



# buzz

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## Pastoral Transition Update

Since Pastor of Family Life and Financial Stewardship Lyle Miller announced on January 10 his resignation (effective at the end of March), numerous explorations have been going on for other arrangements to assist the congregation through this significant transition. Here are the developments that can be named at this time:

Foremost on our minds is adequate coverage for the ministry programming for our children and youth. Thanks to our excellent dedicated sponsors for Venture Club, JYF and MYF, we feel confident that the Wednesday night activities for these respective age groups will be in good hands through the rest of the school year. Specific plans for those evenings will have been made before Lyle leaves, to be led by existing sponsors. This is what we are calling short-term coverage, in conjunction with the coordination of Ron and Vicki Weirich, the Lay Ministry Partners for Family Life Ministry Team.

As we head into summer, there will be a few major special events in these age groups (Bible School Retreat, Know Jesus, and Arizona service trip, respectively) which will also largely be handled by current sponsors or the Children's Cluster. Summertime focus in family life ministry typically shifts toward preparations for the coming school year in Sunday School and Wednesday night activities. For this medium-term coverage, we are exploring possibilities for someone in a paid part-time interim position, spanning the summer and into the fall as necessary until the next pastor is hired. This will be largely an administrative position working with the Weirichs and sponsors, doing coordination and fall planning of programming and recruiting of new Sunday School teachers and sponsors, as needed.

We must also give careful attention to finding our next Pastor of Family Life (PFL). We are happy to announce that a search committee has already been formed, which plans to begin meeting with Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference staff yet in February. These are the search committee members:

- Andrew Hartzler, chair (Ministry Leadership Council member; JYF sponsor; parent)

- Neil Amstutz (pastoral team leader)
- Vicki Weirich (Lay Ministry Partner of Family Life Ministry Team)
- Marge Gingerich (parent; past pastoral search committee member)
- Cynthia Bontrager (MYF sponsor; parent)
- Matthew Smucker (high school senior in MYF)

The stewardship-related duties in Lyle's current job description will be partly assigned to other pastors and partly put into a separate, very part-time paid financial stewardship position, providing practical analysis and assistance to the congregation's Treasurer and Bookkeeper. Details of this position, and arrangements for filling it, are still being worked on.

The exact job description for the next PFL position is still being revised, and will soon be posted. The search committee expects to provide periodic updates to the congregation as the pastoral search process continues.

—Vyron Schmidt for Ministry Leadership Council

## An opportunity to respond to the Flint water crisis

The black ministers' association in Elkhart (IMA) is collecting bottled water for Flint residents. On Friday, February 5, they sent off 1,350 cases of water in a donated truck from the Elkhart community. When they buy 50 cases of water, Kroger donates a matching 50 cases.

This provides us with an opportunity this month to contribute to the assistance effort. Designated giving in the next two Sundays will be collected and sent to IMA in Elkhart. Mission & Service Ministry Team will match the first \$500 to increase the gift. This collection is happening only in February, so please be sure to get your donation in by the 21st. People wanting to make direct donations of cases of bottled water may drop these off the week of Feb. 22 at the Tolsen Center on south Benham Avenue in Elkhart.



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### Staff Team

#### Administrative Ministry

- Greg Hire  
*Coordinator of  
Ministry Gifts*
- Michelle Lehman  
*Secretary*
- Elvina Schmidt  
*Bookkeeper*
- Janet Shoemaker  
*Coordinator of  
Administrative Ministries*
- JD Smucker  
*Worship Coordinator*

#### Facilities Ministry

- Jan Oostland  
*Facilities Manager*
- Courtney Shetler  
*Custodian*
- Irma Perez  
*Custodian*

#### Pastoral Ministry

- Neil Amstutz  
*Pastoral Team Leader*
- 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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## Join us for the MYF Supper and Auction

Make plans to join the MYF for their annual supper and auction next Sunday evening, Feb. 21, with the meal at 5:30 followed by the auction around 6:30.

During last fall's Fanning the Flame series, Greg Hire told of "smousching" together all the ingredients for his mother's goulash. This meal will be your opportunity to test the results of the recipe yourself as Greg prepares supper for us. The meal is by donation.

In the auction, you'll have the opportunity to bid on many different items from MYFers and their families. A full sale bill will be available later this week, but among the items on the list so far are:

- Pecan and Seed Granola available at the auction
- Four hours of babysitting
- Lessons in conquering your Rubik's Cube
- Garden compost using Jersey cow manure
- A meal for six at the Herrmann Steakhouse
- A six-month membership in the Soup of the Month Club
- A Night with Prince Charlie (Lehman)

The meal and auction serve as the largest fundraiser for MYF faith formation activities such as Winter Youth Retreats and the biennial Service and Learning Trip. This year's trip will be to Tucson, Ariz., where youth will explore issues surrounding immigration and border conditions. Former Waterford pastor Tina Schlabach is playing a key role in organizing.

## Thank You

I would like to thank the WMC family for expressions of condolence—prayers, cards, phone calls, face-to-face conversations, and for the beautiful orchid plant—after my son's death.

—Cora Askren

## Addressing a potential shortfall

We are grateful for the continued financial support of the ministries of Waterford Mennonite Church. However, as we move into the fourth quarter of our fiscal year, we need to report that our giving is down from last year and our expenses are up, which could make for a significant shortfall this year.

As we move into the final three months of our fiscal year which ends April 30, here is a summary of income and expenses for the year to date.

Our expenses for the year have totaled \$674,734 through Feb. 9. Expenses fall into our main categories: staffing, giving to external agencies giving, other programming within our Operating Fund, and support for Mennonite education.

To date, we have received \$570,906 in combined giving to the Operating, Mennonite Education, and Either Funds during the 41 Sundays of the fiscal year. This compares to \$599,942 during the same first 41 Sundays of last year. Earlier in the year, we reported that our average offerings were as much as 10 percent behind last year's totals. Though that gap has closed, we have still received about 4.8 percent less than a year ago.

Based on our projected remaining expenses, our average offering has been \$13,900. If offerings were to average this size for the remaining 11 Sundays, we would experience a shortfall of about \$95,000. Last year, we received \$184,468 during the final 11 weeks of the fiscal year. Matching this amount would leave a deficit of about \$62,000.

We invite your generosity in addressing this shortfall. In addition to your contributions, you can help us to plan for the future by completing both sides of the yellow Giving Plan Response Card when you return them Feb. 21. The Facilities and Finance Ministry Team and Ministry Leadership Council are monitoring these trends closely and invite your prayers as we consider next steps.

—Lyle Miller, pastoral staff,  
and Tom Yoder, treasurer