

**OMC Calendar
DECEMBER 2020**

Sunday	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2 Exec zoom 6 pm. Council zoom 7 pm.	3 Youth Group Bible zoom 7pm. Community Connection zoom 7 pm	4	5
6 George Janzen preaching.	7 .Kids Bible School zoom 7 pm	8	9	10 Youth Group Bible zoom 7 pm	11	12
13 Alex, Micah & Benjamin sharing	14 Kids Bible School Zoom 7pm	15	16 Blue Christmas zoom 7:00 pm	17 Youth Group Bible zoom 7 pm	18	19
20 Singing Service & Children's Video Program	21 Kids Bible School zoom 7pm	22	23	24 Christmas Eve FB service 7:00 pm	25	26
27 Patty Friesen preaching	28	29	30	31		<u>Each Sunday Worship:</u> 10 am. In sanctuary & on Facebook

Note: Meetings and church activities can also be found in the bulletin on the church website. www.oslermannonitechurch.org

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

The Osler Mennonite Church

DECEMBER 2020 Newsletter

Osler Mennonite Church
oslermcoffice@sasktel.net
<http://www.omchurch.org>
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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:
 Nov. 29, First Advent Communion: On the Road to Readiness by Patty Friesen
 Dec. 6, Second Advent: On the Road to Repentance by George Janzen
 Dec. 13, Third Advent: On the Road to Restoration by Alex Tiessen, Benjamin Penner and Micah Guenther
 Dec. 20, Fourth Advent: Singing Service and Children's Video Program
 Dec. 24, 7:00 p.m. OMC Christmas Eve Service on Facebook only
 Dec. 27: Christmas Sunday: In the Anchor-hold: Julian of Norwich and Self-Isolation by Patty Friesen

Pastor Patty's Ponderings:

I have a short fuse these days. I blame Covid. I was losing it the other day over car troubles and Patrick looked at me calmly and wryly said, "I'd feel sorry for you if you weren't so middle class." It made me laugh and put things in perspective again.

I'm trying daily to be thankful. It's a spiritual discipline for which I'm held accountable to my spiritual director. We're healthy with financial security. We get to spend more evenings together as we're not running around to meetings. We are in touch with our families more including Zoom Canadian and American Thanksgiving Dinners. Our friendship bubble has become even more precious. We find our comforts in nature. We have learned more technology than we could have imagined. We have more time to read and quietly meditate.

While the pandemic feels like a smelter, melting down the church communities and ministries we knew and loved, we are all more resilient than we know and gold is refined by fire. While I deeply miss our potlucks, coffee-times and intergenerational interactions, I am blessed by how we continue to reach out to each other, Friendship Inn, Mennonite Central Committee, Rosthern Junior College and Shekinah Retreat Centre. We still believe in what we do best together for the sake of our young people and the most vulnerable in our communities and world.

May God be near to us in the quietness of wintery days and in the music of the season. Nora and I will be posting Advent videos and preparing for a pre-recorded children's Christmas program December 20 and pre-recorded Christmas Eve service. May we be blessed by the incarnation of Christ all around us these days.

Pastor Patty's Picks:

Percy DVD and hopefully on Netflix is the famous Saskatchewan farmer vs. Monsanto story.

The Biggest Little Farm - Netflix is another inspiring agriculture story beautifully filmed.

The Social Dilemma - Netflix is a wake-up call for us to think about how we use social media or how it uses us.

Talking to Strangers by Malcolm Gladwell is another provocative social examination by this well respected author.

The Women of the Copper Country by Mary Doria Russell is a fascinating historical fiction on unions.

From the Ashes by Jesse Thistle is a heart-breaking read of family life, culture, addiction and recovery.

And the People Stayed Home by Kitty O'Meara from her beautiful pandemic poem for kids. Church library.

Grace from the Rubble by Jeanne Bishop about reconciliation, forgiveness and restorative justice. Church library.

His Truth is Marching On: John Lewis and the Power of Hope by John Meacham. Powerful, hopeful. Church library.

The Body of Christ in a Backpack by Patty Friesen

After we struggled through several Zoom communions, I was eager to try the new safely packaged communion with soft wafer and grape juice in a creamer. Cool churches like Mount Royal have been using them for months. Plastic communion has been on back order for months as every denomination has switched over. Finally the order arrived at Universal Church Supplies on 2nd Ave and I hiked downtown with a backpack on a warm November day to get it.

I like our city and enjoy living close enough to walk downtown. I dodged people without masks but ran into Charlie with a mask on the campaign trail. I told him I was praying for him and his family in this stressful time. The women at Universal said they had never seen the Body of Christ stuffed into a backpack before. We laughed and I carried it to the Granite for curling and lunch. Ben laughed when I showed him the Body of Christ in my backpack. The day was bright, my mood was light and I was thankful for our church folks, our city and the life we share together somehow symbolized by the plastic in my backpack.

LECTIONARY PASSAGES FOR DECEMBER

Dec 6

Isaiah 40: 1-11 Psalm 85: 1-2, 8-13 2 Peter 3:8-15a
Mark 1:1-8

Dec 13

Isaiah 61: 1-4, 8-11 Psalm 126 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
John 1:6-8, 19-28

Dec 20

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16 Luke 1:46b-55 Romans 16: 25-27
Luke 1:26-38

Dec 27

Isaiah 61:10-62:3 Psalm 148 Galatians 4:4-7
Luke 2:22-40

OMC CALENDAR

- Dec 2 Executive zoom meeting 6:00 pm;
 Council zoom meeting 7:00 pm
- Dec 3 Community Connections Committee zoom meeting 7:00 pm
- Dec 16 Blue Christmas Zoom 7:00 pm
- Dec 24 Christmas Eve Facebook only service 7:00 pm
- Jan 6 Executive zoom meeting 6:00 pm
 Council zoom meeting 7:00 pm with 2021 budget & reports.
- Jan 11 Worship Committee zoom meeting 7:00 pm

***Theatre of the Beat "Unmute": Free Performance Dec 3, Dec 5.**

6:30pm. In recognition of November being Domestic Violence Awareness Month in Canada, Theatre of the Beat will premiere their latest show UNMUTE: The Impact of a Pandemic on Gender-Based Violence. Reserve your FREE tickets to UNMUTE!
<http://theatreofthebeat.ca/unmute> Sponsored by MCC. Recommended viewer Age 14+

*All the Ten Thousand Villages stores in Saskatoon have closed. But there is good news! : **Villages Calgary is now shipping fair trade items Canada-wide!** Find them at www.villagescalgary.ca to do your fair trade shopping.

OMC Announcements & Opportunities

***Many thanks to our volunteers who made 75 blankets for MCC during our blanket making bee in November.**

***2020 Sunday School Christmas Giving Project:** Lina Refugee Fund. Through Advent and at Christmas Eve pre-recorded service, we will be receiving gifts for Lina Al-Nouris Refugee Fund in anticipation of their arrival in the new year. Please pray for Lina, Ayiat, Hajar, Hussein, Abdal, and Mohammed as they prepare for their new life in Saskatoon. For an updated list of items still needed go to www.oslermennonitechurch.org
Contact Sandra Grismer (306-380-4576; sgrismer1@sasktel.net) if you can donate, pledge to provide, or have questions.

***Advent Resources** for individuals and families at www.commonword.ca/go/2190.

***January Friendship Inn Mechanized Potato Peeler:** Thank you for your generosity to Friendship Inn since we have not been able to volunteer in person. January 16 would have been our volunteer day and one of the big volunteer jobs was peeling potatoes. A mechanized peeler would be a great asset to Friendship Inn at this time. It will cost around \$7,500.00. Mennonite Disaster Service has donated \$2000 and Mount Royal Mennonite Church is looking for other Mennonite churches to help donate. Those who would like to help please e-transfer osler.mc.treasurer@gmail.com or drop off a cheque at church designated to Friendship Inn.

***At our OMC library** you will find the “Elberfeld School District No.1279” book published November, 2020. As early as the year 2000 there was talk of publishing a history of Elberfeld and community. This after two reunions. After many years of research, and convincing people to write their stories, to gather photos of family, school and community, the book has become a reality. Writing and research is hard work. And somewhat painful at times, but one sees the events and times in a different way(s). Hopefully you will gain some appreciation in the “way it wuz” way back then.
May this publication encourage you to write your memoirs.
Submitted by Kathy Boldt

Nora's Notes:

As I sit to write my final newsletter for the 2020 year, I am left with the wisdom of Kathy Braun's children's story during our memorial service. Her encouragement to open our minds to what it means to live a life of "more with less," when so much of our lives has been reduced over the past few months.

In the in-between space of Memorial Sunday and the beginning of Advent I am remind once more of the wisdom of Dan Epp-Tiessen who taught us the place of both lament and praise within the experience of grief. During our memorial service Patty invited us to lay down the many loses that we have experienced in the past year. Kathy reminded me that Advent season keeps our eyes on hearts centered on hope. Leaning into acts of praise during this time may not come quickly or easily, rather it is a discipline and a choice. It is a spiritual exercise that shapes us as we practice it, it works on our hearts and our souls so that we may find hope.

My youngest housemate, Lilianna, often pulls books of the bookshelf and brings them to us to read to her. The other day she brought me a copy of "The Grinch Who Stole Christmas." At first, I was a little resentful of the way the 'Whos' expressed themselves at the end. While they may not have their bells and whistles, they are still able to celebrate their Christmas season *by holding hands and singing* in a circle, to gather as an entire community of Whoville, no masks required! You might say I was being a bit of a grinch. With Kathy's nudge I have found a different teaching in this familiar story. When stripped of the many things that I am familiar with, maybe it is time to look around and name the gifts that remain. To gather together the pieces of good that are still present in my life and hold them up in thanksgiving and praise. To let this be my advent practice and discipline as I prepare my heart once again for the gift of God's child incarnate among us. With this in mind I invite you all to join me in pulling ourselves into an act of praise. I will begin by writing out a list of thanksgiving; I hope you are able to find space in a journal or scrap paper or your Notes app to join me in doing the same. If it is hard to feel connected to hope in this list, maybe pause and light a candle. Remember that you are not alone in this act, and the Holy Spirit continues to companion us through all of our acts. If the list is still to painful to begin, I invite you to simply listen to the song I have linked below and know that your hope is carried by those within your community of faith, for we never do this work alone.

<https://tomwuest.bandcamp.com/track/burn-this-as-a-light>

Nora's Praise List in a Time of More with Less

1. The comfort of holding a warm mug. The memory it carries of all the times my heart was heavy and I was offered a cup of tea and a place to sit. Sometimes I don't even remember to drink the tea; what I needed was to hold the warm mug in between my hands and be grateful for this moment.
2. The ability to hear my sister laugh when I tell her a silly joke. She lives in Mexico and I am so thankful that I can still make her laugh and share in a moment of joy even at such a great distance. My eyes fill with tears when I think of how thankful I am for this.
3. The company of a lit candle. I was a part of a church that held a ritual of lighting a peace candle every Sunday and emphasized it as a reminder of God's presence with us, and our unity with others. Sitting with a lit candle in the room reminds me of the presence of all those whose lives are tied to mine even without their physical presence. It makes me feel less alone.
4. Every single person who has allowed me to visit them by zoom or call or text or distanced seating. I recognize the extra amount of energy required in these exchanges and do not take for granted the space that is gifted to me to enter into a more restricted format. It is a gift to continue to be in relationship with you all.
5. For the artists, and access to the beauty they create. The ability to look at a painting, sculpture, or listen to a song and feel connected to something deeper than words when my brain is exhausted by words. There is something very healing in sitting and witnessing the beauty that has been placed in this world by another human. It is such a nurturing and thoughtful gift. Thank you, artists.

"Appreciate everything, even the ordinary. Especially the ordinary." – Pema Chödrön

❁ Pieces of Peace ❁

"Come, thou long expected Jesus! Born to set thy people free". HWB #178

Parishioner Picks: if anyone has any movie, book, music, game recommendations - please email Next Newsletter: oslermcoffice@sasktel.net

Cooperative Board Game Picks for Families (I haven't actually tried these 3 but they come recommended from Christian Science Monitor, Nov. 2/2020).

Outfoxed: like Clue but without the literal and figurative backstabbing, with 2-4 players, ages 5+ tests deductive reasoning and eye for details as chicken detectives work together to examine the fox suspects. Each game lasts about 15 minutes with mechanics simple enough for young children but engaging enough for adults.

Just One: for 3-7 players, one player guess a word based on other players' one-word clues. It is a wordsmithing test as you try to find clues that are neither too obvious nor too obscure.

Spirit Island: for 1-4 players ages 13+ is the anecdote for Settler of Catan. Instead of rapacious colonizers, players become the island's native spirits, who thwart the settlers with river surges, rampant vegetation and other disasters. With a playing time of more than two hours, this is a complex and challenging game which also makes for a satisfying solo session.



HUMOUR



Emmanuel by Angela Alaimo O'Donnell (*Christian Century* Dec 13/11)

From the cave of darkness a baby comes to light.
In the nick of time, eternity tonight.
In a world of error a perfect child is birthed.
In the midst of terror, peace arrives on earth.
In the chill of winter dawns this blazing son.
To a world of sinners comes this sinless one.
In a land of chaos speaks this single Word
whose voice can raise the dead, whose promise can be heard.
Even as he cries sleepers stir beneath the sod
for nothing is impossible with God.

Prayer for the Christmas Season

O God, whose love blesses and unites us in this place and time, we come before you with hearts gladdened by this holy season, its lights, its colours, and most especially, its message of peace and good will to all.

In the birth of Jesus, you have given our weary and struggling world reason to rejoice. In the cry of an infant, you have given hope to all who cry. By the light of a star, you have helped us find our way again.

We thank you, good and generous God, that in Jesus the Christ, you have made yourself known and have beckoned us to join you in the continual creation of a world where wolf and lamb shall dwell together and justice will roll down like waters.

Create in us, O God. Hearts devoted to shaping that world and bless especially those for whom such a world seems only a distant dream - the poor, the imprisoned, the ill, the lonely, the despised. Open our hearts, Spirit of Life, to the news of angels and the wonder of shepherds that these days may renew us for the days to come.

Grant us, for the sake of Christ, hearts that may discern how to make meaningful the gospel which we cherish. Grant, to your glory, that those whose lives we touch may hear in our words and see in our lives that truly you are merciful and gracious and abounding in steadfast love! These things we ask, trusting in your care for us today and always. Amen.

A Prayer as I put on My Mask – Moderator Robert Bott, UCC

Creator,

May I see the holy moment in the wearing of this cloth - a sign to the world that I care - a tangible and visible way of living love for my neighbours, as I love myself.

Christ,

Since my lips will be covered, may I uncover my heart, that people would see my smile in the crinkles around my eyes. Since my voice may be muffled, may I speak clearly, not only with my words, but with my actions.

Holy Spirit,

As the elastic touches my ears, may I listen carefully - may I be full of care - for all those I meet. May this simple piece of cloth be shield and banner, and each breath that it holds, be filled with divine love. By all I hold sacred, by the love that is intended, I say these things, I take this action. In your name and in that love, I pray. May it be so. May it be so.

A Christmas Prayer by Brother Roger of Taize

Seeking you, the Christ, is discovering
that you already loved us
and we did not know it.

Through the Gospel, you enable us
to catch a glimpse of how to love you,
right into our innermost solitude.

Happy those who surrender themselves to you.

Happy those who approach you
in trust of heart,
source of serene joy.

A Blessed Reflective Christmas to all from Pastor Patty Friesen and Pastor Nora Pederberg.

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.

January Services:

10:00 a.m. Facebook Live (and hopefully in-sanctuary)

Sun. Jan. 3, Epiphany: On the Road to Radiance by Patty Friesen
Sun. Jan. 10, The Baptism of Jesus and John Lewis by Patty Friesen
Sun. Jan. 17, Jesus' Call: Servant Partners Saskatoon
Sun. Jan. 24, Nora Pederberg preaching
Sun. Jan. 31, Patty Friesen preaching