



## COMMEMORATING 40 YEARS OF FOOD ASSISTANCE

BY LUKE ELZINGA, COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

In May, 1976, the call went out to congregations across Greater Des Moines: we need your help to end local hunger.

Many aspects of our work have changed over the past 40 years, but our mission remains the same. We are still dedicated to ending hunger in our community, and we still rely on our member congregations to help us do so.

As we mark our 40th year of food assistance work, DMARC would like to thank the countless volunteers and donors who have made this work possible. The DMARC Food Pantry Network would not be able to function without community volunteers, on whom we have relied from day one.

What started in a church basement has grown to become the largest Food Pantry Network in the state of Iowa. Our community has consistently shown throughout the years that when we all work together, we can accomplish some incredible things.

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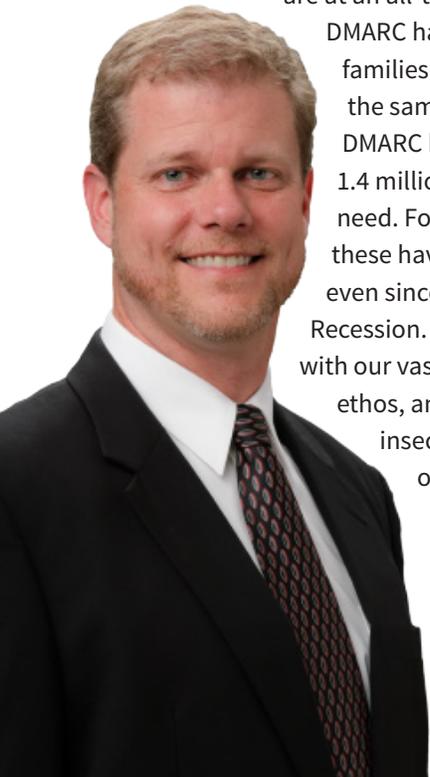
## FROM IRONY TO INSPIRATION

BY DOUG VENTLING, PRESIDENT

Wow! Have you heard?! Des Moines is the #1 Wealthiest City in America (TODAY show, 2014); in the “Top 10 U.S. Cities to Land Work” (NBC News, 2015); a Top 10 Best City to Live and Work (Robert Half’s Career City Index, 2016); the #11 Best Place to Live in the U.S. (U.S. News & World Report, 2016). In fact, Des Moines is also considered the #7 Hippest Mid-Sized City in America (Gogobot, 2016). These are just a few samplings of the numerous accolades the Greater Des Moines area has received over the last few years. We truly have something special going on here!

Unfortunately, there is a cruel irony in our community with a serious human impact. In spite of all the recognition for our “hip-ness” and wealth, tens of thousands of our neighbors across Greater Des Moines are in a crisis of epic proportions. As we mark 40 years of food assistance this year through DMARC’s Food Pantry Network, food insecurity and hunger

are at an all-time high. So far in FY2016, DMARC has served 19,485 unique families- 4,500 more families than at the same point in FY2015. In FY2016, DMARC has already distributed nearly 1.4 million food items to those in need. Food assistance statistics like these have been rising dramatically even since the end of the Great Recession. The irony here is that even with our vast economic strength, cultural ethos, and community focus, the food insecurity and outright hunger in our community is accelerating at an alarming rate.



Fortunately, Des Moines is on another list – the #1 Metro with the Most Community Pride (Gallup, 2015). Together, our community has the talent, the work ethic, the commitment, and the financial means to end this cruel irony and truly achieve what we originally set out to do 40 years ago - end hunger across Greater Des Moines. Together, with our member congregations, our community and government leaders, our corporate and nonprofit partners, with the countless donors, supporters, and volunteers like you, we CAN do this!

Let’s add another reason why we are #1 when it comes to community pride – that none of us have to every worry about having enough to eat. Eliminating food insecurity will almost certainly show up in the workplace in the form of higher productivity, reduced stress, reduced absenteeism, and better health. It will show up socially in terms of more stable families, greater financial independence, and improved learning and therefore better futures for our children. Volunteer once in a DMARC food pantry site and you’ll quickly see that the face of those with food insecurity is like looking in a mirror.

On behalf of the team members and board of DMARC, we are truly inspired! We are developing a new strategic plan that supports a future vision for a Greater Des Moines where everyone has enough nutritious food to eat. It will take imagination, innovation, and untold cooperation to get there. We’ll be leveraging data to better understand food supply and demand for those in need, to analyze food pantry utilization patterns, and to better measure outcomes. We’ve secured funding for our first mobile food pantry to address pantry access issues faced by many in poverty without transportation. We’re evaluating other innovations and relationships to help achieve this vision.

We’re inspired and we hope you are, too! Thank you so much for your support!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Doug Ventling". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Doug Ventling  
President

## DMARC WELCOMES MIKE SCHNEIDER

Mike Schneider joined DMARC in March of 2016 as the Donor Development and Outreach Strategist. In this role he is responsible for fundraising efforts and donor cultivation in order to meet DMARC's goals.

Mike is an Iowa native but moved to Michigan when he was just one year old and will always consider himself a Michigander! He grew up in Jackson, MI, where most of his family still lives. A proud Wolverine having graduated from the University of Michigan in 1982 with his Bachelor's Degree, Mike still finds time to echo a "Go Blue" when his team is playing.

Mike started his career in banking working for Comerica Bank, headquartered in Detroit, Michigan. Fate then stepped in and an opportunity arose in Des Moines with Norwest Card Services. That opportunity to return to his birth-state was too good to pass up. His time with Norwest was spent in credit card operations and portfolio acquisition and to this day ranks very high in his corporate experiences.

A short two-year stint in the Twin Cities ensued with another regional bank, during which time he married Dawn. And when another opportunity in Des Moines presented itself, the now-expecting family decided Des Moines was to be their home.

"We knew the Des Moines area was where we wanted to raise a family," said Schneider. "It's cliché, but there's something about Midwest-Nice that's very appealing."

Mike then embarked upon a 16+ year career with GuideOne Insurance, focused on process improvement and project management. At that time the Schneiders welcomed their second son and immersed themselves in the West Des Moines community, finding homes for the boys at Western Hills Elementary, Stilwell Jr. High, and ultimately Valley High School where Cory, their youngest, will graduate this May.



The family calls Lutheran Church of Hope their second home and can be found there throughout the week and on the weekend attending services and volunteering in myriad capacities. On top of that, for the past 2 ½ years prior to joining DMARC, Mike was on staff at Hope serving as their Production Operations Director.

Mike loves spending time with family and friends, playing golf, running, biking and reading incessantly! Mike is also passionate about helping others and to that end, founded 100 Men on a Mission, a collective philanthropy concept that brings 100 men or more together 4 times a year with the goal of raising \$10,000 each meeting. 100 Men just entered its 5th year and continues to bless local charities.

Mike is extremely excited to join the DMARC team to support the critically important mission we embrace.

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DMARC's Department of CROP and Other Human Needs had been aware for some time that community food needs were not being properly met, and that it was time to take action. Under their recommendation, the "Emergency Food Pantry" resolution was adopted by DMARC's Administrative Cabinet on February 17, 1976.

The first congregation food drive was held that May. 17 congregations participated, donating 847 food items and \$57.71. The food was stored in the basement of Kirkside, a large house located at 3807 Grand Avenue, DMARC headquarters at the time. Later that year, the pantry "warehouse" was moved just down the street to the basement of Central Presbyterian Church.



*Food Pantry Director Fran Botzin (R) sorting food with volunteers Arden Wood (L) and Jayne James (Center) and her children in 1994.*

Food was distributed to six neighborhood pantry sites throughout Des Moines. Three of them- Salvation Army Temple Corps, West Des Moines Human Services and Bidwell Riverside Center- are still part of the DMARC Food Pantry Network today.

Over the next few years, contributions of food and cash donations to the Emergency Food Pantry increased, but so did the number of hungry people seeking food.

In the early 80's, it became evident that a new department should be created within DMARC, specifically focused on the Emergency Food Pantry. In December, 1982, the Department of the Emergency Food Pantry was formed, with Earl Holst selected as its first chairman. Holst, a small business owner and regional officer in central Iowa Kiwanis clubs, had been a volunteer in the food pantry since 1979.

In the summer of 1986, DMARC moved headquarters to 3816 36th Street, and two important decisions were made that would impact the future of the Emergency Food Pantry.



*Pantry volunteers (L-R) Wil Dubes, Shaw Johnson, Dale Dallner and Warren Nixon sort food items in the basement of Central Presbyterian Church in September, 1984.*

## A TIMELINE HISTORY OF THE DMARC FOOD PANTRY NETWORK

**February 17, 1976**

DMARC's Administrative Cabinet adopts "Emergency Food Pantry" resolution.

**1983**

Department for the Emergency Food Pantry is established by DMARC's board.

**April 12, 1990**

Red Barrel Program is established with the help of Kiwanis clubs.

**May 10-16, 1976**

Emergency Food Pantry launch week, third Sunday food drives established.

**Summer of 1986**

After ten years in existence, DMARC builds a warehouse and hires its first Emergency Food Pantry Director.

**1993**

DMARC assists with providing water and food to residents during the flood of '93.

First, a new warehouse must be built, because no food storage space was available at the new headquarters.

Second, a part-time director should be hired to manage the pantry supervisory work. Until that point in time, the pantry had been entirely volunteer-run.

Holst and fellow Kiwanian Wil Dubes approached Des Moines area Kiwanis clubs to help build a new warehouse, with an estimated cost of \$30,000. The project was fully funded by Kiwanis clubs.

Once the building was complete, it was ready to welcome the first pantry director, Charles Schachterle. The new warehouse and director could not have come at a more opportune time.

Economic downturn in the late 1980's led to a large increase in demand, and DMARC began exploring ways to gather donations from other sources throughout the community.

*DMARC's old warehouse on 36th Street was funded by Des Moines area Kiwanis clubs and was completed in 1986. Photo taken 1994.*



This prompted the launch of the Red Barrel Program in April, 1990. Bright red barrels decorated with "STOP HUNGER" signs popped up in supermarkets throughout the area. Kiwanis clubs of Des Moines again played a vital role in starting this program.

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*DMARC's first ever Red Barrel. The Red Barrel Program was launched on April 12, 1990 with help from Des Moines area Kiwanis clubs. Kiwanis members still volunteer with the program.*



**2002**

Hunger Sacks implemented into Red Barrel Program, increasing donations.

**2010**

*MovetheFood* truck purchased. Fresh produce introduced in pantries.

**2013**

DMARC 1435 Mulberry Initiative and Capital Campaign launch.

**2008**

Emergency Food Pantry renamed as DMARC Food Pantry Network.

**2011**

*MovetheFood* initiative launches to engage the community in building a systemic model to end hunger.

**January, 2014**

DMARC moves into its new home at 1435 Mulberry Street.

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Ray Hock and Fran Bobzin both served as Food Pantry Directors in the years of 1990-1992, with Charles Ryan taking the position in September of 1992.

The flood of 1993 was a true test for DMARC's Emergency Food Pantry. Hundreds of residents were suddenly left homeless, with no access to food. DMARC saw food resources pour in from across the nation, and the pantry distribution system passed its most rigorous test it had ever faced. In the year of 1993, DMARC served a total of 95,448 individuals- more than the pantry system would serve for another 10 years.

Charles Ryan resigned as Food Pantry Director in 1995, with Sister Sandra Rodemyer taking over. To this day, many individuals share fond memories of volunteering in the food pantry warehouse with "Sister Sandy."

From 1994 -2001, food pantry usage hit a plateau. This period of relative stability can be attributed to the economic boom of the 1990's.

Then, at the start of the new Millenium, the economy took a downturn. Over the next three years following 2001, the DMARC Emergency Food Pantry saw a 30% increase in the number of people it was serving.

Sr. Sandy Rodemyer retired at the end of 2007, just before Iowa and the rest of the nation would suffer their greatest economic recession since the Great Depression.

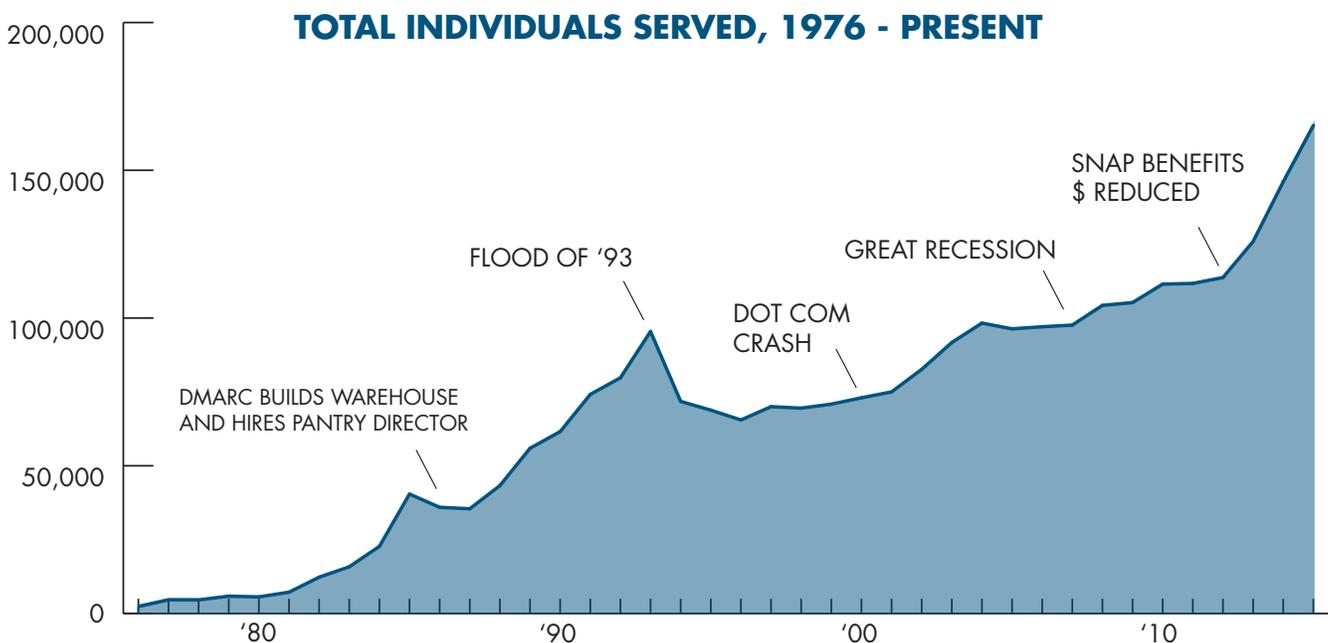


*Sister Sandy Rodemyer (left), Food Pantry Director from 1995-2007, is presented the Iowa Star award by Laura Hollingsworth (right), then-publisher of The Des Moines Register, at Sister Sandy's going away party in 2007.*

Jim Trotter served as Food Pantry Director from 2007-2010. During this time, many families in Greater Des Moines turned to utilize a service to which they had previously donated.

In 2008, DMARC's Emergency Food Pantry was renamed as the DMARC Food Pantry Network. The system had always existed as a network of pantries, and the new name aimed to be more reflective of this.

Elisabeth Ballstad began as Food Pantry Director in 2010, the same year DMARC purchased a van to haul food. Prior to this, transportation for food was provided entirely by volunteers and other organizations.



Over the next few years, DMARC would take large strides in re-examining how it was providing food to our community and finding the most effective ways to get food where it needed to be.

The following year, 2011, the *MovetheFood* initiative was launched to address the entire food system in Des Moines. Two large trucks were purchased to aid in this effort.

In addition, DMARC took another look at the type of food we were providing our clients. After a study conducted by Iowa State found that our pantry clients were three times as likely to have diabetes than the general population, we knew changes must be made.

DMARC adopted a healthy foods guideline for its monthly food box, featuring food items lower in sugar, fat and salt, as well as fresh fruits and vegetables.

Rebecca Whitlow took over as Food Pantry Network Director in 2012, and still serves in that role today. Whitlow has been involved with DMARC almost her entire life, and has a natural passion for our work.

Many of DMARC's partner pantries converted to "choice" pantry models during this time period, allowing clients to select their own food items as a volunteer assisted them. Choice pantries provided a new level of dignity and respect for those seeking help.

With all these changes, it was clear that DMARC had outgrown its warehouse. After searching for a new possible location, a spot was chosen near downtown Des Moines.

DMARC launched its 1435 Mulberry Initiative, a \$1.3 million capital campaign to purchase, renovate, and stock a building previously owned by Central Iowa Shelter & Services.

In January of 2014, DMARC moved into its current home at 1435 Mulberry Street. The renovated building houses an administrative office adjacent to the new 6,000 square foot warehouse. The new facility features a pit-dock, walk-in freezer and cooler, a pallet racking system and an electronic pallet jack, and overall a much more expansive, efficient and safer storage space.

Today, DMARC is serving more people than we ever have before in our 40 years of food assistance. We continue to find underserved areas, parents still going to bed hungry because they can't afford to feed both themselves and their children. The fight for food security is far from over, but we are not in this endeavor alone.

Through it all, we have known we can count on you to help us feed our neighbors. We thank our congregations, partner pantries, volunteers, donors, DMARC board members and employees past and present, and the entire community of Greater Des Moines. We feel truly grateful to call such a giving, helpful place home. ■

*DMARC's 1435 Mulberry Street grand opening and ribbon cutting ceremony was held on June 10, 2014. Photo by Bill Gentsch.*



## POLK COUNTY PROVIDES MORE WAREHOUSE SPACE FOR FOOD

BY LUKE ELZINGA, COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

This January, thanks to funds from The Partnership for a Hunger Free Polk County, DMARC set up additional food storage space at a Polk County building located at 1301 Scott Street, just off Martin Luther King, Jr. Parkway in Des Moines.

The warehouse, primarily used by the Polk County Parks and Recreation Department, offers storage for 105 pallets, a large walk-in freezer and cooler, and a forklift for moving and stacking large quantities of food.



DMARC keeps an inventory of food for both the Scott Street warehouse and the Food Pantry Network warehouse located at DMARC's 1435 Mulberry Street building. This allows movement of product between the two storage facilities, depending on what is most needed at the current time.

With this additional warehouse space, DMARC can get even better prices on food purchases by ordering in bulk. We are also able to receive food donations we previously couldn't access, such as donations from trucking companies and large-scale distribution centers.

"We're getting things through our door we would've had to turn away a few years ago," says Rebecca Whitlow, DMARC Food Pantry Network Director. "Before, we just did not have the ability to receive nor capacity to store the amount of food we do now."

Purchasing food in bulk has resulted in significant savings for DMARC. Currently, an average meal costs us \$0.58.

Please keep this fact in mind when you are deciding how best to support our work. Cash gifts allow us to purchase anywhere from two to six times the amount of food a consumer is able to purchase at the grocery store.

The warehouse space, racking, freezer, cooler and forklift were all funded and provided by The Partnership for a Hunger Free Polk County. DMARC would like to thank the Partnership, Polk County and its Supervisors, and all who support The Partnership for a Hunger Free Polk County for making this possible.

*Joe Dolack, DMARC driver and warehouse associate, moves a pallet of cereal with the help of a forklift. Photo by Luke Elzinga/DMARC.*



# DRAKE AREA FOOD PANTRY FORMS FROM COLLABORATION

BY LUKE ELZINGA, COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

Last year, the Des Moines Community Action Agency and Red Rock Area Community Action Program came together to form IMPACT Community Action Partnership. As a result, there have been some changes throughout the DMARC Food Pantry Network system.

IMPACT Community Action Partnership purchased an old Parks and Recreation building at 3226 University Avenue in Des Moines for their new administrative office. This location will replace the Des Moines Community Action Agency office located on 6th Avenue.

In Ankeny, IMPACT will be moving to a new location at 2701 SW Convenience Boulevard in the middle of May.

Meanwhile, CROSS Ministries has also moved locations, with new office space in the aforementioned IMPACT building at 3229 University Avenue.

Both Des Moines Community Action Agency and CROSS Ministries operated DMARC partner pantries, so with the change to IMPACT and the new shared office space, a natural partnership formed. IMPACT Community Action Partnership and CROSS Ministries would jointly operate and staff a food pantry in the new building at 3226 University Avenue.

This collaboration effectively reduces the amount of DMARC partner pantries from 12 to 11. However, the Drake Area Food Pantry, as it has been named, is actually open 21 more hours per week than the two previous pantries combined.

In addition, the Drake Area Food Pantry is located directly on a bus route, making it more accessible for clients who struggle with transportation.

The Drake Area Food Pantry is a choice pantry, with a large freezer and cooler storing fresh produce and frozen meat. It has spacious aisles and a clean, inviting atmosphere. We are excited to see what IMPACT Community Action Partnership and CROSS Ministries can accomplish in their new facility!

## FOOD PANTRY NETWORK UPDATES



## DRAKE AREA FOOD PANTRY



3226 University Avenue  
Des Moines, IA 50311  
(515) 279-9998

**M, T, TH, F:** 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
**W:** 8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.  
**Sat:** 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.



## EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

### DMARC'S MISSION:

Religious Communities Working Together  
to Meet Basic Human Needs.

### STAFF:

#### REV. SARAI SCHNUCKER RICE,

Executive Director

#### DANIEL BECK

#### JOE DOLACK

#### LUKE ELZINGA

#### PAM LARSON

#### DREW ROBERTSON

#### JOHN E. ROBINSON

#### MIKE SCHNEIDER

#### LINDA VANDER HART

#### REBECCA WHITLOW

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

#### 2016-2017:

#### DOUG VENTLING,

President

#### JODY MEAD,

President-Elect

#### LINDA HARVEY,

Recording Secretary

#### ROBERT W. NYE,

Treasurer

#### TOM FISCHER,

Past President

#### DAVE ABRAM

FRANCES COLSTON (Advisory)

PHYLLIS CHILDERS (Advisory)

#### TOM CROSS

#### KATIE DAWSON

#### RABBI DAVID KAUFMAN

#### DENNIS ROUPE

#### ROBERT D. SHAW, M.D.

#### LEANNE VALENTINE

#### JOHN WHALIN

### DMARC SUMMER HOURS:

Monday - Thursday: 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Friday: 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

# GIVE LOCAL DES MOINES!

Presented By  
The Des Moines Register  
PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

## MAY 3, 2016

#GiveLocalDSM is a 24-hour crowdfunding campaign to encourage people to give back to their local community.

On May 3, support DMARC through the #GiveLocalDSM campaign at [givelocaldsm.org](http://givelocaldsm.org).

## MEALS FROM THE MARKET

Each Saturday morning during the summer, the Meals from the Market program collects produce donations from vendors at the Des Moines Downtown Farmers' Market.

DMARC is currently seeking volunteers to collect produce donations during the Downtown Farmer's Market. If you are interested, please contact Daniel Beck, [dbeck@dmarcunited.org](mailto:dbeck@dmarcunited.org) or 515-282-2026.



## IOWA CUBS SUNDAY HOME GAMES



At every Iowa Cubs Sunday home game this summer, DMARC will be accepting three food items as a donation in exchange for one general admission ticket. Fans can also pay \$5 to upgrade to a Grand Stand seat.

Find a full list of the Iowa Cubs Sunday Home Games on our community calendar, located online at [dmarcunited.org/events](http://dmarcunited.org/events).

We are still in need of volunteers to assist gathering donations at Iowa Cubs Sunday home games. If you are interested in volunteering, contact Daniel Beck, [dbeck@dmarcunited.org](mailto:dbeck@dmarcunited.org) or 515-282-2026.

## CONFERENCE ON BRAIN DEVELOPMENT

The Kiwanis Club of Des Moines (Downtown) is hosting a three-day conference on brain development featuring Dr. Wil Blechman, M.D. The conference will be held from May 31 to June 2 in Des Moines.

Multiple events will be held, with a variety of topics covered including early childhood brain development, poor and inadequate nutrition, and the importance of local Kiwanis clubs.



For more information and registration, visit [downtowndesmoineskiwanis.org](http://downtowndesmoineskiwanis.org).

# NEW DMARC RESOURCES FOR YOUR CONGREGATION

A new area on the DMARC website has been created to house resources for our member congregations. You can visit it at:

[www.dmarcunited.org/resources/congregations](http://www.dmarcunited.org/resources/congregations)

There you can find a full list of the Donation of the Month for 2016 (which is also listed at the bottom of this column), videos about donating food, and a series of images and graphics showing what you can buy in the store versus what we can buy wholesale (see the infographic to the right for an example of this).

What other materials or information would be useful to your congregation? We are continually building on our resources, and would love your input! If you have an idea you'd like to share with us, please contact DMARC Communications Manager Luke Elzinga at 515-277-6969 x10 or [lelzinga@dmarcunited.org](mailto:lelzinga@dmarcunited.org).

Make sure you're getting the most up-to-date news from DMARC by signing up for our weekly email newsletter, the *eVoice!* You can also sign up for our monthly volunteer email newsletter. And don't forget to connect with DMARC/ *MovetheFood* on Facebook and Twitter!

The infographic below is available for download at [dmarcunited.org/resources/congregations](http://dmarcunited.org/resources/congregations).

SHOULD I DONATE  
**FOOD**  
-OR-  
**FUNDS?** 



— *CONSIDER THIS* —

DMARC IS ABLE TO PURCHASE  
**TWENTY-FIVE**  
**BOXES OF CEREAL**  
WITH YOUR \$25.



COMPARE THAT TO THE  
**SEVEN OR EIGHT**  
BOXES YOU COULD BUY AT THE STORE  
WITH THE SAME \$25.

**3X THE AMOUNT OF CEREAL.**

(THAT'S MORE BREAKFAST IN MORE BOWLS.)

**DO MORE. DONATE FUNDS.**

[dmarcunited.org/donate](http://dmarcunited.org/donate)

## DONATION OF THE MONTH

**January:** Hot Cereal

**February:** Healthy Canned Goods

**March:** Peanut Butter

**April:** Diapers

**May:** Fruit Cocktail

**June:** Canned Seafood

**July:** Fresh Vegetables

**August:** Fresh Fruit

**September:** Rice

**October:** Chili

**November:** Canned Soup

**December:** Pasta

For a full list with printable PDF flyers, visit [dmarcunited.org/resources/congregations](http://dmarcunited.org/resources/congregations).



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**Des Moines Area Religious Council**

1435 Mulberry Street  
Des Moines, Iowa 50309

515.277.6969  
[dmarcunited.org](http://dmarcunited.org)

Warehouse: 515.282.2026  
Fax: 515.274.8389  
Email: [info@dmarcunited.org](mailto:info@dmarcunited.org)

 **Des Moines Area Religious Council**  
 **@dmreligious**



## INTERFAITH TRIVIA NIGHT

**Thursday, May 19, 6:00 PM**  
**4th Street Theater, Java Joes Coffeehouse**  
**214 4th Street, Des Moines, IA 50309**

Test your knowledge about religions across the world and right here in your backyard! DMARC will be hosting an Interfaith Trivia Night on Thursday, May 19, from 6:00 - 8:30 p.m. at the 4th Street Theater at Java Joes Coffeehouse, 214 4th Street in downtown Des Moines.

For more information, visit [dmarcunited.org](http://dmarcunited.org). This event is free and open to the public. A goodwill offering will be taken at the event.

### SAMPLE TRIVIA QUESTION

Many local Vietnamese Buddhists pay special respect to the bodhisattva of compassion, pictured here. What is her name, and where in Des Moines is this statue located?

**A:** Quan Am, Tu Vien Hong Duc  
Buddhist Temple on SW 9th Street

