

First Congregational Church United Church of Christ (FCCUCC) of Colorado Springs
Minutes of the Council Meeting
August 13, 2020 via Zoom

Council Members in Attendance:

Bill Kemp (Moderator)
Paul McNeill (Vice Moderator)
Adam Gibbs (Worship & Spiritual Life)
Lisa Mason (Secretary)
Polly Strovink (Treasurer)
Laura Pfender (Education)
Margaret Reiber (Care & Fellowship)

Ex Officio in Attendance:

Dr. Donald Longbottom
(Transitional Minister)
Rev. Jacque Franklin
(Minister of Pastoral Care)

Ex Officio Absent: None

Council Members Absent:

Wayne Bland (Outreach)

Guests: None

Prayer: Dr. Don

Meeting called to order - 6:07 pm

MINUTES

June 8 Budget Review (Zoom) meeting - corrections were discussed.

Margaret moved and Laura seconded that the minutes for this meeting be approved as amended. The motion was approved via hand-vote with one abstaining vote.

June 11 Council (Zoom) Meeting - corrections were discussed.

Polly moved and Laura seconded that the minutes for this meeting be approved as amended. The motion was approved via hand-vote with one abstaining vote.

July 9 Council (Zoom) Meeting - corrections were discussed.

Margaret moved and Adam seconded that the minutes for this meeting be approved as amended. The motion was approved via hand-vote with one abstaining vote.

Paul moved that future minutes for Council meetings be sent out to Council members within 6 days of the meeting date and that responses to correct those minutes be returned to the Secretary (or whoever drafted the minutes) within 6 days of receipt of those minutes. Margaret seconded. The motion passed unanimously via hand vote.

MODERATOR / NEW BUSINESS (BILL KEMP)

- In-person outdoor worship services are currently being planned for Aug 30 and for two Sundays each in September and October. The planned Sundays in September and October are likely to be the 2nd and 4th Sundays.
 - FCC still needs final permission from the city to use East St. Vrain Street on the south side of the church for this outdoor service.

- Council needs to have the draft budget completed by the beginning of September in order to get that information to Ruth Roland. That gives Ruth time in September to compile that information and send it on to Stewardship Committee for the Annual Campaign in October.
 - HR Committee will be asked by Ruth to get their recommendations for personnel salaries and benefits to Ruth by the beginning of September.
 - The first Sunday in October is World Communion Day and there were some concerns about starting the Annual Campaign on that Sunday, but Dr. Don said he is ok with the Stewardship Committee. Dr. Don stated he would discuss this with Pastor Jacque as she is preaching that Sunday.
 - Dr. Don explained that the heart and soul of stewardship will be testimonials, not from staff, but from congregants who have a passion for the church and who are articulate.
 - Bill would like to have each Council member check in with his/her respective ministry staff member and committee chairs to get their feedback on any general budget increase or decrease suggestions. Bill has set a deadline for those conversations to be done and reported back by Aug. 27.
 - Dr. Don wants to know if Council's goal/strategy is to base the 2021 budget on a "return to normality" budget or will it be based on programming within a COVID 19 environment? If it is more of the latter then Council needs to envision a more robust on-line presence which will probably require investments that facilitate that goal: I.E.: a teleprompter, etc.
 - Dr. Don encouraged thinking about what creative new ideas would allow FCC to thrive and how much would those ideas cost budget-wise.
 - Council discussed whether staff positions remain as is or would staffing costs also be increased or decreased. No consensus was arrived at; staffing changes were a rhetorical discussion.
 - Equipment investments would more likely fall under discretionary budget items.
 - Items such as mortgage and insurance costs are likely fixed costs.
 - Dr. Don noted that most churches run a staff cost of around 61% of budget and we are now at 70% because donations/giving has been less.

- Pastor Jacque Franklin was welcomed back from Sabbatical and Bill hopes she is rejuvenated.
- The Rocky Mountain Conference was summarized as good content and informative. Due to time constraints for tonight's Council meeting, no full reports were given on RMC.
- The budget topics discussed tonight will also be on next month's agenda with more full discussions after Council members have had time to gather their impressions from staff and committee chairs.
- Bill suggested we create additional online offerings for the congregation. For instance, can we rejuvenate The Forum? Could it be held live so that there is ample opportunity for questions, but still on-line?

LEAD/TRANSITIONAL MINISTER (DR. DON)

- Dr. Don reiterated that we are planning to have outside services on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of Sept and Oct.
- Dr. Don will be conducting a Zoom Bible Study on the Book of Mark. The plan is to also have it recorded in order for it to be available on YouTube.
- The Zoom townhall meeting following worship last week was very helpful for gathering information. Suggestions included an idea to create DVD's of the worship services for distribution to our shut-ins who don't have internet/Zoom capability.
- Online worship attendance numbers, distributed by Emily Bond, look pretty good especially for David Acton's musical prayer.
- Worship planning is 6 weeks in advance and that has helped David to bring in more creativity in the music selections, ie., soloists.
- Dr. Don described Rachel Rumpel, the new Administrative Assistant, as being a phenomenal editor. He said she made a piece of Dr. Don's better than the original and that she is fitting in well. Bill also stated that Rachel has some very good skills.
- Dr. Don has been chatting with various church individuals.
- Dr. Don said he is thrilled to have Jacque back. Dr. Don called himself a curmudgeon and stated Jacque is a wonderful spirit.

MINISTER OF PASTORAL CARE (REV. JACQUE FRANKLIN)

- Pastor Jacque wrote a three-part report for each month of her Sabbatical which will be published in The Communicator. Additionally, she will still go to Guatemala next summer for the remainder of her sabbatical. That part of her Sabbatical was postponed due to COVID restrictions.
- Jacque will be continuing the Affinity Group work that Elizabeth Vincent, who filled in for Jacque, was compiling.
 - Some groups were pre-existing as having online capabilities plus some have moved to on-line group activity, ie, Stephen Ministry and Visitation.
 - A program is being piloted where Del Hokanson's family group is leading 6 other family groups to see if this format is workable.
- Pastor Jacque identified that there are probably 20-30 potential teen congregants that would be available for affinity groups.
 - 11 participated over the summer.
 - Tom Francis and Jill Robinson have done oversight for this age group but neither of them have a staff person to support them and Tom has a new job and Jill has had a work crisis that is depleting their energy.
- Elizabeth Vincent identified, for Pastor Jacque, several people to possibly spearhead various Faith in Action Affinity Groups.
 - Pastor Jacque believes that her absence created a gap in information with regard to the community outside the church where people or Affinity Groups might engage.
- Pastor Jacque also envisions Neighborhood Affinity Groups that are multi-generational in structure and serve as a check-in group.

- Youth age group and action-oriented groups are still in the drawing board phase of development whereas the children's groups and several over 70 age groups have some connections already established. For instance, Prayer Shawl Ministry has masked up and gone out in the park.
- Lynne Stefonik is the new 9-to-Dine Coordinator and is in process for some groups.

EDUCATION (LAURA PFENDER)

- JWW Lectureship Series: Laura reported that she continues to follow-up with the two speakers that were originally scheduled for the JWW forum.
 - Tripp Fuller has confirmed that he agrees with tabling the JWW commitment until 2021 but Laura has still not heard a firm answer from Robyn Henderson-Espinoza.
- Children's & Family Ministry: Del has sponsored a scavenger hunt and is next working on a bike ride. For the teens, there will be a "Capture the Flag" activity at Pastor Jacque/Tom Francis' house this weekend.

CARE AND FELLOWSHIP (MARGARET REIBER)

- Margaret still needs a U-Care-Casserole Coordinator and someone who can also facilitate pick-ups and deliveries.
- Margaret reiterated Lynne Stefonik is stepping into the coordinating position for 9-to-Dine.
- Margaret mentioned she attended two virtual workshops and stated they were fantastic. The first was a UCC presentation, "Organize the Church: Voter Registration, Education and Mobilization", and the second was by the Interfaith Alliance of Colorado on "Women's Reproductive Health Issues."

VICE MODERATOR (PAUL McNEILL)

- Paul reported that the Facility Team has activated the exhaust fan in the bathroom by the Founders' Room to operate full-time in order to create quicker air exchange in order to help clear COVID virus air after usage. Previously it operated only when the light switch was activated.
- Dr. Don recommends new tile flooring in the lead pastor's office. It is currently a mismatch of old carpet and exposed concrete.
- FCC has requested a permit to block off East St. Vrain from the alley to N. Tejon in order to hold outdoor worship services. We don't know yet how many volunteers we'll need for crowd control/seating assistance but Paul requested Council members please be available to help if you can.
 - We'll start with the Usher Ministry to help with seating but due to COVID complexities, we may need more volunteers.
 - There will be two services on each of the outdoor Sunday's. Reservations to attend will be needed. Emily Bond and Rachel Rumble are working on this function which may be done through Fellowship One.

SECRETARY (LISA MASON)

- Lisa reported that LCC will be meeting with Dr. Don at the end of August to start arranging for fall nominations.

- She also reported that HR has been at work researching Emily Bond's appropriate pay ranges for her new job description.
- HR is asked to submit salary and benefits recommendations for staff to be included in Ruth Roland's draft budget preparations.

WORSHIP AND SPIRITUAL LIFE (ADAM GIBBS)

- Adam reported that the Chancel Choir has been meeting sporadically via Zoom but the Handbell Choir has not been meeting.
- Adam also exclaimed the high quality of the worship services.

TREASURER (POLLY STROVINK)

- see Polly's e-mailed financial reports.
- Polly requested that Council approve informing Ruth to go ahead and pay the two months of principle on the mortgage that are currently in arrears. It is money that was set aside and so we need to authorize Ruth to do it. There were no objections from Council.

EXECUTIVE SESSION opened at 7:49 pm (Pastor Jacque left)

EXECUTIVE SESSION - closed at 8:10 pm

EVALUATION

- Dr. Don stated he thinks it was a good meeting. A lot of time was taken in certain areas but that was well managed and well-shepherded.
- Bill was declared a good facilitator.
- Bill wants and hopes to see all Council members participating and he believes we are getting close to that standard.
- Lisa appreciated that we can have differing opinions but then find consensus past those opinions.

CLOSING PRAYER - Adam

Adjourned 8:16 pm

Respectfully submitted by Lisa A Mason, Council Secretary

Lisa A Mason, *Council Secretary*

Bill Kemp, *Council Moderator*