

## Parish Board Meeting FRS – October 18, 2023

Jim Supple called the meeting to order at 6:10pm.

**Present:** Rev. Rebecca Bryan, Rob Authier, **Tina Benik, Jim Supple, Kathy Desilets, Renée Wolf Foster, Annie Maurer, Laurie Evans-Daly, Tom Himmel, Vern Ellis, Minnie Flanagan, Bob Higgins, Liss Larsen, Lori Clark,** Barbara Garnis, 4<sup>th</sup> Century Team. *Note: names in **bold** are voting members.*

**Absent:** Caitlin Creps

**Welcome/Reading:** Rev. Rebecca welcomed the Board with a reading from Parker Palmer on Leadership. The reading stressed that we are all responsible for leadership which we exercise in a variety of ways and roles: “We co-create the reality in which we live.”

**Minister’s Report:** Rev. Rebecca reported.

- **Staff:** continue to carry the spirit from the retreat with more sharing of ideas and collaborative projects.
- **Service for Peace:** tomorrow evening and will include representatives of the Jewish (Rabbi Matthews) and Muslim (Ahmer Ibrahim) communities. We will notify the police of the event.
- **Housing for the Mirzayee Family:** A group, including Rev. Rebecca and others in the congregation, are raising money to support the family. This work does not target our congregation specifically although we are all invited to help as we are able and to spread the word to others who may want to help. As a side note, all the Afghans who were sheltered in local churches now have planned community housing. Our primary commitment was to one family and to the interfaith sheltering effort, so Rev. Rebecca and folks from the congregation may be able to free up time from citywide housing development efforts.

**4<sup>th</sup> Century Team Update:** Barbara Garnis reported.

- The 4<sup>th</sup> Century Vision is a wheel with five spokes: Congregational Insight, Facilities/Green Team, Stewardship, Campaign Fundraising, and Facilities.
- This is a continuation and expansion of the work done through the Values, Mission and Ends process.
- To determine congregational interests, the Insight Team will hold workshops during the next two-three months which will encourage people to look at hopes and dreams, and then begin to look at what is possible.
- The group will also offer specific workshops for youth and other special audiences.
- After worship service on October 29, Annie Maurer will lead an update to the congregation of the work of the Board. This will cover recent accomplishments and will introduce the Congregational Insight process to define our future path in all areas of operation.
- Marketing and getting maximum involvement in the project will be important and all help and suggestions are welcome.
- Congratulations to Barbara on a great start.

**Governance Update:** Tom Himmel reported.

One of the Trustees of the Endowment positions was vacant at the time of the Annual Meeting. In these circumstances, the Board is authorized to fill the position.

**Action: Approval an appointment to the Trustee of the Endowment**

**Motion:** Tom Himmel moved to approve the appointment of Tina Benik to fill a vacancy as Trustee of the Endowment for the remainder of this church year. Renée seconded and the motion passed with one abstention and no opposition.

- Tom discussed the issue of Board training, to consider how we operate as a Board. He asked members to review the excerpt from the FRS Policies and Procedures Manual distributed prior to the meeting. He reminded us that in 2010 the church adopted a policy-based governance process intended to make it clear that the role of the Board is not management, but rather strategic planning, policy development, and oversight. One role of policy governance is to empower staff to make decisions within their own structure of responsibility. At all levels we are working to set measurable goals and evaluate performance.
- We need volunteer work from committees and teams, and we need to clarify where the roles of various levels of the organization (minister as CEO, staff, Executive Committee, Parish Board, Committees, the Congregation) begin and end. Policies can help to set boundaries.
- We should assess whether our work is consistent with our written policy. Are we okay with the way we are working or is change needed? This assessment could involve a special meeting of the Board.
- Tom also provided a list of items that the governance committee will consider—see attached.

**Stewardship Update:** Vern Ellis reported.

- The Auction-Grateful Gathering is the next step. We are a bit low on donations—we have 25; last year we had 70-90. The committee has gathered good donations but fewer than last year. We have completed the city process to serve liquor. Remind folks to buy tickets in advance.
- Cookie Walk is three weeks later. We are dropping the crafts aspect.
- Committee is an identified part of 4<sup>th</sup> Century Initiative.
- Looking at starting up fellowship dinners.
- Ray Wilson will be co-chair for the Annual Campaign. Still seeking another co-chair, ideally one who could be the next chair. This will give us a chain of succession, which would provide a chair who had direct experience. All Board members should be stewards. Next steps will be developing theme and materials (art and copy).

**Parish Board Goals:** Jim Supple led a final review of these goals. Discussion led to minor adaptations (see current version attached). The board will monitor how the groups are doing and keep track of progress on goals. We will be sharing these goals with the congregation.

**Action: Approval of FRS Board Priorities**

**Motion:** Renée Wolf Foster moved that the board accept the 2023-24 priorities as amended. Lori Clark seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

**Finance Update:** Renée Wolf Foster and Rob Authier reported.

- Written report and financial statements submitted.

- Key Points: Quarterly reminders to congregants are yielding pledge payments; DISH payments will start shortly; we are behind on income and over on expenses, but this could be partly because this period is in the summer months and at the start of the program year. The financial and business staff are watching the figures carefully.
- Rob is having major surgery soon and will be out of the office for recovery. He has set up systems for key financial operations, payroll, and other predictable items.

**Action: Consent Agenda**

**Motion:** Lori Clark moved to accept the minutes of the August and September Board Meetings and the Special Meeting in October. Tom Himmel seconded, and the motion passed without objection.

**Closing Words:** Rev. Rebecca offered a blessing for the Board and a special blessing for Rob for his surgery.

**Action: Adjournment**

**Motion:** Minnie Flanagan moved to adjourn. Lori Clark seconded the motion, and it passed without objection. The meeting adjourned, and the chalice extinguished at 8:05pm.

Respectfully submitted, Kathy Desilets, Clerk

## 2023 - 2024 FRSUU Parish Board Priorities

- **Board/Congregation Relations (Annie Maurer)**

To increase the amount of and improve the nature of the dialogue between the Parish Board and the broader church membership.

- **300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

To ensure that a variety of activities honoring our 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary happen over the 2025 calendar year. These activities cover the range of church activities and history, seek to offer restitution where harms were done, and celebrate the long successful history of the church.

- **A Comprehensive Facilities Plan (TBD)**

To provide overall support and guidance on the maintenance, repair, and care of the buildings and grounds. To provide a roadmap for the Board and congregation on sequencing of projects related to our properties.

- **4th Century Team (TBD)**

To help articulate for ourselves and the greater community what FRSUU aspires to become in the coming century.

- **Anti-Racism (Vern Ellis)**

To take concrete action as a community to acknowledge the destructive nature of white supremacy in society. The church membership affirmed the continuation of this work at the June 2023 Annual Meeting. Prepare for a congregational vote on the 8<sup>th</sup> Principle at the 2024 Annual Meeting.

- **DEI Policy (Jim Supple)**

To develop and adopt a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy for FRS.

- **Shared Ministry (Tom Himmel)**

To support the Board and our minister to guide and assist in oversight and support of the church's major priorities.

- **Develop a more comprehensive Safe Church policy (TBD)**

- **Strengthen Membership (TBD)**

## POTENTIAL GOVERNANCE ACTIVITIES

### Policy Actions

Planned Giving policy – in progress

Alcohol policy – consider whether to pursue

Electronic/Virtual Meeting policy – formulate

Fundraising policy – Consider whether to define/clarify

### Governance Committee Actions

Replace exact staff titles with role responsibilities – bylaw change

Consistent structure/description for three standing committees – bylaw changes/addition

Specify latest edition of Robert's Rules – bylaw change (minor)

Financial authority of the Parish Board – consider bylaw change to raise amount

Description of Treasurer Positions (2) – add to Parish Board manual