

**First Congregational Church United Church of Christ (FCCUCC) of Colorado Springs
Minutes of the Council Meeting**

Aug 8, 2019 - Lisa Mason's Residence

Council Members in Attendance:

Connie Brachtenbach (Moderator)
Paul McNeill (Vice Moderator)
Adam Gibbs (Worship & Spiritual Life)
Lisa Mason (Secretary)
Lynne Stefonik (Care and Fellowship)
Wayne Bland (Outreach)

Ex Officio in Attendance:

Rev. Heather Haginduff (Lead Minister)
Ruth Roland (Director of Financial
Ministry)

Ex Officio Absent:

Rev. Jacque Franklin (Minister of
Pastoral Care)

Council Members Absent:

Polly Strovink (Treasurer)

Guests: none

Meeting called to order - 6:50 pm

Dinner provided by Lisa. Devotional and prayer thanks to Lisa.

JULY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES:

It was suggested to delay voting on these minutes until September as they were issued too close to this meeting to be reviewed by all.

CORE RESOURCE AREA AND MINISTRY AREA REPORTS:

WORSHIP AND SPIRITUAL LIFE (ADAM GIBBS):

- Adam reported that there will be a kick-off party for the Handbell Ensemble and the Chancel Choir in August.
- The Music and Arts Ministry Team has started meeting again.
- Choir rehearsals start up again in August.

MODERATOR (CONNIE BRACHTENBACH):

- Connie discussed the meeting with Rocky Mountain Conference Minister, Sue Artt.
 - Sue suggested we start a parsonage due to housing concerns of Colorado Springs growing and housing prices becoming quickly unreasonable.
 - Connie has had conversations with Mike Harris and with Pam Shockley-Zalabak regarding the gifts that they might bring to the church going forward.
 - Pam has decided to concentrate her time and efforts on LCC tasks, especially with several open positions on Council needing to be filled by LCC. This includes the Education position as Laura Pfender will only fill that position for six months.

MOTION: Paul moved and Wayne seconded to approve Laura Pfender as the new Education Council position. Approved via voice vote.

DIRECTOR OF FINANCIAL MINISTRY (RUTH ROLAND):

- Ruth reported fiscally the church is in a good position compared to last year.
- Ministry expenses are way down. We received a special one-time gift of \$25k.
- The General Fund is positive, whereas last year we were negative at this time.
- We will, however, need to do work with Fleet Meyer for repair work on the tower (which has been planned but is still quite expensive); plus there was a major leak in the Kitchen which will be covered by insurance but there is a \$2.5k deductible. There is also a leak in The Dwelling Place. Total costs are approximately \$70k – the majority of this is for the cost of repairing the tower.
- Regarding pledges, there are currently 8 families that have pulled their pledges but that amount has remained stable for a while now.

BY LAWS COMMITTEE (CONNIE):

- The Committee has two possible motions to propose regarding By-Laws changes to be addressed at the Special Meeting to be held in September.
 - **Motion #1** - I move to strike the words “in January” after the words “shall be held” and before the words “at such time and place” and add the words “on or before the last Sunday in February of each calendar year” to Article 6, Section 6.1. of the Constitution and By-laws of First Congregational Church.
 - **Motion #2** - I move to strike the words “in January” and add the words “on or before the second Sunday in March.”
- Nora Gustafson, our parliamentarian, is advocating for Motion #1 (she believes it is probably the simplest change to the By-Laws). This motion removes the specificity of January and leaves the Annual Meeting timeline open-ended - thus giving increased flexibility.

MOTION: Lynne moved we approve putting Motion #1 on the agenda for the Special Meeting. Adam seconded. Paul considered the questions that might be asked which might reasonably be that the Annual Meeting could then be all over the calendar. Connie explained that it is for flexibility and to help anchor it to when the Annual Appeal gets done. Framing the context, making it succinct and direct, before the motion gets presented to the congregation will help set the direction for making the motion. Polly has written an article for The Communicator about changing the timing of the appeal and so it might be a natural segue for her to also present the motion.

MOTION: The motion was approved via voice vote.

The Council reviewed the various resources that might be mobilized to help carry the church forward since the staff reorganization. Jill Robinson from the Pastor Search committee has been proposed. Nancy Henjum has held a meeting to hear from the

young families of the church as to their needs and concerns. Pam Shockley-Zalabak was going to be able to help the congregation, but she has had travel and family commitments and has had to reconsider. Heather has asked her to still consider doing, at some time, a workshop with the staff. Mike Harris was going to help with Council. He is not a member but has many years of experience in church transitions, especially with choir and musicians, so he would support David Acton's (Director of Music Ministry) transition particularly using a 20 Questions format (that can also be adjusted to other ministries.) Additionally, we, Council or Heather, will want to check regularly with David to make sure that all the support doesn't also turn into overload. Another suggestion was to have Emily organize/create formatting for tactical Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's). This would prevent David from feeling compelled to do it. Ruth suggested it's too early to address SOP's as there are more pressing needs especially with getting Safety Task Force meetings done and that information needs to be formatted/disseminated first.

LEAD PASTOR:

- Pastor Heather reported that Suzanne Bayer, Laura Pfender, and John Felps are the new Search Team for filling the new Faith Formation position.
 - This opening will likely get posted next week probably through UCC channels.
- Pastor Heather has exciting ideas regarding a concept called "One Big Question".
- Pastor Heather met with a small contingent of the Southeastern Association (SEA - a subset of the Rocky Mountain Conference) representatives regarding a pending past staff member's complaint.
 - Based on that event, the SEA representatives, plus Rev. Sue Artt, suggested that, in the future, the church should make it policy to not hire church members because then that person's pastor now becomes their boss and could lead to complications.
 - The SEA will next report to this Council.
 - Pastor Heather also advised that MG&O is sending out grants of \$1,500.
- Council discussed the ramifications of congregant Sean Buchanan's death:
 - Sean died in a motor vehicle accident that was caused by an immigrant who was in sanctuary at All Souls Church.
 - FCC has been active in our support of Sanctuary Coalition and All Souls participation in that coalition.
 - Past FCC staff member Candace Woods was a very active participant in Sanctuary Coalition.
 - The All Souls pastor has been giving media reports since the accident and Ruth would like to be clear on what our position is.
- Death of De'Von Bailey:
 - Stephanie Rose Spalding and Pastor Heather have spoken publicly regarding the shooting death of De'Von Bailey.

- Claire Twomey wrote a letter to Police Chief Richard Mayer and Mayor John Suthers and hopes to get action underwritten by UCC leaders such as Tracy Blackmon. The letter requests consideration and justice regarding this shooting and FCC is mentioned as one of several churches supporting this request.
- Pastor Heather reported that Jazz Sunday is coming up next and that our own Council member Adam Gibbs will be preaching.
- All Church CampOut: Pastor Heather said there are about 50 signed up to attend Campout.
- Pastor Heather met with the trans-military community at Fort Carson. This community said that they didn't know that FCC even existed so we need to "show up" more.

Paul brought up that Council could enlist a hand-selected group of elders of the church that rather than saying "we don't like this or that," we could ask them to suggest what they would like. Related to that idea, Connie said that one idea had been to invite ALL past moderators to function in a capacity like the Financial Advisory Committee. Pastor Heather said a Council of Past Elders could be created to be available for crisis situations that might arise in the church. They would be a forum of ambassadors and allies that could serve as a resource. Council suggested we might want to ask Rev. Sue Artt for input, from a "best practices" perspective relating these suggestions.

Ruth closed us out with a thought from Tony Robinson: *"It's not all up to you."*

MEETING EVALUATION

- The food was amazing and the hospitality great.
- There was some relief felt that the meeting was less crisis driven and relief was expressed at that.

Adjourned: 8:33 pm

Respectfully submitted by Lisa A Mason, Council Secretary

Lisa A Mason, *Council Secretary*

Connie Brachtenbach, *Council Moderator*