

**.Flossmoor Community Church
Minutes of Congregational Meeting
June 28, 2020 at 11 am**

Via Zoom

Call to Order and Opening Prayer Anna Carvalho, Governing Board Chair

- Called to order at 11:02
- Anna offered a prayer

Approval of the Minutes of the January 26, 2020 Congregational Meeting

- Motion to dispense with the reading of the minutes; seconded; motion approved
- Motion to approve the minutes; seconded; motion approved (voting box via Zoom was used)

Approval of the 2019-2020 Annual Report

- Show of hands confirmed that the Annual Report has been received

Treasurer's Report Bob Norby, Chair of Finance Committee

- Bob reported that we have seen some negative impact on revenue due to the building closure, but that expense reductions offset many of those
- Overall, we are tracking where we should be for our \$36,500 deficit budget this year
- Pledges are our largest revenue component. Back in January, we had pledge commitments of about \$548,000, so we budgeted conservatively for \$600,000
 - Good news is that our pledge commitments through the end of May stand at about \$569,000, which is about 95% of budget
 - However, we are still \$31,000 short of meeting our annual budget
- Bob thanked the congregation for continuing to send their pledges in
- To close the gap, the Stewardship Committee put out the 2020 Challenge – inviting 300 contributions of \$258 each. The goal of that amount was to enable us to reach our pledge budget and reestablish our mission grants
- We are tracking Challenge 2020 separately, and so far, there are commitments of \$17,012
- Plate offerings are also a large source of revenue. Through May, they are about 54% of budget, which is not that far below last year at this point. Bob remarked that members have been very deliberate in mailing envelopes in, and thanked everyone for their faithfulness on that
- Sharing revenues are another large budget line (things like building rentals). This has been one of the hardest hit lines. To date, we are less than 50% on budget for that, but that was expected given that our buildings have been closed.
- From an expense side, we had savings due to the closure of the buildings such as utilities being conserved. Bob commended Jamie for renegotiating rates for cleaning services, and other services in order to save on overall expenses.
- Overall, the true expense savings up through May was about \$14,000. Some of that came from not having a Pastor for about 6 weeks.

- Bob reported on FCC's participation in the Federal Paycheck Protection Program. We started receiving funds in Mid May. If they are used for wages and utilities, the loan will be forgiven and essentially become a grant
 - Questions were asked about the amount of the PPP loan, and how that will help FCC meet its budget this year
 - The PPP amount was \$121,400. Regarding its impact on the budget, Bob responded that it depends on what happens going forward – when and whether we can open the building, come together for worship, etc. Overall receiving the PPP was a Godsend, but there are a lot of unknowns, and we will have to let it play out to see how much of a positive bump it will be for our budget. We will have a better sense at the end of the 3rd quarter and beginning of the 4th quarter.
- Bob assured the congregation that we will communicate with them if anything changes regarding the loan
- Concluded by asking folks to stay faithful with their Pledges and with mailing in plate offerings
- And to continue with the 2020 Challenge – we need another \$17k to make up the deficit to hit our pledge budget

Nominating Committee Report Terese Thrall, Chair of Nominating

- Committee was able to meet one time before the quarantine started, so this year they sent emails and calls rather than asking in person
- Terese thanked those who submitted nominations, the committee members, and those who accepted the call to serve
- Slate has been posted on the website, and was approved by the Governing Board
- Motion to approve the nomination slate – voted via Zoom survey; motion passed

Election of Elders, Board and Committee Members

- Slate was shared as a part of the Nominating Committee Report and can be found on the website

Governing Board Chairperson Comments Anna Carvalho

- Anna shared her thoughts about our church and where we are during this moment in time
 - Some conclusions included:
 - We have incredible resiliency, we have incorporated new technology into our worship style, we have adapted, we have been studying racism and stumbled and yet persisted
 - We met our new pastor virtually, not even in person, yet we were successful in the process
- Anna shared statistics about the demographics of the surrounding communities and, especially, those communities that are most represented within our congregation
 - Overall, in terms of racial/age/income demographics, our congregation doesn't look like the communities we serve
 - Anna referenced our statement of faith: Where Christ is central, and diversity is cherished

- She affirmed that statement, yet challenged the congregation to think about our culture – our way of doing things – and that our culture may have been in synch with the how the community was decades ago, we are no longer in synch with our communities today
- Anna raised the question – Can we move our culture to the side to make room for other cultures? If so, she believes something magical can happen, we as a church will broaden and become more meaningful and essential to our community because people will feel seen and at home with us
- Anna encouraged the congregation to become comfortable talking about this, but recognizes that it is challenging because established cultures feel “right” and comfortable
- Our goal would be to find ways to create a collective identity that draws from all cultures
- Anna assured the congregation that there will be much more discussion, challenges, opportunities, stumbles, and unexpected moments of grace
- She ended by saying that this is an extraordinary moment in time, challenging and offering us to become what Jesus meant us to be in this time and this place

Pastor Comments Pastor Julie Van Til

- Pastor Julie started by saying that the job that she started on June 1, is not the job description for which she applied
- The landscape has changed so much, so the journey of discerning how best she (as our new pastor) and FCC “fit together” has, to her, been a journey of surrender. Typically discerning means trying to understand what you are agreeing to do, and then understand what strengths you are bringing and what you are lacking.
- Pastor Julie said that at this moment in time, she is relying a lot more on surrendering to trusting God’s timing for her to start with FCC and for being at this moment in history
- She recognizes that she can’t rely as much on her experience given all that is currently happening, but she can rely on her commitment to learning
- As a church that is primarily white, comes from an historically well-resourced community, Pastor Julie recognizes that there will be a process of learning and unlearning
- She said that she is – “with fear and trembling, up for it”
- Pastor Julie thanked everyone for their kindness. For showing up on these Zoom calls and offering warm smiles. She has already grown accustomed to names and faces. That is one of the gifts of Zoom.
- She has also gotten to know our dedicated staff – and is actively working to figure out how best to support our spontaneous ideas within a pandemic that is ever shifting and changing
- She confirmed that she and the staff feel a deep responsibility to the health and wellbeing of our congregants – and tremble that the first time that we gather together, if anyone of us is COVID positive, we ALL are impacted
- This coming month she looks forward to getting to know Chairs of Boards and Committees – particularly looking forward to reconvening the Long-Range Vision Committee
- Her invitation to us is to meet in the shade in the Church yard, and to please reach out
- She will be in prayer for all of us while we’re apart, and confirmed that if there’s something private that is wearing us down, she wants us to please reach out so we can have a call to offer emotional support

Questions and Comments

- Thanks were expressed by the congregation to Anna and Pastor Julie for their work on thinking about the future, and how our church will be turning the corner and rising to the moment
- And, huge vote of thanks was expressed to the staff for getting these meetings together; it's been so rewarding to be able to see each other; we're all learning a lot
- Anna agreed that seeing names and faces together on Zoom really is helpful
- Question was asked about when we will regather. Anna said we will most likely lag the state by about 3 or 4 weeks. Many of our members are in the risk pool and she is reluctant to regather because of the risk, but also concerned about regathering when not all of us can gather. And, knowing how loving our church members are, she thinks we will be challenged to keep personal distance if we all come together

Recognition of Outgoing Governing Board Elders Anna Carvalho

- Members typically serve 3 years – this year Phyliss Royster, Rick Hanzelin, Stephanie Byrd have come to their end of their term
- Anna shared our collective appreciation for them and their contribution to the board and FCC
 - Phyliss – was recognized for her leadership to the Diaconate (7 ministries that oversee outreach to the congregation such as meals, visits, rides, memorial services, and words of encouragement). Phyliss excelled at keeping all those moving parts going.
 - Rick Hanzelin – recognized for leading the Stewardship committee with confidence and aplomb; the power of his own commitment compelled the commitment of all of us; brought forward those deeply felt stories that spoke to the hearts of us all. Rick helped fill the budget gap, board members appreciated his calm confidence and his willingness to always for take a bold step forward
 - Stephanie – was recognized for leading Worship and Arts (the board that oversees all that goes into worship, including and the sounds system, the greeters, ushers, equipment, etc.). She continues to promote the arts as the God spark within us. Stephanie was thanked for her passion, her love of the church through her persistence, and how she supported Anna by guiding her on the topic of racism and how our church can be more effective in offering solutions for the church/community
 - Anna expressed gratitude for the commitment and the work and the thoughtfulness each of them have contributed in these past 3 years

Closing Prayer Pastor Julie Van Til

- Pastor Julie shared a prayer with the Congregation

Adjournment

- Motion to adjourn; seconded; motion passed
- Meeting was adjourned at 11:51 am