In a surprising sequence of events, Associate Professor of Counseling Education, Dr. Thomas Arbaugh, Jr. has been released from his job for his relationship with another man, effective after the fall semester.

According to a statement from Interim President Beryl Brubaker to faculty members regarding Arbaugh’s release (see page 2), “The administration has raised an issue with Tom related to the Community Lifestyle Commitment (CLC)... Tom’s commitments and those of the institution are not compatible for the long term.”

This explanation, however, did not mention any specific ways that Arbaugh was in violation of the CLC. By signing the agreement, Arbaugh agreed to “recognize [his] responsibility as a member of the community to refrain from sexual relationships outside of marriage.” That terminology is derived from the Mennonite Church USA’s official position as stated in the “Bylaws Statement” that came out in 1995. It states, “We believe that certain sexual behaviors are inappropriate within marriage...”

Regarding the issue of employee termination, though, FG member and Associate Professor of Biblical Studies and Church History Nancy Heisey said, “We weren’t given the opportunity to discuss the causes for termination, just the process of termination.”

It appeared, however, that LiFT had broader powers. “LiFT was being given the space to work to effect the administration’s interpretation of the CLC,” said Heisey. “We decide that if LiFT is free to work on these issues, then it’s up to LiFT to work on them.” FG phased itself out soon after LiFT’s inception.

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Abused, however, “stated to the Board that it was a celibate relationship. They never questioned that. My partner and I specifically decided to remain celibate so that I could sign the CLC in good faith.” If it is indeed the case that his celibacy was not in question, why the firing?

According to an EMU Bible professor, “My understanding is that, strictly speaking, [Tom] is within the guidelines.” Arbaugh, as well, was under the impression that his actions were acceptable. The problem occurred while defining ‘celibacy’.

“At the cabinet meeting” each person asked me what is the meaning to be celibate,” said Arbaugh.

Jon Kauffmann-Kennel may bring more than just sixteen years of radio experience and some new ideas to WEMC. Some of his former students might just follow him here, too. After five years as a program director for National Public Radio (NPR) station WVPE, Kauffmann-Kennel spent nine years at Goshen College’s radio station WGCS, eight of those years as general manager. While at WGCS, he also taught some radio classes for Goshen College. It was here that he had a noticeable effect on students hoping for a future career in radio.

One student was especially outspoken about Kauffmann-Kennel’s departure. "Frankly, I’m considering following him to EMU,” said Junior Communication major Nick Gingerich.

While he doesn’t have any plans to teach any classes at EMU, Kauffmann-Kennel’s presence will indeed be felt. His plans for Virginia’s oldest public radio station include strengthening programming; improving equipment, facilities, and internal operations; and pursuing fundraising opportunities.

“I sense an openness to look at making potentially significant changes that could really help to advance the station,” said Kauffmann-Kennel.

One of the main reasons Kauffmann-Kennel was willing to leave his alma mater for EMU was that it was a full-time position managing WGCS. Even with his teaching on the side, he wasn’t up to full-time hours.

The new voice of WEMC will also bring some excitement...