

Fourth Advent

Darkness to Light

How Will We Know ...
Why me? Why *not* me?



Grace Mennonite Church
December 24, 2023

Vol. 62 No 52

Order of Service

Welcome, Life of the Congregation & Land Acknowledgement

Infant Holy, Infant Lowly VT #243

[Luke 1:26-38](#) – Mabel Allan, Ella Rogalsky

Call to Worship

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming VT #216

Prayer

A Northern Nativity Begins

The Holy Family Among The Inuit

O Come, All Ye Faithful VT #241

The Holy Family On The Prairies

The Holy Family Among The First Nations

Huron Christmas Carol – Zoe Chantziantoniou

The Holy Family Among The First Nations

Special Music – Our Hope is in This Child

(Choral Voices)

The Holy Family At The Falls

The Holy Family In Winnipeg

A Northern Nativity Ends

Special Music – Potter and Clay

(Loretta Friesen & Kristy Rempel)

Prayer & Offertory

Joy to the World VT #240

Benediction



Sunday December 24th, 2023

9:00 am - Sisters of Grace – all women are invited to a time of reading, sharing and prayer together.

10:00 am – Worship Service

Livestream will be available between 10-11 am.

Audio recording can be accessed on the church website after the service.

There will be no Children's Church today.

Regular classes will resume on January 14th, 2024.

Please assist your little ones to access the games and coloring supplies on the table at the back of the sanctuary.

All are welcome to stay for coffee.

Worship Leader	John Mahi
Ushers	Ken Fehr, Marigold Peters
Musicians	Ron Dick, Emmy Friesen, Jen Rogalsky Gerry Sapinsky, Annalee Schellenberg
Story Readers	Myelle, Paxton, Tasha, & Zander Wiebe
Coffee Servers	Sherril Reimer, Wes Reimer
Technicians	Lloyd Funk, Curtis Kulpa

We Pray Together

We pray for those in our community who use the resources that help with their lives on a daily basis: **Agape House, Soup's On, Southeast Helping Hands, Today House, Steinbach Community Outreach** and **Steinbach Family Resource Centre**.

Laurie Wiens began cancer treatments 2 weeks ago. Pray for her, Arthur and their family.

Prayer for the week: Lord, we pray that our Christmas worship and celebrations will be meaningful in some important ways.

Prayer for the world: Lord, we pray for the people of Gaza and Israel who are experiencing a Christmas of fear and violence.

The church has booked the ENTIRE POOL for swimming on Saturday, Jan 13th, 6pm-7:30pm. If you would like to join in the fun, cost is \$10/person.

RSVP with nina@gracesteinbach.ca by January 3rd, 2024.



This Week at Grace ❖ Dec 25th - 29th

Monday	Christmas Day Worship Service – 10 am
Tuesday	Soup's On - Dine in lower auditorium, 5-6:15 pm
Friday	Soup's On - Dine in lower auditorium, 5-6:15 pm

With Mel's retirement Dec 31, and Kathy Koop's interim ministry starting Jan 1, our church will be going through a time of transition. As church council, we would like to intentionally use this time to engage the entire church in discussion about the future of Grace Mennonite church, including our own sense of God & spirituality, our church's priorities, pastoral job descriptions, our strengths and growth areas, and the structures that support the work we do. As such, we are working with Credence and Co. to design a process to help us to discern who we think God is calling us to be here at Grace. We're anticipating this work starting shortly after our AGM on Jan 28, 2024. When we are finished the process, we are expecting it to lead us into forming a search committee for our new pastor. We will have more info later in January, and will keep you updated as best we can. If you have any questions, please feel free to be in touch with Church Council.



Kyle Penner will be on vacation until January 7, 2024.

The church office will be closed December 25th, 26th and 27th.



Giving to Grace Mennonite Church

To support Grace, point your smartphone camera at this QR code or visit: gracesteinbach.ca/donation/

Pastor	Mel Letkeman	mel@gracesteinbach.ca
Pastor	Kyle Penner	kyle@gracesteinbach.ca
Grace Office		office@gracesteinbach.ca
Admin Assistant	Nina Pauls	nina@gracesteinbach.ca

Office Hours: Tuesday – Friday 9:00 am – 1:00 pm

www.gracesteinbach.ca

A Northern Nativity by William Kurelek



Artist William Kurelek grew up on the prairies during the 1930's. He spent the first years of his life on a farm in AB where his father had settled after coming from Ukraine. They later moved to Stonewall. As a young man he traveled to England where he struggled with clinical depression and emotional problems. While there he found faith and the strength to recover. A Northern Nativity contains his paintings and the story enlarges on his belief in the universality of the Christmas message.

December 24th - "News of Great Joy!" tonight @ 6:30 pm

This evening is an evening of experiencing the beauty of the Good News of Great Joy through song and reading. The songs will guide us through the emotion and depth of the story and our reading will inspire us to hear the news that is for all. In the spirit of reconciliation with our Indigenous neighbours, we recognize that tonight we worship on Treaty 1 territory, a land that has been stewarded long before us and with whom we seek to live in harmony. In concert with this spirit of reconciliation, tonight we are invited to hear the familiar words of the Christmas story paired together with an Indigenous translation. As we hear the familiar side-by-side with The First Nations Version our understanding of the story may be expanded by hearing descriptive names of people and places. Together the familiar and unfamiliar welcome us into a renewed expression of the NEWS of GREAT JOY!

Offertory this evening will be going to MCC and the relief work they are doing with Canadian Foodgrains Bank in Gaza.

December 25th – Christmas Morning Worship @ 10 am

Please bring any extra Christmas baking to share with one another, after the service.



Save the Date!

Sunday January 14, 2024 we will be officially celebrating Kathy Koop's Installation Service here at Grace.

Please come and join us to officially welcome her here!



Advent Giving Project:

In this season Advent, we want to remember those in our community who face difficult circumstances and are unable to provide healthy nourishing lunches for their children in school.

The school lunch program being run by Soups On, here at Grace, is experiencing increasing demands for school lunches. For the next 4 Sundays of Advent, we ask you to bring one or more of the items on the list of School Lunch Program needs.

As the children come forward for their time with the puppets, they will be coming to us in our seats to collect the items that we bring to help build a mountain of supplies needed for the school lunches.

School Lunch Program Needs:

- ◆ Fruit to go
- ◆ Cookies – Dad's (individually wrapped)
- ◆ Rice Krispies treats (individually wrapped)
- ◆ Fruit sauces - mostly apple
- ◆ NUT FREE Granola bars- regular with chocolate chips (not chocolate covered)
- ◆ Gummies- Welch's or Sunkist- individual packages
- ◆ Pudding- snack packs in either chocolate or vanilla
- ◆ Fish crackers - in boxes
- ◆ Fruit cups- peaches
- ◆ Spoons- plastic- teaspoons
- ◆ Miracle Whip – 500 gram
- ◆ Peanut butter - Kraft 500 gram
- ◆ Jam - strawberry - 500 ml