



Waterford Mennonite Church | May 10, 2020

# buzz

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## **A Note of Gratitude!**

In a recent conversation with a co-worker, as we were discussing the challenges brought by the COVID-19 virus, she made the comment, “*we really do not know the answers to the many questions that we have.*” There is no doubt that the world has changed and as people talk about going back to “*normal*” we do not know what that normal will be.

In this context of so much unknown, we have been trying to project how the end of the year for Waterford finances will look, as well as preparing the budget for our next fiscal year, which began May 1. At the worship service, Sunday, April 19, I provided a glimpse of how our numbers had changed in a matter of weeks. We had moved from an early projection of ending the year with a basically balanced budget to a projected \$16,000 loss to a \$26,000 loss. This all took place in a matter of weeks and in the context of an economy that has almost come to a standstill.

The reality is we did not have any history to look back and make projections and estimates. Never before have we canceled our in-person gathering for an online worship experience. How could we calculate what the offering would be? Our experience of Sunday morning offering changed to online giving and the sharing of the offering by sending it by mail.

As we are closing our fiscal year, our hearts are full of gratitude for the generosity of our Waterford family. Our preliminary numbers indicate that we will end the fiscal year with a surplus of close to \$23,000! Our total offering and tithes came to \$829,115.50, which is 99.5% of the amount we had budgeted for this year. The faithful stewardship of our ministries and staff made it possible for our total projected expenses to be \$805,995.30, 96.7% of our

See **Gratitude** on back

## **An Experience of Being Cared For**

It is the goal of our Stephen Ministry program to continually monitor its effectiveness to make sure the caring we do is valuable and effective. It seems appropriate to ask those people who have had a Stephen Minister to share their experience and give helpful feedback. Following are the responses of a person in our congregation, after completing a relationship with a Stephen Minister, in their own words.

### **Did you feel cared for by your Stephen Minister?**

Yes, I definitely felt cared for. I felt genuine interest in my life. She would often help me work through questions and areas in my life I was struggling with. She would do research if answers weren't readily available. She was not afraid to be real, if she didn't know something, but would help me find answers.

### **What was the most meaningful aspect of your visits with your Stephen Minister?**

I have a deep appreciation for my Stephen Minister's time and understanding in walking through a dark time in my life. I am thankful for her listening ear and her help in finding some peace in my questioning, and finding comfort in trusting God is in control. Being held in confidence was very comforting to me. I felt secure in being honest with my feelings in a very dramatic time.

### **What, if anything would you have changed about your visits?**

I'm not sure I would have changed anything. The amount of time spent together felt very comfortable, and becoming friends was a bonus. I found I really looked forward to our meeting times.

See **Stephen Ministry** on back



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*Coordinator of Administrative Ministries*
- Andrea Golden  
*Business Manager*
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*Director of Children's Ministries*
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*Worship Coordinator*

**Facilities Ministry**

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**Pastoral Ministry**

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- Katie Misz  
*Pastor of Family Life*
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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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**Stephen Ministry** (cont. from front)

**Would you recommend Stephen Ministry to a friend?**

I certainly would! In the beginning I was rather reluctant to accept this program and needed some persuading from friends, but I really feel it helped to bring me out of a very dark time, even though it took awhile. Thanks so much for this ministry. It is a blessing!

If you or someone you know is in need of added personal support, please contact one of the Pastors, your SS Class Shepherd, or one of the Stephen Leaders, Liz Gingrich, or Mel or Lorna Claassen.

**Thank you note**

Mennonite Mission Network has many partners around the world that we help to support. None of Mission Network's ministries would happen without congregational contributions to support these life-changing ministries. Waterford Mennonite Church's contribution of \$54,650.33 has enabled Mission Network to partner with more than 115 organizations around the world. Thank you for your prayers and generous contributions in 2016.

— Stanley W. Green

**Gratitude** (cont. from front)

budgeted amount! As a congregation, we have been able to honor all our financial commitments to the various ministries outside our congregation that we support. This generosity has also allowed us to fully fund all of our funded accounts in our budget. We were also helped by a one-month premium holiday given by *The Corinthian Plan (TCP)* to all the congregations that participate.

We want to express our thanks for the generous giving that has made this possible. We realize we are still living in the COVID-19 context, that there are many questions to which we do not have answers, and the future is not totally clear. But in the midst of all of this, let us take a moment to offer our thanksgiving to God that the ministries of the church do not stop; they might change as we move forward, but we will continue to be faithful and be light in the midst of COVID-19 and beyond!

— Carlos Romero (on behalf of Ministry Leadership Council and Facilities and Finance Ministry Team)



**Remembering Life Garden in bloom.**