

First Congregational Church of Minnesota, UCC
Annual Meeting
December 7, 2025
Minutes

Call to Order (Approximately 11:30am) – Linda Valerian, Moderator

Opening Prayer – Jane McBride, Minister

Receive Annual Report

Linda thanked all involved in contributing to the Annual Report – members of the staff, Board, committees, teams, and task forces – and offered the Annual Report to be received.

In favor – unanimous from in-person and online attendees.

Financial update and approval of 2026 budget – Kris Felbeck, Treasurer

For 2026:

The objective of our budget planning is to balance our long-term vision with our short-term needs.

As of December 7, we have met our pledge goal for 2026.

More than 2/3 of our income is from pledges, with the remainder coming from the 5% yearly withdrawal from the investment fund, rental income, unpledged offerings and other sources.

Our expenses fall into the following categories:

1. Pastoral – the Principal Minister and the Minister of Music, the largest single expense category;
2. Administrative – our Communications and Administrative Lead, and the office supplies and services such as the new accounting service;
3. Building maintenance – our Facilities Manager and the supplies needed to maintain the building in good condition; and

4. The wider church – money sent to the Minnesota Conference and National Synod.

Staff salaries for 2026 were increased by 2.7%, the Cost-of-Living Adjustment. An assumed increase in other expense categories was calculated at 10% across the board, though individual categories may vary.

Some new expenses were included in the 2026 budget:

Accounting service:	\$7,800
Donation to Neon:	\$3,000
Pest control:	\$2,160
Design and printing of new logo:	\$1,500
Minnesota Paid Leave program:	\$290

A portion of recent bequests from deceased members will be used at a decreasing rate over the next few years to offset the loss of their pledges.

The budget for 2026 is balanced at \$376,984 in income and expenses.

Motion to accept the 2026 budget:

Move/second: Paul Fate/Kathy Hansen–Discussion: None

Vote: 38 in favor/0 opposed: **Passed**

Maintaining a Safe Church – Bill Lindberg and Maggie George

Bill and Maggie reported that a small group had met with Pastor Jane to begin to discuss the topic of how to maintain our church as a safe place while still being open and welcoming to the community in keeping with our mission statement. Recalling recent violence perpetrated against places of worship, they identified a need to address the issue of safety, and to create plans and protocols to protect our building and our congregation. Bill and Maggie stressed that the conversations they have had with Pastor Jane focusing on this issue were at the beginning stages, and feedback from the congregation was welcome and necessary. Plans for 2026 include creating ways to allow for meaningful conversations with the congregation about this issue.

Election of Board Members – Slate of Nominations

***Linda Valerian** will continue as Moderator through 2026; Jeff Peterson will take over as Moderator in 2027, meanwhile shadowing Linda in the job

Kris Felbeck will continue as Treasurer.

***Xan Laurence** will begin a new 2-year term as Clerk.

At large:

Jean Anderson

***Allegra Montanari**

Rob Cooper

Jeff Peterson

***Paul Snyder**

***Joy Gullikson**

Asterisked names indicate new members being elected at this meeting.

Motion to accept new Board members:

Move/second: Sandy Johnson/Tom von Sternberg

In favor – unanimous from in-person and online attendees.

Gratitude moment:

Linda offered thanks on behalf of the Board and the congregation to:

Mary Byers, as she concludes her term on the Board, for her insight and ability to get to the core of an issue.

Kathy Hansen, for her sterling work as Financial Secretary for more years than she can calculate, as she assists Jean Chagnon in preparing to take over the job.

Other business – None

Motion to adjourn – Maggie George/Glenn Strand

In favor – unanimous from in-person and online attendees.

12:30 pm

Xan Laurence, Clerk