

FCC Board Meeting
First Congregational Church of Minnesota, United Church of Christ
Thursday, May 15, 2025
7:00 – 8:30 pm
Minutes

Present: Linda Valerian, Kris Felbeck, Paul Snyder, Mary Byers, Jean Anderson, Allegra Montanari, Jane McBride, Rob Cooper, Jeff Peterson; Xan Laurence, recording

1. Opening: Jean Anderson read “Walk, Don’t Run” by Rob Bell
2. Approve minutes from the April meeting (see attached, also in Dropbox). Kris moved, Mary seconded; approved
3. Creating our mission statement:
The Board reviewed and discussed the draft mission statement presented by Jane, Mary, and Allegra after the board meeting. Allegra produced a document outlining three possible statements:
 1. A radically inclusive, vibrant, justice-seeking community, mobilized to create a space of belonging rooted in Jesus’ unconditional love.
 2. Rooted in Jesus’ love and justice, we create space for belonging.
 3. At First Church, we connect creatively and with curiosity, collaboratively nourish our community in body, mind and spirit rooted in God’s love.

The discussion that followed brought up a number of points:

- “rooted” appears in all of them
- “radical” – possibly too political a word?
- “unbounded/boundless”
- “mobilize” doesn’t resonate – too militaristic
- “belonging” – too passive; perhaps “for you to belong to”
- some modifier for Jesus’ “----- love” – “transforming”? “challenging”?
- some like “curiosity” as a counterpoint to “dogmatic”
- branching, flourishing tree image

4. Administrative Staff Issues:

The Personnel Committee reported two upcoming changes that affect parish staff.

1. Sarah Tittle is planning to retire in mid-August. The job may undergo some modifications in consideration of our communications plan. Sarah is willing to stay on until the end of the year to provide support for the financial tasks the job currently entails. This staffing change will create an opportunity for us to review our financial structure and consider other new needs related to building rental, program goals, and other administrative functions. The Personnel Committee is in the process of creating a draft job description and a plan for the hiring process.
2. Brad Schumann is seeking additional medical information and will know more about his options for treatment as the summer progresses.

5. HVAC Report:

The Board discussed a follow-up report on value engineering (the VRF system) as it pertains to deciding what system to choose. There are several questions we must answer, such as:

- Is Jeremy Davis, the consultant at Minify, the right person to coordinate the process?
- Financial resources – are they, or will they be, adequate?
- The VFR system – it does not have a long track record, and there have been mixed reviews from facilities that have installed them.
- How much can we expect a capital campaign to raise?

6. Capital Campaign Report:

The Board was asked to consider a request for funds to conduct a feasibility study for the campaign. Jane and Joy met with the James Company, which we have used for a previous capital campaign. A feasibility study would help us get an idea of how much we could expect to raise in a campaign, based on interviews with 15-20 individuals, with the data extrapolated to reach an approximate sum. A study would cost about \$7,500, and would need a case, i.e. a question to be answered, such as: What are we raising money for? Members were in favor of more information gathering; we need to know how much we can commit to an HVAC system, and whether we can afford the system we want. It is also important to identify other projects we need to consider in the next 15-20 years, such as having the roof repaired, maintaining the organ, and installing an elevator.

A motion was made by Kris to authorize the Capital Campaign Task Force to spend up to \$10,000 on a feasibility study. There are several sources of funds available, including the HVAC task force money, which would be appropriate to use. Paul seconded the motion, and it was approved.

7. Board member ministry team reports

Kris visited the Faith Formation Team, the members of which are Sarah Almén, Jean Anderson, Brad Schumann, and Mary Jean Korsmo. The Faith Formation Team does programming for children and families, and has produced devotionals, organized the Story Slams, family gatherings, intergenerational coffee hours, and brought in a speaker (Dr. Larry Rudnick). Kris reported that the Faith Formation Team identified a desire to have more people on the team and more time – they do a lot of experimenting on program, which takes time. They would like the Board to be aware of what is going on.

8. Reports and action

- Preservation Projects – *Tiffany window update*

We received a \$96,000 grant from the Minnesota Historical Society for the restoration of the Tiffany window. Contracts have been signed, and the reinstallation will be sometime in July. (**Note:** Some time after this Board meeting, Jean Chagnon reported to the congregation that the restoration of the window would take longer than expected but will hopefully be installed by Christmas. We need to celebrate this!)

9. Closing: Jean Anderson read “Revenge”, by Elisa Chavez

Next Board meeting: June 19, 2025, 7:00-8:30PM

Mary Byers will provide the opening and closing.

Reminder: The Board does not meet in July.