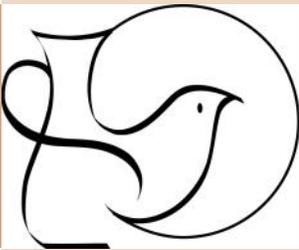


Advent 2

PEACE



December 4, 2022



The Waterford Buzz

This Sunday

9:00 a.m. - Worship

10:30 a.m. - Nurture classes for all ages

Welcome Team

Greeters: Sheldon & Velma Swartz

Ushers: Dennis Myers, Bruce Snyder, Wade Ramer

Audiovisuals: Bob Hochstedler, Shawn Stutzman

This Week at Waterford

Wednesday

7:00 p.m. Mentor/Mentee mtg

Thursday

8:30 a.m. Mennonite Women / MYF Room

10:45 a.m. Expecting Emmanuel / North FH

7:00 p.m. Worship MT / FH

7:00 p.m. Facilities & Finance / Room 15

Zoom prayers

Waterford Mennonite Church

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Goshen, IN 46526

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Congregational Business Meeting Update

By Chris Judson and Cindy Voth

This past Wednesday night, we had our first hybrid congregational meeting. After a delicious meal (thanks, Karen Hostetler!), a large group gathered in person in the sanctuary, and a large group joined through the gift of Zoom technology (thanks, AV folks!!). Having a congregational meeting is a routine component of our shared life together. These meetings allow us to communicate and discern items related to our shared life, ministry, and witness. In our typical pattern each year, we have a congregational meeting in May and August. This fall Ministry Leadership Council (MLC) and Pastoral Team called for an additional congregational meeting to share updates and reflections with the congregation and for space for ballots for three areas – Gifts Discernment Ministry Team (GDMT), Welcome and Inclusion Statement Affirmation, and Land Acknowledgment Statement Affirmation. While having a congregational meeting is part of our regular routines, we also recognize that at this meeting, the congregation affirmed significant statements that inform our shared life together as we move forward in the emerging vision God is illuminating among us. As we recognize the significance of those affirmations, we decided to share this update in the Buzz so that all can be informed of the outcomes of our congregational meeting.

See Congregational Meeting on page 3

Life at Waterford

Last Sunday Attendance

Worship – 189

Nurture Hour – 180

Finances – November 27, 2022

Operating Fund: \$5,672.07

Mennonite Education: \$3,770.00

Either Fund: \$2,520.00

Budget Subtotal \$11,962.07

Welcoming Spaces \$2,000.00

Jubilee Fund \$55.00

Total \$14,017.07

Looking Ahead

December 11: Sermon: Ursula

Hess: Time for All

(Isaiah 42:1-9)

December 18: Everybody's

Christmas Pageant

Pastoral Team

Cindy Voth, Pastoral Team

Leader

Monday - Thursday

Deron Bergstresser, Pastor

Tuesday - Friday

Katie Misz, Pastor

Tuesday, Thursday

Monday & Wednesday p.m.

Office hours this week

Mon., Wed.- Thurs. 9-12, 1-3

Tuesday, Friday 9-12

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

Janet Shoemaker,
Editor

buzz@waterfordchurch.org

Reflections from Nov 20th Nurture Hour

Presented by Rachel Stoltzfus, chair of MLC

As we prepare to voice our desires regarding welcome and inclusion at Waterford, I want to read some of the responses from our November 20 Nurture Hour. First, I am amazed that out of the 109 responses (7 on zoom) 88 were signed. You took the time to write more than just a couple words. You wrote from your hearts. I saw trust in leadership and love for each other in your responses.

A number of you wondered about the list. How did we decide on the list of people to welcome and include? It seemed simple at the time. They are not there because they represent diversity. The list represents those who often are fearful of their safety and not by choice. They are there as the vulnerable among us, in our communities, our country and our world. Is each of us vulnerable at some point in our lives? If so, may we also feel welcome and grace.

I recorded 10 pages of responses. Here are a representative few.

From I wonder ... What God has in store for us and how we will continue to engage with the wider culture while still maintaining our center on Jesus. **I wonder ...** how we will be transformed as a church by creating a more welcoming community. **I wonder ... How we can invite** younger people, younger generations into this conversation? We can learn how to accept others from them if people can put aside their previous views and be open to God's leading us today.

My fear is ... That people who don't agree will leave. **My fear is ...** this will cause divisiveness and polarization. **My fear is ...** that relationships will be affected—people unable to maintain relationship. **My fear is ...** conflict (I don't like it!) but I want to move forward with integrity and not judgment. **My fear is ...** that change will be too slow.

My hope is ... More people will feel the safety of attending church. That we can accept anyone who answers "yes" to God's call with welcome to be a member. **My hope is ... that God's light** will shine more and more upon us. **My hope is ...** that every person entering Waterford's doors will be treated with compassion, kindness and respect. **My hope is ...** that we continue to commit to educating ourselves – I'm excited about the Jan - March sessions.

My prayer for Waterford is ... I am thankful that my church is able to want to include those people so they can feel safe. Meaningful change to help bring more people to God. **My prayer for Waterford is ...** that we can continue to grow into true inclusion—to become truly welcoming—full of mercy, grace and compassion for all as God's beloved children. **My prayer for Waterford is ...** that we keep our focus on Jesus in all our relationships and on God's welcoming all-embracing, compassionate love / **My prayer for Waterford is ...** that we embrace ALL, hear stories, love each other with compassion and forgiveness, continue growing and changing, or learning.

May it be so.

Congregational Meeting, cont. from page 1

First, the four individuals on the GDMT ballot were all affirmed for their new leadership roles — Carlos Romero, interim treasurer; JD Smucker, MLC member at large; Melissa Chupp, lay ministry partner for Fellowship Ministry Team; Sheldon Swartz, lay ministry partner for Spiritual Formation Ministry Team.

The next item on the ballot was Welcome and Inclusion Statement Affirmation (“*We celebrate that everyone is created in God’s image and as followers of Jesus we welcome people of every age, ability, race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, marital status, socio-economic situation, gender identity, and citizenship status as full participants in the life of our congregation.*”). During the meeting, Rachel Stoltzfus, chair of MLC, shared some of the comments recorded from our joint nurture hour on November 20th. (See page 2) One hundred eighty-three (183) individuals submitted a ballot for this item: 156 (85%) marked that they affirmed this statement as representing the vision and direction of Waterford; 9 (5%) marked that they did not affirm this statement as representing the vision and direction of Waterford; and, 18 (10%) indicated that they were willing to ‘stand aside’ (using language from our Quaker siblings) to allow the emerging sense and vision of the congregation to proceed, even if they have reservations.

The last item on the ballot had two parts related to our work with Dismantling the Doctrine of Discovery. The first part was Land Acknowledgement Statement Affirmation. One hundred sixty-nine (169) individuals submitted a ballot for this item: 165 (98%) marked that they affirmed this statement as representing the vision and direction of Waterford; 4 (2%) marked that they did not affirm this statement as representing the vision and direction of Waterford. For the second part, 126 individuals indicated that they encouraged Waterford to pursue reparative justice with indigenous people by joining the Repair Network with the Dismantling the Doctrine of Discovery Coalition.

Thank you for how you have engaged with us and each other as we discerned the movement of God’s Spirit in our midst. We recognize that it is significant that the congregation has overwhelmingly affirmed the Statement of Welcome and Inclusion, and the Statement of Land Acknowledgment. We begin the next step in our shared work of learning how to live out these statements. We are grateful for the “Formation Series on Inclusion” plans already scheduled for Wednesdays in January - March 2023. This series will provide space to reflect on our current practices while learning from others ways we can become more inclusive in our practices, attitudes, speech, and activities.

We ended our time together with the same prayer we began with:

A Prayer for our Community

by Rev. Richard Rohr:

God, Lord of all creation, lover of life and of everything,

please help us to love in our very small way what You love infinitely and everywhere.

We thank You that we can offer just this one prayer and that will be more than enough, because in reality every thing and every one is connected, and nothing stands alone.

To pray for one part is really to pray for the whole, and so we do.

Help us each day to stand for love, for healing, for the good, for the diverse unity of the Body of Christ and all creation, because we know this is what You desire: as Jesus prayed,

that all may be one. We offer our prayer together with all the holy names of God, we offer our prayer together with Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Fall 2022 Endowment Fund Grants

The recent Endowment Fund Committee meeting resulted in the allocation of Fall 2022 grant funds for the following purposes:

Karla Lara Sandoval Medical Bills Fund — \$2,500. Karla recently suffered a fall off a ladder when she was crossing the border wall close to Ciudad Juárez in Mexico. She made her way to Goshen to meet her family. When they took her to the ER, she was told she had five fractures and needed surgery as soon as possible. When the family learned the cost of the surgery — 19K with payment plan — they tried to opt out, but were told she absolutely needed the surgery. Karla had the surgery on Wednesday, September 28, and is now recovering in her family's small rental apartment. Karla is in her early 20's. In the long run, despite the cost, this was the best option for her quality of life.

Tusonge Meble Tailoring Group — \$1,200. Millicent Jesse Bujiku, the author of this proposal, was Ariana Pérez Diener's host mother while she was on SST in Tanzania. The objective of the project is to train youth and women in tailoring, creative arts, and entrepreneurship. These tools will enable women to sustain their economy and help girls that fall out of school due to pregnancy by providing them vocational skills so they can provide for themselves and take care of their children.

Clason Family Build, Habitat for Humanity — \$1200.00. Valerie Clason is a single mother who has guardianship of her two adult sons. Both sons have mental and emotional disabilities which prohibit them from living on their own. Currently, the family lives in a two-bedroom home and Valerie shares a room with one of her sons, as sharing a room doesn't work for the boys.

The committee will meet again in the spring of 2023. We have appreciated the opportunity to distribute monies that the church has set aside to further God's mission and kingdom.

The Endowment Fund Committee: Lyz Zimmerman, Philip Habecker, Doug Yoder, Rachel Stoltzfus, Douglas Graber, and Cindy Voth

Waterford Announcements

The **Expecting Emmanuel** elective class will begin this Sunday and will meet in the south fellowship hall. It will be in the room straight in from the fellowship hall doors. The Thursday group will begin on December 8 at 10:45 a.m. and will meet in the north fellowship hall in the Seekers' room. **If you plan to attend Mennonite Women next week, you are welcome to join this Sunday's class instead.**

Mennonite Women will meet next week on Thursday, December 8. If you plan to stay during lunch break you may bring some dish to accompany the soup that will be available. Thank you for all the MCC Relief Kits and items you have brought in so far!

You are invited to **send a note to Ariana Pérez Diener** via her family who are going to Kenya to see her December 19. There will be cards on the table outside the church office and a basket to put them in until Sunday, December 18.

Offering Envelopes: If you have offering envelopes left from last year you may continue using them in 2023. Simply cross out the Sunday listed and enter the current Sunday. Your envelope number will remain the same. **If you do not have envelopes** and would like some, you will find boxes, as well as individual envelopes, on a table beneath the church mailboxes. Please help yourself. You do not need envelopes with a number and date listed. If you have questions contact Elvina Schmidt 574-202-5777.

Everybody's Christmas Pageant will take place during our morning worship on December 18. We will be engaging in a participatory retelling of the Christmas story. **If you would enjoy being a reader** for the pageant or having a special part, **sign up at the participation station** and plan to be at one rehearsal on Saturday, December 17 at 9:30 a.m. with a potluck lunch to follow. All ages are invited to join the fun.

A follow-up to last winter's Enneagram introduction is being planned for this winter. It will be a six-week study that will cover Suzanne Stabile's book, *The Journey Toward Wholeness*. The group will meet from 7:00 to 8:15 p.m. every other Wednesday beginning January 18 through March 15. Some understanding of the Enneagram is needed to benefit from the discussion planned. Sign up at the participation station in the foyer.

It's not too late to join the **Christmas prelude orchestra** on December 11! Send JD Smucker a note at smucker5@frontier.com letting him know that you would like to participate.

Salt & Light weekly reflection for [December 11](#).

Mennonite Church USA

The **African American Mennonite Association** (AAMA), a recognized racial ethnic group of Mennonite Church USA, and Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va, have teamed up to provide scholarships for Black ministry leaders interested in completing EMS' new graduate certificate in faith-based peacebuilding. Learn more here: mennoniteusa.org/news/aama-ems

Mennonite Church USA (MC USA) Executive Board staff has posted the new "**Guidelines for Developing Organizational Resolutions and Church Statements in Mennonite Church USA**" on the MC USA website. The guidelines are effective immediately and apply to proposed organizational resolutions or church statements submitted for consideration by the 2023 Delegate Assembly. Learn more here: mennoniteusa.org/news/resolutions-process

Read a **prayer of lamentation about mass incarceration** by writer Kayla Berkley. The prayer is part of Mennonite Church USA's "Learn, Pray, Join: Mass Incarceration" initiative, which examines the injustices in our criminal legal system through an Anabaptist lens. Read the prayer here: mennoniteusa.org/complacency-prayer-incarceration

As members of **Mennonite Church USA**, let us look ahead to the new year and to focus on living into our Renewed Commitments to follow Jesus, witness to God's peace and help our communities experience transformation. Your financial gifts to Mennonite Church USA help to equip and empower our conferences, congregations and our diverse body of believers to tell the transformative story of the birth, life and resurrection of Jesus Christ. MennoniteUSA.org/give

AMBS

Journey: A Missional Leadership Development Program. Encourage someone you know who has gifts for ministry to check out this distance-friendly undergraduate-level AMBS program! Journey supports learners as they explore spiritual leadership in their local churches and communities and deepen their understanding of Anabaptist theology and ministry with a dedicated mentor. The Spring 2023 cohort begins Feb. 22; those who apply by Dec. 7 can save \$100! ambs.edu/journey

MCC

Uniting for Ukraine Webinar, December 20. Since February, over 14 million Ukrainians have been forced to flee their homes. In response, the U.S. government developed the Uniting for Ukraine community sponsorship program. Join MCC and Church World Service on Dec. 20, at 2:00 PM EST, to learn more about the Uniting for Ukraine program and how the faith community can walk alongside Ukrainians as they seek refuge in the U.S. [Register for the webinar.](#)

Are you a youth who attends a Mennonite high school or an Anabaptist church? This is your opportunity to express your views in essay format on critical issues facing U.S. society. Submissions are due Feb. 24, 2023, and may be in English or Spanish. The grand prize is \$1000! [Find out more about the high school essay contest.](#)

Upcoming Community Events

You are invited to the **First Annual Community Posada** hosted by Center for Healing & Hope, December 2, 2022, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. at the Maple City Conference & Event Center. Enjoy hot drinks, traditional pastries, piñatas, and gift bags for kids including Advent Activity Calendar cards, hats and gloves, and books from the Goshen Public Library.

Support Bethany Christian Schools, December 2, by **shopping at Ten Thousand Villages Goshen.** All shoppers who mention Bethany Christian Schools will have a portion of their purchase go back to Bethany. Come shop with us from 5 - 9 p.m. on First Fridays in December.

Goshen College presents: A Festival of Carols, Sauder Concert Hall, Dec. 2 & 3, 7:30 p.m. Dec. 4 at 4 p.m. Includes performances by Goshen College music ensembles (choirs, orchestra), faculty and students, all set in a lavishly decorated Sauder Concert Hall. Tickets: \$15 at goshen.edu/tickets

An Evening of Advent and Christmas Carols: Sunday, Dec. 4, 7 p.m. in Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary's Chapel of the Sermon on the Mount (3003 Benham Avenue, Elkhart). With Shirley King on organ, Don Kehrberg on oboe and other reed instruments, and Brian Wiebe on viola and piano, this evening of music will feature Advent arrangements, classical selections and jazz settings. All are invited and admission is free, with donations accepted for the Worship and Arts Scholarship at AMBS.

East Goshen Mennonite Church is hosting **Ted & Company** as a fundraiser for Elkhart Co. Clubhouse (Elkhart and Goshen) on Wednesday, December 14, 2022 at 7:30 p.m. They will be performing *Just Given 'Em the News*, "an original, delightfully askew, musical take on the first Christmas. Jeff Raught and Ted weave original songs, inspired piano playing (Jeff, not Ted) and comedic theater around a new look at familiar Christmas stories. So what did Zechariah sound like before his temper rendered him mute? Did Gabriel ever tire of needing to tell people to 'Fear not?'" A free will offering will be taken at the event with all funds raised going to support the work of Elkhart Co. Clubhouses in Elkhart and Goshen.

Upcoming **3-day tag/estate sale**, December 15, 16, 17 in Prairie Village subdivision, Goshen. Follow on Facebook for item listings and location address: Janet and Jamie estate sales. —Dee Birkey

You are invited to **Emma Church** (1900 S 600 W, Topeka) Sunday, December 18, for our **10th annual Men's Chorus Christmas program**, "In the First Light." We are again offering two programs, at 2:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m., with food and fellowship following the evening program. Part of the service will include children and "animals" with a Bethlehem focus. Please join us as we celebrate the birth of Christ in song. For more information, contact info@emmachurch.net or call 260-593-2036.

Opportunities

Mennonite World Conference is hiring for a full-time **Development Executive position in North America.** The Development Executive participates in developing fund raising strategies and develops and maintains donor relations in North America under the supervision of the Chief Development Officer. See <https://mwc-cmm.org/mwcdvexec> for the job posting.