

Faith Mennonite Church

Annual Reports 2025-2026

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Worship Planning Commission

- This year we continued planning unique services:
 - We had an outdoor service at the Summer Day at the Lake.
 - We hosted a Pride Sunday with music from Sadie Gustafson-Zook in June and hosted Mikah Meyer as a guest speaker in the fall.
 - We hosted a Longest Night Service, Ash Wednesday service, ecumenical Taize service, and a Maundy Thursday service.
 - We planned several hymn-sing Sundays, including a service of Lessons and Carols.
- We also had a number of guest speakers from the congregation (sermon-length or shorter segments): Hermann Weinlick, Donna Minter, Brian Roemen, Stephanie Randolph, John Ratigan, Virgil Wiebe
- We added new elements to the service, such as the minute of silence, plus a chime to mark the beginning and end of the silence.
- We did not have a summer outside service this year, but will consider it for this coming summer again.
- We want to especially thank all the worship volunteers, including Keyboardists, song leaders, worship leaders, children's time leaders, scripture readers, ushers, tech people, and any others we forgot!

Worship Commission members:

Miriam Augsburger

Karin Larson Krisetya

Hermann Weinlick

Tom Johnson

Trustees Report

The Trustees continue to focus on the physical condition of our buildings and our financial health. Some of our recent and current efforts are focused on the following:

- The Sanctuary Building is heated by 5 furnaces. While they were only 15 to 20 years old, they started to have problems a few years ago and we began to replace them when we could afford to do so: one per year (they cost about \$8,000 each). We just replaced the last two at the same time because we were warned about rising costs later this year. We have also installed a new thermostat control system which will allow for web based monitoring and temperature adjustment of the furnaces.
- Repairing the east wall of the church kitchen is nearly completed.
- The fluorescent light fixtures in the Education Building are (slowly) being retrofitted with LED bulbs.
- We added electrical outlets in the Narthex, on the west wall of the Fellowship Hall, and in the Pueblos office.
- We will assess the new **Access and Inclusion Report** to find where we can make changes to our building to make it more welcoming to all.
- Support the treasurer and financial team.

As a brief financial update, our 2026 goal for financial giving to the General Fund was set at about \$15,000 per month which meant we expected \$60,000 by the end of April. Instead of that we have received over \$70,000 which does not include the \$10,000 received and then donated to Community Support by our Deacons and Missions and Service members. (In case you are wondering, this is very good news!)

In addition to these physical aspects of our work we also attempt to maintain good relationships with our tenants and neighbors. Keeping up this old building is often painful but that is far outweighed by the worship and fellowship it makes possible.

Trustees: Bruce Brunner, Glenn Geissinger, Darrell Martin

Mission and Services annual report 2025-26

MCC kits: in coordination with the FMC sewing group we participated in the MCC School Kit Challenge in August/September. We packed 68 school kits which were taken to the MCC Central States material resource center in Kansas.

The comforter-making group made 45-50 comforters to be sent around the world.

Advent Collection: In December we sponsored a hat and mitten drive for Community Emergency Services as well as collecting money to purchase hygiene kits and winter gear in bulk for the Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center.

In all we gave :

To Community Emergency Services: 34 pairs of gloves/mittens, 18 hats, and 6 scarves (adult and childrens sizes)

To Minnesota Indian Women's Resource center: we raised \$1050 and purchased hygiene kits, hand warmers, gloves, hats, socks, underwear and feminine hygiene products to give to them.

Food drive: In March and April during Lent we sponsored a food drive focusing on most needed items. We donated 214 pounds of food and \$100.

Financial Giving: The commission is tasked to distribute \$5000 of congregational giving to organizations that serve our local community and peace and justice causes. In the 2025 calendar year we gave to the following organizations

\$300 Pueblos de Lucha y Esperanza
\$300 MN Indian Women's Resource Center
\$300 Wayside Recovery Center
\$300 Resilient Women of Africa
\$300 Roca de Refugio
\$400 Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative
\$500 Community Emergency Services
\$500 Soup for You
\$500 Community Peacemaker Teams
\$500 Interfaith Power & Light
\$500 Conversations with Friends
\$500 Mennonite Action
\$100 Transforming Families
\$5000 Total

Donations to help our immigrant neighbors: Since January 2026 FMC received money from individuals and congregations beyond the Twin Cities in response to the

ICE surge. The funds were over \$13,000 and were put into the Deacons fund so that it could be easily distributed. The Missions and Services committee was asked to work with the deacons to disburse these funds and asked the congregation to give suggestions of families they were connected with that had been affected by the ICE surge and could use financial help, as well as organizations that are raising funds for immigrant families or giving direct help such as food. The funds were disbursed to about 9 families and 6 neighborhood and mutual aid groups. The families all expressed much gratitude for the assistance.

Mission Moments: The commission arranged for Mission Moments during the worship service from groups such as Community Emergency Services and from members of the congregation reporting on their experiences in the Singing Resistance and the clergy action at the MSP airport.

Other activities: Information about rallies, vigils, and other events are posted on the Signal group that was created to enable time-sensitive information to be sent out to those interested. During Metro Surge, information was shared about ways to help our immigrant neighbors and members of FMC participated in a variety of ways, such as driving students to school, delivering food to people afraid to leave their homes, patrolling at schools and in the neighborhoods, and driving Nuria to work and appointments. Many members of the congregation participated in these efforts.

Respectfully submitted
Andi Kuenning

FMC Repair Team Annual Report 2025-2026

The Repair Team at Faith Mennonite Church

In July the Repair team met with Doe Hoyer, staff coordinator for the Repair Network of the Coalition to Dismantle the Doctrine of Discovery. We discussed various national and local initiatives that we might consider, including Makoce Ikikcupi, Rise & Repair with MN Interfaith Power & Light, the Mendota tribal group, First Nations Kitchen and All Nations Church on Bloomington Ave..

In October we held a vigil outside the church in solidarity with Oak Flat. That same evening most of the vigil participants stayed for a potluck and then the training “To Build Our Courage” with Mennonite Action.

The Repair Team at Faith Mennonite Church is part of a larger network of Repair Congregations and Communities connected to the Coalition to Dismantle the Doctrine of Discovery.

<https://dismantlediscovery.org/get-involved/repair-network/>

Submitted by Kristi Zabriskie

Christian Education (CE) Commission Annual Report

April 28, 2026 by Donna Minter, Christian Education Coordinator

Although I was the sole designated person on the Christian Education Commission, many others including Andi Kuenning, Pastor Caleb Yoder, Hermann Weinlick, Matthew Hendricks, and Kristi Zabriskie provided meaningful leadership for youth and adult CE classes on Sunday after worship. The size of this class has ranged over time from 3 people to over 20 people, depending on the topic.

1. Andi Kuenning taught the preschool class for the younger children.
2. Donna Minter and Hermann Weinlick have shared teaching the children's class (2nd-4th grade) using Anabaptist-oriented resources that were well-received by the youth.
3. Matthew Hendricks and Kristi Zabriskie taught the middle school children (5th-8th graders).
4. Pastor Caleb and John Ratigan led a gathering with high school youth playing the game "Martyr: Bloody Theater 1528."
5. For adult CE sessions included a series on "How the Bible came to be," memorial practices and green burial, Charlie Thompson work in the FMC garden, a monthly Troubled Times supportive discussion and prayer, input from Mennonite Action curriculum and resources, Singing Resistance practice, studying the For Such a Time as This emergency devotional book, and input and discussion about providing healthy affordable housing by Bruce Brunner.
6. We encourage all FMCers to engage in daily Scripture.
7. If any FMCers are interested in sharpening their mental acuity and memory skills by engaging in Bible memory of favorite Scripture passages, please contact donnaminter@comcast.net.

Your sister in Christ,
Donna Minter
FMC Christian Education Commission Coordinator

Annual Report of the Deacon Commission

(May 2025 - April 2026)

Deacons were:

Minke Sundseth (chair), Pat Eliason, Roberta Malles, Pierre Gingerich, and Barb Beers

Other roles fulfilled by deacons:

- Council Rep (primary/alternate) Barb B., Pat E. as alternate
- Personnel Rep. – Pat E.
- PPRC – Pat E.
- Note-taking/minutes – Roberta
- Sunday morning duties (greeting, communion, taking down Joys/Concerns) - all
- Retreats Rep. – Roberta M.
- Gifts Discernment Rep – Minke S.

The Deacon Commission at Faith Mennonite Church (FMC) has worked throughout the year to foster community, provide pastoral care, and support the church's overall mission. Here is a summary of our key accomplishments:

1. **Deacon Role Specialization and Organization:** The Deacon Commission continued to organize itself into specialized roles to improve our service to the congregation:
 - **Chair** (Minke) facilitate meetings, track progress on goals, maintain written processes, and ensure smooth onboarding of new deacons.
 - **Hospitality Deacon** (Roberta) work on greeting, follow-up with newcomers, and coordinate Sunday morning tasks.
 - **Kids and Families Deacon** (Pat) support programming for families and children.
 - **Pastoral Care Coordinator** (Barb) maintain deacon care groups, organize pastoral care, and ensure follow-up on joys and concerns.
 - **Small Group and Newcomer Coordinator** (Pierre) support small group coordination, welcome newcomers, and facilitate connections within the congregation.
2. **Fellowship Initiatives:**
 - Our primary fellowship activity this year was the bi-monthly **Family and Friends** game nights. These were primarily organized by Pat, and were well attended and enjoyable.
3. **Welcoming and Engagement:** We continue to work on welcoming newcomers and integrating them into the FMC community.
 - This year, we also shared a survey with the congregation around access, inclusion and accessibility. This resulted in a fairly extensive list of items that came up and some possible actions that could address those issues. We then identified the various commissions those items would typically address those respective issues, and various deacons engaged those commissions. We were careful to include that these were not any kind of mandate, but a request to see what we can do to improve access and inclusion. Some requests were easy and

simple, and some issues are more complex and long term - but we're making some good process, and I am hopeful this conversation will continue,

- This year, we also revamped our old (and seldom used) newcomer cards, and added them to the pews. Those also include a section for newcomers to ask for accommodations if needed.
- Pat led congregational discussions related to end-of-life planning and also related to the possibility of having a place for ashes in the FMC courtyard. This is an ongoing discussion.
- Pat is also involved in ongoing discussions about the nursery: supervision of the nursery, nursery guidelines, etc.

4. Retreats and Special Events:

- We reached out to women from last year's well attended Women and Nonbinary retreat who had indicated they might be willing to plan one this year, and it was agreed that this should not be just a deacon effort. There wasn't enough energy in that group to plan another early spring retreat, but we agreed to touch base again in coming months, possibly about a summer option.

5. Deacon Fund and Support for Congregants:

- The **Deacon Fund** continues to be an essential resource for supporting the congregation in times of need. This year, however, we primarily used this fund to house the thousands of dollars that came to us via the larger Mennonite community in response to what our area endured during Operation Metro Surge and its aftermath. In partnership with Missions and Service, we were able to fund food, rent, and immediate needs for several community efforts as well as assistance for several families with whom FMC members had a direct connection. We're grateful for Darrell's assistance in facilitating all of that in a short time.
- Care for the congregation as needed is at the heart of our work as deacons, and this year was particularly intensive in that regard.

7. Leadership Transitions and Future Planning:

- The Deacons prepared for upcoming leadership transitions, as Minke Sundseth and Roberta Malles prepare to retire from their roles, with new deacons being selected to fill those positions. Pat Eliason is our new chair, and is sharing some of those responsibilities with Barb Beers. We are grateful that John Ratigan is joining us as a new deacon. We are still looking for at least one more deacon for this year.

8. Membership and Baptism

- We had one Parent-Child dedication in October: Sol Carolina, daughter of Isaiah Friesen and Andrea Moya.

The year was marked by growth in our community-building efforts, with a focus on pastoral care, inclusion, and fellowship. We look forward to continuing these efforts in the coming year, strengthening the bonds of our church family, and serving those in need both within and beyond FMC.

Respectfully submitted by Minke Sundseth