



# *buzz*

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## Welcoming Spaces 3.0 update

Are we still being Welcoming? That is, what's the update on the Welcoming Spaces 3.0 projects that we've been working on? Here are some answers to questions you might have:

**How generous have we been?** We are thankful for the nearly \$144,000 we have received for the projects through Nov. 10. In addition, several households have named an intention to give more than \$12,000 in the months to come.

**When will we get more donuts?** So far, we have received gifts from 59 households, with four more households planning to give. When we reach 75 total households, we'll celebrate again.

**What's happened with that money?** Lots! This spring, we blessed the new ramp in the sanctuary that allows more people to access the platform for leading and participating in worship. We've repaved the parking lot, making a safer walk for people and a smoother arrival for vehicles. We've supported ministry among the Shipibo people by helping create a space for training new leaders. And we'll be sending a gift to Mennonite Men's JoinHands program so they can help other congregations welcome people into new worship spaces.

**What's next?** We'd earlier identified improvements in the fellowship hall as the third primary project at Waterford. Since then, we've also become aware of other projects that would also help make our spaces more welcoming. Both the fellowship hall and these projects have different options to them, so we are gathering additional information on our needs and on the budget required to complete them. We anticipate seeking more input from the congregation on these projects, potentially at a congregational brainstorming meeting in early 2020.

See **WS 3.0** on page 4

## WMC Advent Orchestra

We have a recent tradition here at Waterford of inviting anyone who plays an instrument to join the Advent Orchestra for prelude on a Sunday during Advent. This year, we will play on December 8. Young people, old people, and everyone in between are invited to participate. The group plays a medley of Christmas Carols with full orchestration. It is a time when we celebrate, praise God with instruments, and enjoy the company of whoever is creating music beside us.

It is a unique experience. Once you have played in the group the previous year, there is little to no preparation the next year. Strings, woodwinds, brass, are all welcome to join. There were over 20 participants last year (from baritone to violin). Music is a sweet gift from God, so of course each person receives a large candy bar as a thank you.

I have attended different churches in my lifetime and, before attending Waterford, I had never experienced the gift of so many instrumentalists from the same church gathered for such an occasion. We are blessed not only to have this tradition, but also to have people who enjoy being together to create music for worship, and to help the larger congregation enter into the Advent season. If you are interested in being a part of this group, please send JD a note and he will make sure you have music ahead of time, as well as other details.

—JD Smucker



## “What Are You Waiting For?”: An Advent and Christmas worship series

The church season of Advent is one unknown in secular society. The concept of deliberately waiting for Christmas to come is countercultural. If such waiting happens in our society, it's not for lack of celebrating Christmas early. Most people wait only because time doesn't move faster, and they have no choice. In the church we have a choice, and that's why we build up to Christmas expectantly, not fully celebrating it right away. But even in this pattern, sometimes special opportunities make Christmas celebration the right thing to do. That is why we are excited about our special Christmas musical “Camel Lot”, which will be the main part of both worship services on December 15, providing a wonderful

interlude within Advent for the children, youth and adults who are working so hard to prepare it for us!

This year's theme for Sunday worship in Advent and Christmas plays on multiple meanings of that question, and multiple people to whom it's addressed. Sometimes we ask, “What are you waiting for?” very earnestly of someone, because we don't already know why they're waiting. Sometimes we ask the question in anger or sarcasm, which basically means “Hurry up already!” In this season of waiting on God's self-revelation through Jesus, the question in worship will first be directed toward God. It will then move to a question for us to reflect on individually, before, on Christmas Sunday, the question turns toward the congregation itself.

Here is a summary of elements to expect from December through Jan. 5:

Date	Focus	Preacher
Dec. 1 (Advent 1)	Our wait begins	Cindy Voth
Dec. 8 (Advent 2)	Getting ready while we wait	Neil Amstutz
Dec. 15 (Advent 3)	Waterford Christmas musical	Hardworking children, youth and adults in the musical
Dec. 22 (Advent 4)	Worth the wait	Katie Misz
Dec. 29 (Christmas)	Time to get a move on!	Terry Zehr
Jan. 5	Singing through the Salvation Story	None. Lots of singing as we review Heilsgeschichte

## Thank Yous

Thank you to all the volunteers who participated in the MCC Great Lakes Comforter Bash in Goshen. Several hundred people knotted 497 comforters over the two days of this fun-filled event. Thanks to you, people around the world will not only be kept warm but can go to sleep knowing that someone cares about them. Stay tuned for information about next year's Comforter Bash!

—MCC Great Lakes

On behalf of more than seventy persons who participated in the September 29th educational conference on “Living Well with Hearing Loss” in Nappanee, Indiana, we express our deep appreciation for your financial support of this conference.

From the feedback we have received, the conference was very beneficial for those who participated.

—The Michiana Chapter of Hearing Loss Association of America, and The Hearing Life Committee at Greencroft Goshen

*Note: Endowment Funds were granted in the spring to sponsor this conference.*

## **Prairie View Elementary Partners with Big Brothers — Big Sisters**

Have you ever been interested in being a Big Brother or Big Sister but were concerned about fitting it into your busy life? Would you be able to mentor during one lunch break per week? If so, we can make Big Brothers – Big Sisters work for you!

The Big Brothers – Big Sisters organization has used their extensive history and experience in mentoring children to develop a similar school-based program. Prairie View Elementary recognizes the critical, yet unmet need for adult relationships in some children's lives and wants to accept the offer from Big Brothers – Big Sisters, but we need your help in making this happen for our students.

Being a “Big” means that you would go through a background check and then

receive some basic mentoring training. Once per week, you will meet your “Little” in a private area within the school during their 45 minute recess/lunch break. Your Little will eat the school lunch or their packed lunch during your visit. Except for occasional special events, the Big is actually discouraged from bringing food for the Little. Bigs are encouraged to bring an activity or game to do with their Little during their visit. Some games and activities are available at the school. The expectation is that you would be able to serve in this role for one school year.

To learn more about being a “Big” in the life of a Prairie View student, please contact our Prairie View SOS representative, Len Harms, or call Prairie View at 534-4710 and ask to speak with school counselor, Marge Gingerich, or Spanish-speaking Parent Liaison, Iris Cortes.

—Len Harms, for Prairie View  
Outreach Team

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## **Doing Depot Duty**

The Agape class volunteered at The Depot, Wed., Oct. 30, assembling artificial Christmas trees to be sold for MCC.



**Above: Sandy Kauffman and Dale Wentorf demonstrated great teamwork.**

**Left: George and Karen Thompson transported this tree to the lobby for display while Loanne Harms and Myrna Kaufman looked on.**





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## Support of Carlos Ramos

Thank you to those of you who contributed to the support of Carlos Ramos. Enough money was raised at the November 10 concert to support Carlos for a little over a year. Also, thank you to Ruthie Saunders for delighting us in a wonderful concert. Carlos also expresses his appreciation for the support he is receiving from WMC. If you would still like to contribute to Carlos' support, please write out your check to Samaritan Trust. Contributions are not tax deductible.

## Request for Assistance

There is a parent of a kindergartener at Prairie View who would like some help in providing clothing for her children. She will be happy with good, used items. Please give the clothing to Len Harms rather than put them in the Prairie View tubs. These are the sizes:

Kindergartener: size 8 shirt, size 10 pants;

Sister: size 5/6;

Brother: 9-12 months.

## WS 3.0 (continued from page 1)

**So, should we continue to give?** With the gifts we have received, intentions to give more, and expenses and gifts to date, we have an available balance of just over \$60,000. Because of the variables still in play, we don't yet have a cost estimate for the fellowship hall and other projects, but it likely will be significantly more than this amount. As we come to the end of the calendar year, we recognize that there are likely some in the congregation who are considering their year-end giving, either through cash, a Qualified Charitable Distribution from their IRA, or through a tool such as a Donor Advised Fund. In addition to additional gifts to the church's spending plans, we invite you to make an above-budget gift to the Welcoming Spaces 3.0 campaign that will be used for our remaining projects.

— Lyle Miller,

Welcoming Spaces

3.0 coordinator