

**OMC Calendar
December 2013**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Advent One Each Sunday: Worship:10am SundaySchool @ 11:15am starting Sept 8	2	3	4	5	6	7
8 Advent Two	9	10	11 Council meeting 7:30pm	12	13 Free Friday 7:30pm	14
15 Advent Three	16	17	18	19	20	21
22 Advent Four	23	24 Christmas Eve Children's Pageant & Candlelight Service 7:00pm	 25 Christmas Day	26	27	28
29 Yearend & OMC 85 th Birthday Celebration and Worship	30	31				

Note: Meetings and church activities can also be found on the Events Calendar on the church website. www.omchurch.org

**The Osler Mennonite Church
December 2013 Newsletter**

Osler Mennonite Church
olsermc@sasktel.net
<http://omchurch.org>
Volume IX, Eleventh Edition

212 2nd Ave. P.O. Box 129
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A WELCOMING CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY FOR PEACE

Upcoming OMC Events and Opportunities



O, the mystery of God's dwelling!

Our Advent theme is a statement about God's profound act of entering the human world, and it also reflects our confusion and frustration from trying to make sense of this stupendous event.

To better grasp the Christmas season, Advent is designed to be a penitential season, instead of a frantic shopping season that ends on the 25th. Each Sunday, through to Epiphany, we will progress in exploring the mystery, as penitence peels away the barriers to understanding.

The themes for each Sunday are:

- Advent One:** O, the mystery of God's dwelling in our present!
- Advent Two:** O, the mystery of God's dwelling in our relationships!
- Advent Three:** O, the mystery of God's dwelling in transformation!
- Advent Four:** O, the mystery of God's dwelling in the child that is born!

***Sunday, December 22nd** will be our choir Christmas presentation during the worship service.

***The Christmas Eve Children's pageant and Candlelight service** is at 7:00 pm on Tuesday, December 24th.

***Sunday, December 29** will also include our Year End Celebration.

Pastor's Note:

The congregational discussion, on Sunday, November 24th, was about the youth ministry opportunity. We have over twenty youth connected with our youth group, of which over half do not regularly attend church. Teenagers face many challenges and influences, some far greater than their ability to properly discern, without help. To effectively respond to this opportunity, to inspire the youth to thrive and survive, we would need to hire a halftime youth pastor; however, we face two important considerations. One, is to determine whether God is calling our church to this ministry. Churches and those who care have an overwhelming array of needs to respond to; selection is the only alternative. Secondly, without a miracle, we simply cannot afford to hire a halftime youth pastor. Therefore, both considerations require prayer. What is God calling us to do and be, and will we allow the miracle to happen? I invite all of you to pray about this. Please ask God what we should do, and ask how you can be a part of that calling.

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A Christmas/Advent message:

It seems that every Advent, I vow to not let consumerism and holiday hype take control, and every year, I end up disappointed in myself. So this year, instead of focussing on what I shouldn't do, I plan to engage in what I truly deem has important and life-giving. I hope it works. Life is too short to sabotage with regrets.

From my home to yours, *May you have a blessed, joyous, inspiring and peaceful Advent, Christmas and New Year.*

Gordon

## ❁ Pieces of Peace ❁

Christmas is not a time nor a season, but a state of mind. To cherish peace and goodwill, to be plenteous in mercy, is to have the real spirit of Christmas.

—Calvin Coolidge

## Humour ~ The Isaac Section

Danny had recently passed his driving test and decided to ask his clergyman father if there was any chance of him getting a car for Christmas, which was yet some months away. 'Okay.' said his father 'I tell you what I'll do. If you can get your 'A' level grades up to 'A's and 'B's, study your Bible and get your hair cut, I'll consider the matter very seriously.'

A couple of months later Danny went back to his father who said 'I'm really impressed by your commitment to your studies. Your grades are excellent and the work you have put into your Bible studies is very encouraging. However, I have to say I'm very disappointed that you haven't had your hair cut yet.

Danny was a smart young man who was never lost for an answer. 'Look dad. In the course of my Bible studies I've noticed in the illustrations that Moses, John the Baptist, Samson and even Jesus had long hair.' 'Yes. I'm aware of that...' replied his father '... but did you also notice they walked wherever they went?'

It was Christmas Eve in a supermarket and a woman was anxiously picking over the last few remaining turkeys in the hope of finding a large one.

In desperation she called over a shop assistant and said "Excuse me. Do these turkeys get any bigger?"

"No" he replied, "They're all dead".

-humor submitted by Adeline

**Rosthern Junior College/  
Canadian Mennonite University Announcements**

**\*RJC OPEN HOUSE** - RJC is hosting a casual style OPEN HOUSE, Friday, December 6th from 7:00-9:00 pm. There will be tours of the school and dorms, video presentations and refreshments, and a time to ask questions about the school's history, programs and unique opportunities. Please email [admissions@rjc.sk.ca](mailto:admissions@rjc.sk.ca) or call 306-232-4222 if you are interested in attending.

**\*RJC Choir Concert**, December 15, 7:30 pm at Knox United Church, Saskatoon. RJC Chorale, Women's choir and guest performer SONRISA will present a Christmas Concert in Knox United Church, 838 Spadina Crescent East. Admission is free; a collection will be taken in support of RJC. Everyone is welcome.

**\*RJC Christmas Concert** - RJC will present its annual Christmas Concert on Friday, December 20 at 7:00 pm in the school auditorium. Join us as we celebrate the Christmas season with music and fellowship. A time of refreshments will follow the concert. Everyone is welcome.

**\*RJC Tournament of Memories:** Jan. 3 & 4, 2014 - Basketball and Hockey are waiting for you! Alumni, family and friends should register by December 21st by email ([deneldafast@hotmail.com](mailto:deneldafast@hotmail.com)) for basketball or ([mel@rjc.sk.ca](mailto:mel@rjc.sk.ca)) for hockey. Reconnect with old classmates and friends and exercise your mind, body and spirit at the same time! Your Alumni Bulletin will be in the mail and on the RJC website soon with more details, or if you have questions contact Denelda at 306-221-2846 or RJC office at 306-232-4222.

**OMC ANNOUNCEMENTS AND  
OPPORTUNITIES**

**\*Youth:** Saturday, Dec. 14<sup>th</sup>: **Christmas Mystery Supper and Party!**  
Including Secret Santa and caroling. Meet at church at 7:00pm

**\*“Did I remember to put a cheque in the offering last month?” - An Opportunity to Simplify and Standardize Your Giving**  
People attending our church have, from time to time, asked about making regular donations in a simpler way – like direct bank withdrawals or even regular credit card payments. A few people have chosen to provide post-dated cheques to the treasurer, which is certainly an option open at any time. When we've looked into options in the past it seemed that most of them carried a significant cost so we didn't pursue them. A recent discussion with Affinity Credit Union (where the church has its accounts), however, has determined that the direct withdrawal option could be introduced without excessive cost. They indicated that a system known as CAFT is a very low risk (i.e. very secure site) system and can be set up so the cost (to the church) is quite reasonable. To keep the cost down the withdrawals would be regular (likely once a month) and on the same day for everyone involved (say the first Monday of each month). Set up in that way the cost to the church would be a \$50 initial set-up fee, \$1.00 per month for the monthly group file and 25 cents per individual transaction. The required set-up is fairly simple and changes can be made at any time with no cost.

If this sounds like an option that would interest you, please contact the church treasurer, Jim Dyck (phone 306-239-2205, email [dyck.mj@gmail.com](mailto:dyck.mj@gmail.com) or leave a note in his church mailbox) to indicate your interest. If there is enough interest to justify setting this up, Jim will contact you to get the necessary information. Please consider whether this would be helpful in managing your stewardship.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

### \*A *Buncha Guys* Christmas Concerts

Sat. Dec. 7 7:30 pm at Knox United Church, Saskatoon

Fri Dec. 13 7:30 pm at Shekinah Retreat Centre

Doors open at 6:45 pm

Tickets are \$5.00 each (Children age 12 and under are free)

Tickets are available at McNally Robinson Book Sellers in Saskatoon, Russ Regier (306-249-3650), any of the Guys, **or at the door.**

**An offering will be taken to support Shekinah Retreat Centre.**

\*The Station Singers will be presenting **the Messiah by Handel** with full orchestra on December 8 at 2:30 pm at the Rosthern Mennonite Church, with conductor Duff Warkentin. Guest soloists are Robert Dick, Lisa Hornung, Barbara Milner and Matt Pauls. Get your tickets from choir members or at the door or by calling the Station Arts centre at 232-5332. Tickets: Adults \$20 Students \$10 and Children 12 and under \$5.

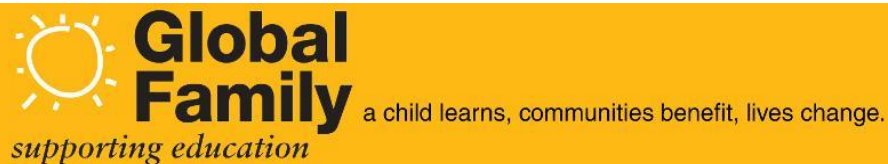
### Canadian Mennonite University [cmu.ca](http://cmu.ca)

\*CMU Study Tour opportunities: **RSB International Study Tour: Europe / April 27 - May 11, 2014** Join the Redekop School of Business at CMU for an exciting 2-week study tour looking at business, politics and culture in Europe. Visit [cmu.ca/business.php?s=studytour](http://cmu.ca/business.php?s=studytour) for more details.

### \*Ancient Stones, Living Stones: The Holy Land in Perspective / April 29 - May 21, 2014

You will meet with thoughtful and engaged Israelis and Palestinians, hike into ancient sites, swim in the Dead Sea and eat the freshest falafel and baklava you can imagine. Still a few spots available! [cmu.ca/studytour](http://cmu.ca/studytour)

## ANNOUNCEMENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES



### Fall 2013 Reports



How beautiful on the mountains  
are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace,  
who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation,  
who say to Zion, "Your God reigns!" Isaiah 52:7

Dear Friends ,

Greetings from Global Family!

Thank you for your support in this community-based initiative. With your gifts you are choosing to participate with MCC and local partners all over the world to make a difference in the lives of children and their communities. Below you will find the link(s) to your most recent Fall 2013 report. Take time to read about the impact of your partnership. Together we are instruments of God, working to provide hope and promise to the world. Please click on the link(s) below to access your latest Global Family update.

*\*Note: some email providers do not allow the links to function the way they should. If you are unable to click on the link, simply copy and paste the link into your browser.* Afghanistan - Le Pelican <http://bit.ly/1aRE64p>

Best regards,

**Werner Wiens**

Global Family Coordinator, Mennonite Central Committee Canada

**[Check out the Global Family video!](#)**

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**Mennonite Central Committee Canada**

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## Lectionary Passages for the next 5 weeks

### December 1, 2013 – Advent 1

We may walk in God's paths

Isaiah 2:1-5 (3)

Psalms 122

Romans 13:11-14

Matthew 24:36-44

### December 8, 2013 – Advent 2

God's kingdom is here

Isaiah 11:1-10

Psalms 72:1-7, 18-19

Romans 15:4-13

Matthew 3:1-12 (3)

### December 15, 2013 – Advent 3

Happy are those . . . whose help is in the Lord

Isaiah 35:1-10

Psalms 146:5-10 (5) or Luke 1:46b-55

James 5:7-10

Matthew 11:2-11

### December 22, 2013 – Advent 4

Tell the Good News

Isaiah 7:10-16, Psalm 80: 17, 17-19

Romans 1:1-7 (1)

Matthew 1:18-25

### December 29, 2013 – First Sunday

after Christmas - Out of Egypt

Isaiah 63:7-9, Psalm 148

Hebrews 2:10-18

Matthew 2:13-23 (15)

## MORE OPPORTUNITIES

### \*Canadian Mennonite University [cmu.ca](http://cmu.ca)

"The blatant poverty in Vancouver was overwhelming. There was no attempt to hide the extreme substance abuse and poverty within the city..." Read more about their time in Vancouver on the **Outatown South Africa site blog**, [outatownsa2013.wordpress.com](http://outatownsa2013.wordpress.com) \_ Graduating from high school and looking to travel and serve others? Investigate the **CMU Outatown** program. OT is an opportunity to learn about God, make lifelong friends and travel to one of three international locations: Guatemala, South Africa and Burkina Faso. Space is limited. [www.outatown.com](http://www.outatown.com)

## A Requested Potluck Recipe

### Ruby Red Salad

1 (3 oz) package of raspberry flavored Jell-O mix

2 cups boiling water

1 (10 oz) package frozen raspberries

1 pint sour cream

1 (3 oz) package cherry flavored Jell-O

1 (8 oz) can crushed pineapple, drained

1 (16 oz) can whole cranberry sauce

Dissolve raspberry gelatin in 1 cup hot water. Add frozen raspberries and stir until well mixed. Pour into a glass bowl. Refrigerate until almost firm, about 30 to 60 minutes.

Spread sour cream over firm gelatine. Refrigerate.

Dissolve cherry gelatin in 1 cup hot water. Stir in crushed pineapple and cranberry sauce. Chill until partially set, about 20 to 40 minutes.

Spoon cherry gelatin mixture over sour cream layer. Chill until firm, another hour or two.

-shared by Leslie Allaby

**Ministry Note for Sunday, Dec 1** (ministry notes are one way in which national church leadership and staff say “Thank you” for your help in ministering across the street and around the world, and let you know what your financial support means):

**\*First Sunday of Advent**

Cross-border connections provide sharing and spiritual refreshment for MC USA and MC Canada leaders. Thank you for enabling us to co-host the annual bi-national gathering for conference and area church ministers in Denver, CO., Dec. 4-7

\*Mennonite Church Canada is committed to creating family friendly resources—and we couldn’t do it without your generous support. Thank you for helping us create the 2013 edition of Advent at Home, The Mystery of God’s Dwelling, a collection of activities, prayers and reflections that raise awareness of God dwelling amongst us. Find your free, downloadable copy at [www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/2164](http://www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/2164)

**News and Announcements for Sunday, December 1** (stay in tune with the wider church):

\*Are you Christmas shopping for that hard-to-shop-for someone? Give the gift that keeps on giving! Check out paperless gift giving at: [donate.mennonitechurch.ca](http://donate.mennonitechurch.ca). Be counter-cultural, environmentally friendly, and satisfy your soul all at the same time!

\*Invite your children to support traumatized child victims of Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines. A kid-friendly video featuring the characters Chris and Selah and their visit to the Philippines is available at [www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1944](http://www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/1944).

\*Plants that feed fish that feed plants? That’s the focus of new kid-friendly, eco-friendly, projects in the Global South. Give your kids the gift of mission, grow the global church, and help sustain families all at the same time. Watch this kid-friendly video on Aquaponics at [www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/2192](http://www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/2192) and then participate!

## OMC ANNOUNCEMENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

\*All who sing are welcome to **join the Christmas choir!** The choir will sing once during Advent, December 22nd during the worship service, and on Christmas Eve as part of the Sunday School program.

\***Christmas Giving Project:** Each year at this time the church, through the Education Committee, chooses a Christmas Giving Project. This year’s project is through the Canadian Food Grains Bank; the **Christmas Ornament Project**, to provide food for starving people around the world, especially focusing on Syrian refugees who are experiencing severe suffering as a result of war in their country. For every \$12.00 donated, an ornament will be displayed on the tree in the church foyer. It takes \$12.00 to feed one person for a month. We are aiming to feed 100 persons for a month. There is a jar in the foyer where you can drop in your donations. You may also designate your church offerings and the Christmas Eve offering will go towards this project as well. Thank you for your support!



### Prepare Ye the Way: Advent

Advent, from the Latin *adventus*, means “coming”. It is a time of self-examination and prayer; a time set aside to prepare for the celebration of Christ’s birth. The Advent wreath is an adaptation of an ancient practice that dates back to pre-Christian times. Candles were lighted around a wheel during the festival of the winter solstice to celebrate the return of gradually lengthening daylight. The symbolism of this ceremony takes on an entirely new meaning for us in the form of the Advent wreath as we anticipate the birth of Christ and the enlightenment His coming brings to our lives. A candle is lit each Sunday of Advent, and centre Christ candle is lit. Advent serves to remind us what Christmas is all about. It stands juxtaposed and in contrast to the commercialized Christmas.

## A Christmas Pageant Story

Each December, I vowed to make Christmas a calm and peaceful experience. But once again, despite my plans, chaos prevailed. I had cut back on nonessential obligations-- extensive card writing, endless baking, decorating, and yes, even the all American pastime, overspending. Yet, still, I found myself exhausted, unable to appreciate the precious family moments, and, of course, the true meaning of Christmas. My son, Nicholas, was in kindergarten that year. It was an exciting season for a six year old filled with hopes, dreams and laughter. For weeks, he'd been memorizing songs for his school's "Winter Pageant." I didn't have the heart to tell him I'd be working the night of the production.

Unwilling to miss his shining moment, I spoke with his teacher. She assured me there'd be a dress rehearsal the morning of the presentation. All parents unable to attend that evening were welcome to come then. Fortunately, Nicholas seemed happy with the compromise. So, just as I promised, on the morning of the dress rehearsal, I filed in 10 minutes early, found a spot on the cafeteria floor and sat down. Around the room, I saw several other parents quietly scampering to their seats. As I waited, the students were led into the room. Each class, accompanied by their teacher, sat cross-legged on the floor. Then, each group, one by one, rose to perform their song.

Because the public school system had long stopped referring to the holiday as "Christmas," I didn't expect anything other than fun, commercial entertainment -- songs of reindeer, Santa Claus, snowflakes and good cheer. The melodies were fun, cute and lighthearted, but nowhere to be found was even the hint of an innocent babe, a manger, or Christ's sacred gift of hope and joy. So, when my son's class rose to sing, "Christmas Love", I was slightly taken aback by its bold title.

Nicholas was aglow, as were all of his classmates, adorned in fuzzy mittens, red sweaters and bright snowcaps upon their heads. Those in the front row -- center stage -- held up large letters, one by one, to spell out the title of the song. As the class would sing "C is for Christmas," a child would hold up the letter C. Then, "H is for Happy," and on and on, until each child holding up his portion had presented the complete message, "Christmas Love."

The performance was going smoothly, until suddenly, we noticed her - a small, quiet girl in the front row who was holding the letter "M" upside down. She was entirely unaware, that reversed, her letter "M" appeared as a "W." Fidgeting from side to side, she soon moved entirely away from her mark.

The audience of 1st through 6th graders snickered at the little one's mistake. But in her innocence, she had no idea they were laughing at her as she stood tall, proudly holding her "W".

One can only imagine the difficulty in calming an audience of young, giggling students. Although many teachers tried to shush the children, the laughter continued until the last letter was raised, and we all saw it together. A hush came over the audience and eyes began to widen.

In that instant, we understood -- the reason we were there, why we celebrated the holiday in the first place, why even in the chaos there was a purpose for our festivities. For when the last letter was held high, the message read loud and clear:

**CHRIST WAS LOVE.** (And He still is and always will be!)

-Author Unknown



**News Release: MEDA brings innovative water solution to Ghanaian women and Receives Grand Challenges Explorations Grant for ground-breaking research in global health and development**

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**WATERLOO, ON** - MEDA - Mennonite Economic Development Associates – announced today that it is a [Grand Challenges Explorations](#) winner, an initiative funded by the [Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation](#). MEDA will pursue an innovative global health and development research project in Ghana, *Water Catchment, Storage and Irrigation for Women*.

Effective, affordable water catchment, storage and irrigation systems will help women in Ghana to extend their growing season and produce more food to feed their families. MEDA will test models that can be assembled with local available components and easily used by women from varying locations and agricultural yields. Commercial suppliers will offer demonstrations and introductory discounts to stimulate early adoption, strengthening both supply and demand.

If women farmers in Northern Ghana can raise food, specifically vegetables and legumes, during the dry season they can improve their families’ nutrition and earn income to buy supplemental food, cover health, education and household costs. With low-cost, appropriate and effective systems readily available, women farmers can harvest water during the rainy season, store it and use efficient yet simple irrigation mechanisms for dry season cultivation.

Grand Challenges Explorations (GCE) funds individuals worldwide to explore ideas that can break the mold in how we solve persistent global health and development challenges. MEDA’s project is one of more than 80 Grand Challenges Explorations Round 11 grants announced today by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

**For more information, please contact:**

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Jaclyn Stief - [jstief@meda.org](mailto:jstief@meda.org)

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|  <b>December 2013<br/>OMC Youth Group<br/>ACTIVITIES</b> |     |                                                                |                                                                                                                              |           |     |                                                                                                                              |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sunday                                                                                                                                      | Mon | Tues                                                           | Wed                                                                                                                          | Thur<br>s | Fri | Saturday                                                                                                                     |
| 1<br>Worship Service - 10 am<br>Sunday School - 11 am                                                                                       | 2   | 3                                                              | 4                                                                                                                            | 5         | 6   | 7                                                                                                                            |
| 8<br>Worship Service - 10am<br>Sunday School - 11 am                                                                                        | 9   | 10                                                             | 11                                                                                                                           | 12        | 13  | <b>14</b><br><b>Christmas Mystery Supper and Party!</b> Meet at church @ 7:00pm. Dress warmly- there will be caroling later! |
| 15<br>Worship Service - 10am<br>Sunday School - 11 am                                                                                       | 16  | 17                                                             | 18                                                                                                                           | 19        | 20  | 21                                                                                                                           |
| 22<br>Worship - 10am<br>Sunday School - 11 am                                                                                               | 23  | <b>24</b><br>Christmas Eve Pageant & Candlelight Service - 7pm | <b>25</b><br>Christ-<br>mas<br>Day!<br> | 26        | 27  | 28                                                                                                                           |
| <b>29</b><br>Worship Service - 10am<br>Sunday School - 11 am<br>Yearend Celebration during Worship Service.                                 | 30  | 31                                                             |                                                                                                                              |           |     |                                                                                                                              |