

## OMC Calendar

February 2021

Sunday	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4 Youth & Mentors Game Night zoom 7pm.	5	6 AGM Zoom 9:30 am
7 Nora Pederberg preaching.	8 Kids Bible School zoom 7 pm	9	10	11 Youth Group Bible zoom 7 pm	12	13
14 Valentine's Day Comm Patty Friesen	15 Kids Bible School Zoom 7pm	16	17 Ash Wed Zoom 7pm	18 Youth Group Bible zoom 7 pm	19	20
21 First Sunday of Lent Patty Friesen	22 Kids Bible School zoom 7pm	23	24	25 Youth Group Bible zoom 7pm	26	27
28 George Janzen preaching						Each Sunday Worship: 10 am. In sanctuary & on Facebook

## The Osler Mennonite Church

### FEBRUARY 2021 Newsletter

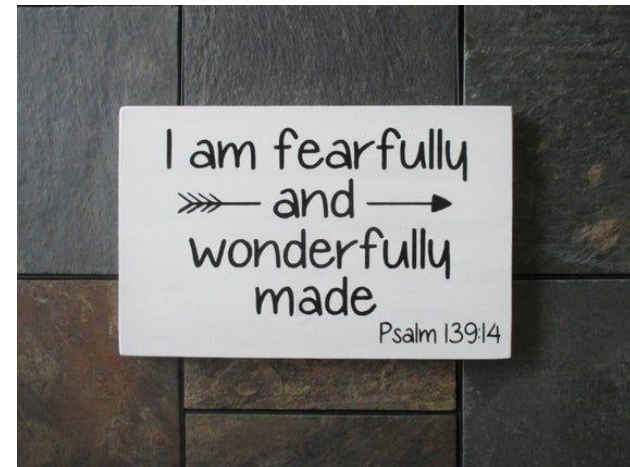
**Note: Meetings and church activities can also be found in the bulletin on the church website. [www.oslermennonitechurch.org](http://www.oslermennonitechurch.org)**

*We gather on Treaty Six Lands, Nehiyaw Territory, and the Homeland of the Metis.*

Osler Mennonite Church  
[oslermcoffice@sasktel.net](mailto:oslermcoffice@sasktel.net)  
<http://www.oslermennonitechurch.org>  
 Volume XIV First Edition

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



#### UPCOMING SERVICES In-sanctuary and 10 am Facebook Live:

- Feb 7 Nora Pederberg preaching
- Feb 14 Valentine's Day Communion - Patty Friesen
- Feb 21 First Sunday of Lent - Patty Friesen
- Feb 28 George Janzen preaching

## Thoughts for “Love Month – February”

If you love something, set it free.  
If it comes back, it’s yours.  
If it doesn’t, it never was.  
And if it just sits there on the sofa,  
    watching TV unaware that it’s been set free,  
    you probably married it  
    or gave birth to it.

### Pastor Patty’s Ponderings:

We begin February with our Annual General Meeting on Sat. Feb. 6, 9:30 Zoom with Osler store donuts. I’m looking forward to seeing people as we process this historical event we are living in and how we move forward as a church. I’m so proud of our resiliency and adaptability, care for each other and deepening faith. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday; February 17 and it is traditionally recognized with the reading of scriptures reminding us of our mortality and our need for God. In our Zoom gathering, we will think about the gift of our lives and what reflects our values as we share the scriptures, songs, poems we would like used at our funerals. Then we will conclude with anointing our foreheads with the sign of the cross in lotion instead of ash. And this begins 40 days of reflection on deeper meaning in our life with God.

I’m reluctantly entering this second Lent under COVID. Last year I abandoned all Lenten disciplines of giving up sweets and chowed them down voraciously as Patrick and I ate our feelings about the pandemic. The sweets brought temporary comfort but also brought more COVID curves. “Let’s flatten the curve,” Patrick says cheerfully as we head out for another winter walk. I want to flatten him!

Our scriptures for Ash Wednesday are all about hearts, returning our hearts to God, creating new hearts or clean hearts and opening wide our hearts. They are fitting for a Valentine’s Day communion service February 14 as we talk about love between friends, love between partners and spouses, love in families, and Christ’s love for us personally and as a church body as expressed in the ritual of communion.

## LECTIONARY PASSAGES FOR FEBRUARY

**Feb 7** Isaiah 40: 21-31; Psalm 147:1-11, 20c; 1 Corinthians 9:16-23; Mark 1:29-39

**Feb 14** 2 Kings 2:1-12; Psalm 50:1-62; Corinthians 4:3-6; Mark 9:2-9

**Feb 21** Genesis 9:8-17; Psalm 25:1-10; 1 Peter 3:18-22; Mark 1:9-15

**Feb 28** Genesis 17:1-7; Psalm 22:23-31; Romans 4:13-25; Mark 8:31-38 or Mark 9:2-9

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## OMC CALENDAR

Feb 1 Kid’s weekly Bible School zoom 7:00 pm

Feb 4 Youth weekly Group / Bible School zoom, 7:00 pm

Feb 6 AGM zoom 9:30 a.m.

Feb 17 Ash Wednesday Zoom 7:00 pm

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## **OMC Announcements & Opportunities**

**\*Mosaic Sunday School class:** Every Sunday at 11:00am via Zoom. The password is: Mosaic. This is a NEW link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87212174301> Meeting ID: 872 1217 4301

**\*Feb 1-5. MCC blanket making in the multipurpose room.** All current COVID protocols will be in place – e.g. masks on at all times. Contact Diane McKinnell or Anne Peters if interested.

**RJC Early Application Incentive** - New students who apply for Fall 2021 by February 1 will receive \$500 off their tuition! Apply online at [rjc.sk.ca/apply](http://rjc.sk.ca/apply). ***One last chance to apply early!!!***

**\*Youth & Mentors Game Night: Thursday February 4, 7:00 p.m.** We are inviting all our mentors to join in on our regular youth games night for time to connect as a group! All mentors and youth will receive an email that week of the event with a zoom link and any further instructions needed in order to be ready to jump in the virtual fun.

**\*Sat. Feb. 6, 9:30 a.m. AGM.** All welcome! Please dial in if you don’t have Zoom. You can click on this on the website and arrive at

meeting as well. Please call office if you want AGM booklet delivered with your long johns (the edible kind!).

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8529596955> Meeting ID: 852 959 6955

One tap mobile

+16473744685,,8529596955# Canada

+16475580588,,8529596955# Canada

Dial by your location

+1 647 374 4685 Canada

+1 647 558 0588 Canada

Meeting ID: 852 959 6955

**\*Sun. Feb. 7, 1:00** Snowshoeing to Bruce's cabin for outdoor fire with under 10. Meet at farmyard with thermos in backpack and portable lawn chairs and snowshoes. Possible farmyard barrel fire for non-snowshoe knoodlers with lawn chairs and thermoses. Text Patty 306-260-6069. *This week is full but if there is enough interest, we would do it again on Feb 14.*

**\*February 17 Ash Wednesday Zoom 7:00-7:30 p.m.** Come for a short service of scripture, sharing about the songs, scriptures we want at our funerals and anointing ourselves with lotion. Zoom link coming!.).

**\*Note correction to group name!!** New way to donate to Refugee Fund. Now that the holidays have past, it might be time to do a Sarcan run. Wouldn't it be great if you could use your Sarcan donations to support a good cause? With Sarcan's new Drop & Go system you can leave your bottles at the Sarcan drop off location and the have the money deposited into the Refugee Sponsorship Group's account for Lina Al Nouri and her family from Syria. All you need to do is bring your donations to ANY Sarcan location and go to the Drop & Go door. Register using the group name "**LRS**" and use the group phrase "Refugee" and you are all set! The bag tags and receipt will be printed, and any money will go straight to Lina's support. To find the nearest Sarcan location to you check out their website at Hours and Locations ([www.sarcan.ca/hours\\_and\\_location](http://www.sarcan.ca/hours_and_location)) If you have any questions, please contact Kaytee Edwards at 306-221-1729.

**\*Theatre of the Beat "Unmute":** With increased lockdowns and shutdowns it can feel hard to connect with one another. To respond to this challenging time Theatre of the Beat is offering a new show titled [Unmute](#): The Impact of a Pandemic on Gender-Based Violence. Empowering people, even when stuck at home that they're not alone. **A bit about us:** If you haven't seen our work before, Theatre of the Beat is a Canadian touring theatre company working to catalyze conversations on social justice and its intersection with the beliefs of the communities in which we find ourselves. We have worked in the Mennonite community extensively, some notable pieces have created were #Churchtoo (commissioned by MCC and MCEC), Forgiven/Forgotten (commissioned by MCC Ontario Restorative Justice Program), and Gadfly (commissioned by Mennonite Historical Society of Ontario and Conrad Grebel University College). We have performed all across Canada (Mennonite Church Canada Assembly, MCC Manitoba 50th Anniversary), America (multiple churches and religious institutions) and in 2019 we flew to The Netherlands ∞perform at the 2nd Annual Global Mennonite Peacebuilding Festival. This year marks our 10th year of 'Staging Change' and we would love to present our newest piece with you and spread this important work across Canada into new communities we haven't yet had the opportunity to work with.

**About the show:** Our new Zoom-Play, [Unmute](#), creates an important dialogue around the concept of domestic violence and gender-based violence. Did you know that during COVID-19 there has been a rise in Domestic Violence cases? It can feel unnerving not knowing what to do. Unmute is an interactive, forum theatre piece that will allow audience members to stop the action of the play and suggest different approaches to navigating these difficult situations around gender-based violence. After each performance, we send a follow-up with resources and information and we tailor it to each local communities needs and available programs. The original run of Unmute was produced in part by MCC.

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*Sorry – no humor today*

*In search of fresh vegetable puns - lettuce know*

***A note responding to the December Newsletter...***

Thanks Loretta for this; another well packaged snap shot of 'Osler-breath'. This reads like you're handing reins you've grown comfortable with, to another. She/he will do well I'm sure.

Christmas in Osler still comes back to me, with memory paragraphs shared between the school across the road and church. The reading of Luke's account of the Christmas story in English and German, well presented drama and choir presentations, the scene of 'cutters' in the church yard, with teams of groomed horses munching oats in their 'nose bags; under horse blankets, waiting for the crisp drive back home. All of that and more add to a season to be remembered. It will be different now! May you not lose the undercurrent of abiding joy, peace and good will, that 'times' cannot erase or change for those whose faith rests in Him Who came to create reason for this life changing season.

Prayer sing - Jacob and Junko Friesen

***Along the same lines – from Loretta's Zoom farewell....***

**Lovely Loretta**

Lovely Loretta longed for a life of luxury so she married Lloyd. Lloyd laughed lovingly and said, "Lassy, life on the land will be a lark." Loretta learned to keep the larder and how to lamb and how to never be late with lunch. No one would ever call her lazy, least of all Lloyd.

Loretta's life of leisure on the land left her in limbo. She longed to labour for the lambs of the Lord so she led lessons in Sunday school and choir. She still felt her load was a little light so she logged in as church administrative assistant. The church felt lucky to have her as she was a listener as well as a lithographer.

But Lloyd got lonely and longed to lounge with Loretta, the light of his life, in Lethbridge or London or Lisbon. So, we will lose our lovely labourer but Loretta has liberty at last.

*Pastor Patty*

**Prayers**

***A prayer of lament for crowded spaces***

My God, this morning is a prayer of want  
and a prayer of lament,  
not as terrible as those in the Psalms,  
but still, here is what I pray for:  
Some mornings I just go along  
with waking up alone and lining up six feet apart  
and trying to fill too many hours with not very much,  
but this morning I want to get lost in a crowd.

I want to be part of an anonymous mass of people  
or sit in a crowded coffee shop where there is  
barely a seat to be had and the windows are steamed  
with the breath of all those human beings,  
spending too much time on their phones  
or reading the paper.

I want to sit in a dark, crowded theatre and eat  
too much popcorn and be annoyed by the audience noise.

I want to have to wait at the crowded gate  
of a street fair or a concert.

I want to settle into Your house of worship after shaking hands  
with every single person who has come there for communion  
and I want to pass the bread and wine  
to the person next to me, without wondering  
what else I am passing along.

I want to hear one or two hundred or five hundred voices  
lifting in song together, shaking the rafters.

In defiance of anti-materialism and simplicity, I would love  
to dive into a crowd of people shopping and then  
hardly be able to find a seat in the food court.

I want to be mashed in a crowd watching fireworks  
or a street busker or lean against the gate and watch  
as the kids lead their steers in the pen for 4H and stand  
right next to my neighbour as we load our hotdogs.

I want to be part of a crowd doing the wave at  
some kind of baseball, hockey, or football game  
(It doesn't really matter which. I talk through most of them).

I want to drive up to the house where family is waiting  
and there isn't enough room in the driveway for my car

and through the windows I see people passing back and forth, even the ones who irritate me and usually make me avoid these things.

I am starting to envy the crowd of five thousand who shared the miracle of loaves and fishes, not because of the miracle but the crowd.

The miracle of water into wine was at a wedding where there was so many people, they ran out.

Your Word says that in the very beginning You knew it was not good for us to be alone, so scattered from each other, and so I thought I'd just sit and think of all these crowded and many peopled things and offer them up to You and ask that when they are there again, I do not forget.  
Amen.

Submitted by Rhonda Gascho

*My mom Judy Hildebrand forwards me these daily prayers from time to time, from their pastor Erin Morash @ Morden Mennonite Church. Thought this was a good one to share. I would add: music festivals! jazzfest! ness creek! packed concerts at RJC and Sask Place and the Bassment! potlucks and buffets! Football parties and Rush lacrosse! Who knew I would ever long for crowds?*

### **Nora's Notes:**

When I lived in Vancouver's Down Town East Side I found myself overwhelmed with the constant state of emergency so many of my friends and neighbours lived with every day. It was easy to see how this kind of intensive environment breeds burnout. Heather, my mentor at the time, provided me with a spiritual practice that she has found sustaining through work in chronic emergency. This practice was confession. She told me how everyday, before going to sleep she would take time to light a candle and pray a prayer of confession, releasing all the anguish and shortcomings from that day to God. She told me that we hold too much pain in one day to have it carried into tomorrow, that we need to unpack the load of each day so that we can make it through the days, weeks, months ahead.

At this time, I had a very narrow definition of confession. I believed it was a practice where I made a list of all the mistakes and wrongs I had done and admitted them to God, saying sorry and asking for forgiveness. Heather helped to expand this understanding for me by articulating a deeper understanding of Sin. Instead of Sin being bad things I've done, she explained that Sin in its biblical definition is based on an archery term "miss the mark." It is developed as a concept of Sin as that space where we feel distance from God in our actions or in our world, the space between the vision of Gods shalom and the reality of the brokenness we witness and partake in. Confession then, is not just a list of mistakes I have made, but a time where we can invite God into all the spaces where we have felt/seen/known a distance from the peace and love of God.

To make this into a daily practice gave me space each day to reflect on where I had felt this 'separateness' and to ask God to show me Their presence in these moments, to invite God into the healing work of mending the hurt here and to feel the wash of love and forgiveness that accompanies this. It is a moment to give God permission to enter into these spaces that the spirit longs to bring healing too.

Now that we are all continuing to feel the compounding effects of a pandemic reality I offer up the practice of confession as something that might help us release the pain of one day and have strength to enter into the next. Everyday I can feel resentments, grief, and anxiety building up in me. It is in confessing these states that we start allowing God to loosen the hold they have on our beings and receive a resilience to be transformed with mercy, love, and kindness. This is the work of inner reconciling that allows us to fall into a nurtured state within the embrace of God.

Our new Voices Together Worship Resource includes a section that leads us through an examining of our consciousness, followed by prayers of reconciliation. A time to look back upon your day and present to God the matters that are weighing on your heart/conscience. There are many of these such resources available, and everyone's practice will look a little different, but I am including here a format for any who are interested in a starting place. May we all know the blessing and relief of being held in Gods love as we partake in the act of confession.

1. Light a candle, take a few deep breathes to quiet oneself.

2. Take time to reflect over any heaviness that sits with you, any pain, guilt, or grief that we carry. Bring words (aloud or written) to the feelings and moments that have created a separateness between you and the peace of God. Give space for lament, and sadness in these things. In this act of naming, know that you can release all these things to God, our great reconciler. That in laying down these hardships and shortcomings to peace we invite God into these moments to continue the work of healing, so we may go forward into a new day.

3. Recite a written prayer of affirmation/reconciling. *Worship Leader Edition VT #120:*

From all that is broken,  
let there be beauty.  
From what is torn, jagged,  
ripped, frayed,  
let there be  
not just mendings  
but meetings unimagined.  
May the God in whom  
nothing is wasted  
gather up every scrap,  
every shred and shard,  
and make of them  
new paths,  
doorways,  
worlds.

4. Take a few deep breathes, say “*Thank you, Thank you, Thank you*” and blow out the candle.

## News from MC Sask

Several of our congregations still have women’s groups who are meeting. The link for the new opportunities for giving form available for download (PDF and Word formats) is at [https://mcsask.ca/resources/congregational\\_resources](https://mcsask.ca/resources/congregational_resources)

**\*Save the date!** The 2021 MC Sask Annual Delegate Sessions will be held virtually on Saturday, March 13.

## Happy New Year to all Saskatchewan Foodgrains Bank Supporters!

We welcome 2021 with thankful hearts, and perhaps more aware of things we may take for granted, such as good health, meaningful work, and opportunities to deepen relationships.

It’s clear that Canadians were moved to respond generously in a year where many around the world have struggled. Through phone calls, we have connected with many Saskatchewan Foodgrains supporters who donated recently. It’s encouraging to hear some of the “why” behind why people respond with compassion to the issues of hunger and poverty. Here’s two responses:

“*I’m 87 and I’m thankful I’ve always had 3 meals a day to eat.*” WB  
“*We think it’s important that our farm can have an ongoing role in helping others grow more food*” JE

The Foodgrains Bank compiled a wonderful end-of-year [Thankyou video](#) – to its supporters, member agencies, government and international partners. We are truly blessed to be **working together** towards our mission of ending hunger.

**A Facebook LIVE presentation: India Food Security Learning Tour** Join Kaitlyn Kitzan, a farmer from Saskatchewan, as she walks us through a series of topics that highlight the realities of life for smallholder farmers and their communities in India. Kaitlyn participated in a Foodgrains Bank learning tour in February 2020. Her stories of local families, and their work alongside Foodgrains Bank partner organizations will offer you a window into how your support is making a difference in tangible and meaningful ways. Tune in Monday nights at 8:00 PM SK until February 15<sup>th</sup> – just click the link [facebook.com/kaitlynkitzan/](https://facebook.com/kaitlynkitzan/) to join.

### 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.