



# buzz

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## Talking 'Bout Our Generosity

In the 1960s, an English rock band sang of “talking 'bout my generation.” But over the past weeks, I’ve listened to Waterford people “talking 'bout our generosity.”

Since September, I’ve had the chance to sit down with many households, ranging in age from their 30s to their 90s. Sometimes I’ve been joined by pastor Neil or Facilities Manager Jan Oostland.

We’ve had opportunity to say “thank you” for their congregational involvement, to hear their stories of generosity, and to invite feedback to our Welcoming Spaces 3.0 project. If you would like to have a similar conversation, please contact one of us.

I especially enjoyed hearing about the source of their generosity, where they learned to share, and what they were thankful for about Waterford. I heard several common themes:

- **Nearly all learned their generosity from their parents**, either through direct instruction or through significant modeling. A meaningful story for me was hearing of a father who wrote out a check for the congregation at the beginning of each week, leaving it on the counter until Sunday as a visible reminder to be generous. Another described his father working until age 70, at least in part because of a desire to continue being generous.
- For nearly all, **giving is a spiritual practice**. One person made an analogy about exercise and sports. He sees regular tithing like the regular exercise that keeps him healthy, whereas giving beyond that level is like playing a game for fun and enjoyment. “You could even say that playing Frisbee football without having a healthy habit of exercise can lead to soreness

and pain,” he added, highlighting the need to first make a commitment to regular giving.

- Many named **being part of Waterford’s welcoming community** of faith as something for which they are especially thankful. In many cases, this was named in their particular Sunday school class, but it often went beyond the nurture setting to other relationships.
- Seeing ourselves as **a strong Anabaptist congregation** with a focus on peace and justice, discipleship, support for Mennonite institutions, and involvement in both the local and broader community was important. “It’s a congregation that wants to make a difference,” said one person.
- The long-time strength of **children’s and youth ministry** was mentioned frequently. Staff, Sunday school teachers, and sponsors were all important, but equally so was the many other adults who nurture students through hallway and other conversations. One person even said that her primary regret about coming to Waterford is that their family didn’t do it soon enough to fully participate in children’s and youth faith formation.
- Great **appreciation was named for staff** over the years, including Waterford’s particular gift of having women in leadership for several decades.

As we approach a holiday focused on gratefulness, I invite you to consider the question, “What are you most thankful to God for at Waterford Mennonite Church?”

–Lyle Miller, Welcoming Spaces 3.0 coordinator



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**Prairie View Needs**

There are currently needs at Prairie View Elementary School for the following items: For girls, size 8-10 new underwear and used long pants; For boys, size 10-12 new underwear and used long pants. For long pants the school prefers sweatpants to jeans as they fit better for differing body shapes. Also, if you are someone who clips “Box Tops for Education” but you don’t know where to take them, Prairie View collects these and could use as many as you can collect. And, of course, boxes of facial tissues are always needed.

For all donations to Prairie View use the plastic tubs by the office or north door coat racks. Other used clothing should be taken to the depot as Prairie View cannot use them: no coats, hats, mittens, scarves, shirts, blouses, etc. Thanks for your interest in helping the school.

**Lighting Candles in Remembrance**

During the November 11 worship service, Velma Swartz and Neil Amstutz lit candles in a ceremony of remembrance of those Waterford members who died within the last year.



**October 31 Eat Pray Hope Event**

Participants in the Eat Pray Hope meeting on October 31 trekked through the wetlands, stopping at the prayer stations to pray for the migrants coming through Mexico from Central America. Then they shared an outdoor meal with “caravan food” in solidarity with the migrants.

