

First Parish in Concord
Standing Committee Meeting
November 9, 2022

Fifi Ball	Director of Operations	Y
Michael Beer	Standing Committee Member	N
Rev. Seth Carrier-Ladd	Senior Minister (Interim)	N
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
Eric Moore	Representative of the Transitions Team	Y
Peter Nobile	Congregant	Y

THIS MEETING WAS HELD VIA ZOOM.

Reverend Liz Weber read a poem from *Incantations for Rest* by Alena O'Donner. Committee members checked in.

Minister's Report and Update

As Reverend Seth was ill, Reverend Liz Weber provided the minister's report.

- The staff have been offering more collaborative worship opportunities, which have been well received.
- The staff held their first staff retreat in a long time at First Parish Lexington, where they focused on team building and covenant building and learned how FPL is handling technology for online services and Covid protocols.
- In the pastoral care domain, congregants seem to feel well cared for. Starting this Sunday, coffee hour will take place both indoors and outdoors, allowing more chances for personal conversations.
- After an initial glitch, the new Zoom meeting format for Sunday services appears to be working.
- Small group ministry has launched well, with 58 participants.
- New members intro to UU is going well—several long-time Concord residents also signed up.
- Attendance is trending slightly upward—120 in the sanctuary last Sunday.

Transition Team Update

- Eric Moore provided a brief update about the Transition Team. They will soon announce in FP Weekly an in-person event and a Zoom event. These events will focus on a ritual of release and

will provide a framework for us to collectively put our experiences with Howard's ministry behind us.

- The SC discussed potential congregational wisdom for the interim process. Jim R. mentioned that Jeff Clanon, SC Chair during last transition, advised that the UUA has a well-defined process, and that we should follow it. The team will also reach out to the Year of Reflection and Visioning leaders and the COIC and will attempt to dovetail what they learn as they develop a strategic view for engaging the congregation.

SC Operations

- Meeting Minutes Approval

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously

VOTED: to accept the October 11, 2022 Standing Committee (SC) meeting minutes, as amended, and to incorporate them into the permanent record.

- Pulpit Hand Rails. Peter Nobile provided an update on the Howard Dana pulpit rails using his own architectural drawings of 2 possible design schemes: one in bronze with posts and decorative ends, and one in wood with a wood cap on the handrail. He estimated the total cost of the bronze rails as \$60,000 and the wooden rails as \$45,000. There was a brief discussion about how to present this information to the congregation and how to pay for it. It was suggested that we emphasize that the handrails are the farewell gift Howard wanted. Possible funding sources include the Building Fund and individual donor gifts. It was agreed that fundraising for the handrails will be coordinated within the context of other FP fundraising efforts including the Annual Campaign.

Operations Update

- Fifi reported one budget adjustment of \$5,000 to cover health insurance for our Interim Senior Minister. This increase will be partially offset by the currently unfilled position of church administrator.
- Currently two contract employees are helping with church administrative tasks.

Financial Sustainability Update

- Gib reported that the Close the Gap campaign brought in \$39,000 in additional pledges, and the congregation will be thanked for this generosity.
- The decision was made to not connect with lapsed pledgers at this time, but instead to reach out to them during the stewardship drive.
- Work will continue on the goal of coming in with a balanced budget, and in the spring the SC will focus on messaging for the congregation toward that end.

Connection and Communication Update

- There will be an All Chairs meeting on November 19, 2022.
- The Congregational Covenant process will be led by CC from the SC and Liz W. from the staff. They will also involve the chairs of the COIC and Congregational Life Committee, and intend to draw upon the congregation.
- Liz R. discussed the possibility of convening a congregation-wide Annual Retreat in January or February. The retreat could be focused on the covenant while laying the groundwork for strength-based sharing.
- Liz R. also stressed the importance of an integrative calendar in terms of both operational and financial matters. As energy for activities has increased, it will be important to coordinate fundraising efforts and soliciting input from the congregation rather than having multiple disparate efforts.
- Jen is working on launching a Talent Show on either 3/25 or 4/1 of 2023, and Jen and Liz will team up to chair an Auction on November 4, 2023.

Governance Update

- Virginia reported that based on consultation with Meck Groot and Joe Sullivan of the UUA and with Seth and Liz R, the Governance subcommittee has shifted our scope and focus. Instead of designing a new model of governance, we will attempt to adapt policy governance to make it work better for FP. During the interim process we intend to identify current problems where our model is not working. Based on review and approval of our list by the full SC, we will identify solutions to those problems and strategic end statements to deliver to Seth. Again, after SC review, we will propose plans to implement those solutions. We will submit our list of key problems to the SC before the December meeting, where they will be discussed.

Liz W. concluded the meeting with another reading from Alena O'Donner. The reading offered positive thoughts about elections.