

In Attendance: Donna Minter, Moderator; Andy Martinson, Moderator-Elect and Search Committee; Thom Bower, Pastor; Karen Wiebe, Deacons; Amy Bradshaw, Trustees; Kristi Zabriski, Matthew Hendricks, Fellowship and Search Committee; Bruce Brunner, Finance Team; Jenny Wandersee, Worship and Council Secretary.

1. Donna opened the meeting with a prayer. Group took turns reading FMC's values and did check-ins.
2. **Affirmations:**
 - Darrell Martin and Glenn Geissinger, who did a lot of work to resolve tech issues in worship
 - Andy Martinson, Mark Kaufman, John Ratigan and Glenn G. for dealing with the broken door of the Education wing.
 - All who showed up at leadership retreat and Thom and Andy for leading
 - Leslie Minkler and Roberta Malles for leading book group
 - Peter Martinson for helping with communion
 - Donna Minter for LUNAFEST women's film festival for MN Peacebuilding
3. **Minutes and agenda.** Minutes from the October Council meeting and tonight's agenda were approved by all..
4. **Financial Report:** October was one of our best months, taking in 13K. We have money to cover expenses. Darrell Martin said our budget for next year should be largely the same except for the new pastor's salary. Bruce said historically the budget is drawn up in December and we have a draft in January for the Council to vote on, ahead of the financial meeting in Feb. Amy asked, how often announcements should be made about the budget in church? Bruce suggested waiting until Dec. and after hearing from Darrell before making the next announcement. Donna said they'll put announcements in the bulletin and midweek update and make an announcement after Dec. 14.
5. **Moderator's report.** Donna deferred to Thom's report.
6. **Pastor's report.** The second part of the leadership retreat, which will be about preparing for visioning, is set for Dec. 10. Advent planning is going well. Services will focus on a character each month and a pageant on Dec. 18. The Christmas service will be pre-recorded.
7. **Search Committee.** They're interviewing candidates, but aren't ready to call anyone yet. People are showing interest. Susan Janzen said before covid, it typically took 8-10 months to find a pastor, longer than in the past because of a shortage of ministers.
8. **Fellowship.** They have a variety show planned for 11/20 and are planning a Day at the Lake for Feb., with snow-shoeing and skiing on Bde Maka Ska.
9. **Deacons.** Folks have been willing to fill in to help with Joys and Concerns, which has been helpful. They feel they need more deacons, as people are dealing with parents and other things. Thom recommended we suggest people who would make good deacons. Thom is holding an event 12/11 for remembering parents who have passed away in recent years.
10. **Repair Team.** Donna reported on their behalf that registration for both in-person and online event with Sarah Augustine and Catherine Gea is going well.

11. **Missions & Service:** They'll soon be looking at allocation of funds to outside groups. They met with Pablo and Effie and they're doing well and Effie is pregnant. They feel they can make it without the FMC Migrant Fund. M&S is planning to meet with Nuria on 11/15. They're thinking of splitting the remaining Migrant Fund money between the two families. After they talk with Nuria, they'll have a better idea of how to budget for 2023. Andy thanked Bruce and M&S for having the conversations. Donna said M&S will need to update the financial documents for groups we give money to. M&S does not need to rewrite these documents. Rather, they can simply add a dated comment at the bottom of each document. If they are giving to a new organization, they will need to complete a new giving document, which takes about 5 minutes to complete.
12. **Worship:** They've been planning for Advent. Karla Hovde to do the editing for the pre-recorded Christmas service. Miriam Augsburg has been working on finding musicians to record music for the service.
13. **Covid Committee:** They're going to implement an extra-careful Sunday on the 2nd Sunday of the month, starting in Dec. They will educate the congregation about it first. We're currently at Low risk.
14. **Article from Anabaptist World.** Donna read aloud from the article that people have needs that they'll get filled with or without church. They need meaningful connections with people. They need to fill that space in their soul that yearns for deeper meaning, purpose and hope. She asked what do we want to experience at FMC that we can't get anywhere else? We used the circle process for sharing our thoughts. Thom said he wasn't surprised to read that people who have not come back post-covid are probably not coming back. His perception is that people are looking for community and churches are mostly just offering them fellowship. If congregations aren't ready to offer spiritual discipline of community and only offer fellowship, people are going to be disappointed. Karen said she connected with the paragraph that church is about connecting on our deepest longings. Amy commented that obligation is not a good reason to do something; it's much better to have people who want to be there. Matthew said he's intrigued by the people who have found FMC since covid. I think it's good to think about how we welcome new people. Andy said he was struck by the paragraph about how pastors don't have the leverage of a paycheck to get folks to show up. What is drawing people back? Donna asked, how can we explore our deepest spiritual longings? Also, a number of people at FMC have said that they need to feel more joy. There's the whole idea of understanding the joy that Christ brings to us and how can we share it with others? Jenny commented about how she liked the Sunday when we were bouncing colorful balls around the sanctuary and we need more of that. Karen agreed that we need more joy. Matthew commented that we often feel like we fall short. He feels like things weren't perfect with the migrant families, but in some ways, it was a big success. He added that that doesn't mean we shouldn't reflect on what we can improve.
15. Matthew closed the meeting with a prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Jenny Wandersee