

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

Fifi Ball	Director of Operations	Y
Michael Beer	Standing Committee Member	Y
Lisa Bennett	Standing Committee Member	Y
Rev. Seth Carrier-Ladd	Senior Minister (Interim)	Y
Jennifer Izzo	Clerk	Y
C.C. King	Standing Committee Member	Y
Gib Metcalf	Chair	Y
Caroline Washburn Minkin	Standing Committee Member	Y
Jim Reynolds	Standing Committee Member	Y
Leah Russell	Treasurer	Y
Liz Rust	Standing Committee Member	Y
Susan See	Standing Committee Member	Y
Virginia Taylor	Standing Committee Member	Y
Rev. Liz Weber	Minister for Congregational Care	Y
Kristin Haddad	Member of Senior Minister Search Team	Y
Eric Moore	Member of Transition Team	Y
Eric Van Loon	Member of Senior Minister Negotiation Team and Senior Minister Search Team	Y

THIS MEETING WAS HELD IN PERSON AT FIRST PARISH AND VIA ZOOM.

C.C. King offered opening words.

The group read the Standing Committee covenant. We covenant to:

- Listen respectfully with an open heart
- Publicly support Standing Committee decisions and honor the decision-making process, even if we disagree
- Take the time to hear everyone's thoughts and opinions, including the congregation's
- Be open-minded and curious; we welcome respectful questions
- Respect disagreement and try to work through it

- Make space and take space so everyone’s voices can be heard
- Be open and flexible to change
- Encourage direct communication from the congregation and with each other
- Practice compassion for ourselves and each other
- Enjoy being together and have fun
- Maintain appropriate confidentiality

Everyone checked in about how they are doing.

CONGREGATIONAL CARE MINISTER REPORT

- Liz Weber reported that she is recovering from a serious injury plus a bout of Covid.
- FP’s Lay Ministers have changed their name to the Pastoral Care Team. Lay ministers are now referred to as “Pastoral Care Associates.” There are currently 6 people on the team. Liz will be recruiting new members soon because the ideal number would be 8-10.

DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS REPORT

- Fifi Ball distributed the semi-annual staff compensation report this month. Total compensation is about \$1M, including social security, professional expenses, healthcare, insurance, etc.
- FP’s FY24 pledges have increased by \$12,710 since the FY24 budget was set.
- We ended FY23 with \$145,858 in surplus funds, \$129,858 more than we expected.
- Fifi pointed out that the staff hasn’t received a raise in the past 2 years.
- Catherine Hill has officially joined the staff, focusing on FP’s social media and website.

FOCUS GROUP CONVERSATION WITH SENIOR MINISTER SEARCH TEAM AND TRANSITION TEAM

- Kristin Haddad and Kristin Moore from the Search Team and Eric Moore from the Transition Team visited the Standing Committee to interview the members about our thoughts on the next senior minister.

INTERIM SENIOR MINISTER REPORT

- Worship.
 - On Oct. 1, Peter Bowden, a member of our congregation, a social media consultant for Unitarian Universalist congregations and spouse of our Minister of Religious Education, Rev. Amy Freedman, spoke in the pulpit and also led a workshop on “Friendship in the Digital Age.”
 - As part of our pastoral response to the significant number of deaths and memorial services in the past 2-3 months, the Service on Oct. 8 focused on the theme of Grief and Grieving.
 - Upcoming Special Services:
 - Thursday, Oct. 12 , 7pm – National Coming Out Day service, held in the chapel, led by Rev. Liz Weber and Rev. Paul Langston-Daley
 - Sunday, October 15 – Rev. Keith Kron from the UUA will be our guest speaker.

The theme of the service will follow up on the “Beyond Categorical Thinking” workshop that Keith will have led as part of the Search process the previous day.

- Sunday, October 22 – Celebration of the 30th Anniversary of our Partner Church program, with travelers from the most recent trip speaking. Rev. Gary Smith, who started the Partner Church program, will offer the Call to Worship.
- Sunday, November 12 – First sermon in the 4-part series reflecting on the Benediction.

- Finance and Operations.

- We hired a third AV Technician – Ben Pincus.
- We have begun the transition to the new church management software, Breeze, which will provide a better user interface, offer more functionality, and cost significantly less money. The Breeze technicians have downloaded all of our data, and are in the process of getting everything ready for us to begin using their system.
- We are in the process of upgrading our internet bandwidth in the building to better accommodate the increased traffic on our internet connection. We also added ethernet runs (hardwiring) to improve connection speeds in various places, including the Brooks Room.
- Gib asked Seth to instruct staff to update outdated information on the website, such as the names of current committee members. Jim Reynolds offered to help with this project in the future.

- Sanctuary Technology Modernization

- The technology upgrade to the building is taking up a lot of time and effort. There is a big learning curve for the staff. Shanahan Sound is coming on Tuesday to install additional speakers in the sanctuary to better capture congregational singing, and to relocate a camera.
- Seth brought up the fact that some people in the congregation are unhappy with the screens in the sanctuary, including the Flower Committee. Seth is doing outreach with them.

- Wiggle Room. We now have a “Wiggle Room” in the Parlor, where kids can move around during the service.

SC OPERATIONS

- Minutes Approval. Gib asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the SC’s September, 2023 meeting.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously

VOTED: to accept the September 12, 2023 Standing Committee (SC) meeting minutes, and to incorporate them into the permanent record.

- Nominating Committee. The SC is responsible for selecting a new member of the Nominating Committee. Jim Reynolds and C.C. King are the SC liaisons to the Nominating Committee. They are still looking for names of people to nominate for the Nominating Committee.
- Governance. Next month at the SC meeting the Governance Subcommittee will present their thinking and plans. Liz Rust is moving from the Membership subcommittee to the Governance

subcommittee.

The October 10, 2023 meeting of the First Parish Standing Committee was adjourned at 8:20pm. The group then went into Executive Session.