

**Grinnell United Church of Christ – Congregational
Governing Board Meeting
Sunday, December 10, 2023
11:50 am – 12:40 pm**

Members present: Nancy Brown, Julie Eberbach, Ross Haenfler, Liz Rodrigues;
Pastor Jessica Margrave Schirm
Member absent: Molly Campe

The meeting was called to order by Moderator Ross Haenfler after an informal checking in with each other. The Minutes of October 22, 2023 and the agenda were approved by unanimous consent.

Reports/Updates

2024 Pledges. A few expected pledges are outstanding. As of today, pledges of \$233,212 have been received, surpassing expected pledges of \$233,000. Pledges have averaged 12% higher than last year, and there are five new pledging units.

Insurance Premiums. The building insurance premium will not increase in 2024. Health insurance premiums for staff will go down.

Music Ministry. Liz reported that the music accompanist schedule is complete with two exceptions - the morning services on December 24 and 31. Our usual musicians are obligated to other churches. Possible options were discussed.

Treasurer's Report. Pledges are being paid, and there have been no surprises year to date. The financial situation is where we expected it to be.

Pastor's Report. See attached report. Pastor Jessica's plans for sabbatical are coming into focus. The broad plan, by month, is as follows:

April – Physical renewal

May – Spiritual renewal and growth – a walking pilgrimage in England and Scotland with a UCC clergy group

June – Study leave

July – Writing dissertation

Pastor Jessica requested authorization to use money in the budget for “Ministry Expenses/Conference, Association and Wider Church Meetings” to cover some of the pilgrimage expense. Available money includes \$415 remaining in the 2023 budget and up to \$450 in the 2024 budget.

MOTION: Approve use of money in the “Ministry Expenses/Conference, Association and Wider Church Meetings” line budgeted in 2023 and 2024 to offset some of the sabbatical pilgrimage expenses (Liz Rodrigues/Julie Eberbach). Motion carried.

Continuing Business

Nominations. Julie has been confirming willingness to serve with those whose terms continue. She is working with Dave Eberbach and Pastor Jessica on developing the slate of nominees.

Endowment-related Update. Jean found documents from several denominations providing instructions on how to make a financial gift to a church endowment fund. Pastor Jessica will send Jean similar documents from some UCC sources. The annual meeting will include an introduction to the endowment-building effort that will continue into Spring. The Endowment Committee meets on Thursday, January 11. After the Governing Board meets on Sunday, January 14, the presentation for annual meeting will be finalized.

Important Dates

January 14, 2024 Governing Board Meeting at 11:45 am
January 15, 2024 Annual Reports due to Elizabeth
January 28, 2024 Annual Meeting following worship service and light lunch

Pastor Jessica offered a closing prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy E. Brown, Clerk