

November 22, 2026

The Waterford Buzz

This Sunday
9:00 am Worship
10:30 am Nurture Hour – classes for all ages

Welcome Team
Greeters: Doug & Janette Yoder
Ushers: Dennis Myers, Carla Miller, Wade Ramer
Audiovisuals: Shawn Stutzman, Colin Berkey
Nursery: Dee Birkey, Laura Dick; Julie Zehr, Poppy Habecker

This Week at Waterford
Monday
8:30 am Anabaptist prayers / Zoom
Wednesday
7:00 pm MYF / Batemans

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Advent 2026: God's Dream

by Cindy Voth, Worship Ministry Team

November 29 marks the beginning of the season of Advent. During this liturgical season of the church, we will join believers around the world in a time of watching, waiting, preparing, and expecting. Once again this year we will utilize the worship resource in *The Leader,* a periodical produced by MennoMedia. Like the last two years, this Advent we will be following the assigned texts from the Narrative Lectionary instead of the Revised Common Lectionary. We are excited about this opportunity to enter the familiar season of Advent with unfamiliar pairings of biblical stories.

The theme this year is "God's Dream." The resource planners, from Central Plains Mennonite Conference, note that the text for this Advent invites us to activate our imaginations and to dream with God. "Whether we are awake or sleeping, dreams are about imagining and participating in alternative realities. In this season of waiting for Jesus' birth and celebrating the ongoing presence of God-with-us, we are invited to dream with God: to prayerfully imagine the world as God desires it to be, and to act in ways that make God's dream reality."

Within the weekly worship services, we will dwell with the assigned biblical passages and sing our theme song, Voices Together 209 "We Dream of a Turning," after we light the advent candles. All are invited to create a night sky image to be used as part of our Advent Collage Mural (more in Buzz article on November 15). A special word of thanks to Kathy Miller and Caryl Guth who will create our worship visual arts on the sanctuary platform. Thank you to mentor/mentee pairs Anna Myers / Gwen Habecker and Camila Perez Diener / Poppy Habecker who will assemble our night sky mural.

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LIFE AT WATERFORD

Last Sunday Attendance
Worship – 233
Nurture Hour – 239

Finances – November 8, 2026

Operating Fund	$9,660.25
Mennonite Ed	$190.00
Either Fund	$4,265.00
Subtotal	**$14,115.25**
Children's Offering	$4.00
Reparations	$1,100.00
W. Hollinger Memorial	$210.00
Least Coin Fund	$35.00
Four Way Mission	$50.00
Total	**$15,514.25**

Looking Ahead
Nov. 29: Sermon: Deron Bergstresser; Advent 1: God Dreams of Hope
(Hab. 1:1-7, 2:1-4:3, 17-19; Matt. 26:36-38)
Dec. 6: Sermon: Cindy Voth; Advent 1: God Dreams of Peace
(Esther 4:1-17; Matt 5:13-16)

Pastoral Team
Cindy Voth, Pastoral Team Leader
Monday - Thursday
Deron Bergstresser, pastor
Tuesday - Friday
Katie Misz, pastor
Monday - Thursday
Ursula Hess, Sr. Adult Chaplain

Out of Office
Cindy Voth Nov. 21-27
Katie Misz November 25

Office hours this week
Mon - Thu 9-12, 1-3
CLOSED Thursday and Friday

Greeter sign-up:
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1fRLdoYdw_QxRiQUvRhUscNV-koHV-oTcPnu61NyBcjM/edit?gid=0#gid=0

The *Waterford Buzz* is published weekly for members of Waterford Mennonite Church. Items for inclusion should be no more than 600 words and sent to the editor by 5 p.m. Tuesday preceding publication.
Judy Beachy, Editor
buzz@waterfordchurch.org

Other highlights as we enter the spirit and hope that comes with the Advent and Christmas season:

- Each week, our worship service will be led by two individuals from different generations.
- During worship on December 6, our Christmas Orchestra, led by JD Smucker, will share in prelude music, as well as accompany some of our opening carols.
- During worship on December 13, our children and youth will offer our Christmas Pageant, retelling the Christmas story. A special word of thanks to director Angela Stoltzfus.
- December 20:
  - A Christmas Choir directed by Bob Brenneman will share special music within morning worship.
  - You may sign up to deliver a poinsettia plant to one of the nineteen WMC Senior Adults unable to attend worship.
  - A Longest Night Service will be held at 6:30 p.m. On this evening before the longest night of the year, we will remember the promise of the coming Light that will not be overcome by any darkness. We will honor the presence of those for whom there may be sadness or pain or grief as Christmas approaches.
- On December 24, all are invited to Christmas Eve Service at 6:30 p.m. This service of Lessons and Carols will lead us through the Christmas story and will include candle lighting.
- On December 27, our Christmas Brunch will be at 9 a.m., followed by Christmas Worship at 10:30 a.m. There will be no Nurture Hour (please note the change in our morning schedule). A special word of thanks to the Seekers who will be hosting our brunch.

We welcome you on this journey of Advent as we once again prepare to fully welcome and celebrate the arrival of Emmanuel.

Date	Theme: God's Dream	Scripture	Preacher	Special Elements
11/29	God dreams of **HOPE**	Hab. 1:1-7; 2:1-4:3, 17-19; Matt. 26:36-38	Deron Bergstresser	
12/6	God dreams of **PEACE**	Esther 4:1-17; Matt. 5:13-16	Cindy Voth	Christmas Orchestra
12/13	God dreams of **JOY**	Isaiah 42:1-8; Matt. 12:15-21	–	Children's Musical
12/20	God dreams of **LOVE**	Matt. 1:18-25; Psalm 23:1-4 or 23:4	Cindy Voth	Christmas Choir; Poinsettias for Senior Adults
12/27	God dreams of **SURPRISES**	Matt. 1:1-17; Psalm 132:11-12	Katie Misz	Brunch at 9, Worship at 10:30; no Nurture Hour
1/3	God dreams of **PROTECTION**	Matt. 2:1-23; Psalm 96:10-13; Psalm 11:1-3	Deron Bergstresser	

Congregational Meeting Report

by JD Smucker, Ministry Leadership Council Chair

It was an exciting Sunday afternoon as our WMC community gathered for an evening of fellowship, information sharing, and important decisions. Long tables filled with food and snacks provided plenty to enjoy as we heard updates on the many ways our church supports one another and serves beyond our community.

We began by affirming Bonita Schrock for the Safe Church Ministry Team, receiving 100% affirmation with 117 votes. Other updates included a two-hour weekly increase in FTE for Ursula in her role as Senior Adult Chaplain, Deron's update on the Jubilee Fund, and Jordan Kauffman's invitation to support Ariana and Sam's work with We Are the Farmers in Kenya.

Following several MLC updates—including future reviews of the Mennonite Education Funding Guidelines, the college funding portion, and a possible cap on the Mennonite Education Fund's total budget—we turned to the vote regarding the Bethany funding portion of the MEF.

With three options and a wide range of perspectives represented in the discussion, the outcome was uncertain. The final vote was:

- Option A: 65% funding — 83 votes (65%)
- Option C: Full funding — 30 votes (23%)
- Option B: 80% funding — 15 votes (12%)

A total of 129 votes were cast, including one write-in option for 50% funding.

The result means we will continue with the current policy of 65% funding for the Bethany portion of the Mennonite Education Fund. Further review and revisions to the MEF Guidelines are anticipated in the coming year. Watch for additional opportunities to share your perspective as our WMC community continues discerning how best to support Mennonite education.



WATERFORD AT WELLFIELD

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12 | ELKHART

Join the Fellowship Ministry Team to enjoy nearly 2 million lights along a ¾-mile walking path.
Purchase your own tickets online at Wellfield Botanic Gardens
Adults: $15 | Children (ages 3–12): $10

- Tickets are non-refundable but may be used on a different evening if plans change.
- Doors open at 5:30 p.m., with last admission at 8:00 p.m.
- Concessions are available; outside food and drinks are not permitted.

There is no organized group arrival time. Come whenever you wish, or make plans to attend with other Waterford friends. Enjoy the lights and see how many Waterford faces you can spot! **Please sign up at the participation station** so we know who to look for and can help coordinate rides if needed. Need help purchasing tickets or arranging transportation? Contact Pastor Cindy or Melissa Chupp at 574-370-1261.



Sam & Ariana under a mango tree on their farm



Farmers participating in a rich picture activity



Our team did tree planting at a youth farmer's farm in Saikeri village.

We Are The Farmers

by Ariana Perez Diener and Samuel Lasiti

We Are The Farmers Initiative is a community-based organization registered under the Social Development Office in Kajiado West Sub-County. The name "We are the Farmers" is a translation of the Swahili and Maasai names: Wakulima ni Sisi (Swahili) and Iyiok Ilairemok (Maasai). These names put our farmers at the forefront of our work and give ownership and commitment to being stewards and tenders of their own land. It also depicts our commitment to food sovereignty and self-reliance. By empowering local farmers to produce their own safe and nutritious food, we address critical issues related to climate change and food insecurity while fostering food sovereignty.

Kenyan arid and semi-arid (ASAL) counties are among the most food-insecure because of drought and famine driven by climate change. Communities in Kajiado West sub-county, where we are based, are particularly vulnerable to these effects.

At our home and demonstration farm in Ewuaso, we have a tree nursery that supplies trees to our community through distributions with our organization or through individuals who purchase them. Over the past two years, we have realized the impact trees can have on many households and have seen a growing interest in the community in growing trees. This year we are scaling our impact through our Trees for Food, Peace and Ecological Healing program.

Our Trees for Food, Peace and Ecological Healing program has three main goals. In line with our mission, we aim to increase food security and support the livelihoods of the pastoral communities

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where we live. We seek to strengthen peaceful coexistence betweenpeople in our communities and their relationship with nature. Lastly, we strive to heal and restore the semi-arid and arid landscapes (ASALs) around us that have been degraded by overgrazing, erosion, tillage, and other extractive practices. Our three goals are inter-connected, and we cannot achieve one without the others.

We have partnered with Mennonite Men to help them achieve their goal of planting 1 million trees by 2030. Through the Mennonite Men grant, We Are The Farmers intends to plant 20,000 trees in the next year to help increase food sovereignty and security through agroforestry and permaculture farms while promoting peace and restoring degraded landscapes. We have been gifted land (4.5 acres) from a community member, who is a champion of planting trees and protecting indigenous land, to establish a bigger demonstration farm in Kimuka village, thirty-five minutes from the current demonstration farm in Ewuaso Oonkidong'i village. On the new demonstration farm, we want to model silvopasture ("silvo" meaning trees and "pasture" meaning grass) to showcase how agroforestry and sustainable livestock keeping can be managed together in a successful system. Agroforestry is a farming system that integrates trees, food, and livestock crops. Our goal will be to encourage the growth of existing trees in the area and to plant 5000 agroforestry trees that will provide fodder, timber, firewood, and fruit.

Last year, Waterford supported our work through the endowment fund as well as a through grant from the Missions Team this year. With these grants we have been able to purchase a 10,000L (2,600 gal) tank for the Ewuaso demo farm and establish a herb mandala garden, as well as going on two learning tours with farmers and staff.

We will be partnering with Mennonite Mission Network to continue expanding our work in our community to reach more households. We also hope that it will be a way to connect our communities in the US and Kenya. MMN and WMC will provide a connection point for us to share our work with you all through our quarterly updates and we hope, eventually, learning tours! We hope that our work will uphold the mission of participating in holistic witness to Jesus Christ through lifting up the vulnerable in our community.

To learn more about our work and how to support us financially, contact one of the members of our support team.

- Liz Gingrich
- Katie Misz
- Jordan Kauffman
- Christa Graber Kauffman
- Laurina Graber Ditzler
- Jason Kauffman
- Shawn Stutzman

To stay updated, check our website and social media links below:

- Website: https://wearethefarmers.org/
- LinkedIn
- Facebook
- Instagram

New Attenders

The Beachy family lives a few miles east of Nappanee, about a mile from where Jason grew up. Jason works as a supervisor at Ayr Custom Cabinetry near Nappanee. He enjoys working with wood, fixing things, and birdwatching. Judy grew up near Hagerstown, Maryland. She is currently a full-time student at Indiana Wesleyan, working toward a degree in Social Work. She works in the WMC office, guest teaches at BCS, and is a volunteer advocate with Called to Peace Ministries and LifeRing Christian

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New Buzz Editor

Judy Beachy, the new administrative assistant, is now editing the Buzz! If you have announcements or articles for the Buzz, please send them to buzz@waterfordchurch.org. Remember, **items are due by 5:00 p.m. the Tuesday before publication**. Please limit articles to 600 words if possible.

Ministry. She enjoys adventures in nature, exploring old towns, and listening to podcasts.

Jason and Judy married in 2000. From 2002-2005, they volunteered at Northern Youth Programs, a ministry that partners with Indigenous communities in Northwestern Ontario. They moved from Nappanee into inner Elkhart in 2007, where they lived for 8 years. In 2015, they moved back to the Nappanee area.

Connor joined their family as a newborn via adoption in 2007. He is now employed by Amazon. Jason and Judy became licensed foster parents in 2008 and hosted an infant, a toddler, and a teen in the next 2 years. In 2010, God surprised them with a pregnancy, and Regan was born. Lauren was born in 2014. Regan and Lauren are both students at BCS, where they both play soccer and basketball. Their friendships at BCS led the Beachy family to Waterford. In 2021, after a 6-year process, the Beachys finalized the adoption of their last and oldest child, Makenzie, when she was 17. Makenzie came from Sinaloa, Mexico, where the family spent nearly two months as the adoption process was completed. Makenzie now lives in Kentucky and has two children.

Opportunities

Church Finance Administrator Job Opening: Assembly Mennonite Church (727 New York St, Goshen) is seeking a part-time Church Finance Administrator (10–20 hrs/week) to support the congregation's ministries. Responsibilities include bookkeeping, budgeting, financial reporting, payroll, personnel records, and donor database management. Compensation is $24–$29/hr based on experience. Interested candidates should send a resume and brief letter of interest to the Assembly Finance Committee: finance@assemblymennonite.org.

Mennonite Mission Network is seeking a detail-oriented Senior Finance Assistant to support our payroll and accounting functions. Full-time, hybrid, or in-office in Newton, Kansas, or Elkhart, Indiana. To learn more and apply, visit mennonitemission.net/Employment.

Mennonite Central Committee Great Lakes seeks a Plain Community Liaison to develop, analyze, implement and evaluate engagement with Plain communities. This full-time position sets broad goals for building relationships with key representatives in Plain communities and is based in Goshen, IN or Kidron, OH. View the full job description and apply online by December 4 at mcc.org/plain-liaison.

Waterford Announcements

We will be collecting offerings for the **Reparations Fund this Sunday** in baskets by the doors to the sanctuary after the service.

Please bring your **night sky image for the Advent mural** this Sunday. If you didn't get a chance to make one, there are extra slips of paper with the art supplies on the table outside the sanctuary doors. You can place your finished drawing in the basket on the participation station table.

Stephen Minister Training Postponed. The Stephen Leader Team decided to delay our planned Stephen Minister training until January – April 2028. While a difficult decision to make, we believe it was led by God. This program trains interested persons from WMC, College Mennonite Church, and Berkey Avenue Mennonite Fellowship. We are grateful for those who expressed interest but discerned this year was not the right time for them. We continue to welcome inquiries from persons considering becoming Stephen Ministers, as well as recommendations from others for persons we should ask to become Stephen Ministers. We thank you as you continue to pray for the Stephen Leader Team, the caregiving of the current Stephen Ministers, and the persons they care for.

Join me in singing **a choir number for Advent** on December 20. All ages who love to sing are invited. We will sing "Christmas Sanctus" by Susan and Lee Dengler. IF YOU MISSED THE SIGN-UP SHEET, YOU MAY STILL COME TO REHEARSAL AT 8 a.m. this Sunday, the 22nd, and/or the 29th!
– Bob Brenneman

The **Mentor/Mentee group** invites the congregation to join them in the fellowship hall on Wednesday evening, December 2, at 7:00 to learn from Rebecca Hernandez of MCC. Rebecca will be presenting the **RIR Protocol** (Recognize, Interrupt, Repair), which will give us tools to support others as we live out our values of peace, accountability, and restoration. There will be "low-risk" and interactive practice in ways to become more comfortable with interrupting bias and supporting others. If you need more information, you can search for Dr. Nancy Dome, the developer of the protocol, talk to Pastor Katie, who has heard the presentation (and says it was amazing!), or watch this 3-minute video to get a taste of what is to come: Conflict Resolution With RIR Protocol Contact Bonita Schrock with your questions.

MCUSA

Leaders set three priorities for Reimagining MC USA: Board members and senior leaders from the MC USA Executive Board and its agencies, Mennonite Mission Network and MennoMedia, met near Philadelphia on Oct. 8, 2026, to identify three priorities for the next two years of Reimagining MC USA: equipping congregations for change, strengthening a united peace witness and building a more connected church. Read more here.

AMBS

Develop skills for holistic leadership: Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary's 52-credit-hour Master of Arts in Christian Formation prepares students for ministry in spiritual formation and guidance, teaching and worship in congregations and other faith-based settings. The program can be completed on campus and is also available in a distance-friendly format for students in the U.S. Generous need-based financial aid, scholarships and matching grants are available. ambs.edu/macf

Upcoming Events

Prairie Street Mennonite Church will host a **Christmas Market** for handmade goods (gifts, crafts, and foods), on Saturday, November 28th, from 2-6 p.m. Stop in to do a little Christmas shopping and support your local artisans. If you would like to be a vendor, call or text Heather Blaha at 574-612-6123. There is no vendor fee for this event.

Goshen College Fall Mainstage: The Metromaniacs, Nov. 21 at 7:30 p.m., Nov. 22 at 2:30 p.m., Umble Center. It's springtime in Paris, 1738. Metromania, the poetry craze, is the latest thing. A French farce, adapted by American comic maestro David Ives.

Advent Chapel: Lighting the Campus, November 22, 7 p.m., Church-Chapel Sanctuary. Students, faculty, staff and community members are welcome to mark the coming of Advent by illuminating the campus. Everyone is invited to the Church-Chapel to sing and hear Scripture before processing by candlelight to Schrock Plaza. There, President Rebecca Stoltzfus will invite all to illuminate the campus, and the trees will light up along with everyone's candles.

Mennonite Arts Weekend: Join us at Mennonite Arts Weekend, February 5-7, 2027, in Cincinnati, Ohio. This weekend celebrates the creativity and discipline of Anabaptist Mennonite artists. Presentations by musicians, visual artists, writers, and craftspeople start on Friday evening and conclude with Sunday morning worship. Activities and workshops designed specifically for children (pre-K - high school) are planned. **Early-bird registration ends Nov. 30, 2026**. Find the list of presenters and registration/location information at https://mennoniteartsweekend.org.

Goshen College **A Festival of Carols** , Friday, Dec. 4 - Sunday, Dec. 6: 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday; 4 p.m. Sunday, Music Center, Sauder Concert Hall. The Sunday performance will be livestreamed. Goshen College's holiday celebration is patterned on a traditional English worship service. It features Christmas carols, spirituals, Scripture readings and sacred music in a concert hall decorated with garlands, lights and trees. The audience is invited to join in singing familiar carols. Purchase tickets at https://www.goshen.edu/events/festival-of-carols/.

Mennonite mandolinist Ethan Setiawan will be appearing with his band **Ethan Setiawan & Fine Ground** on Saturday, December 5, at Ignition Music Garage in Goshen. Ethan grew up in the Goshen area attending Assembly Mennonite Church. Ethan Setiawan & Fine Ground is deeply rooted in traditional bluegrass while leaning into a thoughtful modernity. The Boston-based quintet blends fresh original compositions with songs by beloved contemporary folk artists. Their debut album "Little Storms" is a portrait of longtime friendship, collaboration, and love of craft. For more information go to ignitionmusic.net/tickets