

First Congregational Church of Woodstock

MINUTES of COUNCIL MEETING

Tuesday, Sept. 12, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom

In attendance: Rev. Dr. Kevin Downer, Jim Nowak (Moderator), Laura Bond, Charles Bottieri, Suzanne Cimochowski, Jennifer Duggan, Tom Duggan, Kristen Kaiser, Bruce Lyman, Christina Manuilow, Leilani Nixon, Kathy Packard, Rick Singh, Tom Singleton, Bruce Staehle, Charlene Swanson

Welcome

- Moderator Jim Nowak opened the meeting at 7:01 pm.

Opening Devotion

- Jen D. shared a prayer.

Clerk's Report (Laura B)

- Minutes of the August meeting, having been previously submitted in the Google Drive, were accepted with appreciation.

Treasurer's Report (Tom D)

- Please see the Treasurer's Report for details.
- Net income is \$17,000 over budget.
- Income is approximately \$14,000 over budget (\$7,500 from grant for repainting the sanctuary and the rest from higher pledges).
- Expenses are about \$3,000 below what was budgeted but this may even out as the year progresses and our Faith Formation and Worship ministries progress.
- \$36,000 of sanctuary repainting costs was funded by the Trustees' Angel Fund.
- Our bookkeeper Toby Bishop, CPA, continues analyzing our restricted fund accounting going back to 12/31/15. Some adjustments have been made to ensure restricted funds are appropriately segregated.

Pastor's Report (Rev. Kevin D)

- Please read the full Pastor's report which can be viewed on our website.
- Ministry-based approach to Planning and Budgeting
 - We will create plans for the major areas of ministry:
 - Worship: including music, hospitality, creative worship.
 - Care and Community: including cards, visits, social activities.
 - Life-long learning/Faith Formation: spiritual growth including Children, Family and Youth ministries.
 - Faith-in-action/service with others, ie: hunger, environmentalism, racial reconciliation.
 - Our budget plans/requests will be based on our plans for the different areas of our ministries.
 - See "2023 Ministry Planning and Budgeting" document.
 - Conversations will take place in late October/early November.

Updates from Boards, Committees, and Church Members

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Restructuring Team

- The Restructuring Team presented a first draft for a proposed Governing Board model. (See “Addendum A” with the team’s report to Council and draft diagram below.)
 - A governing board of approximately 7 people, voted in at the annual congregational meeting. A board which makes policies and rules but does *not* make a lot of the decisions.
 - Positions on this board might be: chair, vice-chair, clerk, pastor (leading ministry and administration of personnel and communication), 2 lay leaders (overseeing/guiding business decisions either physical or fiscal), treasurer.
 - Those in the leadership level are expected to facilitate conversations across groups.
 - Teams and ministries will need to define roles, policies, plans, expectations, and guiding principles.
 - Where the Diaconate fits in is unclear at this point because they are involved in multiple areas of ministry, ie: worship, discipleship, nurture/care.
 - The focus of various ministries may change with current events.
 - Only the seven members of the Governing Board (the policy makers) commit to a term (1 to 3 years) at a specific post. The lower levels are more fluid; all congregants can become involved and move in and out of areas they are interested in.
- Next Steps
 - Continue to describe the levels of the framework and define mutual accountability.
 - Define members of the governing board, roles and responsibilities.
 - Review and redefine our bylaws.
 - Do we want to make incremental changes or do a complete overhaul all at once?
 - Do we use an interim governing board to transition us?
 - The Restructuring Team would like input and would welcome additional members to their team.

Trustees (Charlene S.)

- Stan Swanson has been repairing rot at the back of Harrison Hall.
- The large window at the back of Harrison Hall is rotting and is beyond repair. To replace the window frame with an arched top would cost an additional \$6,000 over the cost of a standard window. Trustees agreed that this is such a significant expense that even as an “Angel Project” the money would be better spent elsewhere.
- Trustees voted to replace the window with a white aluminum clad simulated divided pane rectangular window. [See “Addendum B”]

Vision and Values (Jen D.)

- A list of 67 values have been culled from the meetings held over the summer. (See “Identified Values” document in Council Google drive.)
- A congregational gathering on Oct. 9th will be held in Harrison Hall to prioritize our list and choose 7 to 10 values we are most passionate about.

Rev. Kevin’s Installation Service on Sunday, October 23, 2022 @3pm

- There is a document outlining this event in the Council folder in Google.
- Brief worship service that day.

Fall Arts & Crafts Fair in October(Kristen K.)

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- All is going according to plan.
- We will add a table for crafters from our church this year.
- There will be a Sign-Up Genius to volunteer. Contact Kristen Kaiser with any questions.

Music Ministry (message from Maria S)

- Music for Homecoming Sunday went well. Please share feedback with Maria.

Sharing Prayers and Celebrations

- Jim & Lisa are extremely pleased to announce their daughter's engagement.
- Nancy Horsfield fell and injured her knee.
- Suzanne C. shared the joy that she and John get to spend Tuesdays with their grandson Cosmo, which she loves every minute of.
- Blessings for Laura & Glenn on their upcoming wedding October 1st.
- Tom & Lynn S. celebrate their 60th highschool reunion and their 59th wedding anniversary.

Opening and Closing Prayer Volunteers

- Oct. - Christina M.
- Nov. and Dec. still open.

Closing Prayer: Jen Duggan

Meeting Adjourned @8:49 pm

Scribe: Laura Bond

ADDENDUM A:

Restructuring Team Report to Council for September Meeting:

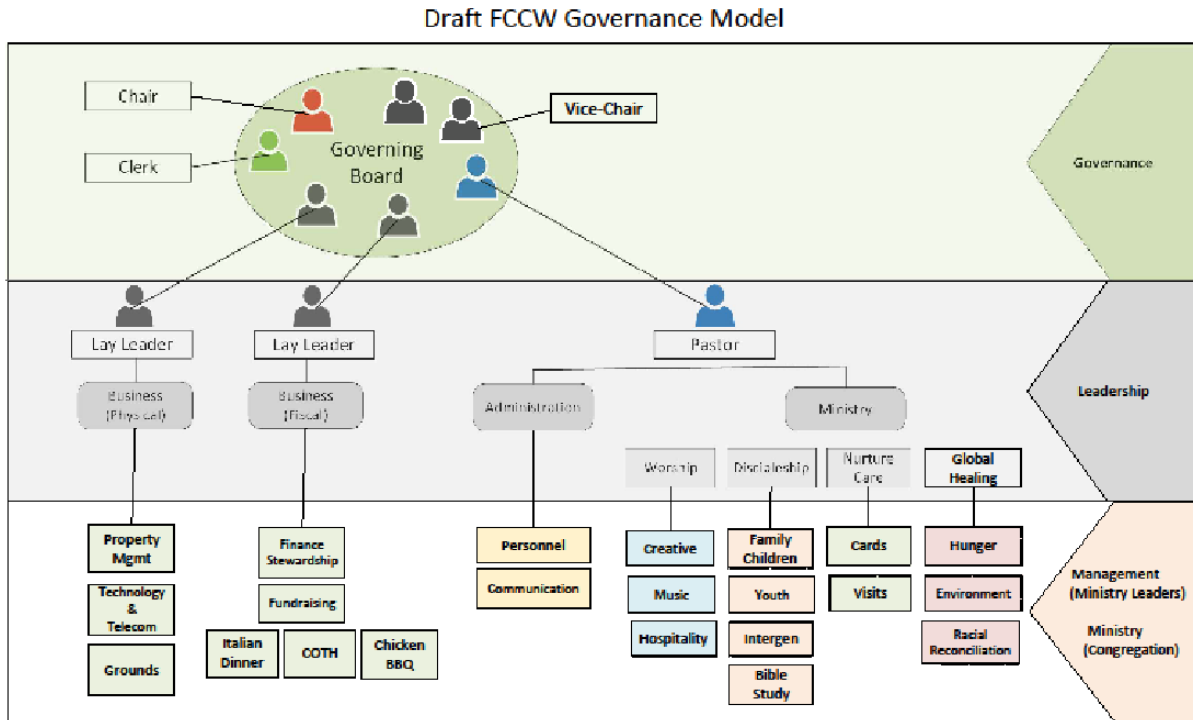
Since our last report our team has arrived at a consensus on a first draft for a new governance structure for our church. This draft is the product of months of reading, study and discussion within the group and incorporates some suggestions we have received. The model is not intended to be a final presentation, but rather a tool to guide in-depth discussions with council and the congregation and to stimulate questions and suggestions.

We look forward to receiving and responding to many questions and suggestions from both Council and any members and friends of the congregation.

Respectfully submitted,

Bruce Staehle

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Note 1: Dotted lines represent ministries that are not permanent, but may be formed or reformed at any time.

Note 2: Management for each box is provided by the leader of that area or ministry. These are not elected positions and can change at any time.

Note 3: Teams, groups and ministries will evolve based on needs of the congregation. They are representative of how we might organize existing teams in the new structure

Rev2b- 9/8/22

ADDENDUM B:

From the Board of Trustees re: Window in Harrison Hall:

While work was being done on the back of Harrison Hall (east side), it was discovered that the large window, which is wood, is rotted and not repairable. At our meeting last night, the Trustees voted to replace this window with a white aluminum clad, simulated divided lites, rectangular window which will match the other windows in Harrison Hall. As good stewards, we cannot in good faith spend the additional \$6000+ (doubling the cost) it would cost to replace the window with a round topped window when there are so many other ministries needs and issues with the building that need to also be addressed.

In the spirit of transparency, we are consulting with Church Council to hear what your thoughts are and to ask you to help us address potential concerns of congregants in a helpful way.

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Rendered photo of proposed window design.