

The Carillon December, 2024

First Congregational Church
Your Independent Worship Center
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THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

November 25, 2024
DRAFT

Present: Lou Deleguardia - Moderator, Pat Krehn – Vice Moderator, John Cooper – Trustees, Jean Morehouse – Women’s Fellowship, Pastor Luke Schmalz, Carrie De Mull – Clerk, Stacy Church - Deacons, Jack Butterick - Board of Charitable Giving, Bill Black – Men’s Fellowship, Jack Stewart - Technology Board

I. Meeting called to order at 6:28 pm. Pastor Luke gave the opening prayer.

II. Approval of the October 28, 2024 meeting minutes: Jean moved to approve, Carrie seconded. Passed

III. Public comments – None

IV. Board Reports

A. Board of Charitable Giving – Jack Butterick

Pastor Luke took a tour with the Ministerial Association to Community Closet the 3rd week of November. He came away with an idea to help the people who shop at the Community Closet. Community Closet’s budget is \$1800 a month. \$950 of that is rent. Community Closet wanted to connect with the churches in the area because of a need for blankets and towels. For the next 4 weeks leading up to Christmas, Charitable Giving is proposing that the congregation help collect as many blankets and towels as possible. So from December 7 until January 6 there will be a collection box in the Narthex to collect the towels and blankets. Monetary donations can also be given, and checks can be made out to Community Closet and deposited into the offering plate.

B. Board of Deacon’s – Stacy Church

The New Deacons will be invited to the next meeting to see what the Board looks like and an actual meeting looks like. Pastor’s evaluation will be done in August of

next year. There will be special things happening during worship for the Advent season. There will be special music and a children's time added to the worship service. FCC will be starting a new "Noisy Collection Sunday". This will happen once a month on a given Sunday. Loose change will be collected and given to a different charitable organization, once a quarter, or 4 times a year. Lou moved to have a "Noisy Collection Sunday". Pat seconded. Passed. The first 3 months of collection will be for Community Closet.

C. Board of Christian Education – No Report

D. Board of Trustees – John Cooper

The attic fan is off for the winter. A tree removal company has been hired to remove 3 dying trees south of the church parking lot. The financial summary is as follows: October is 83% of the year. Income is at 68% of the budget and expenses are at 72% of the budget. We are taking \$12,000 from our investments to shore up our cash, and we had budgeted withdrawing \$22,811 and only have drawn \$8,211 up to now.

E. Women's Fellowship-Jean Morehouse

Jane Stroschin has graciously painted our Welcome Table and it is beautiful. We are gearing up for the Annual Craft Sale on December 6. We will be setting up on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, December 2, 3, and 4.

F. Men's Fellowship – Bill Black

November's meeting was well attended by 14 people. John Cooper was our resident Chef with help from Gail. Special speakers and chef's are scheduled through February.

G. Technology Board – Jack Stewart

Still working on a few things with the new website and am also in the process of activating the donation part of the website.

H. Music Committee-Pastor Luke

We will have special music in December. December 1st we will have Leslie Anderson. Christmas Eve we will have Stacy on the cello. We will also have our choir singing for the Christmas Eve service.

V. Pastor's Report-Pastor Luke

The Hope Initiative has started back up. There are 7 people this time around. I officiated my first FCC wedding this past weekend. Judy Nadeau was married at the church. All Saint's Sunday went well. Rooms of Refuge went well. There will be special music during Advent and a special children's time during Sunday services. Mat Emerick will be doing a special drama the last Sunday of Advent. The choir is happening and Stacy will be playing the cello. The office will be closed December 25, and January 1. December 26 through January 3, I will be out of the office. The Chosen will be wrapping up on December 1. Garrett, our sound tech, will be getting a card and some cash for his hard work on Sunday mornings. There will be an open house for Rooms of Refuge on December 6 from 1:00 until 3:00.

VI. Acceptance of reports – John moved, and Jean seconded to approve – passed.

VII. Old Business-None

VIII. New Business

Trustees wanted to talk about financial status of the church. The trustees also talked about ways to help the church financially: add new members, be more financially solvent (more risk for investments), sell property south of the church, have people give more. Lou motioned to send out letter to the congregation about the financial position of the church.

Jack seconded. Passed. Members of the congregation should look for a letter coming the first week in December. The Sound Booth/Tech Booth at the back of the church has been having difficulty finding volunteers and having leadership. Jeff will be back at the end of January. There has been talk of the Deacon's taking over the sound booth/Tech Booth responsibility. Stacy will take this back to Deacon's along with Communion Help and see what the Deacon's want to do. Many hands make light work. Looking to have extra help with everything the Deacon's are doing. The Rooms of Refuge dates for 2025 are April 14 – 21, August 18 – 25, October 27 – November 3. Carrie motioned to put these dates on the 2025 calendar. Bill seconded. We continued ways of brainstorming helping the church with its financials. Hope 101 (like Meals on Wheels) needs a place to cook meals for the community. They have certified people that can run the kitchen. Lou will call them to see if they are interested in using the church for a small fee. Jean brought up calling Pam Derks about getting an appraisal on what the land south of church is worth. #1 it will give us some income, and #2 less money spent on mowing.

Leadership changes: Tabled

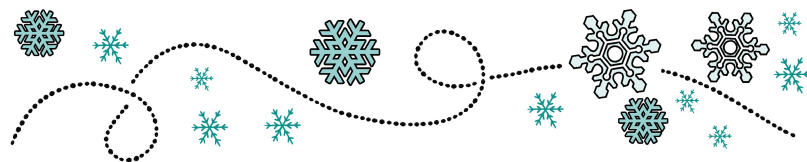
Meeting adjourned at 7:49 pm

Next Meeting is January 27, 2025, at 6:30 P.M. in the library.

Respectfully submitted,
Carrie DeMull

Our Church Family:

Shut-Ins ~



As we approach the holiday season we want to remember those of our congregation who are home bound or who have moved away. Especially Sally DeShetler, Yvonne Lee, Siria Pinnick, Ann Werner.



Dear Community Member:

Wellspring Adult Day Services has seen an enormous amount of growth over the past few years, and it has been an amazing journey! This past May we hit our highest number of community members served. Wow, God had his hand in starting this ministry eight years ago and he has continued to bless and guide us. We want to extend our heartfelt gratitude to all of you who have supported Wellspring. Your prayers, time and financial donations have made a huge impact on the success of this ministry.

Some of the benefits Wellspring has been able to provide to our guests is a daily schedule of fellowship, exercise, crafts, games, food and of course, coffee and baked goods! We strive to give our guests a purpose in life and a feeling of belonging. For their caregivers, Wellspring provides an opportunity for them to get their chores done, have a day of rest, or attend appointments, all while knowing their loved one is being cared for.

One caregiver recently told staff she has noticed an immense improvement in her loved one's mood since attending Wellspring. This guest was, at first, hesitant to attend, but within a few visits, has created multiple friendships and looks forward to attending weekly. Her caregiver has stated that she is thankful for the ministry, and it has greatly improved both her and her loved one's quality of life.

Wellspring will be holding a "Fill the Well" Auction in October 2025. But today, we are asking for your financial support to help meet the needs of the growing number of participants in our program. As the number of seniors increases each year in our community, we know the need for this resource will also increase.

If you are able and willing to give, remember donations are tax deductible. All donations will be matched by the Fremont Area Community Foundation.

Options for giving:

Make checks payable to Wellspring ADS and mail to 6121 S Fitzgerald Ave, Fremont 49412

Scan to donate:



If a financial donation is something you are unable to do at this time, Wellspring would love to have your continued prayers of support, or if you are looking for a place to plug in and volunteer, Wellspring would love to have you!

Thank you for your support!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Allie Maat".

Executive Director

Harvest Ingathering:

Fall/Thanksgiving In-gathering ... thank you!, Women's Fellowship for organizing this activity, and thank you!, Congregants for your contributions. The weight of the food donated to True North's Pantry Program was 105#. The \$75 you gave will buy 375 pounds of food. Thanks to your generosity, True North received 1/4 of a ton (480#) of food for the needy. I'm reminded of Matthew 25:21 ... Well done good and faithful servants. Jack B.



Board of Charitable Giving Request:

Community Closet is a Fremont charity helping the needy: We believe that God is able to provide everything that we need out of His love and abundance. There are no price tags in our store. Instead, we just ask that everyone gives as they are able. Details: <https://www.communityclosetcharities.com>. At present, there is an urgent need for gently-used blankets and towels. Please bring your donations to Church on December 7 - January 6. Or if you prefer, your check to Community Closet Charities, and deposited in a specially-marked basket in the Narthex will be appreciated. Thank you, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. For Charitable Giving, Jack



It's Here!!!

*Saturday, December 7
Christmas Shopping and Plum Pudding Shoppe Sale
10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.*

Invite your neighbors, friends and family and COME!!



We are grateful for your donations to the Plum Pudding Shoppe as well. Drop them off at the church on Friday.



Men's Fellowship Luncheon

Wednesday, December 11 (note the date change) at 12:00 noon. Join us in Fellowship Hall. All mens are invited and welcome!



Christmas Eve Candle Light Service - December 24
 6:30 p.m.
 Traditional Hymns and Carols
 Choir will sing - Solo by Pat Krehn
 Stacey Church & Rachel Poches - Cello & Piano

December Dates to Note:



- Sunday, December 1 - First Sunday of Advent - Special Music Leslie Anderson
- Sunday, December 1 - Deacons Meeting - 11:30 a.m.
- Sunday, December 1 - "The Chosen" - final episode - 5:00 p.m.
- Monday, December 2 - Saturday, December 7 - Crafters Set up in Fellowship Hall
- Saturday, December 7 - Christmas Craft & Plum Pudding Shoppe Sale - 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
- Sunday, December 8 - 2nd Sunday of Advent - Special Music Stacey, Martha & Jack
- Monday, December 9 - Technology Board - 6:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, December 11 - Women's Fellowship Board Meeting - 10:00 a.m.
- Wednesday, December 11 - Men's Fellowship Luncheon - 12:00 noon (note date)
- Sunday, December 15 - Third Sunday of Advent - Special Music Jean Howarth
- Monday, December 16 - Trustees Meeting - 6:30 p.m. (possible it could be cancelled)
- Sunday, December 22 - Fourth Sunday of Advent - Special Drama by Mat and Friends
- Monday, December 23 - No Executive Council this month
- Tuesday, December 24 - Christmas Eve Candlelight Service - 6:30 p.m.
- Wednesday, December 25 - Christmas Day
- Sunday, December 29 - First Sunday after Christmas - Special Music Stacey, Martha & Jack

December Birthdays

- 2 Robin DeKleva
 Bonnie Erber
- 18 Kelly Parks
- 22 Don McKivitz
 Suzanne VandenBelt
- 28 Pastor Luke Schmalz





*Thank you to each one who donated poinsettias to help make
our sanctuary a lovely place in which to celebrate our Lord's
birth.*



Brad & Stacey Church in memory of Jerry & JoAnn Church.

John & Gail Cooper in memory of loved ones.

Robin & Pat Dekleva in memory of John and JoAnn Dekleva and Howard and Mary Pikel.

Arnie & Betty Dougan, Kelly & Kyle Parks, Lyle & Holly Shepherd, Brad & Stacey Church
and families in memory of Jerry Church and Jack Gillette.

Pat Krehn in memory of Bill & Millie Sherman.

Judy Nadeau & Les Salacina in memory of Van Nadeau.

Heidi Redding in memory of Harlow W. Redding.

Lyle & Holly Shepherd and family and Dianna & Frank Force and family in memory of
Shirley Shepherd-Brooks.

Tracy Stern in memory of Viola Stern.

Dave & Linda White in memory of our parents.

Jack & Mary Butterick in honor of our church family.

Arnold & Betty Dougan in honor of family and friends.

Kelly & Kyle Parks, Holly & Lyle Shepherd, Stacey & Brad Church and families in honor of
Arnie and Betty Dougan.

Peter & Nancy Lindner in honor of our families and friends.

Dean & Jean Morehouse in honor of our church family

Heidi Redding in honor of my family and Fremont friends.

Loretta & Duane VanDuzen in honor of our families.

Its Christmas Time



Christmas is the most hectic time of the year. Every year, I find myself faced with the same problem. How do I buy gifts, grocery shop, and go anywhere with all these people everywhere? It never ceases to amaze me how many people appear the second the Christmas buying season begins. It is as if they appear out of thin air. My skin starts to crawl at the thought of going to any store. The people, the loud music, and the sale of cheap plastic stuff- enough to make me contemplate becoming a hermit. I have a touch of the Grinch in me. I come from a long line of grouches and something about the Christmas season brings it out in me. Maybe it is the way Christmas overshadows Thanksgiving, my weird issues with gift-giving (which I find super stressful), or the fact that I'm an introvert. There are just so many things that bug me. And yet as much as I feel myself preparing to trek up Mount Crumpit to meet with the Grinch on how to stop Christmas I find myself pausing, wondering. If maybe God has something to say to me at this time. Yes, Christmas is crass, over-commercialized, and overcrowded. Yes, people have forgotten the reason for the season. But maybe there is something good, even with all the issues.

It is the time of the year when people are joyful, fun, and community-oriented. There is something special about a time dedicated to joy and hope. To the giving of gifts and getting together with family. Yes, there are problems but God works through broken things. God can and does use whatever he wants to give out his grace. Maybe it is me who is missing out. By indulging in my cynicism and melancholy perhaps I am missing out on God's joy. If God can receive worship from all of nature, why not from our celebration of his birth even when we don't do so "right". All of us can do to remember the goodness of joy and experience God through the feeling of wonder. The Grinches like me need to remember that we serve the God of joy and celebration and it is good to cut loose on occasion. The Christmas super fan needs to remember that celebration is good but we can celebrate through quiet and reflection. Whether we are a Who or a Grinch there is so much more for us in the wonder of Christmas. God is always seeking to draw us closer to him. We only need ears to hear. What is God seeking to say to you this season?



