

BERGTHALER MENNONITE CHURCH
of ALTONA
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2023, 10:30 AM

"All of you who are thirsty, come to the water! Whoever has no money, come, buy food and eat! Without money, at no cost, buy wine and milk!" ~ Isaiah 55:1

Gathering and Praise

Welcome and Announcements

Music The love of God STJ 44

Call to worship and prayer

Music O worship the King HWB 66

Offering Just a closer walk with thee STJ 106

Hearing God's Word

Children's story

Scripture Isaiah 55:1-2

Sermon All You Who are Thirsty

Responding in Trust

Music Praise Him, praise Him HWB 100

ABC Conversations with Anna Peters

Prayer of the Church and the World

Benediction

Music Lord listen to your children HWB 353

Sermon: Darryl Loewen **Worship Leading:** Terrell Wiebe

Music: Glenys Voth and Lorraine Hamm

Children's Story: Grace Harms

We welcome Darryl Loewen, Executive Director of MCC Manitoba.

Mark Tiessen-Dyck, Margaret Klassen and Imy Rempel are serving at Eastview and Gardens on Tenth

WORSHIP CALENDAR

October 22: Guest Speaker: Darryl Loewen, Executive Director of Mennonite Central Committee Manitoba.

October 29: Speaker: Virginia, International Witness Sunday

November 5: Brunch Church and Blanket Exercise

FROM THE PASTOR: Terrell Wiebe

I have taken part in a Blanket Exercise in two very different settings. The first was at the Circle of Life Thunderbird House, a spiritual place for Indigenous ceremonies and gatherings in downtown Winnipeg. Indigenous Elders, homeless individuals who had walked in off the street, and a small group of us from the Mennonite church made up part of the large and diverse group of people taking part in the exercise. As we engaged with the story of our land from the Indigenous community's perspective, tears could be seen on the faces of many from that community. We heard later in the sharing circle about both the pain of remembering and a hope for the future. The presence of members of the Mennonite church and other individuals of settler origins were a signal to those present that there was a desire for greater understanding and empathy. It was the sign that reconciliation was possible.

The second occasion was at the Whitewater Mennonite Church in Boissevain. The church was in a time of exploration around reconciliation but had congregational members at many different places in their understanding of history and of what the church's role was in reconciliation. I was inspired by their community's engagement with the Blanket Exercise in their willingness to let people from across the spectrum of understanding and opinion be present. During the sharing circle, there were even individuals with conflicting take away's from the experience. And that was okay! The point was to experience it together, increase understanding, and continue the long road of reconciliation.

Taking part in a Blanket Exercise is not easy. It asks us to open ourselves up to the pain of the past to better understand our present. It asks us to take a posture of humility and grow our empathy towards others. It asks us to listen first and speak second. But a Blanket Exercise is also an act of hope. It is something that we can do together as a community. It draws us towards each other, breaking down barriers and building connection.

I encourage everyone to take part in the Blanket Exercise after brunch on November 5th as a way for our community to walk together in the work of reconciliation. I pray it will be a time of learning, grieving and hope.

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
viriniagr@abchurch.ca

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

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

MCC: As conflict has escalated in the region, MCC laments the violence and mourns all lives lost in Palestine and Israel. MCC remains committed to a just peace for all, and we invite you to join us in praying for an end to the violence. MCC is planning an emergency response to the current crisis with existing partners. Our response will focus on the humanitarian needs in Gaza, given the vulnerability of the population and lack of resources available to families. MCC's work will build on previous responses to the ongoing conflict, including the distribution of food and bedding. We are also planning to offer trauma healing support and housing reconstruction. If you feel led to give, you can do so at mcc.org/Palestine-Israel.

MCI: November 3rd - MCI's Soup & Pie and Fall Concert! Come for soup, buns and pie from 5:30-7:00 in the gymnasium, and stay for our fall concert, *What Wonderous Love is This*, at 7:30 in Buhler Hall with performances by MCI's students. Meal is by donation. We look forward to seeing you there!

CARE Handivan is holding a drive-through fundraiser, Monday, November 6 at Altona Senior Centre from 4:00-6:00 pm.

Gardens on Tenth is seeking an individual who enjoys cooking and has knowledge of the traditional Mennonite meals that our tenants enjoy. <https://gardensontenth.ca>

Sunday Oct. 29 we will celebrate International Witness Sunday. We will join with congregations from across Canada to celebrate the relationships and gifts we have and share with our brothers and sisters around the globe.

Mennonite Church Manitoba weekly congregational profile:

Charleswood Mennonite Church is located on Haney Street in Winnipeg, with the majority of our members coming from outside of the Charleswood neighbourhood. We give purposeful energy to embodying an inclusive posture for all who enter our church, intent on living the gospel call to justice, peace, and love. Pray for Charleswood Mennonite Church as we continue to settle into a season with new co-pastors, Jonathan Neufeld and Lisa Enns, as we experience a time of optimism and growth in robust worship, and as we seek ways to listen to Indigenous voices in the life of the congregation and community.

THIS WEEK AT ABC

Sunday, Oct. 22, 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 with guest speaker Darryl Loewen.

Tuesday, Oct. 24, 10:30 am- Coffee with the church staff.

Wednesday, Oct. 25, 7:00 - 9:00 pm- Ventures in the church basement.

Wednesday, Oct. 25, 7:00 - 9:00 pm- Youth (Gr. 7-12) Blue Bombers Faith night. Rasheed Bailey from the Winnipeg Blue Bombers and the team chaplain are coming to Altona to share about their faith for a town wide event that is geared to youth but open to everyone. Drop off and pick up at the South Park Mennonite Brethren Church.

Thursday, Oct. 26, 2:00 pm- Book study at Gardens on Tenth.

Thursday, Oct. 26, 7:00 pm- Church Council meeting.

PRAYER & PRAISE CORNER

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

International Witness: Mennonite leaders in Burkina Faso have decided that the annual Mennonite Partnership Council meetings should not take place in Burkina Faso this year, due to political instability and increasing terrorist attacks in that area. These meetings will take place in the DR Congo on October 25, along with other Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission meetings. Continue to pray for the restoration of peace and stability in Burkina Faso and the neighbouring Sahel countries. For more information: <https://www.mennonitemission.net/news/4909/In-silencing-the-noise-of-war-dialogue-takes-place-in-Burkina-Faso>



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

Hilda Hamm, Oct. 7, Joyce Falk, Oct. 22,
Helen Voth (Hugo), Oct. 24, Peter Heinrichs, Oct. 25



We congratulate John and Marilyn Martens on a momentous 40-year wedding anniversary on October 22!

CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Gardens on Tenth AGM will be held Thursday, October 26. Jake Bergen and Peter Schroeder have agreed to be delegates. There is a revision of the by-laws that apply to section 4.01 to section 4.06. The reason for these changes is that the board would like to be able to appoint members at large when the board feels it needs someone with some specific qualifications. Questions can be directed to Melvin Klassen.



Soup & Pie

Thursday, November 2nd

4:30 pm – 6:30 pm

at Altona Bergthaler
Mennonite Church

Proceeds to Missions:

- International Witness Ethiopia Ministry

(Werner & Joanne De Jong)

- M.C.C. Urgent Needs

- Camps with Meaning



November 5 Blanket Exercise

As you have read previously in the bulletin, in a couple weeks (on Nov 5) we will be having brunch church and our worship time will primarily 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. Kerry Saner-Harvey, a staff person from MCC and an Indigenous elder, 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>.

Various conversations contributed to the decision to have this event and the process of planning it. A few people from our church have already participated in a Blanket Exercise and have had positive experiences. There has also been an interest in deepening our relationships with Indigenous people and our conversations and actions toward reconciliation. We debated at length about when to do a Blanket Exercise, and through conversations at the Spiritual Advisory Committee and Church Council, eventually decided to do the Blanket Exercise during our regular gathering time on Sunday morning to allow for the greatest participation.

We encourage everyone to come and participate. We know this will be a different type of church service, but it is still church because we will enter the Blanket Exercise trusting in Jesus and his ministry of reconciliation. It may be that we are challenged, inspired, or changed in the way that a Holy Spirit inspired sermon can.

If you cannot participate for whatever reason, including feeling uncomfortable about this event, you may still come and observe the Blanket Exercise from the side.

Regarding the participation of children: Parents, it is your decision as to whether your children participate in the Blanket Exercise. We believe this will be a valuable experience for kids who are mature enough to have some understanding of the themes involved and the attention span to participate. Generally, we suggest children grades 4 and up participate, while younger children do not (but this is not a rule). There will be childcare provided for children who are not participating.

Schedule for the morning:

9:00-9:15: Arrive for brunch.

9:15: Brunch and fellowship.

10:30-12:00: Blanket Exercise.

What to Bring:

A brunch dish to share.

A blanket (optional, there will be blankets provided, but you may wish to use your own).