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Two Rules of One



As I was sitting in the sanctuary just before Christmas waiting to talk to a congregation about DMARC's Compassion in Action program (for rent and utilities assistance), it occurred to me that DMARC's world is governed by two rules:


by Sarai Schnucker Rice

RULE There's just one hole we need to fill.

1 Inadequate income creates a hole in people's lives, and whether we fill it with food, childcare subsidies or utilities assistance, we're filling the same hole. The ultimate solution is not increased assistance, it's paying a living wage to the hard-working people whose work touches our lives every day.

RULE Understand we're all one step from the hole.

2 *Many of us are already in the hole and many more are only one step away.* For so many of us, one transmission in need of repair or one sick childcare provider is all that stands between us and a lost paycheck – even a lost job. Many others, even those with good incomes, know that there's nothing extra in the bank for food should they be laid off.

As I approach the end of my first year here, I am filled with awe at the generosity of the people in my new community. Without you, so many more would be homeless and hungry. Please join me this new year in dreaming of and planning for the time when there's no hole. 

President's Letter

– Dr. John B. Holcombe, Jr.
DMARC President

Challenges are real, so is Our Hope

“We are people of faith, united
by the mission to provide a
means of responding to these
basic human needs.”

With the new year comes the scheduled change in officers of DMARC, and I have been elected to serve as your new president.

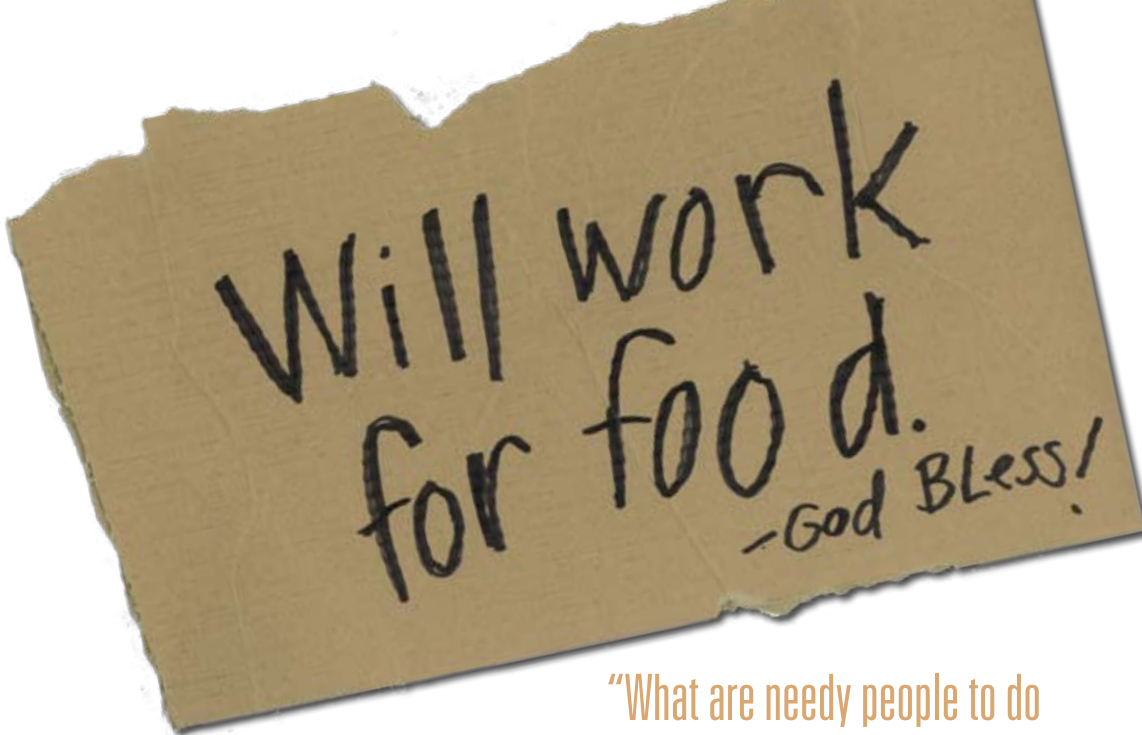
I've been privileged to work with the past two presidents, Faith Ferre and Ross Daniels, watching DMARC become strengthened under their leadership. I feel compelled to continue the unique mission of DMARC to serve the real needs of real people in our community.

I am the senior minister at Highland Park Christian Church (DOC), a congregation that has been an active member of DMARC since 1952. I previously served Altoona Christian Church (DOC) until 1962. During my years of service, the greater Des Moines area has seen many positive changes. We have become a more diverse community and have experienced significant improvement in our roadways, downtown revitalization and business expansion. And yet, an increasing percentage of our community experiences hunger and homelessness as families are plagued with increasing cost of gasoline, food, childcare, health insurance and less time together.

We are people of faith, united by the mission to provide a means of responding to these basic human needs. In addition, we provide a context for interfaith dialog, education and fellowship across the Des Moines area.

DMARC is blessed with a talented staff, a dedicated board and strong support from our member congregations. Our donors and partners continue to provide generous financial gifts that support our greatly needed work.

Our challenges are real, but so is our hope for the future. I look forward to our journey together. ➤



“What are needy people to do when it’s not the holiday season?”

Twas the Season

The Des Moines Area Religious Council has just concluded another successful year-end appeal, with DMARC friends and donors again responding with great generosity. This strong year-end response was, however, also somewhat ironic. The spirit of the holiday season brings out the best in our donors (for which we’re very appreciative), but it raises a larger question: “What are needy people to do when it’s not the holiday season?”

For most of us, the holidays come and go, and life returns to normal. But for those less fortunate the need remains. In these most challenging times, that need is growing.

The reasons are many:

- **Rapidly rising food prices**
- **Wildly fluctuating energy costs**
- **Deepening economic insecurity**
- **Rising unemployment**

An ever-increasing number of families

are seeking help from the DMARC Emergency Food Pantry, Compassion in Action and Childcare Assistance service initiatives. This year there has been an estimated 10-20% increase in need.

So how much should one give? That’s a personal choice. But you should know that every \$100 DMARC receives can:

- **Provide a five-day supply of food for three families**
- **Keep utilities turned on for one family for another month**
- **Provide more than one week of safe, quality daycare for a young child**

You can help the Des Moines Area Religious Council continue to fulfill its mission of serving people in need. *You* are the difference. Your generosity enables us to serve so many needy families. And, together, we do it again... and again.

You can help the Des Moines Area Religious Council continue to fulfill its mission of serving people in need.



Emergency Food Pantry

Volunteers Make It

Happen



DMARC's Emergency Food Pantry and Red Barrel programs wouldn't exist without the hard work and dedication of our volunteers.

Each week volunteers collect the hunger sacks and individual food items from our Red Barrels and bring them to the Emergency Food Pantry. Members from Des Moines, Johnston, West Des Moines and N.W. Des Moines Kiwanis Clubs make sure the food gets to us. In some stores, Kiwanis volunteers also make up the \$5.00 hunger sacks and see to it that sacks are always on hand for shoppers who wish to purchase them. Link Associates also volunteers to pick up hunger sacks and individual food items, including discarded items that are donated by several stores.

In our Emergency Food Pantry warehouse, volunteers constantly work to sort, box and ready food for delivery to one of the nine DMARC food pantries. Their tasks include checking expiration dates on all items received (see related article on page 6), filling orders for the food pantries and stacking food boxes for easy pick-up by the pantries on the next day. At the warehouse, volunteers assist people dropping off food donations by unloading them from vehicles. Additionally, volunteers sort miscellaneous food and personal items, preparing boxes of these items for distribution to the pantries.

Volunteers truly make it happen for the DMARC Emergency Food Pantry and Red Barrel programs. Thank you to all who contribute their time and talents. If you wish to volunteer, please visit the DMARC website at DMReligious.org. ➔

Make a Difference Now!

Want to make an online gift that makes a difference right now? Go to the DMARC website at DMReligious.org and click on the DONATE button.



Third Annual DMARC Food Pantry Soup Supper

The third annual DMARC soup supper will be held Sunday, February 22, from 4:30 to 7:00 p.m. at St. John's Lutheran Church, located at 600 6th Avenue in downtown Des Moines.

For \$10, enjoy all the chili, chicken noodle and vegetable soup you'd like, along with breads from local bakeries and restaurants, and a variety of homemade cookies.

While supplies last, you will also receive

a ceramic bowl created by a local artist. Larger bowls and bowl sets made by local artists will also be available through a silent auction.

All the food and artwork is donated, so 100% of the proceeds go to purchase food for the DMARC Emergency Food Pantry.

Tickets can be purchased at the door or by calling the DMARC office at 277-6969.

From the Hands of the Potter

100 handmade bowls will be donated to the DMARC soup supper by Nancy Briggs and The Des Moines Art Center, where she has taught ceramics to both adults and children for over 20 years.

While Nancy's usual pottery is Raku fired sculpture and decorative ceramics, she has returned to her roots as a functional potter and

created these stoneware and porcelain bowls exclusively for the Food Pantry fundraiser. Nancy says, "It was a joy to make these bowls and I hope this will encourage more people to attend the supper.

The Food Pantry does such important work, and I feel good giving back to the community in this manner." Nancy donated her time and skills to



create the bowls, and the materials were donated by The Des Moines Art Center. The bowls are food safe and dishwasher safe.

The Integer Group Showcases


Project Connect



“I’ve been looking for ways to get involved and volunteer, and think that this is the perfect way to do so.”

This fall, The Integer Group’s Des Moines branch chose to showcase Project Connect for its employees. Part of The Integer Group’s corporate culture is “giving back” to the community, and early last fall, Project Connect was featured as a part of Integer’s United Way “kick-off” event. Barbara Anderson, Director of Project Connect, was invited to speak about the program, and staff members were on hand to sign up recruits and hand out brochures.

Megan Caldbeck, one of the mentors at The Integer Group, had this to say about her experience: “I found that Project Connect is a great way to reach out to young students in my community. I’ve been looking for ways to get involved and volunteer, and think this is the perfect way to do so. The program is also great for both the mentor and mentee because there really aren’t any expectations or obligations as far as when we meet. It’s really just about spending time together and building a relationship. I’ve only been with the program for a few months, but so far my mentee and I have had some great meetings - and I really look forward to the upcoming year!”

We at DMARC and with Project Connect extend our heartfelt and sincere thanks to the staff at The Integer Group and to its president, Frank Maher, for their wholehearted and genuine support. 

What Not to Give

The question is frequently asked: Are there any food items that shouldn't be donated to the Emergency Food Pantry? Yes, there are. DMARC cannot accept the following contributions:



Glass Containers - With the exception of baby food, DMARC is unable to accept glass containers due to the potential safety risks to our volunteers involved with handling broken glass.

Refrigerated or Frozen Foods - The DMARC EFP warehouse is unable to maintain food items that need to be either refrigerated or kept frozen due to lack of refrigerated storage areas. However, some of the Emergency Food Pantry sites do have this capability, so limited amounts of these items can be donated directly to those sites.

Outdated Food - The food donated to the DMARC EFP must be usable. Whenever food that has gone past its "Best by" date or has exceeded its shelf life is received, such food is discarded.

If DMARC were to distribute such food and the person receiving it became ill, the liability could be overwhelming.

Opened Food Containers - When DMARC checks donated food for freshness, it also checks to make sure that any seals responsible for preserving freshness are intact. In the case of dry goods, we check the inner container. With jarred foods, we look at the seal. If either of these is broken, the freshness of the product cannot be guaranteed nor can there be an assurance that the merchandise has not been contaminated; it therefore must be thrown away. Incredibly, on occasion DMARC actually receives peanut butter where some of the product had been eaten prior to having been donated.

AND, THE AWARD GOES TO...

Do you know a worthy individual or individuals whose service to our community is exemplary?

Do you know someone who makes a real difference in the lives of the less fortunate?

Do you know someone whose efforts promote interfaith cooperation and understanding?

Please nominate them to receive a DMARC Service Award. Contact the DMARC office (277-6969) to receive a nomination form or obtain a copy from the DMARC website at DMReligious.org.



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Food Pantry Director James Trotter
Red Barrel Coordinator..... Cindy Morton
Project Connect..... Mary Beth Williams
Communications Specialist.... Matthew Phelps
Development Director Marshall Grabau
Financial Secretary Laura DeLong

D-marc your calendar

Please refer to DMARC's e-Bulletin for a more current schedule of events. To receive the e-Bulletin, please e-mail us at info@DMReligious.org.

FEBRUARY

February 8
LADOS MEETINGS (Life After Death Of Spouse)
LADOS meetings are held at 7:00 p.m.
at Plymouth Congregational Church.

February 10
COMPASSION IN ACTION
Compassion in Action committee meetings
are held at 11:30 a.m. in the DMARC
conference room.

February 19
DMARC BUSINESS ASSEMBLY
The DMARC Business Assembly will run from
7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. at Highland Park Christian
Church, 4260 Northwest 6th Dr.

February 22
SOUP SUPPER
The Soup Supper will run from 4:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.
at St. John's Lutheran Church.

MARCH

March 8
LADOS MEETINGS (Life After Death Of Spouse)
LADOS meetings are held at 7:00 p.m.
at Plymouth Congregational Church.

March 10
COMPASSION IN ACTION
Compassion in Action committee meetings
are held at 11:30 a.m. in the DMARC
conference room.

March 1 - April 30 – Feinstein Foundation Matching Grant

APRIL

April 12
LADOS MEETINGS (Life After Death Of Spouse)
LADOS meetings are held at 7:00 p.m.
at Plymouth Congregational Church.

April 14
COMPASSION IN ACTION
Compassion in Action committee meetings
are held at 11:30 a.m. in the DMARC
conference room.