

Welcome to the Bergthaler Mennonite
Church of Altona
August 13, 2023
10:30 am

"All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation." - 2 Corinthians 5:18-19

Gathering and Praise

Welcome and Announcements

Music We are people of God's peace HWB 407

Call to Worship and Prayer

Music Make me a channel of your peace SJ 56
I've got peace like a river (lyrics in the bulletin)

Offering Let there be peace on earth

Hearing God's Word

Scripture Genesis 33:1-17

Sermon A complicated reconciliation

Responding in Trust

Music Be a sower (lyrics in the bulletin)

Prayer of the Church and the World

Benediction

Music Calm me, Lord SS 45

Sermon: Mark Tiessen-Dyck
Worship Leading: Amanda Wiens
Music: Hilda Franz and Liam Martin

PRAYER & PRAISE CORNER

Hospitalized: Helen Voth, Bernard Wiebe and Jake Rempel at the Altona Health Centre.

International Witness: Pray with Mennonite Church Canada Witness workers Joanne and Werner De Jong as they go through their annual visa/residence permit renewal. Pray for patience, joy and relationship building opportunities in this process. They are spending the next month before seminary courses begin in preparing classes and responding to invitations for short term training and preaching.

Our congratulations to Joe and Amanda Wiens on a momentous 20-year wedding anniversary on August 16!

We wish a happy birthday and God's blessing to:

John Martens August 13 Helen Thiessen August 16
Helen Voth August 13 Jason Driedger August 18
Ellen Friesen August 14

WORSHIP CALENDAR

This Sunday we begin a four-week sermon series called "**Seeking Peace Together.**" Each week we will explore a different Biblical character and how they modeled peace through their actions and how we are called to do the same.

Aug 13: Speaker: Mark

Aug 20: Speaker: Virginia

Aug 27: Speaker: Mark

Sept 3: Speaker: Terrell

THIS WEEK AT ABC:

Tuesday, August 15, 10:30 am, Coffee with the church staff.

CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS:

There will not be livestream of the worship services during the summer months. The services will be posted online shortly after the service.

During the summer months there will not be a children's story however feel free to pick up a children's bulletin from the ushers in the lobby.

FROM THE PASTOR: Mark Tiessen-Dyck

Our trip to Matheson Island a couple weeks ago prompted me to read Neill and Edith von Gunten's book "Walking Together: Intercultural Stories of Love and Acceptance." This book is a collection of stories and reflections from their decades of ministry in communities such as Riverton, Manigotagan, Bloodvein, and Matheson Island. Neill and Edith are remarkable Jesus followers: they began their married life doing voluntary service in Chicago where they were engaged in the civil rights movement and marched with Martin Luther King Jr, followed by studies at Canadian Mennonite Bible College, and then answering God's call to serve with what was then called Mennonite Pioneer Mission. As they led worship services, developed relationships, and ministered to people, Neill and Edith displayed a Christ-like humility and love for all people.

Neill and Edith were instrumental in starting the Riverton Fellowship Circle, a church community for people of Indigenous cultural background. Relationships were not always easy between Riverton Fellowship Circle and other churches because of the community's Indigenous identity. They recount several difficult experiences where individual Christians or churches had condescending and disrespectful attitudes towards the people of their community. When one individual was asked to share her testimony and sing at a church in Winnipeg, someone said to her in the foyer, "I didn't know Indians could be Christian". This person was probably speaking of their genuine learning, but you can see how hurtful these words were. Neill and Edith also share a story of a time when a group of youth and adults from Riverton Fellowship Circle travelled to a Mennonite Church in southern Manitoba (they don't mention which one) who welcomed them with genuine humility and a desire to learn and grow together. After the potluck lunch, members from Riverton were invited to introduce themselves and, because of the humble posture of their hosts, they shared genuinely and deeply about their lives, including struggles with alcohol, the challenges of raising teenagers, generational trauma from residential school, experiencing racism, the desire to lead a Christian life, and how being part of the Riverton Fellowship circle had finally provided a place to be accepted and learn about God. This occasion was moving for all involved, included the church who hosted that day; one member said to Edith, "We are not that honest...Our church lost that deep personal sharing long ago...We have forgotten how to share from our heart with others."

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CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS continued:

Pastors vacation time: Virginia: August 7-13, **Terrell:** August 2-15. For August, the **administrative office** will be open Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday from 9:00 am – 12:00 pm.

ABC goes to camp! September 16-17. September 16-17. Please **sign up** either in the foyer or by calling the church office. The cost for overnight and meals is \$86 per adult and \$52 per child. Having a retreat costs money—some people can cover it and it is not a burden, for others it impacts their decision more. We are looking at ways of cost sharing. If you are interested in helping reduce the cost for others, be in touch with one of the pastors.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS:

MCC: MCC is grateful to our congregation for the Grow Hope donations that have generated from the Kids Coins Count. Join us at the Grow Hope Harvest Celebration on August 27! We are so excited to gather again to celebrate and give thanks for Grow Hope and its many supporters – like you. Come to Silverwinds Hutterite Colony on August 27 from 3–6pm, to hear about your impact, see some of the crops you have supported, and visit with other Grow Hope supporters. RSVP by August 14 as space is limited, at mccmb.ca/events.



I've got peace like a river:

Vs. 1 I've got peace like a river (3x) in my soul (repeat)

Vs. 2 I've got love like an ocean

Vs. 3 I've got joy like a fountain

Be a Sower VT 789

Vs. 1 Be a sower, plant a seed. Let it grow into a tree.

Give it water, watch it grow, and give it the love that it needs.

Chorus:

Be humble, and gentle, and always keep looking for peace

God makes the sun rise, on the good and the evil.

Rain fall, on the rocks and the weeds.

Let's be loving, to one another. Join in God's circle of peace.

Vs. 2 Be a listener, listen close, when you find a friend in need.

Talk to Jesus, Jesus knows, and He'll give you comfort and peace.

Chorus

Vs. 3 Be a dreamer, work for peace. Turn your sword into a plow.

With our neighbours, we will seek to make change as God shows us how.

Chorus