

BERGTHALER MENNONITE CHURCH of ALTONA

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24, 2023, 10:30 AM

“Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be afraid, for I am your God; I will strengthen you; surely I will help you” Isaiah 41:10

Children’s Christmas Program

Prelude Instrumental

Call to Worship & Welcome

Kid’s Songs

Sunday school singing We will follow/ There is no one in this world like Jesus

Scripture Isaiah 41:8-10

The Scaredy-Cats

Scene 1: Meeting our hosts

Scene 2-3: Moses

Scene 4-5: Esther

Song O come all ye faithful VT 241

Scene 6-7: Peter and John

Scripture Luke 2:1-7

Song Away in a Manger VT 257 v 1-2

Scene 8-9: Mary and Joesph

Song O Little Town of Bethlehem VT 245

Offering & Instrumental

Scripture Luke 2:8-20

Scene 10: Shepherds

Song Silent night VT 244 v 1-2

Scene 11-12: The Magi

Song What child is this? VT 267 v1,3

Scene 13: The Nativity

Song Go Tell it on the Mountain VT 252

Sending

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Reflection: When have you trusted God in the midst of your fears?

There will be no kid’s coin offering

FROM THE PASTOR: Mark Tiessen-Dyck

Things will be different at ABC in January when Pastor Virginia begins her three-month sabbatical. We wish her a time of renewal and growth during this time when she is apart from our church community. We’ll still see Virginia’s family here, but as is normal practice for a sabbatical, she will be worshipping elsewhere and not engaging in her pastoral responsibilities at ABC. It is definitely okay to talk with Virginia when you see her around town though! (You don’t have to avoid her just because she is on sabbatical).

In addition to the benefits that a sabbatical can be to a pastor and their ministry, sabbaticals can also help to strengthen congregations. Here’s how:

- Sabbaticals are a time for churches to check their pastor dependence. Over time congregations can, often unknowingly, rely on their pastors more and more. Tasks and responsibilities that are not necessarily their job get left to the pastors. Churches can become too identified with their pastor.
- Sabbaticals are a time to develop and discover spiritual gifts in the congregation as people step up to fill the gap left by the pastor.

During Virginia’s sabbatical, the book study group will continue with others facilitating. Some of the oversight for Sunday school will be shared. And we will also have the opportunity to hear lay preachers which is a wonderful gift. I will take on some of the responsibilities of worship planning that Virginia does. Another area where we will need individuals to step up is worship leading since this is something that Virginia does regularly.

Over the next three months we will have less pastoral capacity, which may be noticeable in some ways. I will also be away on a family trip for two weeks (January 27-February 11) leaving Terrell as the only available pastor during that time. Despite this, I do believe that this will be a time of health and growth for our church community.

Bergthaler Mennonite Church of Altona

Web Page Address: abchurchcommunity.ca **Office:** 324.6717

E-mail: office@abchurch.ca **Facebook:** ABC community

Worship Services available online at: abchurchcommunity.ca

Lead Pastor: Mark Tiessen-Dyck, 324.5990, C 204.771.3406, marktd@abchurch.ca

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

Associate Pastor of Youth Ministries: Terrell Wiebe, 204.216.0058, C 204.417.8200, terrellw@abchurch.ca

SCAREDY-CATS CAST

Announcers: Penny Wahl, Tommy Friesen, Claire Ginter, Carter Penner

Moses: Rowan Wiebe

Esther: Hazel Ginter

Peter and John: Emma Falk, Jack Wiens

Mary and Joseph: Maida Richert, Miles Hildebrandt

Shepherds: Ben Falk, Jack Fast, Lily Niemczak, Leah Tiessen-Dyck

Magi: Natalie Toews, Hannah Tiessen-Dyck, Tessa Fast

Angels: Atlas Friesen, Lennox Braun, Evie Fast

Music: Margaret Klassen, Andrew Richert, Emma Falk, Tessa Fast, Jack Fast, Benjamin Falk, Penny Wahl

Worship Leader: Julia Wiens

Organizers: Virginia Gerbrandt Richert, Sharon Friesen

Scaredy-Cats was written by Laura Thiessen for Charleswood Mennonite Church in 2022

WORSHIP CALENDAR

Advent: Our theme for Advent this year is ***How will we know?*** Each week we will ask this question and expand on it as we watch, wait, discern and trust that we will know when we know.

Dec. 3 Advent 1- How will we know . . . how long?, Communion.

Dec. 10 Advent 2- How will we know . . . what now?

Dec. 17 Advent 3- How will we know . . . what's next?

Dec. 24 Advent 4- 10:30 am- Children's Christmas program.

Dec. 25 10:30 am- Christmas Day worship. Speaker: Mark. Volunteer choir

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CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Prayer and Praise:

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

Myrian Arias- Dec. 24, Tina Braun- Dec. 25,

Melissa Tiessen-Dyck- Dec. 27

Alvin Kehler has moved to Eastview. He is in BlueRidge room 103

Hospitalized: Bernard Wiebe and Ben Dyck at the Altona Health Centre.

There will not be adult Sunday school December 31 and January 7.

We will resume on January 14.

The church office will be closed December 25-27. Pastor Virginia and Ang will be in the office, regular hours from December 28-29. Pastor Mark and Pastor Terrell will be taking time off between December 25 - January 1.

Book Study in the new year! The book study group plans to continue with a new book in January; *Walking Together: Intercultural Stories of Love and Acceptance* by Edith and Neill von Gunten. Thursday afternoons at 2 pm. If you would like to join, please let Virginia or Ang know by Dec 29.

Calling all singers: There will be a volunteer choir for the Christmas morning worship service! Please meet in the sanctuary at 9:45 Dec. 25.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Many of the community announcements have posters in the lobby for more extensive information.

International Witness: All of the Protestant churches in Burkina Faso were asked to contribute "war effort money" to their government. As a Peace church, the Mennonite churches could not accept this, so they sent two church leaders to explore other options which didn't support military efforts. The Mennonite churches were given permission to contribute their portion of funds to work with the displaced and traumatized people in the country. Thank you for your prayers for the Mennonite Church in Burkina Faso, as they continue to be a courageous witness of Christ's way of peace.

MCM: MCM Mondays start on Jan 8, 7:30pm on Zoom. These sessions are meant for everyone in the congregation who is interested in the topic. We're starting off with this topic: "Pastors, do we need them?" www.mennochurch.mb.ca/mcmmondays for more info and the Zoom link.

MCI: Mennonite Collegiate Institute invites applicants for a High School Science Teacher. This is a term position for the 2nd semester (February – June) of the 2023-2024 school year with the potential of permanent status. Please send a resume and cover letter or any questions you have to principal Jennifer Klippenstein at jenniferklippenstein@mciblues.net.