



Waterford Mennonite Church | September 23, 2018

# buzz

## BBI Visit: What's Happening and How You Can Help

Guests from Benin Bible Institute (BBI Board Chair Germain Dossou, BBI Administrator Bonaventure Akowanou, and Bonaventure's wife Clarisse) will be arriving in Goshen on September 24, and staying until October 9, when they will travel to Canada to visit St. Jacob's Mennonite Church.

### What's Happening

Wednesday, September 26

- 6:30 p.m. Gather at WMC front entrance to welcome our guests
- 7:00 p.m. Hear about our guests' faith journeys

Sunday, September 30

- Come to WMC to hear Bonaventure and Clarisse Akowanou preach

Fall Mission Sunday,  
October 7

- Come to WMC to hear Germain Dossou preach
- Hear a BBI News Report during the Nurture Hour
- Join with us for a Fellowship meal after services

Monday, October 8

- 7:00 p.m. Farewell/Send Off – bring fruit or snacks

### How You Can Help

- Volunteer to take our guests to an activity/location that you would like them to experience
- Volunteer to provide a day of transportation for our guests
- Invite them to your home for a meal
- Volunteer to translate at various events between French and English

To sign up for meals, go online at the link available on Life Beyond Waterford, or contact Denise Diener at [denisediener@yahoo.com](mailto:denisediener@yahoo.com). To volunteer your help, contact Rod Hollinger-Janzen at [rod@aimmintl.org](mailto:rod@aimmintl.org) or call/text 574-612-6091.



Benin Bible Institute students take notes during a teaching session.

## Boring Bible Passages

I love boring Bible passages.

By boring, I mean those sections where a person can't help but ask, "Why did this get included in the Bible?" The best thing to do when you come across these passages is to stop and think – why indeed did this get included? After all, there's probably a reason.

A passage I've been musing on recently is Exodus 25-28. Moses has returned from the mountain, and God gives him instructions for building the tabernacle and preparing the priestly vestments. It's like three chapters of reading blueprints, followed by a chapter of sewing patterns!

Then there's Exodus 36:8-39:30, which is essentially a play-by-play of actually constructing the tabernacle and sewing the vestments. Boring stuff indeed.

And in between, there's some other boring stuff – things like instructions for the ordination of priests and how to make the altar. Yawn, yawn, zzzzzz!

But buried in there is an incredibly exciting passage, one that gives me chills each time I read it. In Exodus 35:21, it says that the people came, "Everyone whose heart was stirred, and everyone whose spirit was willing, and brought the Lord's offering to be used for the tent of meeting, and for all its service, and for the sacred vestments." The next several verses describe what they brought: precious metals, colored yarn and linen, the proper wood, gems, and oil and spices.

In Exodus 36, the people kept bringing offerings every morning, to the point that the skilled artisans went to Moses and said, "Tell the people to stop! They are bringing too much stuff!" So "Moses gave command, and word was proclaimed throughout the camp: 'No man or woman is to make anything else as an offering for the sanctuary.' So the people were restrained from bringing; 7 for what they had already brought was more than enough to do all the work." (Ex. 36:6-7.) They were so abundantly thankful for the way that God had cared for them in the wilderness, that they couldn't stop giving! I think that telling the story of their gratefulness, with that level of detail, speaks to the unending gratitude the people had.

Wow. Wouldn't it be incredible if, in churches throughout the world on a Sunday morning, people today brought so much that Facilities and Finance Ministry Teams

would be telling their congregations, "Stop. We can't handle your generosity! We have received more than enough."

As we continue to prepare for our upcoming "faithraising" project, that's the kind of joyful, boring, awesome story I'd love to be a part of.

–Lyle Miller, Welcoming Spaces 3.0 coordinator

## God Loves Maria

My attention was drawn to a woman who was sitting alone, silently weeping. I was a host for the visiting hours at a funeral home where many came to mourn the untimely death of a middle-aged man who was dearly loved.

Maria was sitting on a chair in the hallway far removed from where her cousin lay in a closed casket. God drew my attention to her as I saw persons stop occasionally to console her. When she was alone God said, "Go."

When I began talking with her, God said, "Get down to her level." So I knelt on my knee and I listened. She responded, "I grew up without a father, but this man was like a father to me. Now he is gone and this is too overwhelming for me." In my 23 years as a host, I have never openly prayed for someone, but God said, "Pray for her." As I did, God instructed me to pray for sustenance/strength for her to endure the hard realities rather than for deliverance from them.

In the Hispanic culture, they mourn differently than we do, but we need to respect that and to empathize with them as Jesus does. Near the end of the time for visitation I asked her if she wanted to go say her goodbye, too. But she said, "Not yet, there are too many people in there."

Later I reported to her there were only several left. She said, "I am ready, will you go with me?" I accompanied her to the closed casket, then waited as she leaned on the casket and sobbed.

She turned to me and said, "I'm ready to go now." We returned to the others out in the hall and she thanked me. I placed my hands on her shoulders and said, "Jesus is with you and feels your pain."

Who is God? What is He like? I have seen Him answer prayers (sometimes "miraculously"). Sometimes

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I see Him in a more rational way, but on that day, I experienced what seemed to be from the heart of God. It is only in looking back that I saw that it was God who directed my attention, my thoughts, my prayers, my comments and put love/compassion in my heart for Maria's sake.

Jesus showed me what the heart of God is like, and yes, God loves Maria!

—Don Miller

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## What Do Mennonites Believe?

If you like to answer that question, then consider joining Gordon Bontrager, Len Harms, Don Miller, Jeff Miller, and Kevin Miller of our congregation as volunteer tour guides at Menno Hof. Each year tens of thousands of visitors from around the world come to this Amish/Mennonite information center in Shipshewana, eager to ask questions and learn about the lifestyle and beliefs of Amish and Mennonites. In fact, just this month (September 2018) Menno Hof hosted its one millionth visitor since opening in 1987. However, due to an aging volunteer pool, more local volunteers are needed to interact with these visitors as they tour Menno Hof and learn about who we are as a people of faith.

“At first I was apprehensive sharing about my faith,” says Kevin, “but I found it is not only fairly easy, but enjoyable, when I know people are interested. While our primary purpose is to help visitors understand Anabaptist groups, we also hope they will be challenged in their own faith journey, whatever that may be. This summer, one guest who was raised Methodist and teaches at a Catholic school, thanked me at the end of the tour and said, ‘I think I'm Mennonite—I have the same beliefs.’”

While volunteers may never see most visitors again, sometimes old friends stop by or new connections are made. Gordon, who enjoys finding out where visitors are from, tells about one woman and her friend who resonated with the Anabaptist story: “As the tour continued, she mentioned that she had just retired from carrying mail in Goshen. Asking her where her route was, led us to discover that she had been our mail carrier! I could honestly tell her that we always appreciated her kindness in delivering packages down our long lane without complaining. She was yet another example

## Thank You

The following note was received in June from J Daryl Byler, Executive Director of the Center for Justice & Peacebuilding at Eastern Mennonite University.

*Thank you for your generous contribution to the MJ Sharp Peace and Justice Endowed Scholarship at CJP. Contributions have already exceeded \$50,000. What better way to honor MJ's life and legacy than to make it possible for other peacebuilders to follow in his path?*

of a person in our lives who genuinely appreciates the Anabaptist-Mennonite witness without our ever really knowing it.”

Serving at Menno Hof does come with personal benefits too. Len Harms and Don Miller value having developed a much deeper appreciation for and knowledge of their own Anabaptist heritage. Jeff Miller agrees, “I have enjoyed learning more about the early Anabaptist beginnings and it has strengthened my faith to learn more about what these brothers and sisters went through in living out their faith.”

If you would like to explore being a volunteer, talk to one of these volunteers from Waterford—and perhaps consider shadowing one of them for part of a day to see if it is something you may enjoy doing too. The early history parts are audiovisual presentations and helpful cue cards of notes for talking points make it easy to lead groups through the facility. And you don't need to be retired—one volunteer is in high school—as volunteers are needed on Saturdays and holidays, as well as during the week.



Left to right: Gordon Bontrager, Len Harms, Kevin Miller, Don Miller, Jeff Miller

## Welcoming Back Pastor Cindy, Church Picnic Potluck, September 15-16, 2018

## Thank You

Thank you for the contribution of \$300 toward our “sanitary” bedbug issue—one of the “costs” of hospitality at times. We also have appreciated our joint connection through Mariah. She and Nick are great hosts at the Hope House.

–Kay Bontrager-Singer,  
on behalf of Faith Mennonite



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#### Staff Team

##### Administrative Ministry

- Karen Hostetler  
*Secretary*
- Elvina Schmidt  
*Bookkeeper*
- Janet Shoemaker  
*Coordinator of  
Administrative Ministries*
- Mel Claassen  
*Business Manager*

##### Facilities Ministry

- Jan Oostland  
*Facilities Manager*
- Courtney Shetler  
*Custodian*
- Irma Perez  
*Custodian*

##### Pastoral Ministry

- Neil Amstutz  
*Pastoral Team Leader*
- Katie Misz  
*Pastor of Family Life*
- Velma Swartz  
*Pastor of Senior Ministries*
- Cindy Voth  
*Pastor of Community Life*

The *Waterford Buzz* is normally published weekly for members of Waterford Mennonite Church. Items for inclusion should be given to the editor by 5 p.m. Monday preceding publication.

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Cindy and Luke Voth and family are welcomed back in the Sunday morning service.



Lacy Stoltzfus, JE Misz and Susanna Stutzman get ready to knock Hannah Claassen, Layna Stoltzfus and Daphcar Lehman off of the bouncy obstacle course.



Loanne Harms, Darlene Miller, Sandy Kauffman, Sharon and Tim Burkholder and Len Harms socialize on the lawn.