

PRAYER AND PRAISE

Our Church family

- Church Council will have a meeting this week, there is much work to attend to. Let us remember to pray for our congregational leaders and deacons as we process and move forward.

- Pray for Dave & Hildie Regehr as they are working in the Ukraine. If you want to see what they are doing, check out their blog at <http://regehrsukraine.blogspot.com/>

Our Community

- MC Manitoba Executive Director – Ken Warkentin

- Pray for Canada General Secretary – Willard Metzger

- Eden Health Care Services is looking for a new CEO as James Friesen has retired. Pray for this search.

Our World

On March 17-18 MCA's Annual Assembly will take place at Trinity Mennonite Church in Calgary. Pray for leaders, delegates, and church participants as they gather to discern, connect, and worship, guided by the theme, "Sharing the Light of Jesus." Several Alberta ministry leaders will offer reflections on this topic, including Donna Entz from the North Edmonton Ministry, Jon Olfert from Camp Valaqua, and Pastor Leng Thang of the Calgary Chin Christian Church. Pray that our time may be inspiring and empowering as we seek to be God's people together.

- *If you would like to add or remove any prayer requests, please contact Dan Kehler or the church office.*

From the Pastor

Lenten Theme: Restore Us, O God

Our world is filled with many distractions and voices that call us away from God—consumerism and materialism, violence and fear, hectic schedules and constant busyness... As Christians, we are not immune to the side effects of living in this environment and can feel overwhelmed and afraid, filled both with doubt and an inner disquiet.

To counter this cultural trance that we sleep walk in we need something to call us to be present with the God who is here with us. Lent becomes one such wakeup call. Lent is a 40-day period in the Christian calendar that provides a chance to step back and create space to experience God's presence with us. It brings opportunities for reflection on the bigger picture. It is a time to repent, to renew our commitment to God's ways, and to empty ourselves of what distracts us from hearing

God's voice. Lent is often referred to as a wilderness, a space where the "business as usual" of this life is challenged and we take time to engage our brokenness.

This year the Lenten Scripture texts highlight stories that call us to change our view, see the world with a different set of eyes and be invited to experience new life. Jesus began his ministry alone in the wilderness, fasting and prayer as he faced temptation. Nicodemus and the Samaritan women at the Jacob's well encounter Jesus and have their lives turned around. The unnamed man who was blind from birth received not only his eyesight but a new way of looking at the world. And those who witnessed Jesus' friend Lazarus coming out of the grave had their lives restored as they put their faith and trust in the one who has power over death. These stories call us into the depths of humanity as we experience our thirst, hunger, breath, sight, temptation. But then through longing and seeking, wondering and hoping, finding and healing, they end with renewed life.

You are invited to enter into this Lenten journey of new life. This is not a journey of perfection, but one where we face both the limits of our humanity and our need for divine transformation. Restore us, O God!

How are you doing with "here" this Lenten Season? The entering word "here" and the subsequent prayer is a good one for Lent. It invites us into God's presence during our journey to the cross of Good Friday and new life Easter morning. It keeps us in the moment so that we don't rush. And finally, it reduces our journey to a moment by moment movement so that we can set aside all that distracts us.

Another prayer that acts in a similar way is based on Psalm 46:10 "Be still, and know that I am God." It is also a prayer that invites us into the moment with God by reduction to one word. It goes like this.

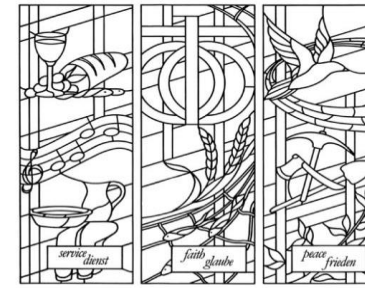
Be still, and know that I am God.

Be still, and know that I am.

Be still, and know.

Be still.

Be.



Altona Mennonite Church

Sunday School – Adults & Children: 9:30 am
Sunday Worship Service: 11:00 am

VOLUME LVI No. 11

March 12, 2017

Restore us O God! We wonder.

Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

Hymn HWB #70 Immortal, invisible, God only wise

Call to Worship

Leader: Mindful that God, the great Mystery, has called us,

All: we gather to worship

Leader: Curious about God's ways in the world.

All: we gather to worship.

Leader: Wondering in the face of uncertainty,

All: We gather to worship.

Leader: Receive our worship and our wonderings, O God, as we seek after you.

OT Scripture: Genesis 12:1-4a; Psalm 121

Hymn HWB #169 I to the hills will lift my eyes

Confession and Words of Assurance

Leader: God of mystery, you call us into the unknown. But we do not always follow willingly.

All: We confess that we do not want to leave behind what is familiar. We prefer looking like those around us.

North: We do not want to change our well-refined beliefs. We prefer to think and believe in the same ways we always have.

Pastor: Dan Kehler

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Wed. & Thur. 9:30 am to noon

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South: We do not want to give up the comfort of our own self-sufficiency. We prefer to stay in control.

Leader: Forgive us, O Lord, when in our best effort to work for you, we fail to move with your Spirit.

All: Stir us deep within. Recover a sense of your holy wonder and make room within us for the mystery of your Spirit.

(Pause for silent confession)

Leader: God of mystery

All: restore us.

Leader: Our help comes from the Lord, Maker of heaven and earth. The Lord will keep you from all harm.

The Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore. Amen.

Offering

Children's Time

NT Scripture: John 3:1-17

Hymn HWB #594 Lord, you sometimes speak

Sermon New Pathways Ray Hamm

Lenten ritual

Hymn STJ #29 You Are All We Have

Prayers of the people

Lord, for your goodness we thank you.

Lord, in your mercy hear our prayer.

Hymn STJ #18 Over my head

Benediction

Postlude

Worship Leader: Lori Hiebert

Song Leader: Lori Hiebert

Accompanist(s): Loren Hiebert

WORSHIP & MEETING EVENTS at AMC

March 13 7:00 pm Education Meeting

March 14 2:00 pm Book Study, ready Chapters 20 & 21

7:00 pm Church Council Meeting

March 17 2:00 pm Worship Meeting

March 19 9:30 am Sunday School

11:00 am Worship Service

Scripture: Exodus 17:1-7; Psalm 95; Romans 5:1-11; John 4:5-42 *Lenten Theme:* Restore us O God! We thirst. *Worship*

Leader: Marilyn Houser Hamm *Song Leader:* Kevin Neufeld

Accompanist(s): Nancy Ratzlaff *Sound:* Greg Heinrichs

Coffee: Henry & Margaret Rempel

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The Rejoice! books for March – May are here. *The cost of each book is \$10. If you regularly use this devotional, consider making a donation to help the Education budget!*

- **Pop up small group – an experiment.** Book Study group is reading *Naked Spirituality: A life with God in 12 simple words* by Brian McLaren. We meet at 2:00 PM at the church. Read Chapters 20 & 21 for Tuesday.

- **AMC Auxiliary Members** - please consider making a designated donation to auxiliary for our MCC Global Family commitment. Thank you.

Birthdays: March 12 – Bryson Loewen; March 15 – Marlene Wiebe; March 17 – Ashlyn Loewen; March 18 – Lauren Martens

COMMUNITY & MISC. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Southern Manitoba Choral Society** presents: **Singing Joyfully, Together.** SMCS has invited First Mennonite Church choir to join us in concerts at Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church on March 18, 7:00 pm and at Winnipeg First Mennonite Church on March 19, 3:00 pm. Everyone is welcome, and a free-will offering will be taken.

- Rosemary Siemens in concert with Ray St. Germain, March 18, 7 pm in Buhler Hall hosted by Mennonite Collegiate Institute. Visit www.mciblues.net to purchase your ticket or call MCI at (204)327-5891.

- **Aboriginal Film Event** - Two short films about tough issues and gritty dreams: When the water goes up behind the Keeyask Dam in northern Manitoba, one family will lose more than any other. In Laird, Saskatchewan, an old land claim sparks new friendships and determination to right past wrongs. March 19, 7:30 pm, Kenmore Theatre in Morden. Q&A to follow. Sponsored by local churches and MCC.

- **Camps with Meaning** registration is now open for all three locations! For details visit www.campswithmeaning.org

- The Camps with Meaning "Raise the Roof" Song-a-thon will be March 18th from 1-9 PM! See poster!

- **Consider volunteering at camp** this summer. Camps with Meaning staff and volunteer applications are now available at www.campswithmeaning.org/summer/camp-staff

- **CMU Open House, Wednesday, March 29:** Be part of a grade 9–12 student 'come and go' Open House to explore programs and opportunities at CMU. Join a campus tour (scheduled every 30 minutes), participate in a class, meet professors and current students, and enjoy free gelato. Parents welcome. Drop in at Marpeck Commons

(library and bookstore commons at 2299 Grant Avenue) anytime between 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM. For more information go to cmu.ca/openhouse or call 204-594-0537.

- **Mennofolk** is an annual expose of fringe Mennonite art and music. This year we invite you hold your fear, stand beside it, or perhaps glare at it from a distance. In this world which gives fear the power to draw boundaries, to validate existence, and to arrest truth, we ask: where does hope meet fear? Shall we resist our very consumption? Bring your family, bring your friends. March 25, 2017, 7:00 pm @ X-cues 551 Sargent Avenue For more information check out the event page - <https://www.facebook.com/events/1565795743438392/>

- On Wednesday, April 5 plan to attend **Spring at CMU** – an evening fundraiser in support of CMU's mission and programs. The CMU PAX Award will be presented to Sarah Thompson, Executive Director of Christian Peacemaker Teams, and we will celebrate the leadership of the Capital Campaign Cabinet in constructing Marpeck Commons. Go to cmu.ca/springatcmu for more information.

- **MCI Celebrates 50 Years of Musicals!** Join us for our Fundraising Gala Concert and Reception, featuring musicals from the past 50 years, on April 8th at 7:30pm in Buhler Hall, Gretna, MB. To reserve a seat for the show, call MCI at [204-327-5891](tel:204-327-5891). Opportunity for donations will be available at the concert.

- **The annual Manitoba MDS Awareness & Fundraising Events** are approaching. See the poster for details. Reserve your complimentary attendance by calling **MDS at 1-866-261-1274.**

- The General Board of Mennonite Church Canada has set the date for a final review of Future Directions proposals to re-organize national and area church bodies. Mennonite Church Canada delegates are invited to a special assembly Oct. 13-15 in Winnipeg, Man. The event will begin with a dinner on Friday and conclude with worship on Sunday. The venue, costs, and other details are pending.

Check the bulletin board for more info on these...

- Newsletters / updates

- xPlore – Keep Thinking – enrichment courses for 55+

- April 2 at 3:30 pm faspa, fellowship and song – Salem fundraiser

- April 9 – "In Harmony for Hope" Concert for Eden Foundation