**Low German Mennonites from Mexico Support Task force (LGMFMSTF)**

**Margaret Goering, Chairperson**

When and why did this task force begin?

* Officially in January, 2004.
* WDC member Tina Block Ediger (and others) conducted a survey of Low German farmworkers in Kansas. That survey document reported high occurrences of medical needs.
* It is a partnership between WDC via LGMFMSTF, represented by the task force to monitor and advocate for Low German healthy living, and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE), who supplies vouchers for bi-lingual health promoters to enable and include the service to Low German and Hispanic farmworkers across the state of Kansas.

The task force meets three times a year with the KDHE director of the Farm Worker Program. The task force is accountable to the WDC Resource Commission. The guiding statement from the Mennonite Central Committee Canada program based in Steinbach, Manitoba is: *"MCC seeks to share God's love with LGM people by working in a mutually beneficial relationship with local leaders, communities and organizations to enhance their capacity to address such issues as poverty, conflict, literacy, health and natural disasters."* The WDC task force added a fourth goal: *"to share our common spiritual background and faith."*

The Farmworker Health promoters identify Farmworker families in need of medical, dental or mental health needs. Through translation services, vouchers for medical assistance, and educational opportunities, the KDHE funds are awarded to needy families. The salaries of the Farmworker promoters are administered and paid by WDC through grants from KDHE. Three additional Health Care Promoter positions have been added this year. Harold D. Thieszen 2019represents the Western District on the KDHE Advisory Council. Some Low Germans from western Kansas are also on the Advisory Council.

The LGMFMSTF members are: Margaret Goering, chair; Kathy Neufeld Dunn, secretary and Western District Conference Staff Representative, Lotti Boschmann, Carola Ratzlaff, Hannah Neufeld, Mary Duerksen, Lici Roth, representing Health Promoters, and Cynthia Synder representing KDHE.