



*We give ourselves one unto another, covenanting to walk together as a congregation, promising faithfully to watch over one another, and to delight for love to abide in our midst.
~ 1717 Covenant (adapted)*

Parish Board Meeting
Wednesday January 5, 2022, 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM via Zoom
Minutes

Present: Karla Baehr, Albert Brownell, Micaela Coady, Jen Guillemine, Jody Leader, John Mignano, Margaret Williams, Bob Williamson (Chair)
Absent: Rev Lisa (on vacation and study leave)

Opening

Chair Bob Williamson called the meeting to order at 7:10. In the absence of Rev Lisa who is on vacation and study leave, Jody Leader lit the chalice while Bob offered as a reading Ann Barker's, *Can We Talk About It?* Members nurtured the connections with one another by taking turns sharing something they do to lift their spirits. Members took turns reading the Board Covenant.

Ministers Report

Bob raised the three matters she particularly wanted to lift up for Board consideration on behalf of Rev Lisa:

- Retreat planning
- Supporting RE in revisioning
- Finance Committee involvement in revisioning

Fiscal Health Status Report

Treasurer Margaret Williams reported to the Board that the Finance Committee has met to review financials through November. There are no changes that warrant Board discussion now.

Reopening Planning Group Report (RPG)

Tri-chair Bob Williamson reported on the RPG's conclusion and recommendation that the Christmas Eve services be held in person and be live streamed so that the community could worship together and that all other FPB activities except the choir be conducted remotely or outdoors at least through January because of the current Covid surge. (RE will be doing some outdoor activities)

Minister's Agreement Revisions - sabbatical leave

Members reviewed the language on sabbatical leave contained in the Minister's Agreement with the Congregation and the proposal Rev Lisa is making to use two months of sabbatical leave in each of the next two church years. Sabbatical leave for study, education, writing, meditation, and other forms of professional and religious growth accrues at the rate of one month per year of service, with leave taken after four but before seven years of service. The 2022-23 church year will be Rev Lisa's fifth year at First Parish. Rev Lisa has reported that she is interviewing candidates for a two-year ministerial internship beginning next year.

Called by Love, Sustained By Community, Committed to Justice

We strive to be a welcoming, diverse and loving congregation that nurtures spiritual growth for individuals and families, celebrates multicultural community, and works together to demand social justice, dismantle racism, and care for our living earth.

The Board reached a high level of consensus (8 5's) to approve Rev Lisa's proposal to take two months of her accrued sabbatical leave in January-February 2023 and 2 more months in 2023-24 (likely January and February). The Board asked the Executive Committee with Micaela Coady to collaborate with Rev Lisa to develop a proposal for Board consideration in February for:

1. communicating about the leave with the congregation.
2. planning how to identify likely needs during her absence and ways to address them, including any financial implications.

Board members discussed the need for better protocols for communicating with the congregation about ministerial vacations and study leaves. The Executive Committee will follow up.

January 29th Retreat Planning

The Board reached a high level of consensus (8 5's) to plan for a virtual retreat with the hope that weather and Covid conditions at the time of the retreat may permit some activity to be done in person outside. The Executive Committee has agreed to plan the Retreat. Members agreed that the Retreat Agenda should address the following:

- Report from Pastoral Team/Board congregational calls and discussion of their Implications for Board action
- Religious Exploration Program visioning
- Board Goals, including Board actions needed to nurturing a more inclusive, welcoming and anti-racist culture at FPB
- A Self-nomination process for Board Chair elect
- Fun Get-to-Know you Activities spread through the Retreat

Goals Development

Board members discussed seven (7) draft goals prepared by subcommittees, seeking to clarify intended outcomes and implications for the Board's work through this year. Board members discussed the likely need to prioritize among the goals. It was agreed that considerable time will need to be devoted to complete this work at the Retreat.

Next meetings:

- Board retreat Saturday January 29 (virtual) specific time within 8:30-3:30 TBD
- Executive Committee (for initial retreat planning) Wednesday Jan 12 5:00-6:30
- Executive Committee (Board Meeting planning) Wednesday Feb 2, 5:00-6:15 (Zoom)
- February Board Meeting Sunday February 6, 1:00 – 3:00 PM via Zoom or in person TBD

Upcoming Triad "Coffees": Bob/Alfred/Karla Margaret/John/Jody Jen/Lisa/Micaela

The meeting was adjourned at 9:02pm

Respectfully submitted

Karla Baehr, Clerk