



buzz

What's Happening with COVID-19 Responses at Church?

Some of you in the congregation may recall a communication in August indicating that a decision about regathering in person for worship would not be revisited until October. So now that we are in October, the situation may still feel confusing, given the contrast of Indiana's coronavirus restrictions having been lifted to Stage 5, even while our local hospitals are dangerously near capacity for treating COVID-19 patients. In recent weeks, in anticipation of cold weather and the need for a worship gathering decision, the pastoral team and Ministry Leadership Council (MLC) have been actively exploring ways to approach such decisions on a more informed, ongoing basis.

MLC is pleased to announce the formation of a new COVID Advisory Team (CA Team), whose purpose will be to advise the WMC pastoral team, Ministry Leadership Council, and other ministry teams regarding the safety of regathering of groups in WMC facilities. According to the proposal approved by MLC, CA Team members will belong to the WMC community, whose individual background and expertise are in medicine, and/or organizational administration which includes attending to the well-being of various ages, including senior adults and children. Ultimate responsibility for decisions about reopening of church facilities, under this plan, will rest with MLC, based on consultation with the pastoral team. Once formed, the CA Team, whose members will likely be named within the coming week, will convene immediately to assess Waterford's group assembly needs, within the current medical and legal context, and to begin making recommendations to MLC for action.

One of the needs coming before the CA Team will of course be whether and how to safely regather for worship, as promised earlier. However, because we

currently have a reasonably well-working worship arrangement online and because existing church groups like Sunday School classes are running out of nice weather for meeting outside, the Team's first priority will likely be recommendations for non-worship use of the church building. We appreciate the flexibility and creativity that small groups and Sunday School classes have already shown over the spring and summer for finding safe ways to connect. In the meantime, as the CA Team sets about its advisory work, and out of consideration for the numerous people in the Waterford community who are considered medically and age-related vulnerable persons, we continue to ask that all "church gatherings" in person be masked and socially distanced, whether they occur on the church lawn or elsewhere. This comes, not only in light of newly revised CDC Coronavirus guidelines that acknowledge the more dangerous airborne means of transmission (<https://www.cnbc.com/2020/10/07/cdc-confirms-airborne-transmission-of-covid-19-how-to-prevent-spread.html>), but also from a heart of mutual aid that looks out for others' well-being within the Christian community.

Please pray for the final forming of the COVID Advisory Team and for their wisdom in drawing on the best medical and public health counsel, their own professional experiences and their Christian faith.

—Neil Amstutz, on behalf of
Ministry Leadership Council



Your Coins Count!

Have you grown tired of hearing so much negative and discouraging news this week? Well, I have some **GOOD NEWS** to share!!

Congratulations Waterford Mennonite Church family! You have shown your love, compassion and generosity once again! A check was sent this week to the Michiana Mennonite Relief Sale designated to My Coins Count for \$7,906.36!!!! Breaking it down, you donated \$3,953.18 and our generous Waterford couple doubled that amount. Last year's final total, after the match, was \$4,231.44!

As a result of **YOUR** generosity, many more of our brothers and sisters throughout the world will have access to clean water! Thank you so much and may God bless each of you!

—Carolyn Kauffman

Autumn Wetlands Foliage



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Thank you for your generous giving so far this year. At the end of September, we are five months through this fiscal year. Giving toward the Waterford budget totaled \$292,487 at the end of September. That compares to \$338,329 at the same time a year ago. The YTD expense budget at the end of September is \$342,969.

Waterford Mennonite Church Cumulative Total Giving

