

Bergthaler Mennonite Church of Altona
Worship Service
December 11, 2022, 10:30 am

“The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus” Isaiah 35:1

Welcome and Announcements

Gathering and Praise

Music **What Is This Place?** HWB 1

Call to Worship and Prayer

Music **Holy Spirit, Come With Power** HWB 26

Candle lighting

Offering Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

Hearing God’s Word

Children’s Story

Scripture Isaiah 35:1-10

Sermon Let Restoration Come

Music **Solemn Stillness, Weary Streets** VT 276

Waiting in Hope

Congregational prayer

Benediction

Music **O Little Town Of Bethlehem** HWB 178

Sermon: Terrell Wiebe
Worship Leader: Jolene Friesen-Stoesz
Children’s story: Andrew Richert
Music: ABC Ensemble

PRAYER & PRAISE CORNER

~ **Hospitalized:** Anne Sawatzky, Mary Sawatsky and Joyce Loewen at the Altona Health Centre.

~ **International witness:** Pray for the leadership of the Meserete Kristos Church in Ethiopia as they work with communities affected by ethnic conflicts and drought. Pray for Werner and Joanne De Jong, Witness workers at the Meserete Kristos Seminary, as they work to grow spiritual leaders from diverse regions in Ethiopia.

~ **We wish a happy birthday and God’s blessing to:**

Menno Braun December 9

Elsie Letkeman December 13

Joanna Ginter December 15

Joyce Friesen December 17

WORSHIP CALENDAR

November 27: Advent 1 – Watch: The day is almost here

December 4: Advent 2 – Prepare the way of the Lord

December 11: Advent 3 – Tell what you hear and see

December 18: Advent 4 - Children’s Christmas program at 10:30 am

December 24: Candlelight service at 6:30 pm

December 25: Sing for Joy: Your God reigns

Candle-lighting liturgy

Leader: Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is soon.

People: Tell what you hear and see: even now, like water in the desert, we see God’s action all around.

Leader: As we gather strength, we light this candle as a sign Of your love made visible among us.

People: Bring your restoration to your people, we pray.

FROM THE PASTOR – Virginia Gerbrandt Richert

Next Sunday at 10:30 am, during our morning worship time, will be our Children's Christmas program. I have had the privilege of working alongside the Sunday School teachers and parents in getting the children and other details in place for this occasion.

One thing that has struck me in the process is how significant it is that we ask the children of our congregation to tell us the Christmas story. We ask them to act it out, to be startled by the angels, to be in awe of their message, to celebrate the Christ child, and to contemplate his meaning for us today. And as a result, the message can take on a new and deeper meaning when it comes from the mouths of children.

We had a practice this week, and there was definitely some silliness, some running around, and a few extra songs. But I left the practice impressed that the kids were making their lines and this story their own. They were seeing the role that faith played in the actions of the shepherds. And the hesitation they might have felt. I am looking forward to seeing it all come together and the impact that it can have on the children as well as the rest of the congregation.

CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Sermon discussion Tuesday at noon.

Potluck lunch following the worship service today.

Part of the process of calling a pastor is affirming the work done by leaders and committees in the church who have discerned on behalf of the congregation. While Church Council strongly recommends Terrell Wiebe for a part-time role as a pastor primarily to youth in our church, God's call must finally be discerned by the whole church. Following our weekend of getting to know Terrell everyone will have the opportunity to affirm the work of our Church Council and endorse the invitation to Terrell through a vote. **Voting will take place at a special church meeting following the worship service next Sunday Dec. 18.** You may also vote in the church office during the week from Tuesday through Friday between 9:00am and noon. Everyone who is currently engaged in the life of our church is welcome to participate by voting.

ABC Youth: Next youth Dec. 14, 7-9pm - Christmas Party with snack/appetizer potluck and Escape Room activity. Bring some food to share. Formal attire? Not exactly. Wear one fancy thing (a tie, a top hat, fancy shoes, ruby necklace from the 17th century), and have a chance to win a prize.

Pastor and office hours over the Christmas holidays:

The church office will be closed Dec 26 -28.

Pastor Virginia will be on vacation from Dec 26 – Jan 2.

Pastor Mark will be off Dec 22 and 23 and taking some additional time off between Dec 26 – Jan 2.

Year-end donations should be handed in by December 30 at 12 noon to the office or dropped off at Laurie Enns' home. Otherwise, they will be receipted for next year.

There is an update from Mennonite Church Manitoba posted on the bulletin board about the various ministries we are together involved in and support through MCM. If you would like a copy, please let Ang know in the office.

We are created to enjoy fellowship with one another. The past few years have been a challenging time to connect with people in assisted living apartments or in care facilities. The restrictions have been lifted. We need more people to be visitors for these people. If you are willing to be a visitor, or if you know someone who would appreciate a visit, please contact Pastor Virginia at the church or contact Irene Kehler 204-324-6248.

CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS CONTINUED:

ABC Custodian position: Here is the ad that will be appearing in various places for the position of ABC custodian. If you or anyone you know is interested contact Al Friesen. "Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church is inviting applications for the position of custodian. The successful candidate will be responsible for the general cleanliness and upkeep of the main church building, and South Education wing. Landscape, mowing and snow clearing responsibilities are also available. This is a part-time position with a flexible schedule. Wages and specific responsibilities to be determined based on the successful applicant's interests and qualifications. Please contact the church office at 204-324-6717 or email Al Friesen - Church Council alfriesen55@gmail.com for more information and complete details."

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS:

MDS: Both Hope Mennonite Church, Winnipeg and Grace Mennonite Church, Steinbach are among five Canadian churches that received grants this fall from the 2022-23 Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) Canada Spirit of MDS Fund. Read the whole article: <https://mds.org/story/canadian-congregations-receive-grants-from-spirit-of-mds-fund/>

MCC: Need some help in gift wrapping that goat? Share some comfort and joy through MCC – give a gift to your loved one that will change a life around the world. Check out MCC's Christmas Giving online at mccmb.ca/Christmas.

Christmas Day Dinner Committee – Angelika Stoesz: Hello Christmas Day Dinner Sponsors! We are pleased to announce that there will be Christmas Day Dinner again this year. We have appreciated your support all these years, and are hoping for your help again in 2022. The dinner will be on December 25 from 11:30 am till 2 pm at the Rhineland Pioneer Centre. If you would like to volunteer in one of the following areas (Shift one: prep, Shift two: serving, shift three: cleanup), please call Angelika at 204 324-8139. **You can make donations to the meal in the church foyer on December 11 and 18.** You can also bring donations to the church office or you may call 204 324-8139 to make the donation.

Bergthaler Mennonite Church of Altona: 117 2ND Street NW Altona, MB, R0G 0B1

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Office: 324-6717 **E-mail:** office@abchurch.ca

Worship Services available online at: abchurchcommunity.ca

Facebook: ABC community

Lead Pastor: Mark Tiessen-Dyck, 324-5990, (C) 1-204-771-3406, marktd@abchurch.ca

Assoc. Pastor: Virginia Gerbrandt Richert, cell 304-6119 virginiagr@abchurch.ca



From Church Council (as shared by Jolene Friesen-Stoesz on Nov 20)

I am here as the chair of the education commission and as a representative of ABC church council with some exciting and encouraging news regarding our youth ministry program. As you know, church council has been tasked with the responsibility of searching for a youth pastor in the past months. After a series of conversations, interviews, prayer, and discernment from both parties, we are very pleased and excited to announce that Terrell Wiebe will be candidating as youth pastor for ABC. Terrell lives in Gretna with his family, and has pastored at Gretna Bergthaler Church, and did youth ministry at Springfield Heights Mennonite Church in Winnipeg. Terrell speaks from a perspective of Anabaptist values and beliefs, and puts relationship with youth and their families as a major priority. As a council, we have found Terrell to be authentic, empathic, and engaging in our conversations. Both parties have discerned that a part-time position is best in moving forward, and we as council, joyfully and unanimously endorse Terrell as youth pastor candidate.

My name is Terrell Wiebe, and I live in Gretna with my wife Janna, and our sons Rowan (8) and Ivan (2). Janna and I previously served together as pastors for 4 years at the Gretna Bergthaler Church. Prior to that, we served as youth and associate pastors for 6 years at Springfield Heights Mennonite Church in Winnipeg.

In the spring of 2022, I graduated from Canadian Mennonite University with my Master of Arts in Christian Ministry. During the summer and fall I was interim pastor at the Whitewater Mennonite Church in Boissevain, Manitoba. I also work part time as the ice maker at the Altona Curling Club.

I love disc golf, curling, reading (*The Lord of the Rings* is my favourite book), boardgames, and playing video games with my kids. I love meeting new people, learning new things, and I am excited to get to know your congregation!

Please join us here **December 11** for **Terrell's candidating** Sunday and to listen and participate in prayerful discernment as he shares with the congregation.

On **December 18**, we invite the congregation to a **vote of affirmation** to move forward with this process.

As council, we look forward with hopeful and grateful anticipation to Terrell's sharing with all of us and are thrilled to move forward in supporting and nurturing the lives of our youth.

