

FRS Parish Board Meeting – May 22, 2024

Present: Rev. Rebecca Bryan, Tina Benik, Kathy Desilets, Renée Wolf Foster, Annie Maurer, Laurie Evans-Daly, Tom Himmel, Vern Ellis, Minnie Flanagan, Bob Higgins, Liss Larsen, Lori Clark, Annie Madden, Doug Latham, Bill Cleary from Green Team.

Absent: Caitlin Creps

Call to Order: Jim Supple called the meeting to order at 6:04pm.

Welcome/Reading/Chalice Lighting: Rev. Rebecca

Rev. Rebecca read a blessing from *The Lives We Actually Have: 100 Blessings for Imperfect Days*, by Kate Bowler, about the ways we manage our lives. She then led a ritual in which each of us took a rock (or more than one) from a collection she provided. The rock(s) were to represent our burdens. We returned the rock(s) to the bowl and acknowledged the love and connection among us.

Minister's Update: Rev. Rebecca

Staffing:

- Rev. Laurel Gray, **Assistant Minister of Congregational Life**, will start on August 13.
- Nick Place, the new **Director of Church Music**, will start on August 1.
- Dan O'Shea, the new **Director of Finance**, has already started. Those who have worked with him found that he brings a great combination of skills, knowledge, and temperament. He knows what other groups are doing and can share some of that knowledge. He will be contracted for 12 hours a week, with additional time possible on a case-by-case basis if useful.
- **Communications Specialist:** We will take a pause in the hiring process (unless a strong candidate appears) and pick this up in the fall.

Raffle: There will be a weekend push to sell more tickets, and all are invited and encouraged to participate. We will try to engage passersby with a table in front of the church and a party atmosphere and see what we can do to increase ticket sales.

Tours of the Church: Plans are underway to train those interested in being docents for tours.

A Spruce-up Project for Parish Hall is being planned to look at things we can do to make the space useful now as we plan to do more when we can.

Anti-Racism Work: Paula Cole Jones, the leader of works around Principle 8 and Article 2 is organizing a learning circle of interested congregations to work together to move this work forward. We have joined this project, and a team is forming to take this on. Anyone who is interested should contact Rev. Rebecca because a few additional members are needed.

Impact of Congregational Insight Work: This work led to kids and families becoming more active in the church.

Review of Church Year: Jim Supple

A review of accomplishments this church year:

- Four search committees for new staff, leading to successful hires, including the first-time-ever second minister for the church.
- Mirzayee family found a home with lots of help and has settled in.
- Formation of a grant team that had early success in getting funds for church roof replacement and other projects.
- Reached ambitious goal for annual campaign.
- And much more.
- IT WAS A BIG YEAR WITH MANY CHANGES.

Governance: Tom Himmel

Major work has been the completion of materials for the Annual Meeting, including the slate of Board members and officers. Next step: planning the meeting.

- Tom distributed the meeting Warrant for review. The order of the Articles will be changed, and a new article will be included to acknowledge the 300th Anniversary celebration which will be held in Calendar Year 2025, crossing two church years, 2025 (July 1, 2024-June 30, 2025) and 2026 (July 1, 2025 -June 30, 2026).
- Lea Pearson will once again act as moderator.
- The slate of officers and the trustees is complete as listed in the Annual Report, and to date we have no delegates to General Assembly (GA).
- Minnie Flanagan asked what happened to the position of Youth Member. Since the position was not formalized and no candidates had emerged this year, it was decided to use this as a general open position.

ACTION: Approval of the Warrant and supporting items

Motion: Tom moved that the Parish Board approve the Warrant items and supporting materials, including the slate of officers, Board members, and Trustees of the Endowment. Vern Ellis seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Report from the Green Team: Doug Latham, Bill Clary, and Annie Madden

- This presentation, based on the status of energy use and cost, outlines changes FRS could make to be greener and offers cost estimates for those changes.
- The Green Team proposes a 45% decrease in carbon emissions by 2030 and near net-zero policy by 2034.
- Values behind this suggestion are respect for the interdependent web of existence, the recognition that the climate crisis threatens the existence of all life on Earth, and responsible stewardship of the church finances and building maintenance and operations. The Green Team believes that we are called to act.
- Over a 20-year period the team proposes installation of solar panels on the roof and replacing the boiler with heat pumps. Funding support could include government programs, grants, and

possibly parts of the project could be included in the Capital Campaign. The first step would be an engineering study to look at heating and cooling needs.

- A slide show outlining the Green Team's recommendations is included with these minutes.

Budget Review: Renée Wolf Foster and others

- Renée extended appreciation and gratitude to all who worked on the Annual Giving Campaign, calling out Bart Bracken, the chairs, captains, stewards, and pledgers.
- The budget went to the Finance Committee this week. There was appreciation for all the effort put into what was called the most careful budget process people remembered. Some reluctance was expressed about using the Futures Fund, but using this fund may help us show a balanced budget, which can be helpful as we apply for grants.
- After a robust discussion, the following action was taken.

Action: Board recommendation on the budget

Motion: Tina Benik moved that the Parish board recommend that the Congregation approve the budget as presented. Renée seconded, and the motion was passed without objection.

Discussion of Roles for the Annual Meeting:

At the request of the moderator, the board established a roster from among those present who will move and second the articles at the Annual Meeting, as well as individuals who will offer an initial explanation of each Article.

Action: Accept Consent Agenda

Motion: Renée Wolf Foster moved to accept the two sets of minutes included in the consent agenda. Lori Clark seconded, and the motion passed without objection.

Closing Words: Rev. Rebecca offered a blessing on the entrance to summer asking that all burdens be lightened and thanked the board for their work.

Adjournment:

Motion: Lori Clark moved to adjourn, and Renée Wolf Foster seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 8pm without objection.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Desilets, Board Clerk