

# The Osler Mennonite Church

## October 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 Ninth Edition

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

## From Brad's Desk:

St. Francis is one of Christianity's historical figures that I find particularly interesting and inspirational. In particular, his emphasis on the beauty of the created world and its role in drawing us to God has influenced my faith journey greatly. In my sermon from October 5, I quote a poem written by Daniel Ladinsky that was inspired by St. Francis. Here it is:

*I once spoke to my friend, an old squirrel, about the  
Sacraments—  
He got so excited  
And ran into a hollow in his tree and came  
Back holding some acorns, an owl feather,  
And a ribbon he had found.  
And I just smiled and said, 'Yes, dear,  
You understand:  
Everything imparts  
His grace.*

I've found this poem to be a simple and beautiful reminder that all of creation is sacramental in that any element of it can serve to draw us into an experience of the Divine, of God and his infinite goodness. The sky has often served this purpose for me. Observing a beautiful sunset, the clouds, a thunderstorm, has been a reminder to me that God is always beyond us and yet with us and all around us. It is a reminder that God is mystery, meaning endless knowability, and that humility is integral to the faith journey with a God we will never fully understand or grasp. I've also had a deeply spiritual experience observing a simple tree and realizing how interconnected every aspect of creation is, how interdependent we all are. Further, observing our family dog, Shiloh, as a puppy exploring and being playful connected me to the truth that every aspect of creation, ourselves included, brings glory to Creator simply through being itself and that our worth and value in God's eyes does not come from what we can accomplish or our 'usefulness' but simply by being. Everything can impart God's grace. Where have you experienced God's presence and grace in the created world? May God grant us eyes to see their presence, goodness, and love all around us.

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

Recently for our youth Bible study we started taking some time to explore Feminist Theology. I think it is an important topic, and also one that I am deeply interested in. Some of these thoughts arose from planning these lessons, as I reflected on why feminist theology is important to me.

In 2017, as I scrolled through Facebook, the screen was flooded with #MeToo. If you are unaware, the MeToo movement empowered women to share their experiences with sexual abuse and sexual harassment. It can be incredibly difficult for survivors to share details of their abuse, but in a culture defining moment, countless women took to social media to share their stories. Many were unable to go into detail (as recounting such things is a painful, vulnerable process), but could simply say “Me Too”. That was all they needed to say to explain that they were also a victim of sexual violence. I was in disbelief that so many women in my life had endured sexual violence. I learned my disbelief was from naivete and ignorance. Consider the following statistics:

- 1 in 4 North American women will be sexually assaulted during their lifetime
- Of every 100 incidents of sexual assault, only 6 are reported to the police
- While both men and women are sexually assaulted, women make up 80% of sexual assault victims.

\*statistics are from [sexassault.ca](http://sexassault.ca)

It is no wonder my Facebook was flooded with #MeToo in 2017. But as a man, I had not had to think about these things. It was not a part of my worldview, until I took the time to listen.

It was around this time I was in Bible college, and studying theology on a regular basis. There are many instances of sexual violence in the Bible. Often it is glossed over, or rebranded due to a male bias in writing and interpreting. I was reading some writings from a feminist perspective. There I was at 20 years old, someone who had read the Bible their whole life. And it took until I was 20 to see David and Bathsheba properly described. David Rapes Bathsheba was the title line. My whole life,

every Bible and sermon said “David and Bathsheba”. Things like this are why I think Feminist Theology is important. Without it, we might find ourselves minimizing and glossing over the very real and very difficult experiences of women that we love- because we have done the same to characters in the Bible. If we rebrand or minimize it in the Bible, we might find ourselves doing the same in our world.

### **Album Recommendation**

Since this article is about feminism, I figured this month’s recommendation better come courtesy of a woman. I recommend **Hounds of Love** by *Kate Bush*. “Running Up That Hill” and “Cloudbusting” are two of my favourites on this pop album that gets a bit experimental sometimes.

### **Youth Schedule**

- Oct. 3rd: Mega Menno Corn Maze
- Oct. 10th: NO YOUTH, THANKSGIVING
- Oct. 17th: Fall Dinner and a Movie Night
- Oct. 24th: Games and Bible Lesson Night
- Nov. 1st: Mega Menno: *Menno Glows in the Dark*

### **THE FAMILY CIRCUS**



“Conscience is e-mail your head gets from God.”

## **Celebrating a Fantastic Summer at Shekinah Bible Camp 2025**

Shekinah Sumer Bible Camp 2025 was a tremendous success! We were trilled to welcome 112 campers this year, creating a vibrant and joy-filled community st Shekinah Retreat Centre. With a fantastic mix of new summer staff and returning counsellors, the energy and enthusiasm were contagious. This summer marked Saralyn Andres' first as Program Director, and she did an exceptional job alongside Jonah Ginther, who stepped into the role of Camp Director after serving faithfully as a counsellor for the past three years. Our talented kitchen volunteers also went above and beyond, preparing delicious meals that kept everyone well-fed and happy, the Bible curriculum, "We Can Be Heroes," led campers through a powerful journey of discovering how to be heroes of faith, love, creation care, and healing. A special highlight was the opportunity for campers to plant trees on the Shekinah grounds – an inspiring, hands-on experience that deepened their understanding of being heroes of God's creation. We are grateful for a meaningful and memorable summer and look forward to what God has in store for next year!

### **Outdoor Education Flourishes at Shekinah**

This past spring, Shekinah Retreat Centre was pleased to welcome nearly 25 school groups to participate in our outdoor school programming. This was a wonderful increase from the previous year, which had seen lower numbers due to teacher job action, and it was encouraging to see students and educators once again engaging with nature through hands-on learning. A major strength of this season was our well-prepared spring staff, who were fully trained and certified to lead guided activities-ensuring that each group received a safe, educational, and memorable experience. From exploring trails to participating in team-building challenges, students were given opportunities to connect with the outdoors in meaningful ways. We are incredibly grateful to all the school division, teachers, and educational authorities who chose Shekinah as a destination for outdoor education, and we look forward to welcoming even more groups in the coming year as we continue to grow and expand our programming opportunities.

## Upcoming Events

**October 4: Shekinah Burger Bonanza:** Come listen to the great tunes of the bluegrass band, the Willie Sons, while enjoying a beautiful fall evening at the timber lodge. Your toes will be a tappin'! Doors open at 5:30, Burgers served at 6:30. Admission by donation. Please register at Shekinah Retreat Centre or call the office at 306 945-4929 by Wednesday, October 1.

### **The Dessert Night at Bethany Manor**

Mark your calendars! On **November 7**, Shekinah's **annual Dessert Night Fundraiser** will be held at Bethany manor in Saskatoon. We invite you to join us for an evening of delicious desserts and delightful music, featuring the incredibly talented Sterling Boehm-a gifted singer and musician who's sure to make the night unforgettable.

### **Very Shekinah Christmas**

Join us on **December 7 at the Timber Lodge** for our beloved annual **"Very Shekinah Christmas"**! Enjoy an evening of beautiful Christmas music by the talented RJC students, directed by Adelle Sawatasky, along with coffee, Christmas treats, and festive connection with friends and family. All are welcome-stay tuned for more details!

*"The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; His mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning". Lamentations 3:22-23*

"Shekinah aims to be a place where all are welcome to experience the presence and glory of God, the Creator, with gratitude, we work, learn, rest, worship, play and find beauty on this land that is part of Treaty 6 territory, the traditional homeland of the Nehiyawak, Anishinaabe, Nakota, Dakota and Metis people. We recognize that we are neighbours to the Young Chippewyan band who were promised but never received the land identified as Reserve 107. In a spirit of reconciliation, we desire to live in right relationship with our First Nation neighbours and all of creation."

# MDS CANADA

Hi Church,  
Momentum.

If you are hiking down a steep trail and gain speed despite your best efforts to slow down, momentum isn't your friend. On the other hand, when you spread the word about something you're involved in, and your friends and neighbours get on board, momentum can be a great gift.

In the last few years, most of our Canadian large-scale disaster responses have been in BC. This is not surprising given that the province has been heavily impacted by our changing climate. While we would never hope for disasters to build volunteer momentum, the reality is that when we respond to a series of disasters in a region, it creates momentum amongst our volunteers. Many return from a great experience and invite others to come along next time. Our BC and Alberta volunteer base has grown through this momentum.

This month, MDS Canada made the decision to respond to the 2025 Saskatchewan wildfires with a project in Denare Beach starting next summer. Over 200 structures burned down, and early indications are that several homeowners were uninsured.

It's been a long time since we've had a major project in SK. I am already imagining the spark of momentum from the day-to-day work on this project. When I get the chance to visit projects, I frequently find myself energized to work even harder. Such energy is contagious! I am also hoping that some of that momentum spreads to our Saskatchewan and Manitoba Units. I look forward to witnessing the words of Hebrews 10:24 once again, "and let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds."(NIV).

Thanks for your part in this work!

Ross Penner  
Executive Director  
MDS Canada

## On the Level

Our September edition of On the Level is now available.

In this edition, you'll read the exciting news that MDS Canada has hired a new Executive Director - Reynold Friesen. You'll also find the story of Jeff and Sylvia Starr who have received a new home thanks to the MDS Manitoba Unit. As she spoke about MDS, Sylvia said, "I never thought there were so many kind people in the world."

Read On the Level: <https://conta.cc/4pxWgG4>

## Canadian Foodgrains Bank

Dear Friend,

You may remember hearing from me back in June about **World Food Day**, which takes place on **October 16**. With the date quickly approaching, I wanted to remind you of the resources available to help you mark this important day.

This year's theme is *Nourishing Hope in Times of Scarcity*, a call to respond with compassion and action. On our World Food Day website, you'll find a rich collection of worship resources we've prepared for you, including:

- Calls to worship
- Prayers
- Videos
- Scripture readings
- Group discussion guides
- Sermon starters
- Activities for children

We encourage you to share these resources with your community to raise awareness and inspire others to pray and learn about the realities of hunger around the world.

If you're interested in joining a national World Food Day event, we're inviting churches, families, groups, and individuals to participate in

an **ecumenical church service hosted by Glenlea Mennonite Church in Manitoba on Sunday, October 19, 2025, at 11:00 a.m. Central Time.** You're welcome to join in person or online.

We're grateful for the ways you and your community continue to engage with the work of our network to end hunger around the world. Whether you use the worship resources, share them with others, or join us for the World Food Day service, your participation helps create space for reflection, learning, and meaningful action.

With appreciation,

Leona Lortie  
Public Engagement Manager  
Canadian Foodgrains Bank

## **Mennonite World Conference**

*“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven, for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous.”*

(Matthew 5:43–45 NRSVue)

Dear Friends

A few decades ago, a Jewish teenager named Edith Eger was imprisoned at Auschwitz, the Nazi concentration camp. Edith endured immense suffering – torture, starvation and the constant threat of death. While facing those who had shattered her dreams for the future; severed her relationships; destroyed her family; and robbed her of her possessions, freedom, and cultural identity; she confronted the same timeless choice that we all face at some point in our lives:

How should we respond to those we consider enemies?

As a globally recognized therapist specializing in trauma treatment, Edith Eger distinguished between what happens to you and how you react to it in her 2018 book, ***The Choice***. “No one can make you a

victim,” she writes, “but you. We become victims not because of what happens to us, but when we choose to hold on to our victimization. We develop a victim’s mind – a way of thinking and being that is rigid, blaming, pessimistic, stuck in the past, unforgiving, punitive, and without healthy limits or boundaries.”<sup>1</sup>

Some people respond to what happened to them by expecting punitive justice, demanding that perpetrators pay for their actions and face fair retribution for their violent crimes. While that demand is understandable, it can lead to a victim mentality, closing the door to forgiveness and transformation for the oppressor, and ensuring that cycles of violence continue into the next generation.

Jesus, however, presented a different approach. He did not deny or ignore the severe violence, oppression and injustice of his time. But neither did he pursue retribution or revenge. “Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,” he said.

**This year, as we commemorate the 500th anniversary of the Anabaptist movement, let’s observe Peace Sunday by asking for God’s courage to love our enemies.**

We cannot be peacemakers in God’s way without love for those who have wronged us. We cannot work for peace if we hold a victim mindset. We cannot build peace if we cannot pray for those who have hurt us. Peace, in Jesus’ terms, involves forgiveness and the possibility of transformation for the oppressor.

Let’s depend on the Holy Spirit to give us the strength to break cycles of violence in our own families, churches and communities.

Let’s directly address our past – not to reaffirm or revisit our victimization, but as a way to heal our wounds and those of others, and to mend fractured relationships.

César García  
General Secretary  
Mennonite World Conference

1. Edith Eva Eger and Esmé Schwall Weigand, *The Choice: Embrace the Possible* (New York: Scribner, 2018), 7–8.

# LECTIONARY PASSAGES FOR OCTOBER

## **Oct 05, 2025**

First\* reading and Psalm: Lamentations 1:1-6 Lamentations 3:19-26  
or Psalm 137

Alternate\* First reading and Psalm: Habakkuk 1:1-4; 2:1-4 Psalm 37:1-9

Second reading: 2 Timothy 1:1-14

Gospel: Luke 17:5-10

## **Oct 12, 2025**

First\* reading and Psalm: Jeremiah 29:1, 4-7 Psalm 66:1-12

Alternate\* First reading and Psalm: 2 Kings 5:1-3, 7-15c Psalm 111

Second reading: 2 Timothy 2:8-15

Gospel: Luke 17:11-19

## **Oct 13, 2025**

First\* reading and Psalm: Deuteronomy 26:1-11 Psalm 100

Alternate\* First reading and Psalm:

Second reading: Philippians 4:4-9

Gospel: John 6:25-35

## **Oct 19, 2025**

First\* reading and Psalm: Jeremiah 31:27-34 Psalm 119:97-104

Alternate\* First reading and Psalm: Genesis 32:22-31 Psalm 121

Second reading: 2 Timothy 3:14-4:5

Gospel: Luke 18:1-8

## **Oct 26, 2025**

First\* reading and Psalm: Joel 2:23-32 Psalm 65

Alternate\* First reading and Psalm: Sirach 35:12-17 or Jeremiah 14:7-10, 19-22 Psalm 84:1-7

Second reading: 2 Timothy 4:6-8, 16-18

Gospel: Luke 18:9-14

## **Nov 01, 2025 All Saints Day**

First\* reading and Psalm: Daniel 7:1-3, 15-18 Psalm 149

Alternate\* First reading and Psalm:

Second reading: Ephesians 1:11-23

Gospel: Luke 6:20-31

## CALENDAR

**Sun. Oct 5 - 10:00 am Brad Schroeder preaching**

**Sun. Oct 12 – 10:00 am Luke Bushman preaching – Thanksgiving**

**Sun. Oct 19 – 10:00 am Brad Schroeder preaching**

11:11 Worship mtg

**Sun. Oct 26 – 10:00 am Youth program**



## OCTOBER

1 – Bruce Boldt  
2 – Robin Neudorf  
2 – Naomi Schellenberg  
3 – Natalia Guenther  
6 – Lanae Martens-Funk  
6 – Jadrian Guenther  
8 – Matthew Stefaniuk  
12 – Stephanie Siemens  
16 – Loretta Sawatzky  
17 – Rachel Buhler  
25 – Diane McKinnell  
27 – Bree Schellenberg  
29 – Mikwanis Bird  
31 – Zenon Borne