

**First Congregational Church of Palo Alto**  
*United Church of Christ*

**CONGREGATIONAL MEETING MINUTES**  
**June 6, 2021**

**Call to Order: Anne Campbell**

Moderator Anne Campbell called the meeting to order at 11:10 AM via Zoom. Members, whether remote or gathered in the social hall, attended via Zoom. A quorum was established.

**Opening prayer: David Howell**

Pastor David Howell offered the opening prayer.

**Stewardship Campaign Update – Bing Heckman**

Bing thanked other members of the Stewardship Committee: Peggy Brinkman, Greg Evans, Cathy Gauthier, Lynn Mitchell, Grant Sontag, and Blake Putney. He especially extended his gratitude to the Stewardship speakers for their wonderful personal messages on behalf of the campaign. The speakers were organized by Peggy, Cathy and Lynn. As of Friday June 4th, there were 173 estimated giving units for a total pledged amount of \$730,673. This amount is about 90% of the goal of \$821,000. Bing asked for questions and comments and there were none. Anne thanked Bing for his leadership of the campaign and the committee for their work. She said she was hopeful that the additional outreach would result in achieving the campaign goal.

**Approval of 2021/22 Budget – Budget Policy Committee**

The committee consists of Ben Roberts, Peggy Brinkman, John Grundy, Monica Johnson, and Randy Melen, with Business Manager Rita Tetzlaff as a committee advisor. Anne Campbell presented budget slides in the absence of Ben Roberts, who was unable to attend the meeting. For 2021/22 the Church asked for a 3.5% increase in actual pledges over the previous year with a goal of \$821,000. For the fiscal year to date, we have seen a 1.4% reduction in income at \$1,206,100 and an increase of 3.3% in expenses at \$1,261,150. Income has been affected largely by the absence of income-producing events and loss of rental income, while the expense increase is from a variety of sources including an increase in staff salaries. Net income will show a deficit of \$55,000. \$62,400 is being transferred from directed funds. The budget will be balanced and with the addition of the PPP loan there will be an excess of funds that will be allocated as follows: \$15,000 for FY21 staff bonuses, \$40,000 to operating cash balance, and \$103,000 to a new Emergency Reserve Fund. Anne observed that, in the years ahead, making the budget balance will become more complicated as the dynamics between income and expenses change. One of the goals for FY21/22 will be to do some strategic planning for how to meet the budget in the coming years. Anne reviewed the updated Stewardship campaign results, adding that as of the previous Weds. we were at 80% of our participation goal of 215 giving units. The expectation is that, with further outreach, the budget goal will be reached by the end of the summer. Reminder letters and email messages have gone out in the past week. Compared with the average of previous years, pre-COVID, we are ahead of the 8+ week percentage of pledges received, at 90%. Last year was an exceptional time with very generous giving and we had 100% of pledges by this time. The expectation is that we will reach our FY21/22 pledge goal by September.

**Resolution:**

- *The Church operating budget for 2021-22 be approved for use starting on July 1, 2021*
- *The operating budget will be reviewed in September. If Stewardship results do not provide sufficient expected income, adjustments to the budget will be presented to the Congregation for approval.*

The moderator asked for comments or questions. There were none. Kim Bomar moved to adopt the proposed

resolution. Bing Heckman seconded the motion.

**Action:** *The budget resolution passed, with no votes against and no abstentions.*

### **Discussion and approval of proposed slate for 21/22 of Church Officers, Boards, and Committees – Karen Routt**

The Nominating Committee consisted of Karen, Mary Grundy, Sue Marianaci, and Debby Martin, with Loren Baker, Anne Campbell, and David Howell serving as ex officio members. There was one big meeting and many subsequent email messages back and forth to come up with the slate. We are close to having all the board and committee positions filled. Karen thanked all those who have agreed to participate. The slate of officers, boards, and committees was presented. Karen pointed out that term limits were implemented this year. For boards and committees, the terms are 3 years and a person may only serve two terms in a row on the same board or committee. Everyone on the slate has been assigned a term. The Church is always looking for people to serve. Karen reported that one board was oversubscribed this year. The committee hopes this is a trend and that all those who are able will consider finding a way to participate. She said the Nominations Committee only meets once a year but is willing to discuss the available opportunities at any time with anyone who is interested. Anne asked for questions. Robyn Crumly asked if the Church was going to elect a historian. Karen answered that she did not recall the position being in the bylaws, but Kim Bomar confirmed that the position is in the bylaws. In that case, Karen said that the responsibility would fall to the Church Council to fill any position that is not on the slate today. A Church member commented that the list of Worship Board members should include Leticia Lai. Karen accepted that correction. In response to a question about term limits, Karen replied that if someone has served two three-year terms in a row, they must take a one-year break from that board or committee. The individual may participate immediately in a different board or committee, however. David added that the new term limit policy is to encourage broad participation in the Congregation. Karen announced during her presentation that David Labaree offered to serve as Council Member-at-Large and Bing Heckman reported that Glenn Edwards has been added to the Community Grants committee. The list was amended to include the correction and additions.

**Resolution:** *The 2021-22 proposed Slate of Church Officers, Boards, and Committees be approved as amended.*

Cathy Gauthier moved to accept the amended slate of officers, boards and committees. The motion was seconded by Loren Baker. There was no further discussion.

**Action:** *The 2021-21 proposed Slate of Church Officers, Boards, and Committees was approved.* There were 33 yea votes in the social hall and 18 online. There was no opposition and no abstentions.

Anne thanked Karen Routt for chairing the committee and the others who worked with her.

### **Bylaws revision – Anne Campbell**

The committee started working on the bylaws in November and have only recently completed the process. Anne thanked the committee, which included in addition to Anne, Einar Sunde, Ben Roberts, Loren Baker, Kim Bomar, and David Howell. They solicited input from boards, committees, staff and Church Council. The Council unanimously approved the revised bylaws on March 24<sup>th</sup>. The revisions have been posted on the FCCPA website and were also presented to the Congregation on April 11<sup>th</sup>. Many people have provided input. Anne said that we have made sure that the updates reflect current practice. Several new items have been added. She reviewed the revisions and additions via slides. They included the following: provisions for emergency and electronic meetings (Article VI), term limits for committees and boards (VII I& IX), new language for Community Grants Committee and Investment Policy Committee (Article VIII, 8.7, 8.12), raised limits on Trustees' authorization of emergency expenditures and loan authorizations (Article IX, 9.6 and Article XV, 15.2), expanded number of individuals authorized to sign checks (Article XV, 15.3), and more gender and identity inclusive language (Article I and throughout). Kim Bomar and Einar Sunde have both reviewed the bylaw revisions from a legal viewpoint and have made changes to the wording in some cases to provide more clarity. Their changes did not affect the substance or meaning.

**Resolution:** *The revisions to the Bylaws of the First Congregational Church of Palo Alto be approved.*

Lynn Mitchell moved to approve the proposed revisions to the bylaws. Ruth Carlton seconded the motion.

**Action:** *The motion to approve the proposed revisions to the Bylaws passed.*

There were 28 yeas in the social hall and 13 online. No opposition or abstentions.  
Thanks were paid to the Bylaws Committee.

### **Senior Minister Report – David Howell**

Dave said that the Church has been truly blessed. The staff is amazing, and the music program is thriving despite all the challenges. We are so fortunate to have all those who help the Church run so efficiently. He expressed gratitude to all. Now we are trying to do both in-person and Zoom worship at the same time. Mike Crager, Steve Terry and Ben Roberts have been helping with the in-person tech and Howard Look has continued his work taking care of the Zoom side of things. Despite the challenges and stress, we are doing it very well. We continue to have more people on Zoom than in person. For now, we will continue as is and will resume worship in the sanctuary in September. Dave added that we will continue to follow the County and CDC guidelines and will require masks unless something changes. He said we are aware that most people are vaccinated, and he encouraged all who are not yet vaccinated, and are eligible, to get that done. Dave reported that the sanctuary audio visual project has been approved and is moving forward pending funding. The plan is to enhance and add capability with retractable and mounted screens and audio changes. We have already committed \$116,000 and our projected need is \$130,000. He said we are asking folks who want to support the project to please do so. There is a small committee that includes Ben Roberts, Jill Bicknell, Mike Crager, Carol Chivers, and Sukey Stanley, with Dave and Joe ex officio. Dave said we are excited to gear up for in-person events. He welcomes feedback and comments on what we are doing. He was delighted to have the choir participate in worship today. There is much to look forward to. Eileen will have a sabbatical and we are excited to support her. The social media program is now going strong with the help of Julia Satterthwaite and others on the marketing committee, and we encourage people to follow us on social media. Rob Lenicheck asked if anyone would be talking about the status of the capital campaign at this meeting. Rita Tetzlaff was called on to provide an update. The 2014 campaign is coming to a close and we have achieved our goal. Those who have outstanding pledges for that campaign can now switch them to the 2016 campaign. The 2016 campaign is still receiving contributions and we are about \$80k short of our goal, so members were encouraged to continue to send in pledges. Dave inquired about the status of the outstanding Church loan. She said it is just under \$1,000,000. Dave emphasized that this is a big commitment and one that we need to pay close attention to going forward. There were no other questions for Dave.

### **Moderator's Report – Anne Campbell**

Anne commented that this has been an unusual year, but we have adapted and are continuing to adapt. We owe huge appreciation to Dave and Eileen for so much that they have done for the Church to keep it going strong and for their incredible leadership. Thanks also to Rita who has been overseeing the staff and to the staff for all their efforts. Anne also expressed gratitude for those who are running the music program, in particular Jenny Matteuci, Joe Guthrie, Tim Bigelow. It has been a phenomenal year, musically. It just keeps getting better. She gave a shout out to Todd and those involved with the children's and youth program. VBS is filled to capacity with a waitlist. She so appreciates the enthusiasm, talent and engagement of the members of FCCPA. Anne also gave a special shout out to Loren Baker for his service of two years as vice moderator and two years as moderator. She closed by wishing everyone a good summer.

### **Associate Minister Report – Eileen Altman**

Eileen added her appreciation for this amazing Church. She said she is blessed to be able to serve this wonderful community. It has been a challenging year but we have been working together and supporting each other. She also thanked the Congregation for supporting her during her sabbatical.

**Closing prayer:** Eileen Altman

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 PM

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Clare Warner*

*Church Clerk*

**Slide Presentations:**

Bing Heckman – Stewardship Campaign update

Anne Campbell – Proposed Budget

Karen Routt – 2021-22 Slate of Officers, Boards, and Committees

Anne Campbell – Revised Bylaws for final Approval