

OMC Calendar

December 2016

Sunday	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Each Sunday: Worship:10am SundaySchool @ 11:15am				1	2	3 Intergenerational Christmas Party 7:00 pm
4 Patty Friesen Preaching.	5	6	7	8 Osler School choir - Carol program 9:45 am	9	10
11 Patty Friesen preaching.	12	13	14	15	16	17
18 Children's Christmas Pageant & Adult choir 10:00 am	19	20	21	22	23	24 Candle- Lighting Service 7:00 pm
25 NO SERVICE	26	27	28	29	30	31

The Osler Mennonite Church DECEMBER 2016 Newsletter

Osler Mennonite Church
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<http://omchurch.org>
 Volume XII Tenth Edition

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A WELCOMING CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY FOR PEACE



Upcoming Worship Services at OMC

- Dec 4 "A new tribe" - Patty Friesen
- Dec 11 "Joseph dreams" - Patty Friesen
- Dec 18 Christmas program with Children's pageant & Adult Choir. Christmas snacks & coffee to follow.
- Dec 24 Christmas Eve candlelight service 7:00 p.m.
- Dec 25 No service
- Jan 1, 2017 Communion service "New Beginnings"- Patty Friesen

"TODAY IN THE TOWN OF DAVID A SAVIOR HAS BEEN BORN TO YOU; HE IS CHRIST THE LORD."

LUKE 2:11

Note: Meetings and church activities can also be found on the Events Calendar on the church website. www.omchurch.org

Patty's Ponderings:

Waiting for light during these dark days of Advent and post US elections, I take comfort in my morning walks along the South Saskatchewan River. I'm reminded in creation, that presidents and dark days come and go but the river continues to flow and feed fish, birds and people along it's shores. God's care for us is timeless.

Things looked bleak in first century Palestine as well with the crush of the Roman Empire and hopelessness. Into the hopelessness, a fragile, thin line of hope was born. It was nearly snuffed out several times but grew into adulthood. It was the anti-thesis of domination and power. In ridiculous vulnerability and weakness, it promised salvation. We remind ourselves through song and story every Advent of this hope in Christ.

Terri Lynn and I worked hard to prepare Old Testament lessons for Osler School that we'd like to introduce to the church through a winter/spring walk through Genesis and Exodus. These are timeless and sometimes crazy stories of God's care from the beginning of the world. Parallel to worship themes, **I'd like to lead a weekly Wednesday Bible Study at 10:30 a.m.** on Genesis and Exodus. Even if I'm the only one there, I'll be working on sermons! God be with us once again through these weeks of Advent and Christmas.

Patty's Picks

Fastball DVD is a fascinating documentary of the evolution of the fastball.

Midsomer Murder 17 DVD is another great British detective series.

The Hunt BBC DVD follows the great BBC Planet Earth series.

Durrells in Corfu BBC DVD is another great British drama series with endearing characters.

Ravens in Winter by Bernd Heinrich is a 25th anniversary reprint of the class for bird lovers.

Just Mercy by Bryan Stevenson was voted most important book of the year by Christian Century.

Tribe by Sebastian Junger was one of my most valuable reads of 2016.

Sweet Chord by Geraldine Brooks is an intriguing bible fiction through the prophet Nathan.

Terri Lynn's Takes: (Our pastor of Faith and Community)

Our 'Advent of Consumption' Mega Menno event:

Saying yes and saying no in the upside-down Kingdom of God.

"Who is writing your Christmas story?" was the challenge offered to over 20 youth from MC Sask area churches as they met for a monthly Mega Menno event at Osler Mennonite Church. The 'Advent of Consumption' event, planned in partnership with MCC SK, invited youth to critically consider how advertising affects our values, wants and needs.

Much of the night was spent in discussion and activities: guiding students through creating a values tree, examining commercials about their subversive messaging and how they use our values to market their products, and talking through how we prioritize and live out our values.

Advent can be a season when advertising and social media messaging often go against the values of the Kingdom of God. Youth made advent calendars to celebrate and be reminded of their values. The last words of the evening were an encouragement that saying no to something usually means saying yes to other things: by saying no to using less renewable resources, we are saying yes to caring for creation; by saying no to wasting our time on social media, we are saying yes to having time for friends, for family, for church. By learning to see through the messaging of the social media of our day, we can turn our eyes and ears and hearts to seeking out the upside-down values of the Kingdom of God.

HUMOR

"No Grandma, hashtags are not something you order with eggs."

YOUTH EVENTS

December 3: 10am-2pm - Youth doing childcare @ OMC for families with young children

December 3: 7-9pm - Christmas Party (all ages) at OMC

Dec 23: Youth Christmas Party at Terri Lynn's

January 27-29: Sr. High Retreat

** Stay tuned for Youth/Mentor Events in the New Year! **

Poem by John Gascho:

There are two journeys the seed embarks on. One is the journey into darkness, the other is the push for what is true. Truth is only evident as a result of what is found inside the mystery. The roots penetrate the soil mining for wisdom and living water. The stem pushes for the light. As it cracks through the crust of the earth, all is revealed, all is exposed. The exposure to light only encourages the roots to go further into the unknown.

We are on one journey, and our journey encompasses both everything and nothing. We must not be distracted by the extremes, for this will lead us to poverty. Instead search for both, and everything in between!!

OMC ANNOUNCEMENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

***Adult choir practice continues on Sundays at 9:00 am.** to prepare special music for Advent and also sing during our Sunday School Christmas pageant during morning worship on Sunday, December 18th.

***Gingerbread houses! Do you love to construct them? Look at them? Eat them?**

We will be having a *Gingerbread House Silent Auction* for the Refugee Sponsorship Fund starting Saturday, Dec 3rd, at our OMC Intergenerational Christmas Party, and closing after church on Sunday December 4th. You are invited to donate a house, or bid on those that the Sr. Youth and others will be constructing.

*The church office will be closed December 28th and 30th but will be open on December 31st in the morning.

***Old Testament Bible Study for all ages and genders** starting Wednesday Jan. 4 - Wednesday April 5, 10:30-11:30 a.m. following the scripture themes in worship.

*We will have **Communion** during worship on New Year's Day. There will be no Sunday School on January 1st.

***Christmas with A Buncha Guys**

Special guest Aaron Bueckert - trumpet

Sun. Dec. 11 7:30 pm at Mayfair United Church, Saskatoon

Sat. Dec. 17 7:30 pm at Shekinah Retreat Centre. Doors open 6:45 pm. Tickets (\$5.00) are available at McNally Robinson Book Sellers in Saskatoon, from Russ Regier (306-249-3650), any of the Guys, **or at the door. An offering will be taken to support Shekinah Retreat Centre.**

Lectionary passages for the next 4 weeks

December 4, 2016 – Advent 2

Prepare the way

Isaiah 11:1-10

Psalms 72:1-7, 18-19

Romans 15:4-13

Matthew 3:1-12

December 11, 2016 – Advent 3

Take heart

Isaiah 35:1-10

Psalms 146:5-10 or Luke 1:46b-55

James 5:7-10

Matthew 11:2-11

December 18, 2016 – Advent 4

Restore us

Isaiah 7:10-16

Psalms 80:1-7, 17-19

Romans 1:1-7

Matthew 1:18-25

December 25, 2016 – Christmas

Glory to God

Isaiah 9:2-7

Psalms 96

Titus 2:11-14

Luke 2:1-14, (15-20)

or

Isaiah 62:6-12

Psalms 97

Titus 3:4-7

Luke 2:(1-7), 8-20

or

Isaiah 52:7-10

Psalms 98

Hebrews 1:1-4, (5-12)

John 1:1-14

A poem by Mennonite poet, Jean Janzen on visiting St. Basil's, Moscow:

ST. BASIL'S CATHEDRAL

These nine domes
are wrapped chocolates,
rings, a striped silk shirt,

an amaryllis bud bulging
into the world, all crammed
over thick walls, its base

entwined with painted vines
and roses. Narrow passageways
lead to intimate chapels

lined with kissed icons,
each room a lacquered box,
a treasury of earth's colors

open and offered:
the robes of velvet hills,
limestone hands uncovering

the heart, golden ash leaves
flung up into wings.
And above it all,

the ceiling rises
to a dizzying swirl of mosaic
blues. Such light,

it ignites everything--cheeks of the saints,
the slope of their shoulders,
Marys eyes, black as coal.

❁ **Pieces of Peace** ❁

Isaiah 9:6 " For to us a child is born, to us a son is given....And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, **Prince of Peace.** "

OMC CALENDAR

Dec 3 Intergenerational Christmas party, 7:00 pm
Dec 8 Osler School Choir program, 9:45 am
Dec 18 10:00 a.m. Christmas Program with Children's Pageant and Adult Choir. Christmas Coffee to follow.
Dec 24 Christmas Eve candlelight service, 7:00 pm
Dec 25 No service here.
Jan 1, 2017 Communion service 10:00 am. No Sunday School.

***MCC Relief Sale Food Booths Coordinator:** The MCC Relief Sale Committee is looking for an individual or couple who would be interested in coordinating the food booths at the annual Relief Sale. If you are interested please contact Bob Neufeldt at 306.381.4523.

Our Statement of Purpose

The purpose of Osler Mennonite Church is to be a supportive community in which people can meet God through worship and fellowship.

We seek to teach an Anabaptist understanding of scripture, led by the Spirit to imitate Christ in word and deed. We strive to nurture faith and discipleship, committing ourselves individually and corporately to respond to the needs of others.

Family and Friends
CHRISTMAS PARTY
at Osler Mennonite Church
DECEMBER 3rd * 7PM
Hot Chocolate * Games * Music * Cider
Bring your friends and your favourite Christmas treat to share!
Make and bring a Gingerbread house to add to the silent auction!
Proceeds going to the Refugee Fund

CAPSULE SERMON:

THE "W" IN CHRISTMAS

Last December, I vowed to make Christmas a calm and peaceful experience. I had cut back on nonessential obligations - extensive card writing, endless baking, decorating, and even overspending. Yet still, I found myself exhausted, unable to appreciate the precious family moments, and of course, the true meaning of Christmas.

My son, Nicholas, was in kindergarten that year. It was an exciting season for a six year old. For weeks, he'd been memorizing songs for his school's "Winter Pageant." I didn't have the heart to tell him I'd be working the night of the production. Unwilling to miss his shining moment, I spoke with his teacher. She assured me there'd be a dress rehearsal the morning of the presentation. All parents unable to attend that evening were welcome to come then. Fortunately, Nicholas seemed happy with the compromise.

So, the morning of the dress rehearsal, I filed in ten minutes early, found a spot on the cafeteria floor and sat down. Around the room, I saw several other parents quietly scampering to their seats. As I waited, students were led into the room. Each class, accompanied by their teacher, sat cross-legged on the floor. Then, each group, one by one, rose to perform their song. Because the public school system had long stopped referring to the holiday as "Christmas," I didn't expect anything other than fun, commercial entertainment - songs of reindeer, Santa Claus, snowflakes and good cheer.

So, when my son's class rose to sing, "Christmas Love," I was slightly taken aback by its bold title. Nicholas was aglow, as were all of his classmates, adorned in fuzzy mittens, red sweaters, and bright snowcaps upon their heads. Those in the front row- center stage - held up large letters, one by one, to spell out the title of the song. As the class would sing "C is for Christmas," a child would hold up the letter C. Then, "H is for Happy," and on and on, until each child holding up his portion had presented the complete message, "Christmas Love."

The performance was going smoothly, until suddenly, we noticed her; a small, quiet, girl in the front row holding the letter "M" upside down - totally unaware her letter "M" appeared as a "W". The audience of 1st through 6th graders snickered at this little one's mistake. But she had no idea they were laughing at her, so she stood tall, proudly holding her "W". Although many teachers tried to shush the children, the laughter continued until the last letter was raised, and we all saw it together. A hush came over the audience and eyes began to widen. In that instant, we understood the reason we were there, why we celebrated the holiday in the first place, why even in the chaos, there was a purpose for our festivities. For when the last letter was held high, the message read loud and clear:

"CHRISTWASLOVE"

And, I believe, He still is.

Author unknown

