September 23, 2018

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ at BCMC,

It has been six months since we shared with you about allegations of sexual abuse by Dan Baumgartner and the steps taken to address the situation. During this time of letting things settle, we have been listening for where we are, as a congregation, and how we have been impacted.

Where are we? Some of us are very grateful for actions taken. Some of us are experiencing confusion and pain. Others of us are asking questions about the process. Some of us are ready to move on. All these responses, and more, are to be expected, given that the issue of abuse and the particulars of this situation (involving people we love and care about) affect many of us at a very deep place.

As congregational leaders, we are paying attention to what we are hearing and seeking ways to help our congregation move forward through it. In the year ahead, we hope to provide opportunities for us to listen to each other, learn from this experience together, and strengthen our commitment to keep children and vulnerable people safe.

To this end, we hope the following information will be helpful for you:

A Brief Update

Dan was offered a Limited Access Agreement that outlined guidelines for his participation at BCMC. Dan has declined to sign the agreement and is currently not attending worship or other BCMC congregational events.

If you find yourself needing emotional support as you continue to process this situation, the following people in our congregation are available for supportive conversation:

- Marlene Ewert: 316-283-8949
- Lil Peters: 316-283-8529
- Orlyn Zehr: 316-283-6949
- Dawn Yoder Harms: 316-212-1847

Counseling resources are also available at Prairie View: (800) 992-6292

In the meantime, if you are aware of abuse taking place within this congregation (or anywhere), here are safe places to report it:

- Heart to Heart Child Advocacy Center: (316) 804-4603
- Safe Hope: (316) 283-0350
- Department of Children and Families: (800) 922-5330
- North Newton Police Department: (316) 283-3191

If a report is made about abuse in our congregation, please also inform someone on the Pastoral Team (per our congregation's Guidelines for the Safety of Children and Youth).

Looking forward:

The Church Board has appointed a task group to work on finding ways to help our congregation

- learn about trauma and abuse and our response to it as people of peace
- learn what we can from our recent experience
- develop a clear policy about care and accountability for known sexual offenders among us.

Members of this task group are: Patty Shelly (Church Board), Elaine Prouty (Church Board), Jim Robb (Deacons), *to be determined* (Faith Formation), Dawn Yoder Harms (Pastor).

In the meantime, we invite you to join in the hard work of being church by committing yourself to prayer: for children and vulnerable people among us; for Dan and Loretta; for victims and survivors of abuse; for congregational leaders as they shepherd us through this time of learning, growing, and healing; for this congregation, as we seek to follow Jesus in doing justice, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God.

Grace and peace to you all,

John D. Waltner

John Waltner, Church Board Chair

Dawn Yoder Harms

Dawn Yoder Harms, Pastor