

# buzz

September 28, 2014

## "I Can't Be a Stephen Minister!"

Maybe you haven't said this aloud in a crowd, but you may have spoken it to yourself in a mirror—or at least thought it. Anytime a new challenge shows up, the "I can't" phrase is bound to be nearby.

You are aware of our congregation's Stephen Ministry, sense you have the gifts, the commitment, and the desire to be a Stephen Minister, and you even may have felt God's tap on your shoulder. But you still aren't sure. What are some of the reasons you've given yourself for not becoming a Stephen Minister? The following are some likely candidates:

*"I'm not qualified to be a Stephen Minister."*

What qualifications are needed to become a Stephen Minister? You need to be a caring person who is willing to learn, grow and serve. You must be willing and able to maintain confidentiality. You need to make a commitment to training, ministry and supervision. If you meet those qualifications, your Stephen Leaders will equip you with the rest of what you need: training, support, encouragement, care and prayers. They will make sure that you will succeed as a Stephen Minister.

*"I don't know what to say or do in a ministry situation."*

Stephen Ministry training is thorough and practical. It includes listening, dealing with feelings, assertiveness, confidentiality, maintaining boundaries, how to begin and end caring relationships, and how to care for people who are grieving, dying, aging, divorcing, and experiencing other life crises. The goal of training is to prepare Stephen Ministers for whatever they might encounter when working with care receivers. Through reading, lecture, questions and answers, and skill practice you will learn what you need to know to succeed as a Stephen Minister. After being assigned a care receiver, Stephen Ministers participate in continuing education and Peer Supervision Group sessions. This is where they care for and support one another, and sharpen their caregiving skills.

*"I have problems in my own life. How can I help other people with their problems?"*

Some problems are so big that you need to address your own needs and wait until later to be a Stephen Minister. After you have worked through your own problems, however, your experience of finding God's help and care in your struggles is some of the best preparation you'll ever receive for caring for others during their tough times. Stephen Ministers' job is to walk beside another person as that person works through his or her struggles. The Stephen Minister brings stability, prayer, and Christ's love to the care receivers.

*"I don't have enough time to be a Stephen Minister."*

There's a way in which this is true for everyone--- time is a precious commodity. As a matter of fact, time is so precious that it only makes sense to use it on activities that make a real difference—in others' lives as well as in your own life. When you make the commitment to be a Stephen Minister, you will find the hours you need to devote to it. Stephen Ministry becomes a priority among the many activities you're involved in. The time investment is significant, but so is the contribution you will be making to building God's Kingdom.

Feel free to converse with our current or former Stephen Ministers: Denise Diener, Len Harms, Connie Haarer, Cathy Hochstetler, Claramae Klink, Kay Miller, Mim Meyer, Gary Shetler or Elmer Wyse who can share their personal stories with you—stories of how God has poured blessings into their lives through their service as Stephen Ministers.

In another year, one of these blessing stories may be your own. An information session will be offered during the **October 5th Nurture Hour**, and **October 8th Soul Food Wednesday** with the purpose of helping you consider your own sense of gifts and call to becoming a Stephen Minister.

—the WMC Stephen Leader Team

## Year of the Bible: Sunday Evening Events



An intergenerational group gathered on September 14 to experience “Reflecting Creation”—our first special Sunday evening event as part of Year of the Bible. Our engaging time was led by Mark and Krista Daniels as we spent time observing God’s amazing creation by having a guided tour of our wetlands, as well as utilizing both sides of our brain in a drawing activity. We concluded our night gathered around a campfire making and enjoy s’mores. Plan on joining us for the next Sunday evening event with YOTB! “Characters Come to Life” will be on October 26 from 5-6:30 pm and will be led by the Ross Richer family!

## Old Fashioned Hymn Sing

On October 15 there will be an Old Fashioned Hymn Sing, so Waterford Mennonite Senior Adults save the date! More information to come soon.

## A New Digital Presence for WMC

In early October we will have a brand new website for our congregation. This new site will be optimized for viewing on your smart phone, tablet, and your desktop. Some other new features include: online event calendar, searchable sermon archives with sermon notes and potential for embedded audio or video, YOTB materials, direct link to live streaming, information for visitors and new attenders.

## Farewell Open House for Sam and June Wyse

Sam and June Wyse have been a part of our congregation for the past twenty years. Their plans are to move to Minnesota sometime in October to be closer to family. We have been blessed by their friendship and the many ways that they have been a part of Waterford congregation. Agape Sunday school class will be hosting an **open house in the Fellowship Hall from 2-4 p.m., Sunday, October 12**. All are invited to attend.

—Agape Friends

## Endowment Fund Applications Welcomed

The deadline to prepare applications for this cycle of grants from Waterford’s Endowment is Oct. 1. A total of \$4,200 will be available during this distribution cycle.

Waterford’s Endowment Fund was established about seven years ago 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. 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:

- Links 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, contact a member of the committee listed below, particularly chair Elvina Schmidt.

Contributions to the fund are welcomed at any time. 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



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- Courtney Shetler

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- Lyle Miller  
*Pastor of Family Life and Financial Stewardship*
- Velma Swartz  
*Pastor of Senior Ministries*
- Cindy Voth  
*Pastor of Community Life*

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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