

**First Parish in Concord
Standing Committee Meeting
January 10, 2023**

Fifi Ball	Director of Operations	Y
Michael Beer	Standing Committee Member	N
Rev. Seth Carrier-Ladd	Senior Minister (Interim)	Y
Jim Hawks	Standing Committee Member	Y
Jennifer Izzo	Clerk	N
C.C. King	Standing Committee Member	Y
Gib Metcalf	Standing Committee Member	Y
Caroline Washburn Minkin	Standing Committee Member	Y
Heather Packard	Treasurer	Y
Jim Reynolds	Standing Committee Member	Y
Liz Rust	Chair	Y
Susan See	Standing Committee Member	Y
Virginia Taylor	Standing Committee Member	Y
Rev. Liz Weber	Minister for Congregational Care	Y
Holly Cratsley	Executive Committee for the Shot Heard 'Round the World, and FP Member	Y

THIS MEETING WAS HELD VIA ZOOM.

Seth offered a reading. Everyone checked in about how they are doing.

Minister's Report and Update

- The new version of *FP Weekly* is out and feedback has been positive. There were a few small technical issues and some groups expressed the desire to have more opportunity to add content. Committees really like the new format and the introductory email. We will add a "Save the Date" section.
- The Holiday services were successful. The pop-up pageant was a success. The 4:00PM service was most highly attended and big thanks to Amy and Beth for making that happen.
- January 15th will kick off the Covenant Process. The Congregational Retreat will be in February, and will be in person and on-line. There will be a racial workshop on March 11. Celebration Sunday is on March 5.

- Transition team. Report from work done by the team in December will be distributed soon.
- FP Administration is working to modernize the technology in the sanctuary.
- An announcement sheet will be distributed to the congregation instead of being in the Sunday News. A Google Sheet will go out with options to sign up for announcements.
- The Pledge Committee had its first meeting.
- An operational decision was made by Seth and the staff that any fund raising efforts below \$2,000 can be approved by Operations instead of the SC.
- Fundraising. Seth is working closely with the Wright Tavern Committee.
- Gib asked Seth for an update on hiring the Office Manager. In the face of an uncertain FY24 budget, Seth and Fifi have not hired an office administrator. A suggestion was made to hire a half time office administrator—either adding them to the staff or as a contractor—with the understanding the position is temporary and could end in June.
- Susan noted that she feels strongly that there is a need for an Administrative Support position. Seth responded that it is dependent on fundraising and the budget.
- There was a question about how many people are attending services. Fifi mentioned that she has access to a report with that information. Liz suggested that a link to the spreadsheet be shared with the SC.
- Christmas Eve service was highly attended by about 300 people.
- The SC requested the RE attendance numbers.
- A list of all Committee chairs will be posted on the FP website.

250th Anniversary of FP: Holly Cratsley

- Holly Cratsley attended the SC meeting to present on the “Shot Heard ‘Round the World” event that is happening in 2025. She is on the Shot Heard ‘Round the World Executive Committee.
- First Parish is at the center of this event.
- Holly’s focus is on community participation. She wants all of the churches, particularly in Concord Center, to participate.
- Ideas include celebration of the diversity of Concord, and events that are open and engaging to people in Concord, such as Community Meals like a Stone Soup event.
- Concord Peace Makers will make quilts and wish to showcase the quilts in Parish Hall.
- The Committee is looking for volunteers. The work will begin in earnest in January of 2024, but we should start thinking ahead now. Liz will discuss with Holly.

Update from the Minister for Congregational Care

- About 25 people attended the Christmas Day service in person and online. There was coordination between the two mediums, which Liz Weber views as a success.
- The holiday plants program happened this year and Liz is grateful.
- Covid update. The Covid Committee is releasing a new policy in response to levels of Covid increasing in Massachusetts. We will now require universal masking in all places in the building. The committee will update the RE policy to match the policies in place in the kids’ schools.
- February 11th Congregation retreat. Lots of work has been done, and Liz is excited about it.

SC Operations

- Meeting Minutes Approval

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously

VOTED: to accept the December 13, 2022 Standing Committee (SC) meeting minutes,

as amended, and to incorporate them into the permanent record.

Director of Operations

- Since some late pledges came in recently, pledges for 2022-2023 now exceed the budgeted amount.
- Share the Plate donations have decreased from \$3,000 per month to \$2,000 per month.

Interim Evaluation

- We are required to do a 6-month Interim Evaluation of our interim ministry period, concluding at the end of January.
- The SC divided up the questions in the Evaluation. Each SC member has a question to answer. Then there will be an optional meeting to discuss. Seth pointed out that some of the questions are about things that haven't been done yet, such as questions 14-18. Gib will put all of the answers in a shareable Google doc. SC members can offer their thoughts on others questions using comments in the Google doc.

Talent Show, April 1st, 2023

- Jen Izzo is organizing the event, and Madzie Burnham will be the MC.
- The SC will sponsor the event. The event will be at 7pm on April 1, 2023.

FP Covenant Update

- The FP Covenant Committee will be comprised of Ken Reeves, Susan See, Leah Russell, Dana Snyder-Grant and Tracey Hurd. In addition, 3 people will be helpers: Dawn Miller, Carolyn Copp and Madzie Burnham.
- Sketch of process: Start with Congregational Retreat on Feb 11th with a process of discerning values. The final draft of the Covenant will be voted at the FP Annual Meeting in June, 2023.
- The congregation will need to discuss how to keep the Covenant alive.
- The Committee has been in conversation with the Congregational Life Committee (CLC).
- Liz added that the retreat will be very good and please come.

Recruitment of Senior Minister Search Team

- Board and staff will make calls to members of the congregation in order to form the search team for the settled minister. The ideal size for the committee is 5-7 people.
- Susan will draft a letter to the congregation about the formation of the search team. The SC will discuss with the Pledge campaign whether to collaborate on the communication. The goal is to have the letter ready by the SC's February meeting.
- Liz will reach out to the former search team chair, Toby Smith Ropiek, to get her thoughts on the process.

Financial Policies

- Gib presented the Financial Policies that were created in 2018, when FP had a Finance Committee. We need to update the policies since we no longer have a Finance Committee.
- A discussion ensued about whether we need a Finance Committee.
- It was mentioned that Michelle Fortier has ideas on how to improve the cash income and whether the staff should have oversight of financial decisions.
- Heather suggested changing the term of the SC Treasurer position from 1 year to 3 years, and

stated that the church would benefit from a Finance Committee.

- The SC would like to explore how members could help Fifi.

Pledge Campaign: Heather, Gib, Jim

- There appears to be some overlap between the Pledge Committee and the Finance and Congregational Life Subcommittees. We need to discuss roles and responsibilities. We need to have one plan and one message for the Congregation.
- There is a congregational outreach effort and a larger outreach to the community.

Upcoming church items

- 2/11: Covenant Retreat
- 3/05: Pledge Drive kickoff, celebration Sunday
- 3/11: Pre-Emptive Radical Inclusion retreat, CB Beal
- 4/01: Talent Show
- 4/11: SC meeting: Review search committee applicants, review prelim budget/s
- 5/09: SC meeting: Confirm search committee ballot, review budget/s
- 5/22(ish): Budget approval deadline, warrant finalization
- 6/11: Annual Meeting
- 6/13: End of year SC meeting