

The following is a summary of things for Council to know. This is for your information only. There are no actions or decisions from council.

- I. Opening Reflection
- II. 2022 Priorities and Direction
- III. Calendar and Communications

I. Opening Reflection

Daily Lectionary reading for January 11, 2022 Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10

All the people came together in the broad expanse before the Water Gate. They asked Ezra the scribe to bring the Book of the Law of Moses which God had given to Israel.

Ezra read the book aloud from early morning till noon, in the presence of the women and men and children. All listened attentively to the Book of the Law.

Ezra opened the book in the presence of all the people. When he opened the book, all stood up. When Ezra blessed the Most High, the great God, all the people raised their hands with the response, "Amen, Amen;" then they bowed their heads and worshipped God lying face down on the ground.

Reading from the Book of the Law, they interpreted it and gave it meaning so that the people understood it.

Then Nehemiah the governor and Ezra the priest and scribe, along with the Levites, instructed the people, saying to all of them, "This day is holy to the Most High, your God. Do not mourn. Do not weep"—for the people all had been weeping as they listened to the words of the Law.

Nehemiah continued, "Go now and enjoy rich food and sweet wine, and be certain that you send a share to those who cannot provide for themselves, for this day is holy to God. Let no one be sad, for God's joy is your strength. "

The Levites continued to quiet the crowd, saying, "Be calm. Today is holy; let there be no sorrow." So every one of them went to eat and drink, and to send a portion of their food to the hungry, and to rejoice. For they understood the words that had been given to them.

II. 2022 Priorities and Direction

In 2021 we were presented with many challenges as we adapted to an ever-evolving situation with Covid, began learning how to work with one another, and navigated a string of challenges.

We succeeded in meeting these challenges by the grace of God, the good will of many, and a great deal of added effort. We are tired and many find this world we are in utterly exhausting.

Nevertheless, we are at a moment where increased focus in several important areas will both lay the foundation for the future and simplify/alleviate the time and energy it takes to make ministry happen, including the following:

- Maria is quickly coming up to speed and helping us integrate a variety of music into worship.
- The Creative Worship team will be meeting this Saturday to agree to how we will work together to shape worship and the music program now that Maria is with us. We will also explore upcoming themes, work on a rhythm to plan worship further into the future, and use collaborative tools more effectively, e.g., Google Drive.
- Life-Long Learning, a.k.a. Faith Formation, includes the Tuesday Bible Study, Five Loaves book groups related to Outreach and February's Worship them, as well as a monthly activity/event for families and twice monthly zoom times with the pastor, children, youth and families.
- The gathering and launch of both the Restructuring Team and Vision and Values following the congregational meeting.

These are all important, high impact items.

As we move forward through the year, I encourage Council and the various boards to consider a date for leadership training to better ground us in the existing policies, by-laws, and responsibilities, calendar, etc. This will dovetail with the reorganization work and can make the ministry less burdensome by clarifying decision making processes, that is the iCare for a decision: who is informed, consulted, accountable, responsible, and engaged/excited.

Additional items for Council and/or Trustees to consider is the reconstitution of a technology team to provide guidance regarding various questions and to work through what we need to enhance security and the capabilities of our office and communications technologies. There is a growing list of items to explore and address... and I need to extricate myself from providing tech support, website design, etc. the Communication Coordinator can help with content, but not the bigger techy questions.

III. Calendar and Communications

The following will be communicated in our weekly emails, Share and elsewhere, however I am summarizing the following upcoming activities, so council is aware. There is no action necessary on the part of council.

- Jan 18 2:30pm Pie with Pastor (these will be virtual)
- Jan 18 6pm Pizza and Pie with Pastor (these will be virtual)
- Jan 23 Congregational Meeting following worship
- Jan 30 Rev. Emma Brewer-Wallin, SNEUCC Minister for Environment and Economic Justice preaching and 2nd hour conversation. Here her interview on SNEUCC <https://www.sneucc.org/newsdetail/conversation-with-rev-emma-brewer-wallin-15789962>

The following chart to help coordinate the many communications in the coming weeks.

What	When	Where/Who
Weekly Email	Monday end of day	Send to Jessica
Bulletin Items	Sunday prior	Send to Pastor, Announcements to Jessica
Sunday Worship (items that alter the flow of worship)	No less than Sunday three weeks prior	Speak with Pastor, Leilani / Maria for Music
February-March Share	Jan 19	Send to Jessica