

## **PRAYER AND PRAISE**

### **Our Church family**

- Pray for Tim Wiebe and family as they heal.

- Condolences to Albert & Marilyn Bergen and family. Marilyn's mother, Annie Braun, passed away this week. The funeral was Thursday.

### **Our Community**

- Pray for MC Manitoba Executive Director – Ken Warkentin and Canada General Secretary – Willard Metzger.

### **Our World**

- May all of our Witness workers who have left their home communities and families (including grandchildren) to share the story of Jesus with others, be embraced by their global families and be truly refreshed and inspired through discovering anew the true meaning of Christmas.

- Mike & Cheryl Nimz (Witness workers - UK) continue to build numerous relationships who have become like family to them. They invite prayers for: their 18 month old godson Kip being treated for leukemia. Kip's parents are also part of Mike and Cheryl's Tuesday night group; as well, Janet from their Cornwall "family" has discovered she has cancer and will begin treatments in the New Year.

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

## **From the Pastor: The Gift of Laughter**

I learned a few things this week.

Do you know what Snowman poop looks like? I found out that it looks very similar to tic-tac's.

Or how a gift of root beer and beans can offer the recipient a Rootin' Tootin' Christmas.

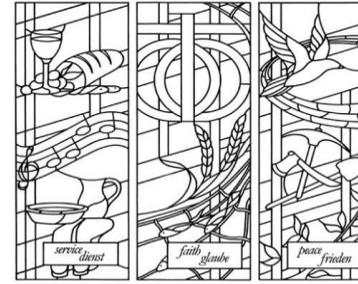
And that you can reverse the Christmas morning disappoint of "batteries not included" by giving a couple of double AA batteries noting the absence of the device.

These were the three "Secret Santa" gifts waiting for me at my office door each morning this week prior to writing this to make the Thursday bulletin deadline. (Lori is always cracking the whip!)

Each gift was received with laughter. And the joy they brought was multiplied as I shared my gift receiving experience with others and laughed again and again.

According to recent studies laughter is a powerful antidote to stress, pain, and conflict. Nothing works faster or more dependably to bring your mind and body back into balance than a good laugh. Humor lightens your burdens, inspires hopes, connects you to others, eases anxiety and tension, and keeps you grounded, focused, and alert. It also helps you to release anger and be more forgiving. (<https://www.helpguide.org/articles/mental-health/laughter-is-the-best-medicine.htm>)

So thank you Secret Santa(s) for giving me the wondrous gift of laughter.



# Altona Mennonite Church

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

VOLUME LVI No. 50

December 24, 2017

## **GATHERING**

Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

### *Call to Worship*

Leader: Yes!

The invitation to carry Light comes to each of us,  
no matter who we are.

**All: O God, you choose to dwell within us.**

**You promise to move about with us  
until we find our rest in you.**

Leader: Your call seems risky:

saying yes takes our breath away.

**All: Yet we know your faithfulness and steadfast love  
endure forever.**

Leader: You are our strength.

**All: Yes! Let it be now.**

Lighting of the Advent Candles

Hymn HWB #186 Fling wide the door

Prayer

## **PRAISING**

Hymn HWB #208 Love came down at Christmas

Hymn HWB #189 To us a Child of hope is born

Offering

Pastor: Dan Kehler

Office Hours:

Wed. & Thur. 9:30 am to noon

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*Altona Mennonite Church is on Treaty One Territory.*

## **HEARING GOD'S WORD**

Children's Story

Scripture: Luke 1:26-38; Luke 1:44b-55;  
Prayer of Illumination

Sermon            To Be Regarded            Dan Kehler

## **RESPONDING**

Hymn    STS #114    God has chosen me  
Confession & Words of Assurance  
Congregational Prayer

## **SENDING**

Benediction  
Hymn    STJ #57    Your will be done

Worship Leader: Andrea Hildebrand  
Song Leader: Kevin Neufeld  
Accompanist(s): Marilyn Houser Hamm

## **AMC ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **- AMC New Year's Eve Party, Dec. 31, 8 :00 pm.**

Are you looking for a good way to end the year? Join us at AMC for an evening of games and food. Bring whatever you like to snack on, to share, and a board game or two, or an idea for a group game. Details will come, but it will probably begin around 8, so you can still enjoy your usual New Year's activity before after this event. We plan to invite the Syrian family to join us, but that won't be the focus.

- An order form for the **Rejoice!** devotional guide has been prepared and is on the lobby table. A year's subscription is \$29. Please attach the cheque to the form and place in the mailbox marked "Rejoice book orders". Please do this by Dec. 31. Thanks.

### **An Update from the treasurer:**

- We need about **\$16,000** before the end of the year to meet our 2017 budget. Please prayerfully consider an extra gift. Thank you.

**Birthdays:** Dec. 25 – Don Enns, Taylor Wiebe; Dec. 26 – Mick Mierau-Friesen; Dec. 27 – Elfie Krahn; Dec. 28 – Edna Zacharias

### **Anniversaries:**

## **WORSHIP & MEETING EVENTS at AMC**

### **TONIGHT    6:30 pm Candlelight service**

Dec. 25    11:00 am Christmas Day Worship service

Dec. 31    11:00 am Worship Service

*Scripture: Theme:* Singing and Sharing *Worship Leader:* Lori Hiebert *Song Leader:* Lori Hiebert *Accompanist(s):* Loren Hiebert *Sound:* Henry Rempel *Coffee:* Rudy & Elfie Krahn

### **8:00 pm AMC New Year's Eve Party**

Jan. 7, 2018    9:30 am Sunday School

11:00 am Worship Service

Food Bank Collection, Coins for SS project

Jan. 9    7:00 pm Church Leadership Council Meeting

## **COMMUNITY & MISC. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- **January 4, 2018, 2 – 7 pm**, Blood donor clinic (Canadian Blood Services) will be held at the Rhineland Pioneer Center

- **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](http://www.edenhealthcare.ca) or call [1-866-493-6202](tel:1-866-493-6202).

- **NAITS** is an Indigenous Learning Community that hosts annual theological gatherings intended for young and older, pastors and activists. Mennonite Church Canada's Indigenous-Settler Relations would like to help sponsor a group of women and men from across our nationwide church to attend this year's symposium on "White Supremacy and Indigeneity," June 7-9, 2018 @ Acadia Divinity College (Nova Scotia). *Sponsorships will help cover the cost of registration and food.* If you are interested, please email Steve Heinrichs for details ([sheinrichs@mennonitechurch.ca](mailto:sheinrichs@mennonitechurch.ca)).

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

- Newsletters / updates
- Exhibitions

## **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.*