in the same breath:

**My help comes from the Lord,
the Maker of heaven and earth.**

**He will not let your foot slip—
he who watches over you will not slumber;
indeed, he who watches over Israel
will neither slumber nor sleep.**

(Psalm 121:2-4)

This Psalm would have been memorized and most likely sung by the people of Israel for generations. It was a constant reminder that in times of need, we look to the Lord. Even if it might seem like God is absent, He does not slumber, not even a bit.

Over the last few weeks in Canada, we have been witnessing unprecedented disasters, from wildfires in BC that have forced over 20,000 people to evacuate their homes, to flooding in Ottawa and the Niagara region that have flooded thousands of homes.

As we witness these disasters and hear stories of survivors, I am reminded that our ultimate home lies in God. He is the source of everything that we need. May we fix our eyes on Him as we seek to be the hands and feet of Jesus.

Moses Falco
Operations Manager
MDS Canada

Community Peacemakers

This year, Community Peacemaker Teams marks its 40th anniversary! To celebrate this milestone, we're hosting a special online gathering that brings together stories spanning four decades of peacemaking, solidarity, and transforming violence and oppression.

We're honoured to welcome Judy Da Silva, Anishinaabe Elder and Land Defender from Asubpeeschoseewagong First Nation (Grassy

Narrows), as our keynote speaker. Judy will help us reflect on the power of community, resistance, and solidarity in the struggle for justice. What does it mean to walk alongside a community in its struggle against oppression? How have we disrupted systems of violence with creative nonviolent action? And what makes CPT's approach to solidarity and accompaniment so unique?

Join CPTers past and present as they share stories that stand out from our journey. Together, we have accompanied campesina communities in Colombia facing displacement, stood against state terror in the West Bank, and supported migrants navigating the jail cells and detention camps of the Aegean islands. We have demanded justice alongside Indigenous communities defending their land and resources, kept memory alive with the families of those killed by Turkish strikes in Iraqi Kurdistan, and held vigil for our neighbors whose lives were lost at the US-Mexico border.

You'll also have an opportunity to support CPT's work into the next 40 years through our fundraising auction. Every bid helps raise the funds that keep our programs going.

Join us as we reflect on four decades of protective presence, celebrate what we've built together, and connect with the CPT community as we rise into the next 40 years of undoing violence and oppression.

Ryan James
Communications Associate

CANADIAN FOODGRAINS BANK

Dear Friend,

Some say August is the Sunday of summer. A month to enjoy the last days of summer before school begins, leaves change, and fall harvests arrive. I hope you are finding moments for rest and renewal this season, whatever that looks like for you.

And as you find time to rest, I hope you can take the time to reflect on what you've been a part of. Our annual report has recently been

released, and thanks to the work of our members, their local partners, and supporters like you, we committed to serve **1,160,441 people in 34 countries** last fiscal year.

That's over one million people reached through our collective work. And we know beyond these numbers are individuals, created in the image of God, who know their suffering is not being ignored. In addition, the impact continues to grow as families share new knowledge with neighbours, communities work together to build resilience, and parents create opportunities for the next generation.

Thank you for your generous support this past year, and for continuing with us on the journey to end hunger.

Mark your calendar for World Food Day!

On October 16, we invite churches and individuals across Canada to join together to mark World Food Day and reflect on our shared calling to respond to hunger in our world.

This year's theme, Setting the Table for Peace, invites us to explore the connection between food security, justice, and lasting peace. To help you engage with your church, family, and community, we've created a variety of worship and learning resources, including:

- Prayers
- Scripture readings
- Sermon starters
- Videos
- Activities for all ages

We'd also love for you to join us online or, if you're in the Kitchener/Waterloo area, in person for a special World Food Day worship gathering on the evening of World Food Day (Friday, October 16).

Join us in prayer

Gracious and loving God, we pray for a world where peace prevails, where hunger is eradicated

and where the rights of all are respected. May your boundless love bring strength to all. May justice be the foundation of our societies and compassion the guiding principle of our actions. Amen.

Written and translated from Tumbuka by Ekwendeni Hospital AIDS Programme, a PWS&D partner in Malawi, from PWS&D's resource: Unceasing Prayer. Shared with permission.

Thank you for being part of this work. Whether through your financial support, prayers, advocacy, or learning, you're helping bring hope to families and communities facing hunger.

Blessings,

Christina Philips
Director, resources and public engagement
Canadian Foodgrains Bank

LECTIONARY PASSAGES FOR SEPTEMBER

Sept 6, 2026

- First* reading and Psalm: Exodus 12:1-14 Psalm 149
- Alternate: Ezekiel 33:7-11 Psalm 119:33-40
- Second reading: Romans 13:8-14
- Gospel: Matthew 18:15-20

Sep 13, 2026

- First* reading and Psalm: Exodus 14:19-31 Psalm 114 or Exodus 15:1b-11, 20-21
- Alternate: Genesis 50:15-21 Psalm 103:(1-7), 8-13
- Second reading: Romans 14:1-12
- Gospel: Matthew 18:21-35

Sep 20, 2026

- First* reading and Psalm: Exodus 16:2-15 Psalm 105:1-6, 37-45
- Alternate: Jonah 3:10-4:11 Psalm 145:1-8
- Second reading: Philippians 1:21-30
- Gospel: Matthew 20:1-16

Sep 27, 2026

- First* reading and Psalm: Exodus 17:1-7 Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16
- Alternate: Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32 Psalm 25:1-9
- Second reading: Philippians 2:1-13
- Gospel: Matthew 21:23-32

Oct 04, 2026

- First* reading and Psalm: Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20 Psalm 19
- Alternate* First reading and Psalm: Isaiah 5:1-7 Psalm 80:7-15
- Second reading: Philippians 3:4b-14
- Gospel: Matthew 21:33-46

CALENDAR

Sun. Aug 30 – 10:00 am Brad Schroeder preaching

Mon. Aug 31 – 6:00 pm Executive mtg

7:30 pm Council mtg

Sun. Sept 6 - 10:00 am Brad Schroeder preaching

Sun. Sept 13 – 10:00 am Luke Bushman preaching

11:00 Vanessa Stefaniuk Bridal shower

Noon – Semi-annual mtg

Sun. Sept 20 – 10:00 am Brad Schroeder preaching

11:10 am Sunday School begins for all classes

Noon - “Kick off to Fall” POTLUCK Group A-B.

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

8 – Dick Braun

12 – Cornie Guenther (86)

12 – Jacqueline Funk

14- Mark Bigland-Pritchard

17 – Adeline Cox

18 – Anna Peters (82)

18 – Brad Schroeder

22 – Margaret Dyck (83)

23 – Rob Borne

24 – Chris Buhler

25 – Christy Martens Funk