

BERGTHALER MENNONITE CHURCH of ALTONA

Sunday, June 30, 2024, 10:30 am

*"When the Lord first spoke through Hosea, the Lord said to Hosea, "Go, take for yourself a wife of prostitution and have children of prostitution, for the land commits great prostitution by forsaking the Lord."
Hosea 1:2*

Gathering and Praise

Announcements

Hymn Alleluia! Gracious Jesus SS 110

Call to Worship and Prayer

Hymn Colossians 3:17 (Chorus in the bulletin)
Som'landela (3x – English, African, English) SS 40

Entering God's Story

Offering

Scripture Hosea 1:1-9, 2:16-23, 11:1-11, 13:1-8

Sermon Are We Married To God? The Power Of An Image
And The Call To Be Faithful

Responding in Faith

Hymn Shine, Jesus, Shine (insert)

Prayer for the Church and the World

Benediction

Hymn Move In Our Midst HWB 418

Sermon: Mark Tiessen-Dyck **Worship Leading:** Al Friesen

Music: Hilda Franz, Sean Goerzen and Andrew Richert

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Here are some definitions that may be helpful for today's scripture readings and sermon:

Northern Kingdom and Southern Kingdom: After King Solomon the Kingdom of Israel was divided into two parts: The Northern Kingdom called Israel and the Southern Kingdom called Judah. The Northern Kingdom was destroyed by Assyria in 722 BC. The Southern Kingdom was destroyed by Babylon in 586 BC with many inhabitants taken into exile in Babylon.

Ephraim: Hosea's preferred term for the Northern Kingdom of Israel. Ephraim was the main tribe that comprised the Northern Kingdom.

Syncretism: The process by which aspects of one religion are assimilated into, or blended with, another religion. In the Old Testament, the Israelites often practiced syncretism between worshipping Yahweh and the gods of the people surrounding them such as Baal.

Baal: A storm god, associated with fertility and rain. Peoples surrounding the Israelites worshipped Baal or similar deities believing that they provided rain and thus caused crops to grow. The prophets denounce the Israelites' involvement in rituals and practices associated with Baal.

FROM THE CHURCH COUNCIL- Al Friesen

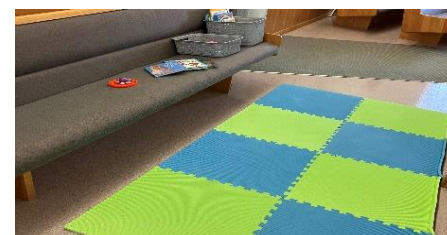
It began as a question. "Do you think the church would be open to creating a small space for families of young children on the main floor of the sanctuary to allow us to remain a part of the worship service even though our children might get restless?" On the surface, the request made a lot of sense. We want to be welcoming of all, young and older. Those of us who are parents also know the challenges of trying to keep our children quiet/entertained during worship, and yet to make that trek up to the nursery also creates a sense of isolation. And we've deliberately encouraged sitting on the main floor to establish more community.

A subsequent discussion following a recent service provided direction and perspective. Those who sit in the back do so for convenience. Some may need to leave unexpectedly because it's nearer to the elevator. Young families are (and should be) welcome to sit anywhere in the sanctuary. Let's ensure we do not lose any seating capacity for those who rely on mobility aids (as a matter of fact, let's look to increase it). We received our direction when a long-term member of our congregation stated that we should move the necessary bench and move ahead. And so, we are.

The space just inside the double doors (on the left-hand side) has been expanded, complete with colourful interlocking sponge flooring, a collection of reading and colouring books, and some toddler toys. We feel it's a welcoming space, and maintains our accessible seating, and hope you do too. Yes, it may take some time to adjust, but we think it's a good option. I should add, someone pointed out that his preference was that families with young children sit throughout the sanctuary and it is up to the rest of us to ensure they feel welcome. And I get that too. On the other hand, if you prefer to colour during church, feel free to join the young families in our newly created family section.

So, thank you for your willingness to mutually explore and create solutions. Thanks also to Josh and Alyssa Neufeld, Wendy Friesen, Gord Sawatzky, Jason Driedger, and Jolene Friesen Stoesz for your enthusiastic contribution. For the time being, the pew has been relocated to the foyer. If you have further suggestions or thoughts, please share them with Council.

The new space, ready to use!



COLOSSIANS 3:17 

Chorus: Do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, who rose from the dead to give us new life in him.

CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRAYER AND PRAISE:

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

Gavin Wahl- July 5, Sandy Friesen- July 6, Joe Wiens- July 6

Hospitalized: Shirley Shellenberg is at the Altona Health Centre.

Congratulations to Celina Toews who graduated from high school this past week. We wish her God's blessing as she pursues more schooling and sports at the University of Brandon next year.

Our love and sympathy are extended to Marge and Edgar Loeppky at the passing away of a brother-in-law, Lorence "Bob" Schroeder on June 16. The funeral service was held June 19 in Winkler.

Condolences to Debbie and Mark Heinrichs at the passing of Debbie's father, Abe Klassen, who passed away June 21. A private funeral was held on June 27.

Indigenous Relations: Hold in prayer the gathering of Strawberry Thanksgiving and Communion happening July 6th focusing on Six Nations' land settlement in Ontario. The main discussion will delve into the 2007 Spiritual Covenant proposal, addressing the complexities of Haldimand Tract lands and missing trust funds. It will be a day for meaningful dialogue, connection, and nourishment. More info:
<https://mcc.org/events/strawberry-thanksgiving-and-communion>

THIS WEEK AT ABC:

Sun. June 30, 10:30: Church service

Tue. July 2, 10:30 am: Coffee with the church staff.

Children's bulletins are back for the summer! Children are invited to pick up a children's bulletin in the foyer before worship begins. There will *not* be a children's story, but they will still be invited to participate in the coin collection each Sunday.

Get out your hymnals everyone! There will only be one tech person during July and August which means that we will not be projecting the music or lyrics. All songs will be from the books in the pews or words will be included in the bulletin.

Josh and Steph Janzen (our former pastor) are planning a visit to Altona in early July. They are looking forward to worshipping with us on Sunday, July 7!

Summer vacations and staff hours: During July and August, Ang will not be in the office on Wednesdays. *Her office hours will be Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday from 9am – noon.*

The Pastors have scheduled the following days as vacation time and may take some additional days off throughout the summer:

Mark will be on vacation from July 4-15. *Terrell* will be on vacation from July 8-16, July 29 – Aug. 11 and Aug.19 -25. *Virginia* will be on vacation from August 24-August 31. *Mark and Terrell* will be away at Matheson Island from July 22-26.

Save the Date: September 28-29. ABC retreat at Camp Assiniboia.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

MCI: We are pleased to announce that Mrs. Londa Backlund has been appointed as the new Principal of MCI effective July 15, 2024. Londa brings a wealth of experience in teaching, coaching, and church ministry. She holds degrees from Providence College, the University of Manitoba, and Grace Christian University. Londa is excited to join the MCI community and contribute to its mission of Christian education.

MCC: Explore the Transforming Relationships: Indigenous Art Gallery, featuring evocative artworks and powerful stories by Indigenous artists, including three from Manitoba. The gallery is part of MCC's ongoing work towards reconciliation between Indigenous and settler peoples. See the gallery online at mcc.org/indigenous-art-gallery

Eden Foundation: Rev your engines and shine those tractors because it's time for Eden Foundation's annual Tractor Trek, July 13th at the Emmanuel Mennonite Church in Winkler, at 11 am. There will be a community BBQ and vintage tractor show all in support of Eden's mental health programs

Mennonite Church Manitoba weekly congregational profile: The Oak Lake Mennonite Church is a small congregation located three hours west of Winnipeg on the Trans-Canada Highway. The church was founded 95 years ago and has continued its tradition of lay ministry to the present day. The congregation supports the work of Mennonite Church Manitoba and Mennonite Church Canada as well as local charities. They are not unique in having an aging membership and pray that health and energy allow them to continue their service.