



FIRST
MENNONITE
CHURCH,
NEWTON

Our Mission is to glorify God:

- ✦ Through expressing our love to God in worship.
- ✦ Through experiencing love in Christian community.
- ✦ Through extending God's love to the world.

Inside this issue:

Update from Rod and Andrea Pauls	2
Caregiving Corner	4
Church Board Report	6

FMC CONNECTIONS

Volume 26, Issue 4

April 2016

LOOKING TOWARD TOMORROW; LEARNING FROM YESTERDAY



The Church Board gathered on Saturday, February 27, at the Dyck

Arboretum for their annual retreat. On that day, Pastor Joel Schroeder led us in a time of thinking about vision and mission statements, about why they're important, what they mean, and why it's time for us here at First Mennonite Church to articulate what we're looking forward to in the years to come.

Pastor Joel helped us to think about what distinguishes "vision" from "mission." The vision of a church or organization is the "being" statement: Our vision is who we want to be and—more importantly—whom God is calling us to be. The mission of a church or organization is the "doing" statement: Our mission directs us in the ways that will help us become whom we are called to be. One analogy might be that vision is like the mountain that we want to get to. Mission is the path we take to get there.

The statement we currently use is this one: We want "to glorify God through expressing our love to God in worship, through experiencing love in Christian community, and through extending God's love to the world." If we use the definition above, then we might call this our vision statement: We want to be a congregation that glorifies God in everything that we do. We do not currently have, however, a statement that tells us how we'll get there.

Going into our retreat on that Saturday in late February, our assumption was that we would not change our current statement but that we would work on a new mission plan to add to what we already have. However as the morning unfolded—as conversation took place about what we celebrate from yesterday, where we are today, and what we hope for tomorrow—it became clear that we were talking more on the "vision" level than on the "mission" level. So our plan has changed: over the year to come, we will all be working together to develop both a vision and a mission statement. We will be articulating who we want to be and how we plan to get there.

At the Spring Congregational Meeting on April 17, Pastor Joel will introduce the process that we will be entering into in the months to come. You will have an opportunity that day (and in the weeks after) to share what you celebrate about FMC from our past. Later, then, we'll use what we learn from our past as a foundation from which to look at where we are now and to dream God's dream for our future. Our goal is to be able to affirm new vision and mission statements at our Fall Congregational Meeting.

We ask you to pray ahead of time and throughout this process for our congregation and for our discernment, wisdom, and openness to the Holy Spirit's movement and leading so that we may be faithful to the way of Jesus in our world.

With thanks for each of you and with anticipation for the ways in which God will lead us—

Anita (for all the pastors)

ROD AND ANDREA PAULS UPDATE

Dear First Mennonite Church Family,

How wonderful it is to be able to write you a brief update on my work with InterVarsity Christian Fellowship! In case you are new to FMC and don't really know much about me, let me introduce myself. I grew up at FMC in the... well lots of years ago. My parents are Melvin and Nancy Pauls and my brothers are Doug and Stan. I came to know Jesus as my Lord and Savior through the witness of my 4th grade S.S. teacher, Mrs. Leonard Juhnke (yay for S.S. teachers!).

Throughout my middle school and high school years I had great mentors and it would be impossible to name them all. Let me just say that as I grew up at First Mennonite I learned that the Bible is God's Word, that Jesus is Lord and that we, as Christians, are called to be witnesses with our whole lives—in word and deed. My youth group experience was especially formative—memorizing the Sermon on the Mount, participating in MDS projects and lay witness missions and singing in the New Directions (oops, I just dated myself). During my senior year of high school I came to understand more completely what a relationship with Jesus really means and made a more solid commitment to follow him with my whole life.

I went to Kansas State University and found a campus ministry called InterVarsity Christian Fellowship. I got plugged into the InterVarsity chapter, served in a number of different leadership roles and, after graduating and volunteering for a year and half with the ministry, decided to become a full-time



campus missionary with IVCF. I've been on staff now with InterVarsity for 31 years—nine of those years in Kansas, eight in Colorado and the last 14 in New Mexico. I married Andrea in 2001 and in 2009 our daughter Mattea was born. I'm currently the Assistant Regional Director for IV in the Rocky Mountain Region and my responsibilities cover a wide range of activities. Mainly I am responsible for three things: helping to lead our region in evangelism, training and coaching our staff in how to raise their funds for ministry, and leading ministry for graduate students and faculty at the University of New Mexico. Throughout all of these years and up to the current day, First Mennonite Church members have been some of my strongest supporters. Your partnership with IVCF in the work that I do means the world to me. Thank you so much for helping to transform the hearts of students and faculty throughout the Rocky Mountain states.

You may wonder just what your

partnership with InterVarsity is accomplishing. Here are just a few snippets of how God has been at work and how you, as my partners, have been involved:

Graduate Christian Fellowship at UNM – Over the last two years I have been working alongside several graduate students to start a ministry to graduate students on campus. The start-up has been slow, but we are seeing some progress and making an impact. Currently there are ten students who show up fairly regularly and there have been as many as 20 who have come to at least one event. We've done a few outreach events and last October we had a party where we filled eleven relief buckets for Syrian refugees and then shipped them to the MCC office in North Newton.

UNM Christian Faculty Discussion group – I've gotten involved with a group of faculty members who meet bi-weekly for either a discussion of a book on apologetics or a study of Scripture. This group was meeting long before I showed up, but I've encouraged them to think more strategically about outreach to their peers and to the campus at large. They have hosted a welcome back picnic at the beginning of the fall semester for three consecutive years, which has helped invite a few new faces into the group. The group also recently helped sponsor a Veritas Forum at UNM (more on that below). 12-15 faculty members and former faculty members have attended the group over the last three years or so.

(Continued on page 3)

ROD AND ANDREA PAULS UPDATE CONTINUED

(Continued from page 2)

Veritas Forum – On February 18 several campus ministries, including Graduate Christian Fellowship, the UNM Faculty Discussion group and InterVarsity worked together to host an event that involved Dr. John Lennox (Professor of Mathematics at Oxford University) and Dr. Mark Boslough (Research Physicist at Sandia National Laboratories in Albuquerque) speaking on the topic of “Does the World Matter to God? Should it Matter to Us?” Essentially the two speakers explored the moral imperatives for why we should care for the planet and how one’s view of God connects with that topic. Dr. Lennox spoke from the Christian perspective while Dr. Boslough spoke from the agnostic/secularist perspective. 600 people turned out for the event and both speakers did very well in answering questions from their particular world view. Dr. Lennox was able to give a very clear presentation of the Christian gospel at a number of points. Many of those attending were believing Christians, but several of the attendees were non-Christian students and faculty members. We are in the midst of doing follow up with those who gave us their contact information. I’m continuing conversations with Dr. Boslough as well and I hope that there will be opportunities to have more dialogue about spiritual things as well as environmental concerns.

Training and Coaching in Evangelism and Fund Development – Over the last several months I’ve had the privilege of doing some training and coaching

of both students and staff in evangelism as well as in how to raise funds for ministry. I’ve been involved with four different campuses in helping them to think about how to be more effective in their evangelistic witness on campus. This has resulted in students and staff trying out new things and seeing more students getting involved in sharing their faith on campus. We’ve also seen students coming to faith on these campuses in larger numbers than in previous semesters. I’ve also coached ten different staff members in raising their support for ministry with several of those staff reporting significant increases in their funding levels.

Urbana 15 – The last thing I’ll mention is the Urbana Missions Conference. This conference happens every three years and has been happening ever since the first one in 1946. 15,000+ students, missionaries and other attendees gathered in St. Louis, MO for five days of learning about God’s heart for the broken and messed up world in which we live. My role was to serve as the Operations Manager for the Bible study portion of the conference. Each morning participants met for an inductive study of part of the book of Matthew. I took great joy in making sure that all of the behind the scenes pieces were in place so that each person at Urbana could have a great experience in their study of God’s Word. Some highlights from Urbana 15 include: 676 first-time decisions to follow Jesus; 9,182 commitments to pray regularly for the global church; 9,001 committed to tell the gospel story in

their context; 5,379 committed to gather some friends to learn and live Matthew together; 5,017 commitments to go on a short-term mission; 1,932 commitments to go on a mid-term mission; and 2,395 committed their lives in long-term mission. In addition, \$1,000,000 was raised in an offering for various mission agencies.

Thank you for taking the time to read all of this. I greatly appreciate your care and concern for me. May you find much joy in giving to the Lord through your prayers and financial resources.

Blessings,
Rod Pauls

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

If you see these people,
wish them a Happy Birthday!

Betty Roth—4/1
April Kabagambe—4/2
Brooklyn Erb—4/4
Sammie Simmons—4/4
Anita Kehr—4/6
Ronald Dietzel—4/7
Joan Goering—4/8
Kathy Andres—4/9
Helen Bachman—4/9

Dewayne Pauls—4/9
Amy Regier—4/9
Linda Shelly—4/9
Cindy Combs—4/11
Nora Miller—4/11
Paul Schrag—4/11
Dora Voth—4/11
Abigail Schrag—4/13
Elena Wiebe—4/13
Santiago Dorado—4/14
Angela Nye—4/14

Remember to pray for each other!

Elda Schmidt—4/14
Robin Simmons—4/14
Miriam Regier—4/15
Maisie Pryce—4/16
Jerry Regier—4/16
Tillie Jantzen—4/18
John Sommer—4/18
Marsha Schmidt—4/19
Connie Claassen—4/21
Neva Frey—4/22
Christian Krehbiel—4/25

Karen Regier—4/25
Deb Penner—4/26
Sheralyn Goering—4/27
Marjorie Janzen—4/27
Manon Ducroquet—4/28
Axel Ducroquet—4/28
Baptiste Ducroquet—4/28
JoAn Thieszen—4/29
Kathy Becker—4/30
Aundres Ray—4/30
Jared Reimer—4/30

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY!

Eugene & Nancy Waltner—4/3
Arlen & Carol Wiens—4/4
Raymond & Janet Franz—4/5
Doug & Joanie Pauls—4/9
Harland & Oneta Unruh—4/9

Gary & Myrna Grochowsky—4/11
Charles & Romielda Wilmore—4/13
Dave and Elena Wiebe—4/19
Ron & Janelle Sybesma—4/22

Caregiving Corner

The Caregiving & Membership Commission is beginning what we are calling the "Elda Bachman Initiative." Elda Bachman was a member who on her own took on the ministry of praying through the First Mennonite yearbook, upholding each family unit in prayer during a week of the year, and then letting

them know by a note that she had prayed for them. This holding up members in prayer feels like a good way to give support to one another, so the commission is beginning to take some time during our meetings to go through the yearbook to focus on several family units in our prayer time. When we have done this, we will put a card in the members' church boxes letting them

know we have prayed for them. So do not be surprised to see a card in your box in the future!



APRIL 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 Life Stories Class FH 6:30-9:00 PM	2 Life Stories Class FH 8:30 AM- 3:30 PM
3 Casa Betania Service 3:30 PM Outreach 7:45 AM FIRST Potluck Noon—FH	4	5	6 Youth Group 7:00 PM Choir 7:00 PM	7 Casa Betania Sanctuary 6:30 PM Nurture 7:00 PM	8	9
					MCC Sale	
10 Casa Betania Service 3:30 PM	11 Church Board reports due	12	13 Youth Group 7:00 PM	14 Casa Betania Sanctuary 6:30 PM Church Board 7:00 PM	15	16
					Men and Boys Retreat	
17 Casa Betania Service 3:30 PM Spring Congregational Meeting —Noon KS Men's Choir- Presser Hall- Lindsborg, KS	18 Property Rm 224 7:30 PM	19 Caregiving 7:00 PM	20 Youth Group 7:00 PM	21 Casa Betania Sanctuary 6:30 PM	22	23
24 Casa Betania Service 3:30 PM KS Men's Choir- Central Community Church-Wichita	25	26	27 Youth Group 7:00 PM	28 Casa Betania Sanctuary 6:30 PM	29	30 FH and Kitchen Reserved 1:00- 6:00 PM

All events must be scheduled in the Church Office and cannot be scheduled more than six months in advance.

CHURCH BOARD REPORT

The board met on March 10, 2016. Pastor Anita opened with devotions and prayer, reading from John 15 and the book, *Jesus Now*.

Marvin Zehr was present as a consultant from Western District Conference. He reported on his evaluation of Pastor Anita for another term of service. The report was a very positive affirmation of Pastor Anita's ministry with us. Marvin will read the same report to the congregation at our congregational meeting on April 17. Ron Ratzlaff, chair of the Church Staff Committee brought the following recommendation: "The Church Staff Committee recommends to the Church Board that Anita Kehr be called as pastor on a full-time basis for a four-year term to begin September 13, 2016." A unanimous vote affirmed the recommendation. The congregation will vote on this recommendation on April 17. He explained that a four-year term was also offered to pastors Joel and Kay at their last evaluation. After the April 17 congregational meeting, a copy of the review will be available for members of the congregation to read in the Warkentin room.

The board also approved the agenda for the April 17 congregational meeting. As requested by the Gifts Discernment Committee, board members offered names of persons for the office of board chair starting January 1, 2017 so that the person could be identified and there would be a time of orientation in the remain-

der of 2016.

The board considered the request of the Allies Group to use the communication tools of the congregation for announcement of their meetings, specifically in the bulletin. Noting that the board had discussed this in several ways over several months of meetings, Jim Schrag, chair, prepared a statement of process for decision-making. The process, in part, required a majority of seven votes to pass a motion because there are 12 voting members on the board. The board unanimously agreed to the process, including the requirement of seven votes to pass a motion. One board member was absent from the meeting resulting in 11 votes being available.

In looking at the ensuing process of decision-making, a motion was made from the board that whatever the board chose to recommend should also be voted on by the congregation. The motion failed for lack of a second.

In a carefully-considered and lengthy process, board members spoke individually about each of seven different motions, most of which focused on wording to be placed in a bulletin announcement. One of the motions suggested that no communication be approved, and another would have required congregational approval for the wording the board had chosen. Of these seven motions, only one earned the required seven-vote majority

with a vote of 9 yes and 2 no. The board then revised the wording of the motion that had carried, passing the amended version with a vote of 10 yes and 1 no. The final version of the approved motion reads this way: "The Allies Group, which supports people with various sexual identities and their families and friends, will be meeting on Sunday ___ at 4 PM in room ___. For more information contact ___." After the meeting, through an email vote, the Board affirmed by a vote of 11 yes and one abstention that the announcement would appear in the community section of announcements in the bulletin.

In further business, Pastor Joel reported that the new FMC website is up and running. Pastor Anita reported that her trip to the Middle East in early April came with the approval of the Church and Staff Relations Committee as continuing education and as such will be funded by the budgeted continuing education monies with additional subsidy coming from Mennonite Church USA and Pastor Anita's personal contribution.

Due to the late hour the board postponed the remaining agenda and reports to the next meeting in April.

Jim Schrag, Chair of the Church Board

SOCIAL WORKERS SEE A NEED, MEET A NEED



“See a need, meet a need” is a phrase we’ve been hearing a lot lately. That’s a way of life

for social workers. I have spent the last 26 years working in the dialysis industry, the first 16 years working with people who required dialysis treatments to live due to their kidney failure and the last 10 years working in the realm of advocacy and public policy. I was honored and humbled on March 18 to receive a Medal of Excellence Award from the American Association of Kidney Patients for the work I have done over the years. The Medal of Excellence is the Association’s highest honor for healthcare professionals. The award recognizes health care professionals whose “insight and perseverance have led to dramatic advances that improve patient care.”

In a recent sermon, Pastor Anita challenged us to see people not just for who they are now but to also recognize who they are becoming. Social workers start where people are at in their circumstances and help them move to a better place. Barb Walker, Sammie Simmons, JoAn Waltner-Thieszen, Gus Dorado and

Penny Dorado are also social workers in our congregation (I hope I haven’t missed any others). Erin Regier and Michelle Peachy are both graduating from Bethel College’s social work program this year. Did you know that Barb was recently instrumental in starting the new Prairie View case manager outreach program to the Harvey County Homeless Shelter? Sammie works for the Kansas Department of Children and Families. JoAn serves people who have health insurance through one of the state’s Medicaid managed care organizations. Gus is a case manager for the Central Plains Area Agency on Aging. Penny works as a social worker at Via Christi St. Francis Hospital. She also just finished a series of parenting classes here at church. Recently, Penny had this post on her Facebook page:

“When the family of a patient gathers around you, hugs you, and says ‘We are so glad you’re here. You are exactly what we’ve needed,’ you realize you need to stop wishing you had the weekend off because maybe you are exactly where you need to be.” That kind of gratitude of involvement in someone’s life is better than any award!



And did you know our own Pastor Joel worked as a social worker prior to pastoring? Of course, you don’t need to be a social worker or a pastor to meet a need when you see a need. We all should be looking for ways to meet the needs that we see around us, and we all should strive to see people not just for who they are now but for the promise that is inside them.

Wendy Funk Schrag

FMC Connections

First Mennonite Church
PO Box 291
429 East First Street
Newton, KS 67114

April 2016

Spring



Dear Friends,

Thank you so much for your December and January gifts totaling \$340.00. Your support means a lot to Health Ministries Clinic and the 46% of our patients who can't afford to pay for the full cost of their services.

2015 was a remarkable year of growth for the clinic! Health Ministries celebrated the first year in our new facility at 215 South Pine Street.

Your contributions give the invaluable gift of health to the community. Thank you!!

Sincerely,

Matthew Schmidt
Executive Director of Health Ministries Clinic