

BERGTHALER MENNONITE CHURCH of ALTONA

Sunday, September 8, 2024, 10:30 am

Today we are baptizing Abby Rempel, Esme Ginter, Jacob Friesen-Stoesz, Nick Rempel, and Shelby Penner; we will hear their testimonies, welcome them as members of our church, rejoice together, and share a potluck. God is good!

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age. - Matthew 28:18-20

Praising God

Call to Worship and Prayer

Hymn Blessed By Your Name VT 637
Here by the Water VT 629

Offering and Prayer

Song Now May the Lord of Peace

Sharing our Faith

Hymn We Will Follow VT 566

Children's Story

Scripture Ephesians 4:1-6

Sharing Faith Stories Abby, Esme, Jacob, Nick, Shelby

Affirmations of Faith

Entering the Waters

Hymn Oceans VT 456

** Gathering on the lawn **

Baptisms

Hymn Praise God

Breaking Bread Together Everyone is invited to stay for a potluck lunch. We will conclude our baptism service prior to dessert by sharing scripture verses with Abby, Esme, Jacob, Nick, and Shelby and words of commitment to them.

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Worship Leading: Virginia Gerbrandt Richert, Terrell Wiebe

Music: Josh and Alyssa Neufeld, Andrew Richert

Children's Story: Mark Tiessen-Dyck

Next Sunday, Sept. 15: Matheson Island sharing service.

FROM THE PASTORS:

Here are some words about baptism from a book called "God's Story Our Story" which is often used in Mennonite Churches for baptism preparation.

"Baptism is a sign of faith. On the day of Pentecost, those who welcomed Peter's message about Jesus were baptized and added to the company of Jesus' followers (Acts 2:41-42). Baptism in the New Testament is always associated with repentance and faith.

Baptism is an aid to faith. Baptism symbolizes and reminds us of our new life in Christ (Romans 6:1-4). Like other rituals, it has no special power in itself and it doesn't guarantee a miracle or spiritual high. But neither is it an empty practice without meaning. Like other rituals, it helps open us up to experience God in a new way.

Baptism shows obedience to God's call. Jesus himself was launched into his mission in life at the time of his baptism. In baptism we show our readiness to participate in carrying God's story forward (Matthew 3:13-17). Jesus instructed his disciples to go and make disciples throughout the world, baptizing and teaching them to observe his teachings (Matthew 28:19-20).

Baptism is a pledge. Baptism shows publicly that we are prepared to be part of the "body of Christ," the Church (Galatians 3:26-28). This new life with God will be lived out in the context of a local congregation. It is commitment to faith, accountability, and ministry (Romans 6:1-11)

Baptism is *not* a rite of passage. Being baptized at a standard age or grade in school isn't much better than getting baptized as a baby. It needs to happen after we have made our own commitment to Jesus. That happens at different ages for different people.

Baptism is *not* recognition of achievement. Baptism isn't a sign that we have passed a faith exploration class or that we are now spiritually mature. Baptism is a sign of what God has done for us in Christ, not what we have achieved for God.

Bergthaler Mennonite Church of Altona

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CHURCH ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRAYER AND PRAISE:

Hospitalized: Mary Dyck is in the Altona Health Centre

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

Tammy Driedger- Sept. 8, Amanda Wiens- Sept. 8,
Wendy Friesen- Sept. 9, Bonnie Friesen- Sept. 10, Imy Rempel- Sept. 12,
Margaret Klassen- Sept. 13

Congratulations to Jake and Freida Sawatzky on their 60th wedding anniversary!

Thank you, ABC family for the support, prayers, food and visits as we mourn the passing of our daughter, sister and aunt, Corrine Sawatzky. – Bill & Dora, Lori, Tammy & Jason, Kelsey, Lucas & Rebecca and Josh & Rebecca.

International Witness: Praise God for 100 years of faithful ministry of the Mennonite Brethren Church of the Congo. Visitors from across Africa, North America, and Europe gathered at the church's center in Kikwit, Democratic Republic of Congo, to celebrate the centenary anniversary expressing gratitude for God's provision and guidance. From one church plant the ministry has grown to now include nearly 104,000 members, 4 Bible institutes, 403 schools, 5 hospitals, and 9 health centers. Pray that the witness and growth of the church will continue. Mennonite Church Canada is involved with CEFMC through Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission (AIMM).

THIS WEEK AT ABC:

Sun. Sept. 8, 10:30 am: Worship service

Tue. Sept. 10, 10:30 am: Coffee with the Church staff

Wed. Sept. 11, 7-9, Youth Kick off at the church! (Grades 7-12) - Outdoor games, rock painting, campfire, smores, etc. Bring a lawn chair. See you there!

Children's Sunday school is starting next Sunday, Sept 15! We have classes for ages 3-18. Singing for grade 6 and under begins at 9:15 in the sanctuary. A big thank you to all of our teachers: Amanda Wiens, Tammy Driedger, Joanna Ginter, Lisa Hibert-Penner, Sharon Friesen, Byron Loepky, Virginia Gerbrandt Richert and Andrew Richert.

Adult Sunday school will resume on September 29. We will be continuing our study of Luke.

Camp Assiniboia Retreat Canceled. After receiving sparse interest or commitment we have decided to cancel the retreat this year. Worship will be held in our church sanctuary as usual on Sept 29 and we will plan some sort of outdoor family friendly fellowship event that weekend.

Koinonia Ladies will be beginning their coming year on Monday, Sept. 23. Anyone interested in joining, call Joyce Falk at 324.7231.

From the Finance and Maintenance: The elevator technician has replaced a part on the elevator door and everything should be fully operational.

From the Audio-Visual Technicians: The speakers under the balcony are currently not working. Sitting in front of the balcony will offer the best quality sound until the repair is completed.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

The Community Exchange in Altona is hosting its 1st Annual Golf Tournament on Sept 16 at the Oakview Golf Club, with a shotgun start at 4:30 pm. Join us for a fun evening of golf, learning about TCE, and enjoying foods from different cultures. Registration is \$75/person and can be done online at www.tcealtona.ca or by emailing info@tcealtona.ca

Southern MB Choral Society is inviting adults of all ages to come and join us this fall as we sing together in harmony. Practices are Tuesday evenings from 6:30-8:30 pm starting Sept. 10 in the WC Miller music room (*Sept. 10 practice will be at ABC*). Ben Kroeker is the conductor and Loren Hiebert is the pianist. Cost is \$35 and auditioning is not required. Contact Sarah Dueck at 324.7144 for further information.

Eden's Recovery of Hope cycling event and help make counselling services accessible and affordable for Manitobans on Saturday, September 28 at Ft. Garry MB Church, Winnipeg, 1771 Pembina Hwy. Register or donate online at www.edenhealthcare.ca

Alicia Buhler, M.Div. is a spiritual care provider located in Morden, MB. Beginning this fall, she has availability to meet both online and in-person with those interested in spiritual direction, an awareness-based and spiritually integrated approach to inner growth and wholeness. More information may be found at aliciabuhler.com.

We request that everyone refrain from taking pictures during the inside and outside portion of our service.

Our time together is a sacred time of worship, not a production. As such we invite everyone to focus on God through the words, music, and baptisms. Taking pictures is a distraction for all of us. We have designated one person to discretely take photos during the service and we will make them available. There will also be plenty of time for pictures after the service.

There will be a video recording of the whole service.

Instructions for the Baptisms:

During our worship time, we will be moving from the sanctuary to the lawn. We invite people to gather around the pool in this way:

- Children and their parents on the blankets near the pool.
- Those who find it difficult to stand may sit on the chairs.
- Others can stand around the pool in all directions.

We invite everyone to gather as close to the pool as possible. There will be no microphone used so the closer you are the easier it will be to hear. After the service is finished there will be a time to visit while final preparations are made for the meal.

Congregational Words of Commitment:

Abby, Esme, Jacob, Nick, and Shelby: As Christ has received you in baptism,

We receive you into the fellowship of the church.

We pledge

To bear each other's burdens

To assist in times of need

To share our gifts and possessions

To forgive as Christ has forgiven us

To support each other in joy and sorrow

And together to seek first the Kingdom of God.

As you covenant with God, we renew our covenant with God.

May the Holy Spirit make us one body, in service to Christ our Lord.

