

First Congregational Church UCC
Waterloo, Iowa

Board of Trustees
January 12, 2021

Present: Moderator Paul Greene, Tim Ahrens, Anne Hoekstra (Moderator Elect), Diane Highnam, Dave Allbaugh, Beth Lauterbach, Cliff Highnam, Karen Jensen, Ed Dams, Gina Greene, Kathy Franke, John Mardis, Craig Driver, Kay Thuesen, and Keith Jorgensen. Staff: Rev. Bret Myers and Luke Overton.

Moderator Greene called the meeting to order at 6:03 PM using ZOOM technology due to COVID-19 restrictions and cautions. Rev. Myers offered a Reflection moment, after joining the meeting slightly delayed, based on a hymn, "O God of Earth and Alter".

Motion: To approve the minutes for the December 8, 2020 Board of Trustees meeting. **J. Mardis / C. Highnam / Carried**

Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Allbaugh began his report by stating the church is in good financial condition as of the end of the budget year for 2020. He then reviewed the financial report for December. He noted Current Pledges finished at 93% of budget, slightly lower than usual. Total Income finished at 92.5%, also slightly lower than usual. It was noted the open staff positions during the year as being one of the factors contributing to Total Expenses finishing at 91%. Most Boards also underspent their budgets for the year. Dave reminded the Trustees that beginning 2021 the pay periods will be twice monthly, versus the current every two week method. He credited office manager Wolfe with saving the church monies through various changes in office practices. The year finished with a \$14,000 budget surplus.

Motion: To approve the Treasurer's report. **D. Allbaugh / B. Lauterbach / Carried**

Reports:

Youth: See the attached written report.

Music: Luke noted no particular changes since his December 8, 2020 report. He did comment on the upgrades in computers and was thankful for a marked increase in processing speed now available.

Office Manager: No report

Senior Minister: Rev. Myers opened his report urging all to pray for our society and a reduction in the polarization. He would appreciate any feedback on the Christmas services and concert. He noted the PPRC committee is now meeting, next Tuesday to be their third. A discussion opened on the possibility of a "discussion time" following Sunday worship services, or any other more convenient time. Due to the current pandemic conditions, face to face contact has been very limited and these discussions may be an opportunity to increase our contact time. Rev. Myers commented on his report for the Annual Meeting, speaking of duties of an Interim Pastor. He finished by noting several special services he traditionally offers, MLK and Ash Wednesday being just two of them.

Board Reports:

Mission: See attached written report.

Fine Arts: B Lauterbach noted the upcoming Talent Show, no date yet set for it. All other activities are on hold.

Diaconate: See attached written report. Gina Greene was thanked for the cookie project.

Religious Education: See attached written report. T. Ahrens noted that Adopt-A-Family went well.

Building and Grounds: J. Mardis reported he had nothing to add at this time.

Committees:

Endowment: See attached written report. E. Dams noted that the trust balance is back to the amount where it started the year.

Pandemic Reopening: G. Hoekstra reminded all that the virus floats in the air and how poorly many people are at following Health Department guidelines. He shared that the vaccines appear to be safe and effective.

Grin and Grow: C. Highnam shared that Cory's Painting will begin work very soon resulting in brighter rooms. He also noted that the Mitten Tree was a successful project.

Old Business:

Stewardship Campaign: Treasurer Allbaugh reviewed the results of the annual stewardship campaign using two written reports, which are attached. Key items he noted were that we are down to 72 pledge units from 76 last year, and that we finished last year with a 93% collection rate for pledged dollars, approximately normal. He reviewed the reasons for lost pledges resulting in an \$18,500 reduction from the prior year. A one-time donation request was successful in balancing the 2021 budget campaign for a \$798 budget surplus. He also reviewed the Pledge Distribution sheet.

Proposed 2021 Budget: Treasurer Allbaugh reviewed the attached 2021 proposed budget. He used the notes in the right column to explain the various line items. There is a 2.5% salary increase for eligible staff, newly hired staff remain the same for this coming year. The budget was created assuming we remain in a "shutdown" condition for the first six months. There was discussion on the OCWM donation calculation. It was decided 10% of pledge income, Endowment contributions to be excluded, would be used and to start with the 2022 budget. It was noted the Proposed Budget booklet created for the Annual Meeting would be available electronically with limited printed versions. Rev. Myers commented on the possibility of a Narrative Budget being used at some point, one in which a written narrative is provided for each section of the budget explaining its purpose.

Motion: To approve the 2021 Draft Budget for presentation to the membership for final approval at the Annual Meeting. **D. Allbaugh / K. Thuesen / Carried**

Organ Capital Campaign: Moderator Greene commented on the letter sent to the membership introducing the need for update work on our organ. An informational meeting using ZOOM technology will be conducted Tuesday, January 19. A vote to conduct a capital campaign will be taken at the Annual Meeting.

Bylaws Proposed Revisions: Moderator Greene reviewed the latest changes to the bylaws. See the attached copy of the revised bylaws. All changes are highlighted, earlier changes in red, the latest in

yellow. Discussion was fairly minimal, since the proposed changes have been discussed several times already.

Motion: To present the proposed bylaw changes to the membership at the Annual Meeting for approval. It was noted approval will require a two thirds positive vote to carry. **J. Mardis / D. Highnam / Carried.**

A copy of the proposed bylaws will be included in the next issue of the Tidings to allow the membership to review them prior to the Annual Meeting.

Moderator Greene requested all Board and Committee chairs schedule their next regular meetings.

Meeting Adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Keith Jorgensen, Clerk