

BERGTHALER MENNONITE CHURCH
OF ALTONA
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2023, 10:30 AM

"I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he will declare to you the things that are to come." John 16:12-13
"For it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to impose on you no further burden than these essentials" Acts 15:28

Gathering and Praise

Welcome and Announcements

Music Move in our midst HWB 418

Call to worship and prayer

Music One is the body VT 386
Breathe on me, breath of God VT 737

Offering Thy word is a lamp VT 398

Music In the quiet consecration

Hearing God's Word

Children's story

Scripture Acts 15:1-12

Sermon The dynamic tandem of God's Spirit
and God's Word

Responding in Trust

Music We praise the word of God

ABC Conversations

Prayer of the Church and the World

Benediction

Music This is my song VT 710

Sermon: Mark Tiessen-Dyck **Worship Leading:** Virginia Gerbrandt Richert
Music: Hilda Franz and Andrew Richert **Children's Story:** Caroline Neufeld

WORSHIP CALENDAR

October 15: The Spirit and the Word. Speaker: Mark
October 22: Guest Speaker: Darryl Loewen, Executive Director of
Mennonite Central Committee Manitoba.
October 29: Speaker: Virginia
November 5: Brunch Church and Blanket Exercise

FROM THE PASTOR: Mark Tiessen-Dyck

Many of us are in shock and grief at the recent eruption of violence in Israel and Palestine. No doubt Jesus weeps too as he did over the city of Jerusalem because people did not recognize the things that made for peace (Luke 19:41-44). The teachings of Jesus to "love your enemy", and Paul's message of, "Do not repay evil for evil," are needed but not heeded. One of the reasons that violence in the Holy Land recurs is that the root causes are not addressed. Never is it mentioned that the creation of the state of Israel in the aftermath of the Holocaust resulted in the displacement and dispossession of hundreds of Palestinian homes and communities and created millions of Palestinian refugees to this day. Instead of addressing this injustice, the state of Israel has continued to colonize the land and displace Palestinian people through settlement construction, land confiscation, house demolitions, controlling resources and the economy, and the personal humiliations of checkpoints, searches, and the like. It is also a dreadful reality that the Palestinian struggle for home and land has been hijacked by fundamentalist Islamic organizations like Hamas whose horrific acts of violence are incredibly counter-productive to creating a lasting peace for Israelis and Palestinians.

It is my opinion, that there will not be peace in the Holy Land until Israel's occupation of Palestine ends. This is because violence is cyclical. People and groups who are continually oppressed, often lash out at their adversaries in violence too, which results in justification for further violence and oppression. It is always interesting to me which violence gets noticed and reported and which does not; which violence appals us and which violence we can justify and how terms like "self defence" and "terrorism" are used in moral reasoning about violence. Jesus invites us to break the cycle of violence, not explain it or justify it, by loving enemies, not repaying evil for evil, and seeking the things that make for peace. Some of the things that could make for peace in the Holy Land are: The United States stop giving billions of dollars in military aid and weapons to Israel because this perpetuates the cycle. Israel must also, at a minimum, abide by international law in its treatment of Palestinian people, and grant Palestinians the human rights that we expect for all other peoples. Our country and others could play a stronger role in advocating for this. Another important thing that could make for peace would be addressing Antisemitism and understanding the historic injustices perpetuated against Jewish people. Western nations have a particular responsibility in this respect because Jewish people have so often not been welcomed in Western society, the Holocaust being the culmination of centuries of Antisemitism in Europe.

Truthfully, the violent and militaristic response that Israel is planning in order to destroy Hamas will not succeed, it will only create further suffering and invite more violence in the long run. As would be the case for all communities, living under the oppressive conditions that the people of Gaza do will cause some to choose a path of violence against the systems which oppress.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

Community Memorial Service at Boundary Trails Health Centre Oct. 30 at 7 pm. The service will include readings, prayer, music, a word of encouragement and a time of sharing our favourite memories. Space is limited! Respond to Ireimer2@southernhealth.ca or call 204-331-8809 if you plan to attend.

Steps Towards Reconciliation Altona: The Orange Bench will be outside the Altona Civic Centre until October 14. Read about truth, reconciliation, and resilience featuring stories of Miskogiizhigok (Marjorie Nelson), told by her daughter Josephine Hartin.

CMU: JJ. Thiessen Lecture – You are invited to hear Dr. Willie James Jennings of Yale Divinity School present his talk entitled, Gathering the pieces that remain: Weaving life together from the fragments of faith, race, and land. October 27 at 7:00 pm in Marpeck Commons or via livestream. Visit cmu.ca/jjt for details and livestream.

Mennonite Church Manitoba weekly congregational profile: Pembina Mennonite Fellowship is a house church in the Morden/Winkler area, formally organized in 1974. We are about 50 individuals in four house groups who meet weekly in our homes and gather together once a month in a community centre. In the summer we meet outside at the research station in Morden. Members take turns hosting and leading Sunday mornings. We are active in climate justice work, hosting newcomers to the area, and supporting Indigenous neighbour initiatives, along with other activities with Morden Mennonite Church (such as making blankets for MCC). Pray that we would continue to humbly care for each other and our neighbours, and that we would be strengthened in our faith. Pray for our young people who leave the area and sometimes have trouble finding community in churches that “do church” differently.

THIS WEEK AT ABC

Sunday, Oct. 15, 9:15-10:15 am- Sunday school for all ages. Ages 3-grade 7 are in the basement of the education wing, *the youth* are in the south wing, and *the adults* in the church basement.

Monday, Oct. 16, 7:30 pm- Small group meeting at South Wing.

Tuesday, Oct. 17, 10:30 am- Coffee with the church staff.

Wednesday, Oct. 18, 7:00 - 9:00 pm- Youth (gr. 7-12) Giant games night!

Wednesday, Oct. 18, 7:00-8:15 pm- Ventures in the church basement.

Thursday, Oct. 19, 7 pm- Church council meeting

PRAYER & PRAISE CORNER

Hospitalized: Bernard Wiebe, Bernie Friesen (Edith), Marge Friesen and Ben Dyck at the Altona Health Centre.

Rick and Carol Neufeld will be leaving this week for Leamington, Ontario where they will spend the next few months. Rick will be doing some pastoral work for the Leamington United Mennonite Church. We wish Rick and Carol the power and guidance of the Holy Spirit in their life and work over these months.

International Witness: Since the October 7 Hamas attack near the Gaza Strip and Israel's crushing military reaction, violence and destruction have escalated in the land we often call “Holy.” As we lament the carnage among Israelis and Palestinians, let us also pray for those working for a future that ends the deep and longstanding injustices that lie at the root of the crisis. Go to Mennonite Church Canada Palestine-Israel Network (<https://www.mennonitechurch.ca/pin>) for prayers of lament and intercession from PIN and Bethlehem Bible College.

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



Tara Funke-Friesen- Oct. 5, Jack Wiens- Oct. 15,

Myrla Friesen- Oct. 21



CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Darryl Loewen, Executive Director of MCC Manitoba, will join us next week for worship as well as Adult Sunday school. All are welcome at 9:15 in the basement to hear stories and ask questions about MCC's work.

Small Group Open House, October 16, 2023. The A.B.C. small group that has been meeting for two years is hosting an “open house” on Monday, October 16 at 7:30 pm at South Wing. If you're interested in finding out more about small group, you're welcome to join us. Questions? Call Tammy & Jason Driedger.

On November 5, we will be having “Brunch Church” again (potluck brunch beginning at 9:15). During our gathering this day, we will be participating in a Blanket Exercise. A Blanket Exercise is an interactive way of engaging the story of our land from the perspective of Indigenous communities' experience. This is a way for our church to grow in knowledge of our history and our journey of reconciliation. Kerry Saner-Harvey, a staff person from MCC, will be facilitating for us. You can learn more about the Blanket Exercise here: <https://www.kairosCanada.org/what-we-do/indigenous-rights/blanket-exercise>. On this day, you will need to bring a brunch dish to share and a blanket to participate.

The Gardens on Tenth Annual General Meeting will be held Thursday, October 26th at 7:00 PM in The Gardens MPR. Two delegates from ABC are needed in addition to our representatives. If interested, please contact Melvin Klassen or Albert Falk.