

Family Ministry Task Force Update

The Family Ministry Task Force has been meeting at least monthly since February, concerned with our task to “realign our proclamation and practices so that parents are acknowledged, trained, and held accountable as persons primarily responsible for the discipleship of their children.”

Along the way we have considered what faith formation looks like at various life stages, including for students in the first half of high school. We explored what it means to be a faith-formed adult, young adult, youth, and child, working backwards to consider what is appropriate at each level for entry into the next stage of life. We spent time exploring what it means to be “family” within a church family, particularly given the changing nature and makeup of households.

As we move to identifying faith formation activities under the family ministry rubric, we have identified four “best practices” on which we hope to focus. In some cases, this might mean that some ministries continue as they have. In other cases, these priorities might call for adjustments in existing programming. The four priorities we have identified are:

- We want to continue our emphasis on being an **intergenerational congregation** that readily chooses to be spiritual grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins of children and youth in the congregation. Children’s and youth ministries have often espoused a 1:5 ratio, with one adult for each five students present. While we will continue that ratio for planned activities, we also imagine a 5:1 ratio in congregational life, where each child or youth has meaningful, though likely informal, interactions with at least five adults. A recent example demonstrated this, when the mother of a child reported that five different adults in the congregation called after surgery.

- We want to enhance what is described as “**milestone ministry**,” where events in the lives of students provide opportunity for ritual and interaction. We already do this with events such as baby dedications, distribution of Bibles, and gifts at baptism and high school graduation. But what would it look like to provide resources for a parental blessing when a high schooler gains the ability to drive? Or offering materials for families to celebrate the seasons of the church year at home?

- Building on a culture of service already present at Waterford, we hope to **emphasize opportunities for service**. These could include developing more service trips such as those which have happened over spring break in Mashulaville, Miss., but could also include inviting parents to join Venture Club, JYF, or MYF service evenings, or enhancing opportunities for families to join God’s work in local ministries.

- We seek to **provide resources** for parents’ own spirituality and for their roles as parents and spiritual formers at home. This could come in the development of programming activities, but it could also include furthering our library holdings or capitalizing on electronic and social media resources. For this area in particular, we welcome feedback from parents on the type of resources they would find most *helpful*. Please feel free to share ideas with Lyle Miller or a member of the task force.

A future agenda item for the task force, after priorities are further identified, will be to develop the ministry team structure which will best serve faith formation activities.

—Lyle Miller, pastor of family life and financial stewardship on behalf of the Family Ministry Task Force:
Helen Bowman, Mikki Bowman,
Jeff Miller, Jo Ward-Selman, Ron Weirich

Change in Worship Times for August 17

As we joyfully anticipate the baptisms of several of our youth on Sunday August 17, in order to maximize the participation of the congregation for this special time, we will **not** be having an 8:00 early worship service that day. Nurture hour and the 10:45 worship service will continue as usual. This will allow us to hear baptismal testimonies within the regular worship service and then proceed together immediately afterward to the baptismal pond to conclude with the baptisms outdoors. This change applies only to worship on August 17. Normal schedule of two services will resume on the 24th.

Applications Welcomed for WMC Endowment Fund

Thanks to another positive investment quarter, the Endowment Fund is pleased to announce that \$4,200 will be available during this cycle of grant distributions.

Waterford's Endowment Fund was established about seven years to serve as a way to support the ongoing work of Jesus at Waterford. Ministry teams, recognized groups within the congregations, and individuals representing outside agencies are all invited to apply for grants, with October 1 as the deadline for this distribution cycle. Past distributions have supported continuing education for ministry teams, special events, housing projects, mission organizations and more. We welcome being inundated with requests, as these applications represent creative approaches to ministry. Applications are available in the literature racks located near the mailboxes.

As you consider an application, here are a few suggestions from the Endowment Fund Committee that can strengthen a proposal:

- Linkages to the congregation's mission and directional statements are beneficial.
- Opportunities to serve as one-time "seed money" for a new project or to expand an ongoing project are particularly well received, though consideration should also be given to the sustainability of an ongoing project.
- We have typically denied projects that would more appropriately be funded from our regular congregational spending plans.
- Given that we typically receive requests for more money than is available, the opportunity to partially fund a proposal through your itemizing of components is helpful.

If you have questions about the process of preparing an application, please contact a member of the committee listed below, particularly Chair Elvina Schmidt.

The balance of the fund on June 30 was \$189,437. When past distributions are taken into account, the investment return over the past year was around 14 percent. Our practice of distributing approximately five percent of the fund in a given year allows us to make consistent grants in both strong and weak economies.

Contributions to the fund are welcomed at any time, both from current giving or from inclusion in your planned giving activities. If you have questions about contributing, please contact a committee member, particularly Lyle Miller. The Mennonite Foundation also provides excellent assistance in considering creative ways of being generous with the financial resources we have been entrusted with.

—Endowment Fund Committee: Elvina Schmidt, chair;
Tim Burkholder, chair of the congregation;
Jim Fisher, lay ministry partner for Facilities & Finance
Ministry Team; Jerry Detweiler; Jon. Wieand;
Lyle Miller, pastor of family life and financial stewardship

Partnership with Prairie View Elementary School

Mission and Service Ministry Team is excited about our new partnership with Maple City Chapel and Prairie View Elementary School (PVES). We are still looking for one or two individuals to join the "Prairie View Outreach Team" to help provide coordination of this new partnership. The team will be led by Len Harms. Contact Len if you are interested.

Our first connection for this partnership will be providing lunch to the staff/faculty at PVES during their second workday on August 6 at noon. Due to the timing we will be having the lunch catered, but we are still in need of additional pies for dessert. We also desire to have up to ten individuals from Waterford present for the luncheon to meet and eat with the staff and make connections for our new partnership. Please stop by the Participation Station today to sign up to make a pie, or to join the staff for lunch on August 6.

—Cindy Voth, pastor of community life for
Mission and Service Ministry Team: Russ Hochstetler,
lay ministry partner; Ann Burkholder, Jordan Graber
Kauffman, Eldon Stoltzfus, Deloris Wyse

College Student Summer Activities

Nate Gingerich, *Hesston College sophomore* — I'm working for Greenfield Landscaping. I'll start back to school in August, where I'll be an RA (Resident Assistant).

Ryan Minter, *Purdue University sophomore* — I'm slowly recovering from ankle surgery and can hopefully put weight on it in the next week or two. The previously scheduled jaw surgery was postponed until August. I did end up taking my last two math courses at Purdue this summer as planned. I'm doing pretty well so far in both of them.

Fall Nurture Hour Elective: An Introduction to the Old Testament

Does the Old Testament have relevance for Christians in the 21st Century? Why should an Anabaptist Christian spend much time in this older testament, when the focal point of faith is Jesus Christ? What connections can there be between the ancient text and imagination?! Can the Old Testament actually be an exiting framework for spiritual growth?

These questions—and many more—will be discussed in the elective class led by Luke Gascho starting on September 7, 2014. The class will study *An Introduction to the Old Testament, Second Edition: The Canon and Christian Imagination (2012)* by Walter Brueggemann and Tod Linafelt. This clearly written book will aid students in reading the Old Testament afresh. It will provide for good in depth learning in how the Bible thinks. It will enlighten the class discussion of dynamic theological perspectives. Be ready for a thrilling tour of 39 books! Caution: Class participants may never read the Old Testament the same way again!

(The church will subsidize the purchase of the book. Please sign up at the Participation Station and indicate whether you need a book.)

Children/Youth Transitions for 2014-15

As we transition into the 2014-15 programming year for children and youth faith formation activities, here are the significant dates for families to be aware of:

- MYF: Returning youth (10th, 11th, 12th grade) will gather on Wednesday, Aug. 13, where we will plan a welcoming night for new youth. New MYFers (9th grade) will join for the first time on Wednesday, Aug. 20.
- Junior MYF (6th-8th grade) and Venture Club (3rd-5th grade): These groups will meet for the first time on Wednesday, Aug. 27.
- Children's and youth Sunday school: All classes from age 2.5 through high school will transition to new grades for Sunday school on Sunday, Aug. 17.
- 1st and 6th Bible dedications: As part of our Year of the Bible kickoff, students beginning 1st grade and 6th grade will receive Bibles as part of our worship service on Sunday, Aug. 31.

—Lyle Miller, pastor of family life
and financial stewardship

Marriage Enrichment Retreat

Save the date! September 12-13 will be our third marriage enrichment retreat—jointly planned and experienced with Berkey Avenue Mennonite Fellowship. This year we will gather at Waterford Mennonite Church on Friday evening at 7 p.m. to watch a play “A Bicycle Built for Two” performed by the Canadian drama troupe, Theatre of the Beat. This play “takes a playful look at relationships, commitment, and divorce.” Tickets will go on sale August 17 and will be \$10 per person for presale, or \$12 per person at the door. We will also publicize the play in the Goshen community so be sure to get your tickets early.

Those from WMC and Berkey Avenue are invited to return to Waterford Mennonite on Saturday morning from 10 am-noon for the second part of our retreat. During this time we will hear from a couple who has had a long history of riding tandem bikes together, and how that experience mirrors their marriage journeys (highs/lows, different terrains, managing different weather conditions, experiences of injuries, etc.). Participants will be given time to meet with their spouse to consider how the themes of the retreat relate to their own marriage. Participants should also come in comfortable clothes appropriate to try out riding a tandem bike with their spouse in our church parking lot! Childcare will be provided during our Saturday morning time.

—Cindy Voth, pastor of community life

Thank You

To our church family and the Sojourners Sunday School class: we would like to thank you for your loving kindness during Irvin's declining health and July 10 passing. Thank you for your visits and cards, the food to our home, and the flowers. Thank you also for providing the meals for our extended family before Irvin's visitation and memorial services on Tuesday and Wednesday. We very much appreciate your care and support during this difficult time. We are thankful that Irvin is now rejoicing in heaven.

—Nelda Nussbaum and family

With Deep Gratitude



Broken...Beloved
Annual Sessions 2014
Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference

Thank you to the Waterford congregation for being willing to host delegates Sunday morning as part of Annual Sessions.

—The IN-MI Conference
Program Planning Committee

In the Nurture Wing ...

Today in Sunday school, children in preschool through eighth grade explored this lesson. Consider using this information for conversation that nurtures your child's faith.

Text: Acts 8:4-8, 26-40

Philip and the Ethiopian official

- 1 | Read Acts 8:39-40. Why do you think the Spirit "snatched Philip away?"
- 2 | Talk about a baptism you have seen or experienced.
- 3 | Build your own chariot using a small box and button "wheels."

Did you know?

There are thirteen months in the Ethiopian calendar. How long is the thirteenth month? (5 days—6 days in a leap year.)

Prayer for the week

God, give us opportunities to share your love with others today.

A View from the Pew

Is God always right? Do we dare to ask that question? How many times have we played the part of Job? And how many times have we said to God, "You've got it all wrong."

A teenager commits suicide. Identical twin sisters are killed instantly in a car accident at the beginning of their senior year. A parent taken from young children by cancer. We are tempted to cry out, "God, where have you been?"

Some one may remind us of Romans 8:28 and inwardly we say, "I cannot hear that now. Perhaps later on." Romans 8:28 is, indeed, given by God to strengthen our faith. "All things work together for good, to them who are called according to his purpose." All things? Work together? For good? But God knows. He may say, "Just wait a while."

So we remember that faith is believing what we do not see. Can we think of anything better?

—John C. King



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

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Year of the Bible

READ IT STUDY IT PRAY IT LIVE IT

Fall Mission Weekend

The Mission and Service Ministry Team has arranged for James Krabill, senior executive of Global Ministries for Mennonite Mission Network, to serve as our morning worship speaker on Sunday, November 23 for our Fall Mission Weekend. We are excited for the opportunity to hear from James! We are particularly looking forward to hearing from James about how his passions and expertise dovetail with our yearlong theme of "Year of the Bible."

James served with Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) from 1976 to 1996. For much of this time he was a Bible and Church History teacher among African-initiated churches in Ivory Coast. From 1995 to 2002, Krabill provided oversight to MBM's Mission Advocacy and Communication division and since then has served as Senior Executive for Global Ministries at Mennonite Mission Network

In addition to preaching during both of our morning worship services, James will also be speaking during the nurture hour. This will allow more interaction with James; regarding his passions about the Bible, as well as providing an opportunity to hear what God is doing in and through Mennonite Mission Network.

As is our history, we will receive a special morning offering on November 23. This offering will be divided in four ways: Goshen Ministerial Association Emergency Fund, Waterford's Jubilee Fund (to provide assistance for community members those who stop by the church during the week for financial assistance and who are not eligible for GMA funds—more info on this fund will be coming soon), Ross Richer Ecuador Ministry Support Team, and Goshen Jail Chaplaincy.

We will be having a special fellowship meal following the second service. For your salad/side dish/main course/or dessert we invite you to consider bringing an international dish to share with others. We will have notecards available to label your dish, both the name and where in the world it is from. Come for a delectable and fun-filled fellowship time!

—Cindy Voth, pastor of community life