

PRAYER AND PRAISE

Our Church family

- Pray for Tim Wiebe and family as they heal.
- While Christmas calls us into a time of joy and celebration, for many it becomes a time of gloom and sadness. Let us be mindful of those whose experiences of loss, tragedy and grief are augmented by the holiday festivities. Prayer moves us to action, offering companionship, caring and support in tangible ways.

Our Community

- Pray for MC Manitoba Executive Director – Ken Warkentin and Canada General Secretary – Willard Metzger.
- The Rhineland Empty Socking Fund is a great way to help everyone have joyous Christmas. Please keep this ministry in your prayers. Those living with minimal income is a year round reality. Let our generosity not end after Christmas and include generous giving all year. Our giving is often God's answer to someone else's prayer.

Our World

- Dann and Joji ask for prayer concerning the ongoing violence throughout the Philippines and in particular in Mindanao where President Duterte has imposed martial law. The Pantoja's peace building base of operations is also in Mindanao. Please pray that the Pantojas and their peace building partners will continue to courageously advocate for peace in this period of unrest. Dann and Joji have posted a prayer "For National Peace and Reconciliation in the Philippines" on their website - Waves.ca through which you can join with them in prayer: <http://waves.ca/join-us/pray/>
- Pray for Jason Martin, new Director of International Witness, as he supports Witness workers and congregational partners through the restructuring process. Pray for understanding of the implications of these changes, wisdom in strategic planning for the future and a deep sense of God's leading and care.

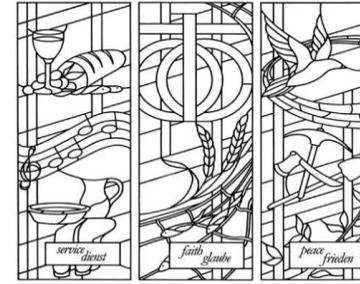
- *If you would like to add or remove any prayer requests, please contact Dan Kehler or the church office.*

From the Pastor: Advent 2017

This year's Advent theme draws us into Mary's prayer in Luke 1:38, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." This is Mary's response to God's amazing plan as told to her by the Angel Gabriel; "And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." (Luke 1:31-33) The plan was for her to carry, and give birth to, the Son of God! Mary responded, "Let it be." Mary is often characterized as a meek and passive, obedient servant. Meekness and obedience do have value, but a close look at the language Luke uses suggests a more active engagement with God's plan. The Greek phrase, "let it be with me . . ." expresses a wish, or a prayer; Mary is giving voice to an active commitment. Mary is expressing a strong desire to be part of God's plan. A more informal way of expressing this would be "Bring it on!" This Advent season we are invited, along with Mary, to make this our prayer to God: "Yes! Let it be!" or, if you prefer, "Bring it on, God!" as each Sunday we explore this prayerful desire to participate in God's reconciling work in the world. "Let it be with me according to your word."

Sunday Morning Mini Retreats

Advent is a season of much preparation. One event follows the other, and between decorating, baking, shopping, and gathering, we hardly find space to wait for the One who came, is always coming, and will come again. In the Adult Education time on the first three Sundays of Advent you are invited to a time of reflection intended to create space for waiting with quiet anticipation. We will enter the Scriptures with silence and prayer to watch for God's coming and to listen with the prophet Isaiah for God's word to us. The Isaiah Scriptures invite us to join the people of the past who have explored our vulnerability in waiting, our openness to receiving the words of God, and our courage to respond like Mary, "Let it be to me according to your word."



Altona Mennonite Church

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

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December 10, 2017

Second Advent – Let it be so

We long to be comforted, we long for change. Moving from uncertainty and fear, we call upon God to make things ready – the mountains leveled, the paths made straight, our hearts prepared.

Welcome

Hymn HWB #176 Comfort, comfort, O my people
Announcements

Call to Worship:

Leader: Awake!

The invitation to carry light comes from the voice who cries out for a smooth way through wild places.

All: O God, your call is uncomfortable.

How can we who are weak remove the rough and rugged places?

(pause for silence)

Leader: Quiet our questioning souls.

All: Lead us into your presence so all can see your way.

Leader: Let it be so.

Prayer of Invocation

Lighting of second Advent candle

Hymn SS #124 My Soul Cries Out

Pastor: Dan Kehler

Office Hours:

Wed. & Thur. 9:30 am to noon

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Altona Mennonite Church is on Treaty One Territory.

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 40:1-11, Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13
Hymn SS #19 Jesus Jesus, oh, what a wonderful child
Children's Story – Nancy Neufeld

Offering
Scripture Reading: Mark 1:1-8

Message From places of exile Dan Kehler
Hymn HWB #181 My soul proclaims with wonder

Confession:
O God of blazing heavens,
You come to us gently and tenderly,
speaking peace and comfort into our fear.
We long for you,
we yearn for your promise of a new heaven and earth.
Yet we confess that though we know how to get busy
and prepare for this season,
We do not know how to slow down or wait
and make space for your presence.
May our ordinary lives intersect with the power of your Word
and the transforming presence of your grace.
Empower us to "let it be so".

(pause for silence)

Words of Assurance

Congregational Prayer
Cong Hymn / Benediction
HWB #172 O Come, O Come, Immanuel

Worship Leader: Ang Enns
Song Leader: Kevin Neufeld
Accompanist(s): Marilyn Houser Hamm

AMC ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Congratulations to Joel and Mikaela Martens on the birth of their daughter, Kira Beth, on Nov. 27! Parents and grandparents Ron and Karen Martens are delighted

An Update from the treasurer:

- We need \$26,000 in the next 4 Sundays to meet our 2017 budget. Thank you for your generous giving.

Birthdays: Dec. 10 – Perry Batchelor; Dec. 11 – Tracy Bergen; Dec. 16 – Elizabeth Falk

Anniversaries:

WORSHIP & MEETING EVENTS at AMC

Dec. 17 9:30 am Sunday School
11:00 am Sunday School Program
Scripture: Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11; Luke 1:46b-55; 1 Thess. 5:16-24; John 1:6-8, 19-28 *Theme:* Let it be whole *Worship Leader:* Andrea Hildebrand, Lorraine Heinrichs *Song Leader:* Marilyn Houser Hamm *Accompanist(s):* Marilyn Houser Hamm *Sound:* Perry Batchelor *Coffee:* John & Norma Thiessen
Dec. 21 7:00 pm Longest Night Service at AMC
Dec. 24 11:00 am Worship service
6:30 pm Christmas Eve Candlelight service
Dec. 25 11:00 am Christmas Day Worship service
Dec. 31 11:00 am Worship Service

COMMUNITY & MISC. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The Rhineland Empty Stocking Fund

- December 16, at 9:00 a.m., Help deliver the Christmas hampers. Parcel pick up at the former Sawatzky Furniture
- Donations can be hand delivered to Rexall Drugs in the Altona Mall, at the Access Credit Union - Gretna, Altona or Plum Coulee locations or simply by mailing the donation to Rhineland Empty Stocking Fund, Box 2255, Altona, MB R0G 0B0

- **December 10** - Come and listen to a delightful mix of music sung by a multigenerational choir. Southern Manitoba Choral Society this afternoon December 10th @2:30 pm at Altona Bergthaler Church. Everyone is welcome. A freewill offering will be received.

- **December 16 & 17** – Faith and Life Male Choir, and Faith and Life Women's Chorus concerts – see bulletin board for times and locations.

- **December 19 - Christmas Open House at the Kehler's.** 7:00-9:30 PM. Come for a time of fellowship and Christmas treats. The puzzle table is set up and Lego will be available for children of all ages.

- **Dec 21, 7pm – "The Longest Night Service"** at the **Altona Mennonite Church.** If you are grieving the death of a family member or friend, separation, or any difficult loss, you are invited to attend. Coffee & refreshments to follow

- **December 21, 7:30 pm** - Mennonite Collegiate Institute invites you to attend the Christmas Concert @ 7:30 in Buhler Hall, Gretna.

- **Christmas Giving** - This Christmas, give a gift that gives twice! Through MCC's Christmas Giving projects, you can bring joy to the people you love and transform lives around the world. Each gift comes with a card that explains the gift you've given. Choose from a variety of gift options that will be meaningful to friends, teachers, co-workers or family! Visit mccmb.ca/christmas today.

- **February 10, 2018** - Recovery of Hope Counselling, together with the Neufeld Institute – Manitoba Chapter, is proud to announce that **Dr Gordon Neufeld, author of "Hold On to Your Kids: Why Parents Need to Matter More Than Peers," is coming to Morden on Saturday, Feb 10, 2018** to deliver a new full-day workshop called **"Keeping Children Safe in a Wounding World."** Parents, educators, youth workers and caregivers will be interested to learn from Dr Neufeld, one of Canada's leading developmental psychologists, as he uncovers the keys to helping children thrive while living in a wounding world. For more information and to purchase tickets, please visit www.edenhealthcare.ca or call [1-866-493-6202](tel:1-866-493-6202).

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

- Newsletters / updates / Concerts
- **Christmas Concerts** – Faith and Life and others

Altona Mennonite Church

Vision

God calls us to be followers of Jesus Christ and by the power of the Holy Spirit to grow as communities of grace, joy and peace so that God's healing and hope flow through us to the world.

Purpose

*We seek to know God through Jesus, the centre of our faith.
We seek to follow God in community, through worship, fellowship, and interpreting the Scripture from a Christ-centred point of view, in the Anabaptist tradition.
We seek to obey God by working toward peace and reconciliation, in the spirit of Jesus, reconciling all people to God, to each other, and to the world around them.*