

In Attendance: Donna Minter, Moderator; Andy Martinson, Moderator-Elect and Pastoral Search; Thom Bower, Pastor; Matthew Hendricks, Fellowship and Pastoral Search; Bruce Brunner, Missions and Service; Kristi Zabriski, Repair Team; Jenny Wandersee, Worship and Council Secretary

1. **Opening:** Donna opened the meeting with a prayer and the group did check-ins.
2. **Reflection:** Donna displayed the FMC Values, which the group took turns reading aloud.
3. **Affirmations:**
 - Andi Kuenning, for using her Spanish to stay in touch with our migrant families
 - People at FMC who leaned in to our talking circles on Money Matters and Vicarious Harm
 - Dick Westby, for his long-time commitment to FMC and serving as witness
 - Donna Minter and Andy Martinson for all their work
 - Hermann and others who stepped up while Thom was gone
 - Those who planned the all-church retreat in Sept.
4. **Sept. Minutes and Meeting Agenda.** A motion was made to accept them and was seconded.
5. **Treasurer's Report.** Darrell sent a financial report, which was shared. General offering is down about \$21K from this time last year. Our checking account has about \$16K and savings has \$43K. Calvert fund is at \$48.3K. The migrant fund is about \$2K down from what was budgeted, but it started the year with \$11K. Donna made an announcement in church this past Sun. regarding our finances. Andy noted that none of the \$5K+ givers have left and asked where is the deficit coming from? Thom said other churches he's in touch with have had giving go down, and he wonders if we're just behind that curve. Bruce commented it'll be interesting to see what happens at the end of the year. Donna said she'll stay in touch with Darrell and, if needed, make another announcement. Matthew said if we need to make cuts, they would be made to things outside our walls (i.e., not pastor salary or utilities).
6. **Moderator's Report.** Donna reported that the last Money Matters talking circle was held last night. She sees the circles as ways to talk about things we're "not supposed to talk about," such as money, conflict, and harm. Donna and Andy spent about an hour completing the financial forms and some only took 10 min. She said that when ideas are written down, they tend to take hold and the financial document really helps.
7. **Pastor's Report.** Thom reported that the congregational retreat went really well. He got a couple of comments about the Bible study and they were positive.
8. **Pastoral Search.** Andy said they are having regular meetings and looking at next steps. They plan to advertise in Mennonite World Review and the Canadian Mennonite publication Anabaptist World.
9. **Fellowship.** Matthew reported they just had a potluck that Dick Westby spearheaded. They're planning a game night or talent show for this fall.
10. **Repair Team.** Kristi reported that Sarah Augustine can't come to Minnesota in November after all, so she'll attend virtually the Nov. 16 event at Calvary Baptist Church. Katerina Gea will be there in person to represent the coalition Dismantling the Doctrine of Discovery and will attend a dinner at FMC the next evening that Joan Kreider is organizing. Kristi said if you donate \$50, you will receive Sarah's book, *The Land Is Not Empty*. Roberta Malles is interested in having a group read and discuss the book.

11. **Missions and Service.** They're planning an event around a mission activity after church
12. **Worship.** Jenny reported they (mostly Thom) have been planning for Advent, including a recorded Christmas service. Thom said we'll be looking at one character from the Nativity story each Sunday, with two on Christmas, and include lots of musicians in services.
13. **Covid Team.** Thom reported they're reconsidering how we do worship when Covid is at Medium risk.
14. **Migrant Fund.** Donna said that the intention all along has been for the migrant families we support to move to financial independence. She pulled together information on the history of the migrant fund and found conflicting information regarding the amounts of funds given to the families. The takeaway is that if FMC embarks on this kind of project again in the future, we need to have a plan and a way to keep records consistently.

The amount given to the families has been based on their specific financial needs. Except for the first year, when outside donors provided about 50% of the funds, FMC has contributed about 90% of the funds. By the end of 2022, FMC will have given about \$100K.

Donna listed some non-financial ways that FMC can support the families: with prayer; by inviting the families to FMC on Sundays when an interpreter is available; when work opportunities arise at FMC, offering the work to the adults in the families.

Donna proposes that we meet with the families to find out how things are going. If appropriate, they'd propose to give each family 50% of the money remaining in the fund (about \$11K). Donna presented the proposal to the Money Matters talking circle, and it was well-received. Jenny asked how much money we're currently providing to the families. Bruce said it's about \$500 per family each month, so \$11K would cover about 10-11 months at that rate. He added that there's agreement among M&S members that this would be a respectful way to end the fund.

Matthew emphasized the need to be sensitive in broaching the possibility of ending financial support. Donna said they'd give the families honest information in a compassionate way and that we should approach them about other ways to maintain connection with the families. Also, if something catastrophic happens in one of the families, we have a Deacons' fund and other ways to help, as long as giving persists, as for FMC members.

Bruce confirmed with council that he could broach the proposal with the families (unless it feels completely off-base in conversation with them). Matthew suggested communicating the plan to the congregation so if people would like to give a final financial gift, they may do so. He thanked the planners and executors for their work on this. Thom emphasized the need to end things well.

15. Meeting closing. Thom closed the meeting with a prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Jenny Wandersee
approved at FMC Council 11/9/22