

The Osler Mennonite Church

December 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*

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Volume XVIII Eleventh Edition

A WELCOMING COMMUNITY FOR PEACE

Following Jesus on the Path of Reconciliation

From Brad's Desk:

Reflection on Advent

Advent is a season of anticipation and preparation. A season of looking forward to and preparing ourselves for the celebration of Jesus' coming to make his dwelling among us (Jn. 1:14). While we remember especially Jesus' coming into the world as a baby it is important we remember Jesus continually comes to us, continually draws near. And not only does Jesus come to us, he comes to the world through us. In his reflection on the season of Advent, Steve Bell states:

Advent was a season to reflect on the rich spiritual metaphor of motherhood, or spousal maternity, which reveals the deepest truth about the mystery of the human person: that we were created to receive and house heaven in our womb, and bear it forth for the sake of the world. The Christ child doesn't merely come to us but through us. (Steve Bell, Pilgrim Year Series: Advent, p. 17).

This brings to mind the words of a song we sing often as we gather, Christ Has No Body Here but Ours, where we sing:

Christ has no body here but ours; no hands, no feet here on earth but ours. Ours are the eyes through which he looks on this world with kindness...Ours are the hands through which he works, ours are the feet on which he moves, ours are the voices through which he speaks to this world with kindness. Through our touch, our smile, our listening ear, embodied in us, Jesus is living here. So let us go now, filled with the Spirit, into this world with kindness. (Voices Together, 568).

As we journey through this season of Advent may we be brought to awareness of the many and varied ways Christ comes to us, speaks to us, meets with us. And may we be inspired to go into the world, in the various spheres of influence that are ours, with the kindness of the Christ.

Luke's Little Life Lessons....

Moments of Hope, Peace, Joy and Love

As we enter into advent, we take time to hold multiple feelings at once. On the one hand, advent reflects our somber waiting for a saviour to make things right. Reflecting on our need for Christ, leads us to consider the darkness in our world today. Advent is also about anticipating what Jesus brings. The four themes of Advent are Hope, Peace, Joy and Love, and reflecting on the coming of these things is an uplifting experience. For this newsletter, I thought I would reflect on one place I see each of the advent themes. I would encourage you to do the same in a journal, or in a conversation with someone.

Hope: The work of the church is something that gives me hope. Since starting at OMC over 3 years ago, I have learned about countless initiatives that inspire me. Every issue and tragedy I see, seems to have a group (with an acronym of course) focused on addressing it. Natural disaster? MDS. The climate crisis? Climate Emergency Response Team. The genocide in Gaza? Palestine Israel Network. The refugee crisis? Many churches have refugee committees. This church gives hope, because it is an example of people repeatedly stepping up to make the world a better place.

Peace: The power of counselling is something that brings me peace. I love that it has become less and less taboo to say I see a counsellor to help me process things. There is even a counsellor on staff at OMC now! The holidays can be a difficult time, and seeking counsel- whether from a friend or a professional, can bring peace in ourselves. Peace in ourselves, helps us work for peace in our world.

Joy: The children I interact with in my life are a great source of joy to me. My nieces and nephews always brighten my day as we read, play, and laugh together. Getting to work with little ones for my job at church always brings me joy as well.

Love: My wife is always the biggest source of love in my life. Her love for myself and others inspires me daily, and at the holidays I am often

reminded of what it looks like to be known and loved. For example, we celebrate “Thriftmas” where we get our gifts to each other from the thrift store. Last year Becca found a Sesame Street Fever vinyl for my gift. It is a collection of Sesame Street songs, reimagined as disco tracks. If that isn’t love I don’t know what is.

Album Recommendation: The Beach Boys have a lovely Christmas album. You should give it a listen if you like happy tunes and nice harmonies.

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“See, don’t the credit cards look more festive on the tree than in our wallets?”

MDS CANADA

Hi friend,

Back in the late 70's Donald Kraybill wrote a book called *The Upside-Down Kingdom*. In it, he describes the Kingdom of God based on the values that Jesus taught - values that are the exact opposite of the world's values. Do you want to be great? Learn to be a servant to all. Do you want to be rich? Give away what you have. Do you want to eliminate your enemies? Love them instead of hating them.

Jesus lived in ways that subverted the empire of his day. His teachings undermined the Roman system with its expansionist agenda. Instead of bigger and better, Jesus talked about the tiny mustard seed.

We live in a society that is becoming increasingly divided. One of the values that I love the most about MDS is how our volunteers subvert divisiveness by bringing together many different perspectives. Despite our differences, we remain unified with one vision: to be the hands of feet of Jesus to disaster survivors. I see this as a sign of God's reign in our midst. It is a modern-day miracle, in my opinion. Thank you for being a part of it!

Ross Penner
Executive Director
MDS Canada

“Empathy came at a high price: says MDS Canada volunteer and disaster survivor

When Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) volunteer Jim Reimer tells a disaster survivor he knows how they feel, he's telling the truth.

Reimer, who lives in Steinbach, Man. with his wife, Marlene, lost his house to a fire in 2022. Most of their personal possessions, and over 40 years of memories, were destroyed.

To read more all to the MDS Canada website

Canadian Mennonite Magazine

The global Anabaptist fellowship faces a defining challenge.

Meserete Kristos Church (MKC)—the Ethiopian Mennonite church—has withdrawn as host of the 2028 Mennonite World Conference global assembly. MKC also discontinued its partnership with Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary.

MKC is the largest Mennonite church in the world.

Prior to these decisions, Mennonite World Conference (MWC) staff withdrew their invitation to Stanley Green to serve as regional representative for North America after three American MWC member groups objected to having a representative from Mennonite Church USA, which Green is part of.

The flashpoint in these cases is gender and sexuality. A 2022 resolution passed by Mennonite Church USA delegates is a particular concern.

For MKC, association with LGBTQ-affirming groups has threatened internal unity. Homosexuality is illegal in Ethiopia, and the MKC position is that it is sinful.

We at CM are going to move slowly and carefully in our coverage of these exceptionally sensitive matters. We aim for the opposite of the knee-jerk, absolutist social media comments that have contributed to the crisis.

Personally, I have the highest regard for the MKC leaders I have spoken with, including president Desalegn Abebe and vice president Kelbessa Muleta Demena. I recently had the honour of providing feedback on an upcoming book about the first MKC church.

I hear MC Canada leaders and AMBS president David Boshart speak with profound respect for their Ethiopian counterparts.

I'll also say there are LGBTQ people who I love and respect.

How then do we deal with difference?

Four of the 110 national church bodies that make up MWC are “on the more progressive side” with respect to same-sex marriage, according to MWC general secretary César García. These are MC Canada, MC USA, and conferences in Germany and the Netherlands.

What responsibility do these bodies have in addressing global discord?

Frankly, unity looks impossible—that puts it squarely in the purview of the Almighty.

We will offer additional coverage of these matters after further consideration and conversation.

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CALENDAR

Sun. Nov 30 – 10:00 am Luke Bushman preaching – 1st Advent

Sun. Dec 7 – 10:00 am Luke Bushman preaching – 2nd Advent

Sun. Dec 14 – 10:00 am Sunday School program

11:00 am Coffee/Snack time – please bring some of you
Christmas baking to share

Sun. Dec 21 - 10:00 am Brad Schroeder preaching

Thur. Dec 24 - 7:00 pm Candle Light Service

Sun. Dec. 28 – 10:00 am Brad Schroeder preaching

LECTIONARY PASSAGES FOR DECEMBER

Dec 07, 2025 - Second Sunday of Advent

First reading: Isaiah 11:1-10

Psalm: Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19

Second reading: Romans 15:4-13

Gospel: Matthew 3:1-12

Dec 14, 2025 - Third Sunday of Advent

First reading: Isaiah 35:1-10

Psalm: Psalm 146:5-10 or Luke 1:46b-55

Second reading: James 5:7-10

Gospel: Matthew 11:2-11

Dec 21, 2025 – Fourth Sunday of Advent

First reading: Isaiah 7:10-16

Psalm: Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

Second reading: Romans 1:1-7

Gospel: Matthew 1:18-25

Dec 24, 2025 – Christmas Eve

First reading: Isaiah 9:2-7

Psalm: Psalm 96

Second reading: Titus 2:11-14

Gospel: Luke 2:1-14, (15-20)

Dec 25, 2025 – Nativity of the Lord

First reading: Isaiah 62:6-12

Psalm: Psalm 97

Second reading: Titus 3:4-7

Gospel: Luke 2:(1-7), 8-20

Or - First reading: Isaiah 52:7-10

Psalm: Psalm 98

Second reading: Hebrews 1:1-4, (5-12)

Gospel: John 1:1-14

Dec 28, 2025 - First Sunday after Christmas Day

First reading: Isaiah 63:7-9

Psalm: Psalm 148

Second reading: Hebrews 2:10-18

Gospel: Matthew 2:13-23

Jan 04, 2026 - Second Sunday after Christmas Day

First reading: Jeremiah 31:7-14 or Sirach 24:1-12

Psalm: Psalm 147:12-20 or Wisdom of Solomon 10:15-21

Second reading: Ephesians 1:3-14

Gospel: John 1:(1-9), 10-18



Some December Activities you may wish to participate in....

December 3 @ 6pm RJC Café Murder & Dessert Theatre RJC's Grade 9 GROW class invites you to the Station Arts Centre in Rosthern for an evening of mystery, theatre, and delicious desserts. Admission is by donation, and please RSVP to office@rjc.sk.ca or 306-232-4222 so we can prepare accordingly. (new)

December 4, 5 - 7 pm- Youth Farm Bible Camp Christmas Supper Fundraiser – Join us at Youth Farm Bible Camp for a Come-and-Go Meal! Enjoy slow roast beef on BBQ, turkey with stuffing, mashed potatoes, corn, salads, and soft serve ice cream. Admission by donation. Come for great food and learn more about the ministry of Youth Farm Bible Camp

December 6, 2:00 pm & December 7, 7:00 pm Bethany Chorus presents "Sing! He Is Born!" at the Bethany Manor Fellowship Centre | Conductor: Andrea Johnson with special guests Andrea Johnson with Anne and Kevin MacMillan in the Bethany Manor Fellowship Centre, Saskatoon. Honorarium at the door.

December 7, 3pm | You are invited to a 'Very Shekinah Christmas': Join us for a festive afternoon of musical offerings by RJC students. Devour some sweet Christmas treats and catch up with your Shekinah friends and neighbours in the Timber Lodge at Shekinah Retreat Centre. Admission by Donation. All proceeds will go towards upgrading our winter equipment

December 15, 5-7 pm RJC Dine & Donate in support of Good Neighbours Food Centre Join us in the RJC Dining Hall for our Dine & Donate Supper, serving ham & scalloped potatoes, with live music, kids' crafts, festive photo ops, and a Dash & Donate take-out option. Proceeds raised will go to GNFC for Santa's toy shop and food aid for families during the Christmas season

December 15, 7:30 pm Warman Community Band Presents *Sounds of Christmas* at the Warman Family (Mennonite) Church. Entrance by donation, also a collection will be taken for the Warman Food Bank. Stay for cookies.

December 18, 7 pm - RJC Christmas Concert Join us in the RJC Auditorium for our Christmas Concert, an evening of student music and community. Admission by donation. All are welcome!

DECEMBER



| |
|----------------------------|
| 2 – Oren Bird |
| 3 – Theresa Loewen |
| 4 – Rachel Clark |
| 6 – Braden Martens-Funk |
| 19 – Shelley Penner |
| 21 – Charlie Clark |
| 22 – Jacob B Friesen (102) |
| 24 – Norman Tataryn |
| 28 – Frieda Rempel (80) |
| 30 – Noah Schroeder |
| 31 – Linda Stucky |
| 31 – Adam Boldt |



May this Christmas Season bring you hope, peace, joy, and love.

Wishing you many blessings for the coming year.

From the staff at OMC