



buzz

Communion at Home

As a community of faith, we enjoy the times we gather and have communion, serving each other, affirming each other and just enjoying each other's presence. We have learned in the past year that we remain the beloved community even if we cannot join together for worship or experience communion together. We have and are learning that our shared faith does not depend on presence; although, I, for one, am looking forward to that experience again.

Our practice has also been to share communion with our Waterford members who live at Greencroft Healthcare and Evergreen Place several times a year.

The question, how do we share communion with them if we cannot be together, came to the surface. The decision was made to make small loaves of bread and put juice in small condiment containers and take the elements to the two Greencroft facilities.



Greencroft generously plays our service on their inter-community TV station and residents can watch on Monday at 8:00 a.m. or 8:00 p.m.

I delivered 11 boxes to Healthcare and Evergreen Place on Saturday so they could join us on Monday with their own communion experience. I also took a box to Waterford Crossing for Una Ross who watches on Sunday.



My prayer is that those who received the elements will feel our love and commitment to remembering them even when we cannot be together. They remain part of the beloved community.

—Velma Swartz for Senior Adult Ministry Team

“TRAVELING TO BENIN” for Waterford’s Mission Sunday

All of us who will participate in our February 7 worship service will be “traveling to Benin.” In fact, we will be entering Benin Bible Institute and worshipping along with the students, professors and administration. BBI has sent us a lively video from a recent service which includes singing, dancing, and a sermon. We will also hear from several students about their experiences at BBI, as well as updates on the study programs of BBI professors, and the farm at Oumako. Let’s enjoy this trip to Benin and worship together!

Special Note to Waterford Children: Please be ready for children’s time on February 7 by finding something you can use as a drum or shaker. We will need it for our activity!

Offering: 50% of the Mission Sunday offering will go to the BBI New Generation Scholarship Fund which helps to support further study for BBI faculty. Currently we have committed to supporting Eric Noukpliguidi’s studies in Christian counseling. You will hear about Eric’s studies and the progress he is making on Mission Sunday. Your participation in the scholarship fund will help Eric to continue his studies.

No Guests From Benin Visited Waterford In 2020. In the pattern of the regular exchange visits between BBI and Waterford which have been happening since 2003, normally, last fall we would have received a two-person delegation from Benin. The delegates would have preached, shared their stories, and visited many of us in our homes. Because of the pandemic, none of that happened. This video worship service represents part of our effort to draw near to our ministry partners during this time when face to face visits are not possible.

You will note that in the video, not everyone is masked. That is not the best possible response to living with the pandemic, but to BBI’s credit they are not hiding this reality from us.

Let this Mission Sunday worship service focused on Benin Bible Institute be a reminder to us to pray for our friends at BBI and for the important ministries they are carrying out.

—Rod Hollinger-Janzen,
BBI Planning Group Coordinator

Introducing *Member Resources* Page on Website

There’s a new password protected page on the church’s website. It contains information for members and attenders that will not be available to the general public. Currently, that includes the church’s online directory, the signup for room reservations, and the job description for Pastor of Senior Ministries.

The link to the Member Resources page is located in the bottom right corner of every page on our website. When you click on it, it will take you to a login page where you will need to put in a username and password. Once in, you will have access to the various forms referred to in the articles in this issue.

- To sign up for room usage by your SS class or another small group gathering, click on the *Reserve Spaces in the Church* button. There you will be able to see what days and times are available and reserve the time and date you would like. Please be sure and put the name of your group in the form. To reserve a repeating timeslot, you will need to enter it for each week, month, or however often you wish to meet. You can also find the COVID-19 Action Plan in both summary and full forms on the site.
- To see the church directory, you will need to enter a different password which will take you to the basic church directory. You will also be able to manage your own family’s information with your own username and password. If you do not have those yet, but would like to access your personal information, please contact Janet in the church office and she will set you up. Please **make sure to logout** of both the family management page and the directory page at the bottom of each of those screens when you are finished.

Please see this week’s “Life Beyond Waterford” for information on accessing the password protected pages.

A Guide to Returning to Meet With Your Group at Church

The January 10 issue of Buzz announced the beginning of implementing our congregational COVID-19 Action Plan. On Jan. 20, Elkhart County shifted to the Orange advisory level on the state map. Based on a recommendation from the COVID Advisory Team and Ministry Leadership Council, groups with reserved rooms can begin meeting in person at church starting Jan. 31. See announcement in the Jan. 29 “Life Beyond Waterford.” *Shifts in Waterford’s Action Plan colored phase will be announced in the emailed “Life Beyond Waterford” announcements on Fridays.*

Last week adult Sunday School shepherds and coordinators received instructions for reserving rooms through a new online reservation form. Here is the basic information groups will need to know if they want to meet at church. This article applies only to group meetings. Information about returning to gathered Sunday worship services will come sometime in the future.

As your group considers meeting at church, refer to the Jan. 10 Buzz for a description of which rooms will be available for groups and their capacity, or find the Action Plan on the “Member Resources” page of the Waterford Mennonite Church website. Here are some general things to consider:

- Not all Sunday School classes will be able to meet at church simultaneously. Think about possibly meeting at some time other than on Sundays right after the worship broadcast.
- Your group may have a mix of people ready to meet together again and others who won’t be comfortable with that. Consider having a hybrid model where some or all of those who want to meet in person do so, while camera and microphone arrangements are made in that space for others to join by Zoom. Do not assume that your meeting room has the needed AV equipment.
- To best serve pastoral staff needs, the sanctuary as a designated meeting room will be unavailable on Tuesday and Thursday mornings.
- There are general guidelines for groups to observe before, during and after room use, such as which entry and exit doors, designated bathrooms and parking lots to use, etc.
- For guidelines for specific rooms, see Action Plan p. 12-15
- For musicians who wish to rehearse or record worship music in the sanctuary (or worship leaders or drama people), please contact the church office ahead of time, since the sanctuary may already be reserved.

To reserve a room for your group, there is an online room reservation form to complete on the Member Resources page, or you can contact the church office. Records of all the scheduled room reservations will also be kept in the church office.

We give special thanks to our COVID Advisory Team (Dr. Cynthia Bontrager, Jeremy Kauffman, Dr. Katie Michalczyk and Kent Myers) for their diligent work on this plan. We also thank Janet and Karen in the office for managing room reservations and fielding inquiries. In the newness and inconveniences of coming back together, we ask your patience with each other, church staff and the COVID Advisory Team as we roll this out. We know that many of you are very eager to safely meet with your group again, and pray that God bless these “mini-reunions”!

—Pastor Neil Amstutz, on behalf of CA Team and church staff

Senior Ministries Pastoral Search

We are pleased to announce that the search for a long term Pastor of Senior Ministries is now underway. Search committee members are Arnold Roth, chair, Esther Farmwald, Rachel Brennehan, Elmer Wyse, and Pastor Neil, ex-officio. We have begun consulting with Conference Pastor for Leadership Transitions Sharon Yoder of Indiana Michigan Mennonite Conference and have invited our congregational coach Ron Guengerich to be involved as it suits him.

The job description, which has been slightly revised to recognize the impact of COVID on the PSM role, can be found on the Member Resources page at waterfordchurch.org. We have decided to require the Ministerial Leadership Information form for each application and invite applicants from our congregation as well as from the wider church. The MLI can be downloaded at mennoniteusa.org/ministry-transitions-candidate-packet/

Please be assured that if you, as a part of Waterford, feel called to apply, you will have an interview with the search committee as they discern the person best suited to this important role.

Winter Elective Offered on Self-Compassion

Bridgebuilders will host an elective this winter on the theme of self-compassion, taught by Pastor Katie. Your class, or members of your class, are invited to join in. The zoom class will be 4 classes on February 14, 28 and March 14, 28. The class will be from 11:00-12:15.

The class will begin with a 30 minute lesson. Then, the group will split into breakout rooms for further conversation. One breakout room will focus on self-compassion and parenting to be led by Pastor Cindy, another breakout room will focus on self-compassion and the faith journey.

Self-compassion is deeply spiritual work that is helpful for anyone who finds they are particularly hard on themselves. It was developed by psychologist Kristen Neff, and you are encouraged to watch this short film to understand more of what we will be exploring in our time together. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wh8ffxvM1eg>

Watch for the Zoom link to join the class in next week's announcements.



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The *Waterford Buzz* is normally published weekly for members of Waterford Mennonite Church. Items for inclusion should be sent to the editor by 5 p.m. Monday preceding publication.

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