

# The Osler Mennonite Church

## January 2023 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 XVI First Edition

A WELCOMING COMMUNITY FOR PEACE

Following Jesus on the Path of Reconciliation

## **Pastor Patty's Ponderings and Pandering**

In the church year, we celebrate Epiphany after Christmas for the weeks leading up to Lent (Feb. 22 Ash Wednesday). In Epiphany, we commemorate the visit of the Magi, then Jesus grows up and is baptized, the call of the disciples and the beginning of Jesus' ministry. Epiphany means revealing - God revealing the divine self to human beings, through Jesus but also in other times, places and ways.

A central biblical motif for revelation is light. Light imagery floods the language of the calls to praise, discipleship and intercession. Light is not overcome by darkness; the windows of heaven are open and the fruit of the light is goodness. Lectionary scriptures give thanks for God's appearances to the patriarchs and matriarchs, prophets and seers, as well as through Jesus. God's light also blesses us to reach out to others with the light. As Israel, to whom God appeared as a pillar of fire, is called to become a light to the nations, so we too are called to God's reach out in the world. Epiphany leads into reach out. This impulse is best expressed in This Little Light of Mine, our children's gathering song for Epiphany - "all around the neighbourhood, I'm going to let it shine." (Anabaptist Prayerbook)

2023 brings a relief to intense pandemic precautions and more energy for seeing how things shake out for moving forward. In January, the longest month of the year, we'll get some more pickle ball going - some larger community folks are interested in playing. We want to snowshoe out to Bruce's cabin for roasted sausage after church January 15. We'll maybe even get a crokinole or Scrabble tournament going some evening.

February 19 we will recognize Ash Sunday (Ash Wednesday Feb. 22) as our preparation for the Lenten season. I hope to get a grief group open to the community going in the 5 weeks of March, culminating in Good Friday and Easter Sunday - the mix of death and hope.

## **Pastor Patty's Picks**

**The Nine Quarters of Jerusalem** by *Matthew Teller* was a wonderful read of the historical diversity of Jerusalem.

**The 7 Deadly Sins of White Christian Nationalism** by *Carter Heyward* is a caffeine jolt wake-up call to the scary wedding of religion and politics.

**Dark Winds** DVD is about a Navajo Tribal police force that needs medicine as well as weapons for protection.

**The Good Wife** DVD is getting me through the winter with strong female leads.

**Favourite On-Line Word Games:** Wordle, Canuckle, Dordle and WordMaster. *Addictive!*

### **Church Signs:**

*Wal-Mart is Not the Only Savings Place*

*Forgive Your Enemies – It Messes With Their Heads*

*The Harvest Truly Is Great – Luke 10:2 Interpreting offered*

*Wanted: Singers                      Inchoir Within*

*Forbidden Fruits Create Many Jams*

*Be the Kind of Person Your Pet Thinks You Are*

*The Church is a Gift From God. Some Assembly Required.*

*Tweet Others as you Would Like to be Tweeted*

## Pastor Luke

I am a huge music fan, despite my inability to sing, or play music. I spend most of my day with music on. Music has a way of uniting us, in the same way all the different sounds, instruments, and voices unite to give us art that is appealing to our ears. Being a huge music fan, I try every once in a while, to really get into a new genre of music. I step outside of my comfort zone, and listen to a lot of music that I do not immediately appreciate, and learn what makes each genre special and engaging. In 2022 I decided to try getting into electronic music, and found I enjoyed a lot of the music in its various forms. One band I took a particular liking to was “The Avalanches”. The Avalanches create most of their music using samples from other music, blending genres, and making a collage that works together. Their debut album *Since I Left You*, is rumored to have been created using 3500 different samples of music and sounds! While the final product sounds cohesive, there are countless small details and sounds stitched together to make an album more about the fusion of different musical ideas, than about the talent of one individual artist. I think we as a church are often like this album- a collage of ideas and genres put together to make something beautiful. When I started on staff at OMC, one of the first things Patty did was give me a *Voices Together* hymnal to have at home. Liturgies, lectionaries, hymns, written prayers and call and responses are all relatively new to me in a church setting. I have experienced all of these things in my time going to church, but it is new for me to experience these parts of church every Sunday and not just on special occasions. While things are new and fresh to me, I have been able to really think about what I love about our worship services together. I am very attentive to the details of our time together, because it is all new to me. The biggest thing that stands out to me is that the church says more together than separate on a Sunday morning. The bulk of our time together is not one voice speaking, but our *Voices Together* proclaiming the goodness of God. The title of the hymn book that sits on my “desk” at home (it is a folding table, not a real desk), is appropriately titled. It truly unites our unique voices. I found it beautiful that when we sang songs this Advent season, there were as many people in the choir as in the pews. This is just one of the ways I have seen OMC live out the Anabaptist principle “priesthood of all believers”. These little details

help us focus on making church services about believers being together, and not about the performance of the pastor or the band. I am very thankful I get to witness this, and I am excited to see how we continue to make church an inclusive space where many voices are heard.



## **Executive Minister Search Update from Mennonite Church Saskatchewan**

2022 has been a year of change and adaptation for all of us. The world continues to evolve and surprise in unexpected ways. This is true for Mennonite Church Saskatchewan as well.

MC Sask Council undertook a search for an Executive Minister. The search committee received one application, but it did not work out. The search continues. There has been a change of roles on the search committee, which caused a delay.

Council has taken part in a visioning process, examining the EM role and needs of the church. An outcome of this process is to look for an Interim Executive Minister. Responsibilities and high priority needs were identified. The search for an Interim EM is in process.

Council also considered the fact that Interim Executive Minister, Josh Wallace, is returning to his role as Church Engagement Minister. In this role Josh will continue to support pastors and congregations. Others will be called upon to fill in areas that will need attention. Please consider filling in should you be called upon.

The Lord will guide us through this season of change. We must persevere, work together and have faith that all is taking place for a reason. And in the Lord's good time prayers will be answered.

Terry Stefaniuk, Moderator  
On behalf of MC Sask Council

## **Mennonite Disaster Service**

Hello Church,

2022 was a busy year for MDS Canada! After the inactivity of 2020-21, due to the pandemic, hundreds of volunteers were busy responding to many needs across the country.

Through Hay West, farmers in Ontario who had good crops supported farmers in Saskatchewan who were threatened with the loss of their herds due to severe drought. “I want to thank you,” said Saskatchewan cattle farmer Curtis Mattson. “I was really up against it. It gave me some optimism to know there are people out there trying to help us.”

In August 2021, the White Rock Lake Wildfire in Monte Lake, B.C. ravaged that community near Kamloops. MDS volunteers built four new homes in that community in 2022. “The words don’t come for how grateful we feel towards MDS,” said Robert Hugh, who received a new home in Monte Lake.

Following the devastating November 2021 flood in B.C., volunteers responded in Princeton and the Fraser Valley in B.C. Altogether, volunteers repaired 45 homes in both locations this year. “I can honestly say we wouldn’t be where we are today without your help,” said Princeton Mayor Spencer Coyne. “You will never be forgotten. You will always be a part of our community.”

In Barry’s Bay, Ontario, MDS volunteers worked with the Roman Catholic Knights of Columbus to help a family with a severely disabled child who needed special accommodation. “God brought us together in an act of love,” said Carole, the mother, grateful to be reunited with the rest of her family after living apart from them with her disabled child for about two years.

MDS volunteers also responded to Hurricane Fiona in Atlantic Canada. Volunteers did 179 jobs cutting up and removing fallen trees in Glace Bay and Antigonish, Nova Scotia, and did 28 roof repair/rebuild jobs in Glace Bay. Homeowners were grateful. “It’s really beautiful what they did,” said Edith Ball of the volunteers who cleaned up trees on her yard. Added Johnny Parson: “People here appreciate what MDS is doing.”

At the same time, the Spirit of MDS Fund was active. Since starting in 2020 as a temporary response during the pandemic, the now permanent program of MDS Canada has made 164 grants worth over \$354,000 to congregations across the country to help them serve people in their communities.

For MDS Canada, it was a privilege to be the hands and feet of Jesus for our neighbours across Canada in 2022 in these and other ways. Thanks for your support!

Director of Operations  
Mennonite Disaster Service Canada

### **From Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary**

O come, Desire of nations,  
bind all peoples in one heart and mind.  
Bid envy, strife, and quarrels cease,  
and fill the world with heaven's peace.  
Rejoice! Rejoice!  
Immanuel shall come to thee, O Israel

May the peace of Christ be with you, and may the life we have in and through Jesus renew you in hope for the coming year.  
We are grateful for your support of AMBS and wish you many blessings this Christmas!

— David Boshart, PhD, President

**Registration is open: AMBS Pastors & Leaders 2023:** Reimagining Ministry: Feb. 13–16. How do we think about our ministry in this time of collective trauma stemming from the coronavirus pandemic, racial injustice, economic uncertainty and rising polarization? This conference will give participants ideas and practices to help nurture resilience, compassion and hope in themselves and in their congregations by learning from Jesus' ministry. Speakers: Joni Sancken and April Yamasaki. Plan to join us in person or online! Register by Jan. 7 to save \$50. [ambs.edu/pastors-and-leaders](https://ambs.edu/pastors-and-leaders)

**Online Short Course: Understanding Anabaptist Approaches to Scripture:** Feb. 1 – March 14. Join David Cramer, PhD, and Susannah Larry, PhD, to study how 16th-century Anabaptists approached Scripture — as compared with Catholics and other Protestants — and to understand those similarities and differences in light of today. Sign up by Jan. 11 for this six-week online

**Take a seminary course this spring!** AMBS’s distance-friendly options include Faith Formation and Spirituality: Adults and Seniors; Gender and the Bible; Global Anabaptist-Mennonite History and Theology; God’s Shalom and the Church’s Witness; Human Sexuality and Christian Ethics; Spiritual Practices: Water of Life; The Epistle to the Romans; and more. In-person courses are also available. Nonadmitted students get 50% off their first three credit hours. Courses begin Jan. 10; sign up by Jan. 3. [ams.edu/upcoming-courses](http://ams.edu/upcoming-courses)

### **The Peacemakers**

The Christian tradition of advent is a season of waiting and preparation to celebrate the arrival of a new world.

I’m not one to wait. I often thought of myself as a patient person, but I’m learning that I can get quickly frustrated by waiting on others, and I’d much rather just get the task done myself.

But of course, there are things out of my control that I must wait for.

I feel like I’ve been waiting for Trump’s prosecution for years. And every few months, I get hopeful because Twitter declares today “the worst day for Trump,” but then nothing happens. I’m still waiting. Why does the US court system take so long?

We’re waiting alongside Kurdish families for compensation and treatment after suffering bombardments. Every day feels just a little closer to reality, but we’re still waiting.

We’re waiting for the Peace Accords to be implemented in Colombia. With the new government this year, the implementation seems to be



back on track, but we're still waiting, while this year becomes the deadliest on record for social leaders.

Waiting can be painful and exasperating. Which is why I tend to want to move on. Either I get the task done or—if it's not in my hands—I move on to other things. I don't want to sit in the uncomfortable.

But what if I did? What would I learn from myself, and others, if I sat and really waited? Waiting implies that you have an expectation that is different from the current reality.

If we dare to wait, we dare to hope.

Hannah Redekop  
*CPT Communications Associate*

### **A few notes from the CPT Newsletter....**

After thirty-five years of growth, learning and solidarity accompaniment, we began this year with a name change. Our shoes had become small for us, and we needed a new pair, we chose Community. "We chose the word Community because it reflects the diversity of our membership."

After a year of living with our new name, I'm convinced that the choice was right. This year, our new name, Community Peacemaker Teams, has allowed us to further recognize our journey of undoing oppressions. It has empowered us to deeply examine the systems of power and privilege within CPT that may not have allowed us to live into our activism and our commitment to collective and inclusive liberation.

As we move into the new year, we invite you to renew your commitment to collective liberation and community. Join us as we join Alice Walker in her declaration, "Activism is my rent for living on this planet."

# LECTIONARY PASSAGES FOR JANUARY

## **Epiphany of the Lord - January 6, 2023**

- Isaiah 60:1-6
- Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14
- Ephesians 3:1-12
- Matthew 2:1-12

## **Baptism of the Lord - January 8, 2023**

- Isaiah 42:1-9
- Psalm 29
- Acts 10:34-43
- Matthew 3:13-17

## **Second Sunday after the Epiphany - January 15, 2023**

- Isaiah 49:1-7
- Psalm 40:1-11
- 1 Corinthians 1:1-9
- John 1:29-42

## **Third Sunday after the Epiphany - January 22, 2023**

- Isaiah 9:1-4
- Psalm 27:1, 4-9
- 1 Corinthians 1:10-18
- Matthew 4:12-23

## **Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany - January 29, 2023**

- Micah 6:1-8
- Psalm 15
- 1 Corinthians 1:18-31
- Matthew 5:1-12

## **Presentation of the Lord - February 2, 2023**

- Malachi 3:1-4
- Psalm 84 or Psalm 24:7-10
- Hebrews 2:14-18
- Luke 2:22-40

## OMC CALENDAR

- Jan 1** No 10:00 am Service  
4:00 pm Stories, Songs & Faspa
- Jan 8** 10:00 am Patty Friesen Communion & Baptism
- Jan 11 1:00 pm Education mtg zoom
- Jan 12 7:00 pm Worship mtg
- Jan 15** 10:00 am Luke Bushman
- Jan 16 7:00 pm Community Connections mtg zoom
- Jan 18 6:15 Executive mtg zoom  
7:00 Council mtg zoom
- Jan 22** 10:00 am Lois Siemens
- Jan 29** 10:00 am Alex Tiessen

### **Upcoming Winter Warmer January Activities:**

- Sun. Jan. 15 - Luke preaching on the Call of the Disciples
- Sun. Jan. 15 - 12:00 Snowshoeing to Boldt cabin for roasting hot dogs over a fire.
- Weds. Jan. 18 - 1:30 p.m. Pickleball in the gym.
- Sun. Jan. 22 - Lois Siemens preaching
- Fri. Jan. 27-Sun. Jan. 29 - Youth Retreat at Shekinah Retreat Centre
- Sun. Jan. 30 - Alex Thiessen preaching

## Youth Announcements

- January 4th:** 7:00 pm - Carrot Night at OMC
- January 11th:** 7:00 pm - Game Night at Schellenberg Residence
- January 27th-29th:** SMYO Youth Retreat at Shekinah

## **January Birthdates**

- 4 – Brandee Borne
- 18 – Kevin Boldt
- 20 – Garry Harms

**From the treasurer:** Cheques dated 2022 will be counted for the 2022 fiscal year. Electronic payments received after Dec 31 until Jan 7 can be counted towards the 2022 fiscal year if you include a note saying you wanted it added to the 2022 fiscal year.

