



buzz

You Can't Keep a Good Meme Down: Holy Humor Sunday

For the third year now, Waterford Mennonite Church will observe Holy Humor Sunday, having thus somehow survived the attempts of a pastor and a few wisecrackers to corrupt the solemnity of a Sunday morning.

This year our Holy Humor Sunday at Waterford will be on April 28, following a tradition that many churches mark on the first Sunday after Easter, when God played the greatest joke ever on Satan. This will be a Sunday to celebrate the healing power of laughter amidst our new life in Jesus Christ. We anticipate still encountering our holy God in worship, but, in recognition of God's sense of humor, we also plan to not take ourselves too seriously.

Here's what you can look forward to:

- We start by inviting everyone to come to church wearing a funny hat or some silly clothes. Leave decorum (and your Sunday best) at home. If you already look funny, you'll be better able to receive "funny."
- Back by popular demand will be the Waterford Clean Joke Contest, with our Top 10 Jokes submitted from the congregation itself, and unveiled to us by Alex Berkey and Ava Chupp of our MYF. (See separate article in this issue.)
- Our preacher will be Mark Daniels, local artist and Waterford member.
- Our worship leaders will be Nick and Amanda Stoltzfus, with songleader JD Smucker also keeping us on our toes.
- We will make the closing hymn especially fun again, but not with kazoos this time. Everyone is invited to bring the musical instrument of their choice to play. Never mind if what you bring is of dubious "musical" value.

In addition to the joke contest, younger children can once again expect to contribute (and share) some of their favorite knock-knock jokes in worship.

- As before, our tithes and offerings will be received in unusual receptacles, but not ones as heavy as last year's crockpots. (More than once we planners have backed away from ushers passing bedpans for the offering.)
- Also returning in the bulletin, in case the bad jokes bore you to tears, more church bulletin bloopers, and a new Mennonite Madlib, created by our own JYFer, Eleanor Habecker.

*—Holy Humor Sunday Planners:
Neil Amstutz, Ruthie Saunders,
Chris Judson, Philip Habecker,
Amanda Stoltzfus*

Calling all clean jokes

Our Holy Humor Sunday on April 28 will once again have the Waterford Clean Joke contest. The top 10 submissions (selected by our sterling planning committee) will be revealed that Sunday morning.

Please submit your jokes in advance to csjudson@gmail.com. Submission deadline is **Monday April 15** (after all, corny jokes are the only thing as sure as death and taxes!) Besides traditional jokes, you can again include other artistic humorous expressions like haikus, limericks and memes.

Rules for jokes are as follows:

- All jokes must be G-rated
- They must not insult other people or God
- The panel of judges will have the final word on joke acceptability

How exactly do communities know how to respond to local disasters (floods, tornadoes, shootings, etc.)?

The floods that hit Goshen a little over a year ago led many community leaders to form Elkhart County Emergency Management (ECEM), to improve the provision of resources during a disaster. Now that group is seeking to merge the many organizations that assist during times of need into one unified and coordinated organization, a COAD – Community Organizations Active in Disaster.

ACOAD is an association of humanitarian organizations that participate in all phases of a disaster situation: mitigation, prevention, preparedness, response and recovery. Streamlining service delivery is the goal, as community, faith-based, non-profit, private and public organizations would work to coordinate responses to help disaster survivors. Jennifer Tobey, Director of ECEM, is inviting church representatives to join other organizational representatives in attending a kick-off meeting for this COAD on April 25. It runs 8:30 to 11:00 a.m., starting with a continental breakfast, at United Way of Elkhart County (601 County Road 17, Elkhart).

Are you interested in representing Waterford to learn more about how churches could be part of a coordinated community disaster response? This does not presume your leadership or participation in ongoing COAD efforts, nor does it commit Waterford Mennonite Church to anything. But if you've ever wished our church might be more active in disaster responses, or you feel a personal call to that kind of ministry, this may be just for you. Please respond (by April 18) directly to Therese Sailor at ECEM (574-891-2238, or tsailor@elkhartcounty.com). If you're able to attend, please also inform either Pastor Neil or Denise Diener.

Thanks

To the Waterford Mennonite Church community,

Thanks for the food, flowers, notes, and other actions of love and care during Fanny's illness and death. We are grateful to be surrounded and lifted up by your kindness and concern.

With love and gratitude,
Henry and Fanny Mast Family

Waterford's Conversations That Matter Hits the Road

Do you appreciate the Conversations That Matter sessions we've had around checkered tablecloths, but find yourself longing for some new people to converse with? Our brothers and sisters at Walnut Hill Mennonite Church (on N. 6th Street in Goshen) certainly have, after several years of holding Conversation Café gatherings on many different subjects. So they are doing something about it.

Walnut Hill has invited our congregation to be conversation partners with them in a unique joint Conversation Café event, **Sunday April 14, 7:00 p.m. at the Electric Brew downtown**, which has been reserved for this purpose. The topic will relate to finding unity in our polarized culture and world. What a great opportunity for relevant conversations with some new people! And there's a bonus: Since Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference is urging member congregations to connect with other congregations in activities and spiritual disciplines, this gives us a wonderful chance for just such interaction!

Mennonite Subscription Renewal

It is time to renew our group subscription to The Mennonite magazine. The Mennonite is a monthly magazine featuring voices from across the Anabaptist-Mennonite world. Through Bible studies, feature articles, columns and more, The Mennonite is hosting a robust conversation about what it means to be an Anabaptist follower of Christ today. If you are interested in joining our group plan or renewing your subscription, please fill out the form in your mailbox and return to the church office mailbox with a check payable to Waterford Mennonite Church by April 14, 2019. New subscribers can receive a one-year subscription for the discounted rate of \$30.

Stephen Ministry Network Gathers

During the evening of March 18, Stephen Ministers and Stephen Leaders from Waterford, Berkey Avenue and College Mennonite churches gathered to celebrate another year of ministry shared by these congregations. Hosted by WMC, the 25 individuals participated in fun, get-acquainted activities led by Stephen Leader Team Coordinator Bill Minter. Everyone then had the opportunity to share with each other, in a one-minute “speed dating” format, about a reward and challenge serving in this lay-caring ministry. The evening ended with opportunity for more informal conversation around tables while enjoying homemade pies made by Pastor Velma.

—WMC Stephen Leader Team



Stephen Ministry Network Gathering: Marge Gingerich and Cynthia Kauffman, from Waterford, take part in sharing with colleagues from other congregations about the joys and challenges of serving in Stephen Ministry.

B.A.R. Retreat Recap

Nine Waterford students recently attended the B.A.R. (Building Authentic Relationships) retreat at Amigo Centre. This retreat is planned by area youth pastors every other year and is intended for 11th and 12th grade students to take time to consider their current and future relationships. A highlight every year is a banquet on Saturday night that mimics a wedding reception. Three couples are chosen to attend the retreat to form a panel. The students have the opportunity to ask questions of the panel and hear from different couples about the challenges and joys of marriage relationships.



This year we were privileged to have Helen and Murray Bowman on the panel. Thank you to Helen and Murray, and to all who were part of making this retreat possible. A special thanks to JE Misz for using his social work knowledge to lead a seminar about communication and conflict. Additionally, thank you Ruth and Andrew Hartzler for coming as youth sponsors to spend the weekend encouraging and listening to students. Lastly, thank you to all who provided scholarships for our students to attend this retreat. Your donations and prayers were felt and appreciated.

(back) Colin Judson, Nathan Oostland, Andrew Smucker, Félix Pérez Diener, Sophia Stutz, Kassy Miller, Tristan Baker

(front) Helen and Murray Bowman, JE and Katie Misz, Isa Hartzler, Anna Myers

Story Hour Provided Sunshine for the Winter Blues

Nathaniel Snyder tells "Oma" Helen about the Holy Family.



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- Courtney Shetler
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Custodian

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- Katie Misz
Pastor of Family Life
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Pastor of Senior Ministries
- Cindy Voth
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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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What fun we had at story hour with 3 and 4 year olds on Wednesday mornings this winter! Helen Bowman and I were privileged to be teachers and story tellers to this group of six small-but-wise ones. We first took some time to prepare. First, Helen approached Harold Helmuth, Karen Hostetler, and Murray Bowman to help create materials for the class. The materials became a labor of love and beauty, to be used in Sunday school classes for years to come. The story materials help bring the story to life for those who cannot yet hold a Bible in their hands and read it for themselves. In a sense, it gives the preschoolers the Bible stories in their own language.

Next, Char Stoltzfus, the wee wonders class's beloved Sunday School teacher, taught Helen and me their songs. We noticed the great delight the children felt when they realized they already knew the songs being sung. And so, we began to worship. We used the curriculum and guides of Godly Play by Jerome Berryman.

The first week we told the story of the Good Shepherd. My favorite moment was when Helen put down a blue cloth and wondered with the children what the blue might be. Later in the story, the shepherd led the sheep to the blue cloth which represented water for the sheep to get a drink. The children found this the most exciting thing they had ever heard and exclaimed with great gusto, "I just knew it was water!" About half an hour later, we told the story a second time, and it elicited the same utter joy. "Yes!" They rejoiced, "I knew it was going to be water!" I could not help but think to myself, when was the last time the Bible story brought me such wonder and delight?

Young children are able to worship God in incredible ways. What a joy it is to witness their sacred encounters with God. May our 3 and 4 year olds continue to lead us to Jesus.

—Katie Misz, Pastor of Family Life



Eli Bowman tells the Noah's Ark story while Jeremiah Voth moves Abraham and Sarai through the desert box.