

Faith Connection

March 2008

Monthly Newsletter of Faith Mennonite Church
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Faith Mennonite Church is a Christ-centered community which seeks to be a place of welcome and nurture for all. Our lives are guided by the life of Jesus and the historic peace position of the Mennonite Church. Our members are people from varied religious backgrounds, and diverse cultures, gay and straight, young and old. We invite you to join us in being a sign of God's healing and hope in our community and world.

Pastoral Musings...

The earth trembled under our feet last week when news arrived that Mike Schrock had died. In one brief moment the landscape shifted, causing a seismic jolt within our FMC community and the broader community that knew and loved Mike. Our grieving and healing, however, will proceed at a much slower pace, for our former reality will never slide neatly back into place. This tragedy will redefine in small and large ways who we are as individuals and as a community. We will move for many days, even months, through what will feel like a revolving door of incredulity, anger, deep sadness, yearning, and overwhelming gratitude for having been so privileged to share in the wonderful life of Michael.

Our Sunday morning worship and the afternoon memorial service on March 2 gave us the opportunity to place our individual grief in a context of communal worship and to celebrate Mike's life. We experienced the power of story to heal, to draw us together, and to momentarily form a community of people who had never previously been together in the same space at the same time. Each of us who attended the memorial service will likely have been struck by one or two particular stories. But as I've thought about the overall story that was conveyed that afternoon, I'm reminded of a conversation Neil Okerlund shared with me not long ago. Neil picked up his son Jacob and a friend from Park Avenue United Methodist Church one Sunday and Neil asked the friend, "So do you still enjoy coming to church?" Without a bit of hesitation, the 15-year-old boy replied, "Church isn't a place I go, it's who I am." The threads of church – music, service, peace-making, nurturing children – were woven through the richly textured and colorful tapestry of Mike's life.

Continuing to tell stories about the way that Mike influenced our life and our church will be an important part of our healing. We can also find healing as we

connect our story with the unfolding drama of Lent. Each year the Sunday readings for Lent are taken from a different gospel. This year happens to be the year when the gospel texts come from the gospel of John. The writer of the fourth gospel dedicates *half* of the book to the passion narrative and the resurrection (chapters 11-21), far more than the synoptic gospels (Matthew 26-28; Mark 14-26; Luke 19-24). John includes stories and monologues attributed to Jesus not found in the other gospels, for instance, the woman at the well, the death and raising of Lazarus, Jesus washing his disciples' feet, and Mary Magdalene's encounter with Jesus at the tomb.

The writer of John used these stories to help persons who never knew Jesus learn from his life and enter into his story. These stories can help us through our double passion this year as we recall the death of Jesus and of our dear friend Mike. Huddled together with the disciples as they fearfully wondered how they would go on after Jesus' death, we too wait to receive the word that Jesus breathed on his grieving friends: "Peace be with you" (John 20:20). With time our voices will grow stronger as we sing the songs that Mike loved and our hearts will swell as we joyfully interact with the children and youth in our midst in whom he delighted so much.

--Joetta Schlabach

"Easter would hardly have been, for two thousand years, the spring and center of Christian life and prayer, would hardly have provided the focus of Christian worship and the form of Christian hope, if the word Easter were simply the name of something that once happened in the past."

--Nicholas Lash, *Easter in Ordinary*

What's happening at FMC...

Holy Week Observances

Holy Week begins on Palm Sunday, March 16. The week begins on a high note as we join in a procession of palms, recalling Jesus' entry into Jerusalem to cheering crowds. But entering on a donkey instead of a horse signaled that Jesus' triumph would not be a military one. As we know, his confrontation with the powers took only one life—his own, laid down in love. All are invited to observe the events of Holy Week through services in our church and those offered in the broader faith community:

March 16, Palm/Passion Sunday ~ Children and adults will process with palms at the beginning of worship.

March 20, Maundy Thursday, 6:30 p.m. ~ Everyone, including children, is invited to this service in the fellowship hall that will include a simple meal set within a worship service that will include (voluntary) foot washing and communion. Childcare for children under five will be provided after the meal.

March 21, Good Friday ~ The Longfellow Ministerial Group is planning a Community Good Friday Service at noon at the Minnehaha Communion Lutheran Church, 4101 37th Ave. S.

March 23, Easter ~ 8:30 Easter Breakfast; 9:45 Worship (no Christian education)

--Worship Commission (Alisa Bardo-Martinson, Adam Nafziger, Jenny Wandersee)

News from Aryn Baxter in Tanzania

I am deeply saddened to hear of the Schrock family tragedy. From a distance, I will be mourning with the community at FMC and keeping their family in my prayers. Their family has experienced my deepest fear, and I can hardly imagine how difficult it would be to go through such a loss. Even though I only knew Mike for a short period of time, he had a meaningful presence in my life and I greatly appreciated his hospitality and enthusiasm for life.

Thank you for keeping in touch with me personally and with church news. It's a strange feeling to be in one place and think of life continuing on in another, especially when difficult things are happening. I've been having a great time visiting a variety of African churches, but once in a while I miss the FMC

community and being able to understand 100% of the music and speaking. I wish I had a *Sing the Journey* book along with me!

Exciting news that I wanted to share is that I'm planning to have an interview with both the MCC directors of Tanzania and Burundi when I am finished working with the program in April. I'm excited to meet them and talk more about possibilities.

--Peace & Comfort, Aryn

[Reminder: you can follow Aryn's activities at her blogspot: www.habarizaryn.blogspot.com/]

Missions and Service Update

At the February 3 congregational meeting, a request was made for a breakdown of funding that the Missions & Services Commission made to various organizations in the community. Following is a record of contributions in 2007. Items in italics were new contributions in 2007.

Brethren Mennonite Council	\$200
Center for Victims of Torture	\$200
<i>Christian Peacemaker Teams</i>	<i>\$100</i>
Congregations Concerned for Children (MN Council of Churches)	\$175
<i>Families Moving Forward</i>	<i>\$100</i>
Friends for a Non-Violent World	\$200
Division of Indian Works (Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches)	\$200
ISALAH	\$200
Joint Religious Legislative Coalition (MN Council of Churches)	\$175
Minnesota Fellowship of Reconciliation	\$200
Wilderness Wind	<u>\$200</u>
Total	\$1950

--Missions & Services (Katie Hochstedler, Melissa Hochstedler, Gregg Richardson)

Hmong Mennonite Church Relocates

The Hmong Mennonite Church has a new address: 815 Frank St., Saint Paul, MN 55106. Their Sunday worship time remains the same: 2:00-3:30 pm. They welcome visitors.

Faith Mennonite Church Council Meeting January 14, 2008 @ FMC

Present: Neil Okerlund, Moderator; Joan Kreider, Moderator-elect; Gregg Richardson, Secretary; Joetta Schlabach, Pastor; Glenn Geissinger, Trustees; Beth Richardson, Deacons; Jerry Janzen, Treasurer.

Absent: Missions & Service representative; Fellowship representative; Worship representative; Education representative.

Affirmations. Glenn affirms Darrell Martin for his discussions with the Vietnamese Alliance Church about the sale of the lease for the parsonage. Joetta thanks Beth for putting together the Sunday school class on human development. Neil thanks the deacons and others who organized the neighborhood groups. Joan thanks everyone who organized the Christmas program, and thanks Jerry for getting out receipts quickly on expenditures.

Pastoral Discernment Committee. The committee has completed the congregational information form, and sent to Conference Pastor Ed Kauffman. They have received capsule bios on six candidates, and four look interesting. They will be getting longer summaries, plus one from Joetta.

Annual meeting. The meeting this year will be in the fellowship hall at tables. Commission representatives will share challenges for the coming year, followed by brief discussions of the work of one commission at each table. There will also be a motion to suspend the constitution on the moderator selection to allow Neil and Joan to serve in their current positions for another year. Glenn says the trustees hope to bring a motion to sell the parsonage lease. Neil says that Sunday school for the first Sunday in April will be devoted to discussing the direction of commissions. Joetta notes that the gifts discernment slate mistakenly replaced a member of Pastor/Parish Relations Committee who still had another year to serve. So, the newly selected member has agreed to wait another year.

Treasurer's report. Jerry notes that the Missions and Service Commission spent down their budget near the end of the year. Gas bills continue to be very high. Designated offering at the Christmas program took in \$1000. James Abendroth, a member in the 1960s, died last year, and has left FMC \$3000 in his will. Checking account is healthy, local giving in December was \$17,000. We beat our budget by \$5000 for the year.

2008 Budget. Jerry says he kept the giving for the Hmong church, and added a line for the MCC relief sale. All other lines were tweaked based on last year's spending. Office materials were reduced because of reduced copying, because we're buying copies from ISALAH. Beth suggests that the nursery coordinator should not be under deacons, because she reports to Joetta. Joetta suggests putting her under Education, Jerry agrees. Travel was higher last year due to the San

Jose conference. Gas increased from \$2000 to \$14,000 due to fixed gas meter; he's still not sure that's enough.

Gregg asks who are the creditors? Jerry says that's the MMA mortgage for the elevators. We have twelve years left to pay off \$100,000. Glenn moves and Joan seconds a motion to accept the 2008 budget for presentation to the congregation, with the suggested adjustments. Council agrees. Joetta says we need to discuss contributing to world conference travel for a developing country delegate, perhaps together with other local congregations. She hasn't yet heard from anyone at FMC who is interested. Jerry doesn't believe that we should commit yet.

Commission reports.

Trustees. Glenn says Dan Leisen was hired as the new office assistant, and a new custodian was also hired. Darrell has been discussing selling the 99 year lease of the parsonage back to the Vietnamese Alliance Church.

He doesn't believe that we need it. Trustees will bring a motion to the annual meeting. We will lose rental income, which offsets the pastor's housing allowance. Beth says that as a realtor, she knows that parsonages no longer have appeal to urban pastors, that they once did.

Deacons. Beth says Deacons are working on ways to build closer community, retreats, and perhaps a marriage/relationship enrichment seminar.

Worship. Joetta says Worship is now working on Lent.

Missions & Service. Gregg say the M&S Commission is still planning a community book discussion and potluck around *The Omnivore's Dilemma*. Also discussed contributions to local charitable groups, and ways to build more intentional relationships to groups we give to.

Other business.

Commissions oversight Joan suggests that we need a discussion of how to oversee things that don't fall under a particular commission, like the nursery or winter retreats.

Pastor/Parish constitutional change. Gregg updates the Council on the Constitution Committee's draft of a proposed new Pastor/Parish Committee selection process.

--Gregg Richardson, Secretary

FMC Annual Congregational Meeting February 3, 2008 @ FMC

Present: Gregg Richardson, Matthew Hendricks, Shelly Hendricks, Paula Okerstrom, Wolf Bartel, Hermann Weinlick, Susan Weinlick, Richard Westby, Sandra Westby, Beth Richardson, Michael Schrock,

Joan Wing, Barbara Beers, Glenn Geissinger, Orv Gingerich, Melissa Hochstetler, Jerry Janzen, Darrell Martin, Arlene Holdeman, Arlene Geissinger, Cindy Bjork, Cleta Roth, Cathy Smetana, Alisa Bardo-Martinson, Thaine Dirks, Phil Stoltzfus, Erin Geiser, Tom Johnson, Kathleen Harder, Candace Lutt, Terry Gerber, Dan Gerber, Mike Okerstrom, Dan Leisen, Carol Harder, Rachel Hoskins, Leslie Minkler, Joan Kreider, Andi Kuenning, Gerald Schlabach, Neil Okerlund.

Neil Okerlund opens the meeting with a hymn and prayer at 1:09pm

Minutes of February 3, 2007 annual congregational meeting: Minutes accepted as written. (Sandy Westby moves, Dick Westby seconds). Minutes of the February 9, 2006 annual meeting were not approved at last year's meeting. Kathleen Harder moves and Barb Beers seconds a motion to approve these minutes, which were published in the April 2006 newsletter. Motion passes unanimously.

Treasurer's Report. Jerry Janzen presents the report for 2007. Jerry points out an error—lines 8 and 9 were accidentally swapped, will be corrected. Giving started out slowly early in the year, and he took some money from the Calvert fund to pay bills, but the year ended strongly. Pastor travel money for San Jose conference was higher than expected. Heating bill was much higher than budgeted, due to the broken gas meter being fixed. Local giving rarely meets budget, but this year was \$5000 over budget. Miscellaneous income category was from a the will of a past friend of the congregation (James Abendroth). The checking account grew from \$5900 at the beginning of the year to \$12,000 at the end. Wolf Bartel moves and Thaine Dirks seconds a motion to accept the treasurer's report. Passes unanimously.

Proposed 2008 budget. Jerry presents the proposed 2008 budget. Same error appears in lines 8 and 9, and will be fixed. Increased support to MCC and added a line for the MCC relief sale. Youth budget was reduced due to no biennial conference this year. Bought a new office computer last year, nothing budgeted in that line this year; also office costs are lower. Increased the gas bill budget this year to \$14,000. Local budget giving will need to increase by about 5%. Darrell Martin moves and Barb Beers seconds, that the proposed 2008 budget be accepted, with the noted corrections. Questions: Joan Wing asks why secretary's and custodian's wage budgets are lower this year, although the pastor's salary increased? Glenn Geissinger says

that these individuals are new in these positions, and trustees will review in six months for possible increases.

Carol Harder asks what the hourly rates are? Jerry says \$10/hour. Dick Westby points out that we are losing income from the Pan-African group that has vacated. Carol asks about Missions and Service spending. Gregg Richardson replies that the Commission will be reviewing this year how to allocate donations, and being more intentional about relationships to groups we give to. Candace Lutt wants to a forum for discussing custodian's and secretary's salaries in light of social responsibility. Phil Stoltzfus asks what is the difference in organizations in the budget lines, vs. organizations Missions and Service contribute to? Greg replies that the budget lines are denominational organizations, while M&S identifies mainly local religious or social service organizations. Carol Harder asks how long we will continue to support the Hmong church? Joan Kreider says that the conference is asking for more independence and decreased support, so we are following conference's lead and tapering off. Gerald Schlabach says World Conference is in 2009, shouldn't we be funding some travel money for this year? Jerry says there is money in that fund, which is currently in Calvert. Candace moves and Alisa Bardo-Martinson seconds a motion to table the budget until amended. Passes unanimously. Matthew Hendricks moves and Hermann Weinlick seconds a motion to add seed funding of \$1000 for World Conference travel to the 2008 budget. Discussion: Hermann says this will give us some flexibility to support our own delegate and another from a developing country. Motion passes unanimously. Motion is brought back to the floor, to approve the 2008 budget as amended, and passes unanimously.

Pastoral Discernment Committee. Joan Kreider refers to the committee's written report. There were very good responses to the discussion groups. The committee sent a job description to the conference in December, and now have Joetta and several other candidates. They will be accepting candidates through February. Carol Harder asks what is the next step? Joan says the committee will interview candidates and then decide on one to meet the church and preach on Sunday, rather than invite several candidates. This is how conference recommends doing it. Dick asks about the question of a team vs. solo pastorate? Joan says the church feedback showed interest in solo or a couple, but not two unrelated pastors. Joetta had suggested the possibility of a 75% plus some part-time positions. All the candidates are looking for solo pastorates.

Commission reports

Trustees. Glenn says they have hired two part-time positions, a custodian and a secretary.

Missions and Service. Gregg says M&S is still discussing an information kiosk for the front, with places for FMC information, organizations in our building, and community announcements. May have hit a city code snag. Also planning a community potluck discussion group on *The Omnivore's Dilemma*. Invite your neighbors.

Deacons. Deacons this year focused on small neighborhood groups and the change in the education hour.

Christian Education. Shelly Hendricks says the nursery has gone very well, the Commission has started children's music, and planned the evening Christmas program. Youth may be going to Wilderness Wind this summer. The change in hours have improved attendance at Sunday school this fall.

Fellowship. Paula Okerstrom says monthly potluck changed with the worship/education hours swap, and they need to have continued volunteers for fellowship time snacks. Had several wedding showers this year, but no babies for the first time in several years (there are more on the way, though).

Worship. Sandy Westby says that the new Worship Commission is now made up of members who have all been at FMC less than three years [sic]. Michelle Okerstrom served as a youth representative on the commission this year.

Moderator's report. Neil says that Council has been brainstorming questions for commissions, and the commissions are each discussing and responding, as a way of rethinking their missions. There will be a commissions open-house during a Sunday school hour this spring, then by fall there will be a new church handbook, with guides to the work of the commissions. We're well past our long healing period, and now resilient and outward-looking. Also trying to be more transparent.

Table talk. Members of the congregation take ten minutes to discuss work of commissions at various tables.

Gifts Discernment slate. Arlene Holdeman moves and Glenn Geissinger seconds the motion recommended by the Council to suspend the constitutional requirements for terms of moderator and moderator-elect, to allow Neil Okerlund and Joan Kreider to serve their respective terms for one more year, in order to allow Joan to focus on the Pastoral Discernment Committee, and Neil to finish the commissions' discussion process. Passes unanimously.

Alisa Bardo-Martinson moves and Dick Westby seconds a motion to approve the Gifts Discernment slate. Discussion: Arlene Holdeman corrects one error on the slate: Candace Lauth, rather than Martha Mayo will be the Deacon representative on the Fall Retreat Planning Committee. Discussion of whether Sunday school teachers should have terms listed. Consensus seems to be no. Slate unanimously approved as amended.

Old Business

Constitutional revision. Hermann explains the proposed change in the selection and relationship of the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee. The proposed new wording for Article 4, Section A, number 3 would read:

3. Pastor-Parish Relations Committee

a. Office and Duties

The Pastor-Parish Relations Committee shall be appointed by the Church Council to serve as liaison between the pastor(s) and the congregation. The committee shall provide:

- i. Ongoing consultation and support for the work of the pastor(s);*
- ii. A structure for communicating concerns about relations between congregation and pastor(s);*
- iii. A structure for providing feedback to Church Council on effectiveness of pastoral ministry; and*
- iv. A venue for considering new directions in ministry.*

The committee shall consist of one deacon and three other persons. The pastor(s) shall normally meet with the committee. The committee shall choose its own chairperson and shall meet at least quarterly. A representative of the committee shall attend Church Council meetings. The nature of the Committee's work is generally confidential, but the Committee shall report to Council on issues that may be significant to the Council's work of congregational leadership.

b. Selection

Deacons shall recommend one deacon for the committee. The Gifts Discernment Committee shall recommend names of remaining prospective committee members to Church Council. Pastor(s) may also recommend names to Church Council. Church Council shall vet these names with the pastor(s) before asking them to serve. Church Council shall have ultimate responsibility to appoint the members of the committee.

c. Term

A term shall be two years. A member may serve up to two consecutive terms.

Sandy Westby moves and Barb Beers seconds a motion to approve the new wording. Discussion. Wolf Bartel says the wording is a good improvement, and gives the committee accountability and oversight it needs. Motion passes unanimously.

Glenn Geissinger moves, and Darrell Martin seconds a motion to approve the second proposed revision, adding a number 10 to Article 4, Section A, which reads:

10. No member shall serve concurrently in more than one constitutional commission, committee, or office, unless specifically authorized by this constitution.

Discussion: It is pointed out that Gregg is currently serving in two such positions, as Secretary and as a member of the Missions and Service Commission. Constitution committee admits they hadn't considered that. Motion is withdrawn, and committee will reconsider.

Sale of parsonage lease. Darrell Martin moves and Dick Westby seconds a motion authorizing the Trustees to be allowed to complete a deal with the Vietnamese Alliance Church to sell the 100 year lease on the parsonage.

Discussion: Darrell explains that when we bought our current building, we retained use of the old parsonage for \$10/year for 100 years. When Patrick and patty wanted to buy a house, we became landlords of property we don't own. We had to increase the pastors' salary and rent the parsonage in order to cover the added expense. The new church in that building now wants it as a parsonage. Appraised value is difficult to assess, but it was appraised at \$187,000. We are currently offering it to the Vietnamese Alliance Church at \$170,000, and the lease would end in June. We still owe \$100,000 on our elevator loan.

Phil Stoltzfus asks where on the budget is the interest on the \$100,000? Jerry says is \$1177/month for principal and interest. Alisa Bardo-Martinson asks whether they want it at this price? Darrell says yes, but we can't sign without the congregation's approval. Hermann asks whether this motion could free the Trustees to do whatever they want, or would Church Council need to approve? Darrell says the Trustees haven't decided how best to spend these proceeds. Jerry says the downside is that the parsonage could be attractive to prospective pastors. Gregg says that in Beth's experience as a realtor, most urban pastors nowadays don't want a parsonage, they want to buy to build some equity. Only in small towns does it make sense. Cathy Smetana says that conference pastor Ed Kauffman told the Pastoral

Discernment Committee the same thing. Sandy Westby asks whether the Christian Missionary Alliance will still own it? Darrell says the African congregation there will own it. Dick Westby says that if we continue to own it, we don't have the resources to maintain it. It's really looking quite shabby. The motion passes with one nay vote.

Sandy Westby moves and Phil Stoltzfus seconds the motion to adjourn.

Meeting is adjourned at 3:00pm.

Appendix: Items relegated to the "Parking Lot" for future discussion:

- Review custodian and secretary wages in light of social responsibility.
- Contribution amounts shown in Missions and Service annual report.
- Budgeting for World Conference travel

Special thanks to Ian Canary-King who provided childcare during the meeting.

--Gregg Richardson, Secretary

What's happening here and there...

Budget and Debt Counseling Services Now Available from MMA

According to national statistics, the average household credit card debt in the US is currently over \$9000 and nearly 40% of US citizens spend more than they earn. MMA, the stewardship agency of Mennonite Church USA, has just launched a new program, in partnership with Lutheran Social Services of Minnesota, to offer free financial counseling services to persons who attend a Mennonite Church anywhere in the US.

Persons may call a toll-free number (1-877-809-0039) and receive up to four free and confidential counseling sessions from a certified consumer credit counselor for these financial problems:

- Money management and budgeting
- Credit reports and improving credit scores.
- Debt repayment and debt management plans (some fees apply)
- Preventing and resolving identity theft.
- Mortgage foreclosure and/or predatory lending.
- Home buying readiness and mortgage financing.
- Bankruptcy consequences and alternatives.
- Student loan issues.

Those who have internet access may obtain more information by visiting:
www.mmaonline.org/financial_services/debt_counseling.html. We will also have brochures available in the near future.

MMA helps people manage resources in ways that honor God through its professional expertise in insurance and financial services. Rooted in the Anabaptist faith tradition, MMA offers practical stewardship education and tools to individuals, congregations, and organizations. Tom Johnson is FMC's MMA advocate.

Thank You, Thank You...

Thank you so much for your kind \$200 contribution for the work of [the Supportive Congregations Network]. [BMC is] at an exciting, if not pivotal time in our history, with many positive things happening because of your support. These include the development of tool kits filled with positive resources for gay or questioning youth, their parents and youth advisors; the offering of Welcoming Church trainings across the country to help individuals build the skills and knowledge necessary to effect change in their congregations and communities... and the development of a new DVD featuring BMC families. In addition, BMC continues to be a presence at denominational assemblies; maintain denominational conversations; reach out to college students and young adults; and ensure that anyone who calls our office is offered the support, resources or referrals that she or he needs.

With great appreciation for the ministry and witness of Faith Mennonite, Thank You!

--Carol Wise, Executive Director, BMC

Mennonite Mission Network thanks Faith Mennonite Church for contributing \$2980 received from February 2007 through January 2008. These gifts, along with your prayers and participation, create ministries of healing and hope across the streets and around the world. May you experience God's blessings as we work together to share all of Christ with all creation.

--Stanley Green, Executive Director, Mennonite Mission Network

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, faculty, staff and students of Meserete Kristos College I wish to thank you for your gift of \$1250 for our College scholarship fund. Within this past year, we built a kitchen, dining hall, toilet/wash house block, transformer building,

workshop, gate with guard house, and a carport. We also planted several hundred trees. Right now we are constructing our future guesthouse for visiting lecturers. Also, we will begin construction on the first of two dormitories next week. We hope you will continue in partnership with us, supporting us in prayer and with your gifts.

--Carl E. Hansen, Director of College Advancement

FoodShare's March Campaign

Minnesota FoodShare is launching a new method to help the state's food shelves stock healthy fresh fruits, vegetables, dairy, and meats. During this 2008 March Campaign, supporters can purchase March Money coupons in denominations of \$1, \$5, or \$10. The real money goes directly to the local food shelf to help it stock fresh produce, dairy, and meats as needed throughout the year.

Each March FoodShare directs the largest food drive in the state (known as the March Campaign) and restocks about 300 food shelves across Minnesota. Half of all the groceries distributed at Minnesota food shelves each year are generated by FoodShare's March Campaign.

March donations will come in the form of cash and nonperishable canned and packaged foods, but this year it wanted to draw attention to the need for healthy fresh foods — especially for children who make up more than half of all food shelf clients in Minnesota.

Many food shelves have refrigerators and freezers but lack the cash flow freedom to buy fresh produce, dairy, and meats as needed for their clients throughout the year. National research has found that many children, especially those living in poverty, lack a healthy diet and are especially deficient in fresh produce, dairy, and meats.

Supporters who purchase March Money will receive a play-money coupon with a thank you message on the back. To get a packet of March Money to sell at your cash or food drive, contact 612-721-8687, ext. 304. Each packet contains ten \$1 bills, ten \$5 bills, and ten \$10 bills.

Deadline for April newsletter items is noon, March 27th.

Faith Mennonite Church publishes our official monthly newsletter Faith Connection. The purpose of this publication is to enhance communication about the various types of the ministry of our congregation among the members and also with the community. Due to the space limitation, the editor may edit, modify, and change the submitted documents.