

FCC Board Meeting
First Congregational Church of Minnesota, United Church of Christ
Thursday, August 21, 2025
7:00 – 8:30 pm

In attendance: Linda Valerian, Jean Anderson, Jeff Peterson, Mary Byars, Paul Snyder, Rob Cooper, Jane McBride; Xan Laurence recording.

1. Approve minutes from June meeting (see attached, also in Dropbox). Jean moved, Mary seconded; approved. A discussion ensued about plans to publish the complete minutes to the website, instead of having the moderator summarize them. The moderator will also provide a brief verbal report to the congregation once a month during worship, in an effort to increase communication and engagement.
2. Creating our mission statement: The board discussed the feedback received from the congregation regarding our proposed mission statements, both short and long. The general feeling was that, while the responses were mostly positive, the statements didn't "grab" the respondents. The word "radical" was still controversial – does this word imply that we are a progressive church? Could people tell that we are progressive just from the statement? One outside person whose feedback we sought contributed the observation that the statement includes four different metaphors and suggested that we choose one to focus on, for instance "making space" to "belong". Jane said that "belonging" would be the worship theme for Fall. Ultimately the words of the statement will be supplemented by graphics. In relation to our program goals, we are about halfway through achieving the current goals; it is not yet time to consider new ones. A mission statement should be finalized before that. The conclusion was that the small group would continue to work on finalizing the statement.
3. Treasurer's Report/Finance Committee – Kris Felbeck was not present, but her reports are available in Dropbox. Highlights were:
 - The rent paid by Southeast Seniors will bring us close to our budgeted goal of \$12,500 in rental income. They have signed a lease agreement and are in the process of moving in.
 - A gift of \$50,000 from the estate of a member was deposited into the savings account and will be transferred to the Trust Fund.
 - Of the \$25,000 authorized by the board for building improvements, \$19,912.10 has been spent. We also received a Good Neighbor grant in the amount of \$9,130.92
 - HVAC spending goals have been scaled back but will still cost a significant amount. The board authorized \$100,000 of undesignated funds from the savings and checking accounts to cover these expenses.
 - We have had some new, unanticipated expenses this summer related to staff – to cover our Facilities Manager's duties while he recovers from surgery; to bring our

salary for the administrative position to a market rate, and to hire Clergy Financial to do our accounting.

The board approved funds to cover these expenses for the rest of 2025, being drawn from Employee Retention Credit received from the federal government (\$3115 out of the remaining \$27,000) and from the undesignated memorial fund (\$2275 out of \$16,000)

The new position of Administrative and Communications Lead will not include bookkeeping or other finance-related duties, so it was proposed that we hire an outside firm to keep track of our finances. After meeting with 2 accounting firms and examining their references and differences in fee structure, the Finance Committee recommended Clergy Financial. This will cost \$975 for setup and \$650 per month. The yearly total will add \$7800 to the budget. A specific bookkeeper will be assigned to First Church. Our former Parish Administrator will stay on part-time until the end of the year to assist with the changeover. Clergy Financial would not take over the role of Financial Secretary. The Finance Committee asked for the board's approval to hire Clergy Financial as our bookkeeping service. The board approved.

4. The Nominating Committee is working on creating a new slate of officers for 2026. They will follow the procedures outlined in the process document which can be found in Dropbox.)
5. Building Use Group/Flourish: The space to be occupied by Southeast Seniors needs paint and upgraded flooring before the group can fully move in. Cleanup in the archives and other upstairs spaces is ongoing.

Next Board meeting: September 18, 2025, 7:00-8:30PM

Mary Byers volunteered to provide the opening and closing.