

Grinnell UCC-Congregational Governing Board

Meeting Minutes

Sunday, September 26, 2021

12:00-1:07-pm in Person Seekers Room and/or via Zoom

Members present: Liz Rodrigues, Julie Eberbach, John Ashby, Ross Haenfler; Jessica Margrave Schirm, *ex officio*.

Opening Devotions

Approval of minutes

8 22 2021 Governing Board minutes: Approved by unanimous consent.

Reports/Updates

Treasurer

- Monthly reports show nothing out of the ordinary for the status of our budget at this point in the calendar year.
- Keir Johnson would like to be replaced as Treasurer. Julie will be reaching out to potential candidates.

Pastor

- Pastor Jessica shared an annual reflection with the board rather than a monthly report. In this reflection, she narrated her first three years as our settled pastor in light of the hopes laid out in the church profile. Despite the massive disruptions spurred by the pandemic, Pastor Jessica has led the church firmly in the directions it envisioned for itself. These include but are not limited to finished accessibility renovations, a more embodied and present commitment to social justice, and thriving educational ministries for all ages. The board thanked Pastor Jessica for preparing and sharing this reflection, and we affirmed that her leadership was valued and celebrated.
- The board discussed a draft budget. Pastor Jessica framed it as a budget looking toward a year that we will hope will mark a return to more typical church life but still full of unknowns. In the spirit of being ready to live our mission vibrantly, increases have been to areas that support in-person worship and ministry (such as childcare, speaker fees, and support of Our Whole Lives classes). These budget areas are still below pre-pandemic levels, however. The budget is over projected income by roughly \$24,000, but projected income has been estimated conservatively in light of uncertainty. As well, the past couple of years have run under what our budget would have

been if the pandemic hadn't happened. The board agrees that it is better to plan for a more normal year and adjust if income doesn't match than to be overly cautious and miss opportunities to live our mission.

- Pastor Jessica will take the board's comments back to the staff and work to prepare a final proposal and the stewardship campaign.

Old Business

- **Stained glass:** Insurance sent a check to cover additional costs to the derecho-damaged window and we have made a deposit for the work. Glass Heritage will try to fit us in for that particular window this fall but it may be spring before their schedule opens up. The endowment committee will consider a proposal to undertake remaining maintenance using brick and mortar funds.
- **Signage:** The proofs for the front signs have been approved and we are on ASI's schedule for this fall.

Open Business

- **Update on live and livestreaming Worship:** There are some lighting issues that we need to work on, specifically on how speakers' faces are lit.
- **Update on live and livestreaming Seekers:** Livestreaming is being improved as processes are refined through practice.
- Livestreaming has clearly become part of our accessibility and welcome, which is one of the positive things we will take away from this difficult time.
- Technology replacements and upgrades will need to continue in this next year to support the work of the church as a whole. Staff computers are getting out of date, introducing lost work efficiency as well as security risks. We also need two more laptops to support regular ministries (such as livestreaming Seekers at the same time as showing videos in Godly Play and setting up worship).

New Business

- Henry Rietz has been approved to move forward with his Ecclesiastical Council by the Committee on Ministry and has planned for a October 24 for a zoom gathering that will be "hosted" by our church and the Central Association.
- Henry is working with Pastor Jessica and the Association to develop a call to public theology work that will facilitate his ordination.

Next meeting will be October 24, 2021.

Closing Prayer

Respectfully submitted by Liz Rodrigues, clerk