

December 21, 2025

The Waterford Buzz

This Sunday:

9:00 a.m. - Worship
10:30 a.m. - Nurture Hour;
classes for all ages

Welcome Team

Greeters: Leroy & Joyce Bontrager
Ushers: Dennis Myers, Wade Ramer, LaVon Short
Audiovisuals: Colin Berkey, Dom Ramer
Nursery: Cynthia & Gordon Bontrager

This Week at Waterford

Wednesday

6:30 p.m. - Christmas Eve Service

Zoom prayers

Monday - 8:30 a.m.
Thursday - 8:00 p.m.

Waterford Mennonite Church

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Phone 574-533-5642
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EXCITING NEWS FOR WATERFORD!



We are excited to share that Waterford Mennonite Church has been accepted to participate in Anabaptist Disabilities Network's new project, All In: Immersive Worship for Everybody. Over the next 5 years we will be joining 18 other Anabaptist congregations on a journey towards accessible and intergenerational worship.

We will learn from experts on children's faith formation, disability theology and intergenerational worship. We will explore new worship practices that engage people of all ages and abilities, such as art projects, dramatic reenactments, songs, repetition, and other multi-sensory practices. Waterford will receive a \$10,000 grant to support these expanded ministry efforts.

Lorene Miller will serve as our All In Project Leader. In the new year we will begin by organizing a congregational survey to get the input from the entire congregation, old and young. If you are interested in learning more or supporting these efforts, please get in contact with Lorene Miller or Pastor Katie. We are excited to discover how we can create worship services that are accessible and engaging for people of all ages and abilities, especially children.

Katie Misz

Life at Waterford

Last Sunday Attendance

Worship - 260
Nurture Hour - 238

Finances – December 14, 2025

Operating Fund	\$5,590.00
Mennonite Ed	\$5,796.00
Either Fund	\$6,355.00
<i>Budget Total</i>	\$17,741.00
Least Coin Fund	\$33.00
Four Way Mission	\$50.00
Total	\$17,824.00

Looking Ahead

December 28: Cindy Voth;
Christmas: God Among Us
(John 1:19-34; Psalm 32:1-2;
Isaiah 40:3)
January 4: Sermon: Deron
Bergstresser; Epiphany: Come
and See
(John 1:35-51; Psalm 66:1-5;
Matthew 2:1-12)

Pastoral Team

Cindy Voth, Pastoral Team
Leader
Monday - Thursday
Deron Bergstresser
Tuesday - Friday
Katie Misz
Monday - Thursday

Out of Office

Deron Bergstresser - Dec. 21-26
Cindy Voth - December 22
Katie Misz - December 26-29
Janet Shoemaker - Dec. 24-26

Office hours this week

Monday-Wednesday
9-12, 1-3
CLOSED Thursday-Friday

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

Janet Shoemaker, Editor
buzz@waterfordchurch.org

January Benefit Meal

Haystack Dinner 2026

David Gingerich

On Sunday January 4, the Pathfinders and Seekers Sunday school classes will again host a noon benefit meal for Carlos Ramos in the fellowship hall. Carlos attended WMC from August 2013 to August 2015. Pathfinders will be providing a Haystack dinner and Seekers will provide desserts. While living here, haystacks became one of Carlos's favorites foods.

Carlos used to live in Goshen. In 2012 while living and working here, he contracted bacterial meningitis and had both legs below the knees, all his fingers, and part of his nose amputated. In 2013, Darrel and Karen Sommers and myself, with help from Galen Kauffmann, set up the Samaritan Trust to assist him financially. Since 2016, he has been living in Mexico City. We support him financially. At the beginning of 2025 we increased his monthly amount to \$550.

This will be the fourth haystack fundraiser meal for him. The previous haystack meals have raised the following: January 2023: \$4,358, January 2024: \$6,429, January 2025: \$5,680. We have also held two other fundraisers for him in 2018 and 2020.

As I have often mentioned previously, Carlos continues to persevere. He still sings in the streets to earn income. This past spring he received new liners for his prosthetics. He had been waiting for them for some time. He continues to have a pet dog. His apartment has two rooms and a bathroom with hot water. It is located on the ground floor and is near the center of Mexico City. He describes the neighborhood as not the nicest nor the safest, but it is convenient for him.

Last summer he enrolled in a program through the Mexican government for housing. He is now on a waiting list. But as part of this program, he needs to show proof of income or have a specified amount of savings before he can move in when a unit becomes available. He sent me a picture of his Mexican bank statement which showed a balance of approximately \$30,000.00 Pesos. This is the equivalent of about \$1,650 US dollars. He is quite proud of his savings and I am, too.

Carlos continues to rely on and appreciate our support. I communicate with him by text or voice about twice a month. If you are unable to attend the benefit meal, but wish to contribute, your donation may be made in cash or check made out to Samaritan Trust and given to Karen Sommers. This is not a tax deductible donation.

Thank you again for showing kindness to others.

MLC

From the Beehive

Rose Shetler, for Ministry Leadership Council

From the Beehive will be an occasional feature in the *Buzz* to update the congregation on some of the items Ministry Leadership Council is discussing. It is an exciting time in the life of our congregation as we see the multiple ways God is at work through WMC. *From the Beehive* is a way to keep you informed and to understand issues and initiatives that MLC is working on. Please use these updates as a reminder to keep MLC and our congregation in your prayers. Here are a couple of updates we want to share:

- WMC is blessed with many elders in our congregation. We value their wisdom and life perspective from a vantage point full of years. We are also aware that this age group is growing in number. We are currently looking at how to best support Pastor Deron in his role as Pastor of Senior Ministries to meet the pastoral care needs of this age group.
- We are forming a listening group to hear from the congregation regarding the current Mennonite Education Fund Aid Plan.

Stay tuned for more developments in these two areas of ministry!

MLC Members:

Rose Shetler, co-chair
JD Smucker, co-chair
Christa Graber Kauffman, secretary
Jim Gascho, treasurer
John Kaufman
Linda Short,
Jerrell Ross Richer
Cindy Voth, pastoral team leader

Sunday, December 14

Orchestra

The WMC Christmas Orchestra, led by JD Smucker, provided the prelude and offertory! Thirty-one people, from ages 11 to 70-something, participated this year.



JoLee Stoltzfus on percussion.

Photos by Vyon or Elvina Schmidt

Children's Musical

The children performed the musical, "That Starry Night."



Wee Wonderers, Maeve Weaver Martens, Lydia Maust, and Lucas Smeltzer, wait for their cue to go onstage.



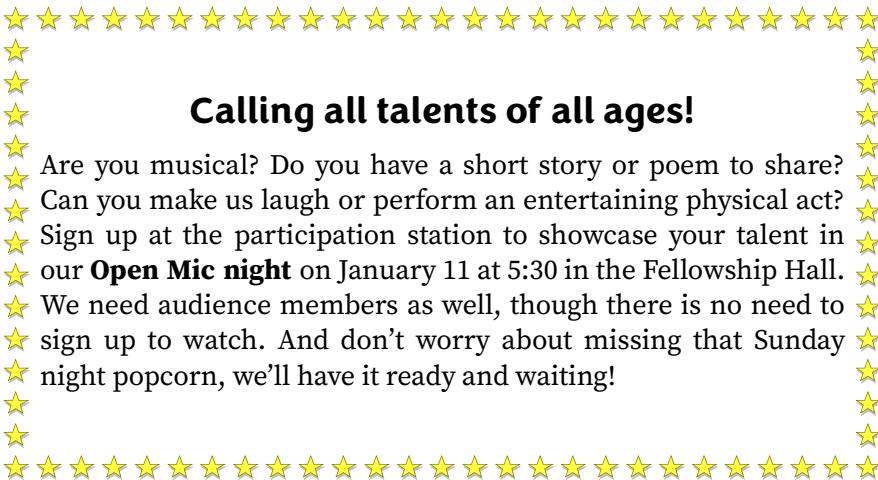
Thank You

[When assigned to write] a "Thank You" letter in one of my classes, my first thought was of Waterford Mennonite Church. Thank you for all you did for me and my opportunity to study at Goshen College. Everything I have at college is primarily thanks to you. Thank you!

Artem Prykhodko

Thank you to everyone for the prayers, cards, emails, offers of assistance, running errands and delivering food during my several weeks of solitary confinement after my foot and knee injuries. I was overwhelmed by all the care and concern I received from my church family! I know my healing process went smoother and faster—physically, emotionally and mentally—because of you than if I had been left to fend for myself. You are truly a blessing!

Janet Shoemaker



Calling all talents of all ages!

- Are you musical? Do you have a short story or poem to share?
- Can you make us laugh or perform an entertaining physical act?
- Sign up at the participation station to showcase your talent in our **Open Mic night** on January 11 at 5:30 in the Fellowship Hall.
- We need audience members as well, though there is no need to sign up to watch. And don't worry about missing that Sunday night popcorn, we'll have it ready and waiting!

MCUSA

MC USA invites you to join the **new Reimagining MC USA initiative**—a denomination-wide process of prayerful reflection and open dialogue about our shared future. Visit the new web portal to watch a four-part video series, download the small-group discussion guide and share your ideas in a survey. Learn more here. <https://www.mennoniteusa.org/news/reimagining/>

Learn how rest strengthens our capacity to resist oppression, inequity and despair in this Menno Snapshots blog by MC USA's Lorraine Stutzman Amstutz, denominational minister for Peace & Justice, featuring **reflections from attendees of MC USA's Women's Summit** in Greensboro, North Carolina. Read more here: <https://www.mennoniteusa.org/reflections-womens-summit/>

Read more in Executive Conference Minister Stanley Green's Menno Snapshots blog and accompanying sidebar to learn how Pacific Southwest Mennonite Conference is following Jesus, including its **commitment to be an "apartheid-free" conference**. <https://www.mennoniteusa.org/following-jesus-psmc/>

Waterford Announcements

Christmas Services this week:

- Join us **Christmas Eve, Wednesday, December 24**, for a service of "Lessons and Carols" and candle lighting at 6:30 p.m.
- Sunday, the 28th, there will be our **traditional Christmas brunch** beginning at 9:00 a.m. Bring Christmas breads, egg dishes or fruit to share with all of us. We will begin singing Christmas songs at 10:15 in the sanctuary until the service begins at 10:30.

Nursery Signups on class clipboards and the participation station! The children's cluster is looking for nursery volunteers! We have altered our process and will now have you simply sign your name that you would like to be added to the schedule either for worship or nurture hour. A sign-up list will be on Sunday school clipboards and also at the participation station. The list with dates will be published in January. Thank you for caring for our youngest Waterford community!

Court Chupp is looking for a 1 bedroom apartment, or even an extra spare room, in the Goshen area. Please contact him at 574-536-9625 with any leads.

Relief Kit supplies: Bring your relief kit items and place them in the boxes under the display table by the library until **Sunday, December 28**.

MMN

Just Peace Pilgrimage Calais, France: Walk with migrants, listen to their stories, and serve alongside organizations bringing hope at the edge of Europe, April 6-18, 2026. This 13-day pilgrimage will forever change how you see borders, justice, and the gospel call to welcome the stranger. Registration deadline: February 15, 2026. Only a few spots remain! Contact Stephanie Weaver at StephanieW@MennoniteMission.net or visit www.mennonitemission.net/JustPeace

AMBS

Webinar series: Find your way at AMBS! How can faith speak to issues that matter? Gain inspiration and insight from Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary faculty in these webinars geared toward young adults. The webinars will be held from **8 to 8:30 p.m. ET** on the following Tuesdays: **Jan. 20: Find Hope in the Midst of Despair**, with Jackie Wyse-Rhodes, PhD; and **Feb. 17: Find Meaning in Life**, with Sunghyun Lee, PhD. Attend either or both! Register to receive the link: ambs.edu/find-your-way

Online Short Course: Understanding Anabaptist Approaches to Scripture: Jan. 28–March 10. Study how 16th-century Anabaptists approached Scripture—as compared with Catholics and other Protestants—and consider those similarities and differences in light of today. This six-week online short course of Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary will be taught by Laura Brenneman-Fullwood, PhD, and David Cramer, PhD. No grades, no papers! CEUs available. Sign up by Jan. 7 to save \$50. ambs.edu/short-courses

Upcoming Events

Picket and Pray: Join Mennonite Action, Christians for a Free Palestine, Kirkridge Retreat and Study Center, and our partners each Wednesday from 12:00 to 12:30 p.m. for a **weekly 30-minute Zoom call** for shared action for a Free Palestine and spiritual practice rooted in the Christian tradition. It is more important than ever that we not lose momentum in our struggle for justice and peace. We can do so much more together than we can do alone. Each “Picket and Pray” call includes a short program of check-in, prayer, and a collective digital action. We invite you to join us and invite your friends and loved ones. Register here.

Plans are for the **MCC Meat Canner to be in Goshen in January** to – Saturday, January 10; and Monday, January 12 to Friday, January 16, 2026. The Canning will take place at The Depot, 1013 Division St., Goshen. The committee is also in need of funds to help pay for the meat. This year's Expected Budget will approach \$200,000.00. Please send your donations early. Make checks payable to: Foreign Relief MCC and send to: Ernie Miller, 59123 SR 13, Middlebury IN 46540. See announcement on the bulletin board for all the details.

Opportunities

The **English as a New Language (ENL)** program at Goshen College is still taking registrations for the spring semester. Cost is \$400 for 16 weeks of evening classes from January 20 to May 14, 2026. Classes are held Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 6 to 8 p.m. Before classes begin, you must schedule an appointment to attend a registration session, during which, you will complete your registration form and take an English level assessment. Tuition must be paid on the day of your evaluation. For more information or to make an appointment, contact Rocio Diaz at srociod@goshen.edu

Creative Resistance: Art, Faith & Social Change is a transformative week-long experience in Los Angeles exploring how creative expression fuels the imagination for peace and justice while building resilience in communities under attack. Grounded in Scripture's rich artistic tradition—from the Psalms to Jesus as a creative disruptor who used parables and embodied actions—you'll discover how creativity builds pathways toward justice. **March 20-25, 2026.** [Learn the details and apply](#) by January 15. Space is limited, so register early.

In **First Light Mission's year-end letter**, Mindy Morehead, executive director, says, “Today, we are excited to share an incredible opportunity that will directly support these families. The Elkhart County Community Foundation has awarded First Light Mission a generous matching grant of \$200,000. This means that every dollar you give between now and December 31 will be matched—dollar for dollar—up to the full amount of the grant.”

MCC US is actively seeking a new Executive Director. If you know individuals, within or beyond MCC, who should be considered, please share their name and email address with Ashley King, Director of Human Resources, at ashleyking@mcc.org by December 31. You can find details about the Executive Director job description by clicking [here](#).