

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. Posting Council Materials on Web
- II. Transformation Activities
- III. Calendar and Communications
- IV. Other updates and things to know
- V. The Change Cycle

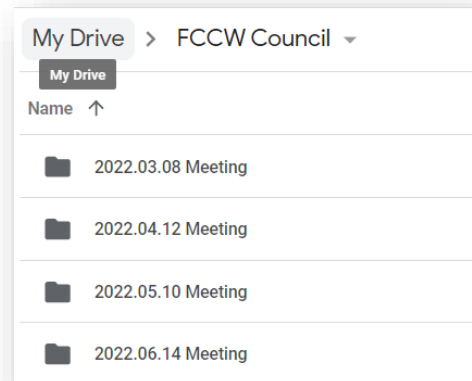
I. Posting Council Materials on Web

I propose using Google Drive for pre-meeting council materials and posting documents to the web page following the meeting.

Here is Why: Currently few know how to post items to the website. In addition, most materials are only available the day before and day of council. As a result, many emails are sent in the 24 hours prior to council. The emails can be easily missed. They require time and focus to see the email, detach the attachments, convert them to PDFs and post them to the website.

Here is how it would work:

- A Google Drive has been created with a folder for each upcoming meeting.
- The drive can be accessed through a link. Anyone with the link can upload and view documents. *The link will be shared separately.*
- All persons on the 2022 leaders list distributed last month will also be invited to be editors through Google. This invitation will come from my Gmail account.
- The agenda, reports, minutes, etc. will be posted prior to the meeting by the report's author.
- We will reference items posted to the Google Drive during council meetings.
- Following the meeting, documents may be edited to remove emails and other sensitive information before being posted. Authors or related teams will be responsible for such edits, unless someone else is designated during the council meeting.
- Following the meeting (and any edits), items that are not already PDFs will be converted and renamed as needed to support long term document management, i.e., document names will begin with a date to indicate the meeting for which they were created yyyy.mm.dd.
- PDFs will be posted to the council webpage within the week of council meeting.
- Meeting folders will be archived after 2 months.



II. Transformation Activities

The following are updates, no action is required of Council.

Vision and Restructuring Teams

Both the vision and restructure teams have met twice since last Council.

The teams spent some time clarify their understanding of the need for the initiatives, their purpose, and guiding principles we will use as a team to guide our work as a team and congregation.

Both are working on their process and thinking about creative ways to inform, educate, and engage the congregation. The restructuring team is also reviewing case studies of the structures others have adopted.

Faith formation Coordinator Search

The search team has formed and includes Paula Wilmot, Aimee Ahearn, Christian Hirt, Ashlee Stone and me. Debby Kirk, Ashley Singh, and Deni Van Der Voort have offered to provide guidance and review of needs, descriptions, etc.

Our approach will follow the approach used to identify our Music Director and Communications Coordinator:

- Create updated job descriptions based on our understanding of our needs
 - Review recent FCCW descriptions and postings for similar positions
 - Describe/clarify needs of the congregation
 - Circulate draft for comment and review
- Post opportunity broadly
- Prescreen/Screen applicants and Interview candidates
 - Define Must have and nice to have skills and experiences
- Make recommendation based on team consensus

Updates will be shared with the congregation through weekly emails and morning announcements.

The reality is that May 1 or after is a likely time before anyone might start.

III. Calendar and Communications

The following are a few thoughts and guidelines to help us create more impactful and efficient ways to communication. There is no action by council needed, however awareness among leaders in the congregation will be helpful.

A few helpful guidelines for organizing various communications:

- Think who might be interest?
- Why might they attend or read this?
- Explain what, when and where.
- And how to take next step.

Different modes of communication require different amounts of information, e.g., Newsletter vs. Worship bulletin.

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

What	When	Where/Who	Focus	Content
Weekly Email	Monday end of day	Send to Jessica	0 – 14 days; updates that missed newsletter	Short items to inform, engage and help audience take next step. Picture is helpful.
Bulletin Items	Sunday prior	Send to Jessica	0 – 7 days	Short two to three sentences (and/or bullets) What, When, Where, how to take next step.
In Service Announcements	n/a	n/a	0 – 14 days; updates	Short (less than a minute). Informative updates and highlights. What, When, Where, how to take next step. Best if can point to a person or place following worship; or the bulletin, website, newsletter for more detail. Special, longer announcements s/b as brief as possible 2-3 minutes. And no more than 1 per Sunday.
Liturgical/ Worship Items	- at least a month prior for ideas and question - no later than the Sunday prior for details	Speak with Pastor, Leilani / Maria for Music Enter ideas, questions and items into the orders of worship	Sunday worship	Blessings Celebrations Ritualization of community activities
Newsletter/Share	May – June July – Aug Sept – Oct Nov – Dec	Send to Jessica Tues Apr 19 Tues Jun 21 Mon Aug 22 Tues Oct 18	0- 10 weeks;	Updates, recent News, events, announcements, etc. Pictures are a plus! 25 - 300 words

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Facebook Event	As soon as we are able to	Any page administrators Editors	1 – 26+ weeks	Events and activities attractive to the greater community Pictures, URLs to forms, etc.
Church Calendar	As soon as an event or meeting is known	Jessica (or anyone granted access to Calendar)	0 – 52 weeks	Brief event description And information ok to be visible to public
Website	As soon as information is available, or needs to be updated	Currently Pastor, and anyone who is willing to help edit web pages on	any	Information of interest to congregants, visitors, greater community, event attendees, etc. Pictures and brief videos a plus! More images and fewer words.

As a reminder, Jessica is in Tues and Thurs morning. You can email Office@FirstChurchWoodstock.org
In addition, I am happy to review or talk through items as needed, and/or think through questions, e.g., is this something we could include? However, if you have something prepared for the weekly email or newsletter, please send it directly to Jessica.

IV. Updates

Worship

During Lent worship will explore values and how we “make the way as we walk it.”

Please note that March 27

- Area Conference Minister Elizabeth Garrigan-Byerly will be with us in worship. I have invited her to preach.
- Liz Mae Magill will be with us for a second hour to discuss her book; Five Loaves, Two Fishes
- And later that afternoon, at 3pm, Putnam Congregational Church will be installing their new pastor, Norman Michaud.

Creative Worship Team is meeting monthly 2nd Saturday 9-10am.

This month we will re-examine our purpose statement and explore guiding principles for worship. The intent is that the Creative Worship Team helps to integrate music, liturgy, and other creative expressions that help deepen the experience of worship. The team is a collaborative exploration of team-based ministry and a hopeful harbinger of the future.

Music Leadership (Maria, Leilani, and I) meet every other Monday at 4pm

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Lifelong Learning/faith formation

Book study sponsored by outreach has begun. Register to participate and/or facilitate

<https://tinyurl.com/5loavesBookStudy>

Rick Lamarre has begun a monthly activity for the older children, while Paula continues to work to coordinate a monthly activity for families. We have made a commitment to offer an early word every Sunday... sometimes these will be stories, sometimes songs. Feedback and volunteers welcome.

With an intergenerational environment-focused worship service being planned for April 24 (Sunday after Easter and Earth Day weekend).

Trying to also coordinate monthly virtual conversations with youth, children, families, and pastor.

V. Change Cycle

The last two years have brought a great deal of change, some because of Covid, others as part of my arrival. The planned conversations related to restructuring and the values initiative are meant to increase our attention on the realities of today and will bring about more change.

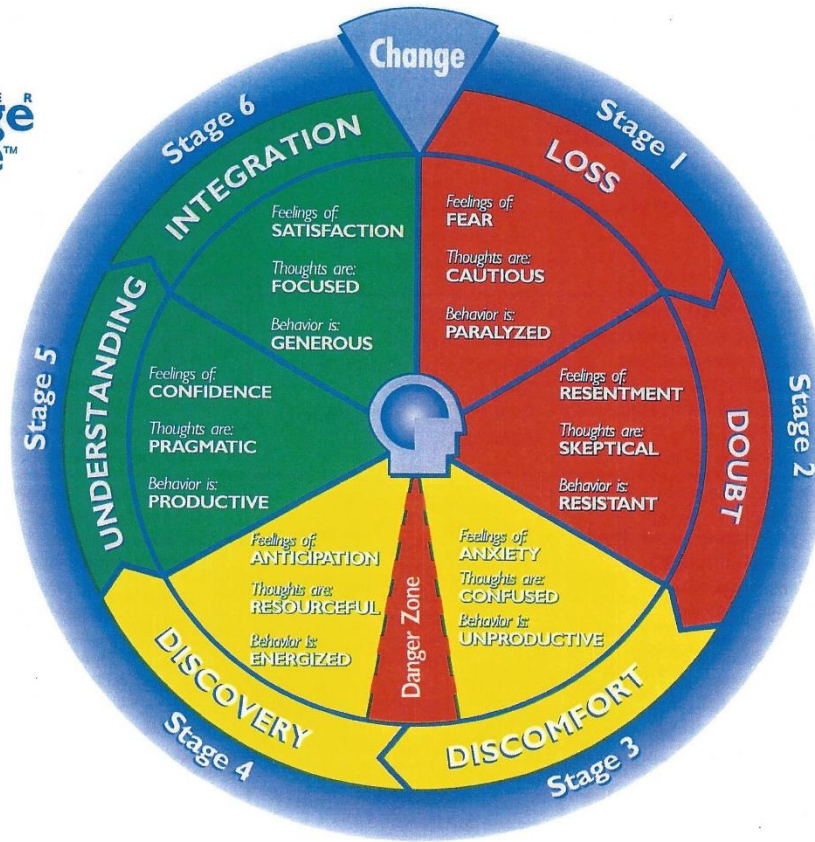
Although we all have our own stories, and there are limits to every model, one tool that I have found helpful with people and congregations experiencing change is called the Change Cycle. The premise is that, like grief, we experience change in various stages – individually and collectively.

Naming the stages and the typical thoughts, feelings and behaviors we may experience or observe, makes the whole change thing much less daunting. It also frees us to better understand what we or another might need or be able to do as we support one another and help each other in the journey.

I offer this now, to make you more aware of the cycle, and to give you some tools to begin navigating (and help others navigate) current and future change. I will explain more Tuesday evening.

I have a separate presentation that the Restructuring and Values Initiatives may want to offer as a second hour conversation some time.






Pastor's Report to Council March 2022



	Acknowledge	Challenge	Key Question	Exit Strategy
Stage 1: Loss	Large and small losses and concerns	Channel fear into appropriate action	What is the worst that could happen? Can I live with it?	Create safety for yourself and others
Stage 2: Doubt	Need to face reality by letting go of fiction	Manage anger, both passive and aggressive	What specifically do I still want/need to know?	Seek valid and accurate information
Stage 3: Discomfort	Need to breakthrough instead of breakdown	Take small steps despite frustration	What is the next step I can take to gain some momentum?	Focus on finding the motivation to keep yourself moving
Stage 4: Discovery	Merit in gaining perspective and insight	Consider options without over – analyzing	Do I trust my decision-making skills?	Make decisions and act on them
Stage 5: Understanding	Meaning of this change in the bigger picture	Be determined without being judgmental	How can I increase my productivity?	Identify the features and benefits
Stage 6: Integration	Dealing with change is a life-skill	Create stability while warding off complacency	How can I help others deal with change?	Integration



Tools for Navigating the 6 Stages of The Change Cycle™

	What you will SEE..	What you will HEAR..	What YOU Should DO..
Stage 1 Moving from Loss to Safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoidance Withdrawing from the group Acting suspicious of others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "This isn't fair/Why me?" "This is just another fad." "I don't know who or what to believe." "This cannot be happening!" "They don't care about us." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remain calm and quiet; show empathy Listen - let them talk about concerns Clearly define the change Address "What's the worst that could happen?" and "Can we live with it?" Insure on-going, two-way communication
Stage 2 From Doubt to Reality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Me" vs. "Them" mentality Defensiveness and/or blaming Asking loaded questions Stubborn and close-minded Judgmental comments Negativity Disparaging remarks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "This makes no sense." "There's no way this is for the best." "They don't know what they're doing." "Do they have a clue how this will impact us?" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address all questions and concerns Determine what relevant information is missing Provide missing information and/or timeframes for specific answers Insure on-going, two-way communication Define current reality as often as possible
Stage 3 Discomfort to Motivation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased absenteeism Frustration, Lethargy Anxiety and/or overwhelmed Lowered productivity Confusion about how to prioritize and focus effort 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "I am tired and worn out." "I can't make sense of all this." "I am frustrated and overwhelmed." "I'll never get done with my work." "I get it - I just don't know how to implement what's next." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide direction as needed (could be often and micro-manage if needed) Link tasks/projects to the big picture Assist others in prioritizing work Create formal and informal distractions Insure on-going, two-way communication
Danger Zone  (Back to Stage 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overwhelming urge to give up Dismal/pessimistic outlook Glosses over frustration by pretending to be OK 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "I believe I'm just working hard for nothing." "I still can't believe this is happening." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help him/her identify if root of feelings are from fear or discomfort Encourage dialogue Be smart and sensitive to their needs
Stage 4 From Discovery to Perspective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offers new ideas Identifying possible solutions Displays more energy Willingness to brainstorm Begins to talk about options and decision points 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "I see lots of options." "I am excited about the new things we can do." "This may be for the best after all." "We can figure this out." "I have to decide what to do next." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek out ideas/possible solutions Encourage brainstorming and being creative Identify good decision-making strategies Choose options, act on them Avoid micro management
Stage 5 Understanding the Benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Productivity increases Displays competence Determination Team-work Pride Accommodating to others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "I couldn't see it before, but now I understand how this can work." "We're really making progress." "I finally feel good about this." "This makes sense." "The benefits do outweigh the costs." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledge results and productivity Assist others in identifying and understanding the benefits of the change Encourage mentoring Celebrate progress
Stage 6 Experiencing Integration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excitement about learning Contentment Mentoring Ease in tackling new projects Positive attitude 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "I have learned from this experience." "Tough road, but worth it." "The change really was for the best." "I never thought it would work out - but now it's our new normal." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledge good change skills Ask "What can we do better next time?" Note what was done well Anticipate and prepare for future changes

To Know More, Notice More...

- ▼ Ask "What's the worst that could happen?" and "Can I live with it?"
- ▼ There are facts and there are issues. Acknowledge both. Issues drive thoughts, feelings and behaviors.
- ▼ Feelings are a normal and natural part of the change process, they will surface. Deal with them.
- ▼ Listen, to yourself and others, before you try to "fix things".
- ▼ Resistance and skepticism are signals that more valid information is needed. Determine what makes it valid.
- ▼ Avoid being defensive and/or assuming the worst.
- ▼ There is no right way to do the wrong thing.