

Country Club Christian Church
Congregational Board Minutes
January 10, 2023

Attending: Jennifer Austenfeld, E.J. Becker, Kathy Buckley, Liz Copeland, Sara Engber, Erin Feitz, Dana Flora, Shelle Jensen, J.J. Jones, Phil Klever, Becky McElduff, Glenn Mills, Matt Moeder, Kay Moffat

Not Attending: Tom Thornton

Staff: Carla Aday, Tulley Beard

Guest: Nancy Lear

Call to Order

Jennifer Austenfeld called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

Welcome and Meditation

Mrs. Austenfeld gave an opening meditation touching on the lyrics of the Pointer Sisters' "Yes We Can Can," and the hymn "One Bread, One Body." The meditation closed with Galatians 3:28, "There is no longer Jew or Greek, slave or free, male and female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus."

Consent Agenda

Ms. Austenfeld asked the Board whether there were any amendments or corrections to the items on the consent agenda. Those offered were accepted, and the Board unanimously approved a motion to approve the consent agenda including the November 8th and November 29th Congregational Board Minutes as corrected.

Personnel Committee Report

Sara Engber reported the Staff Appreciation Lunch was held in December, continuing a loved tradition. Rev. Bryce Bowers has joined the staff and will attend next Sunday's worship with an informal meet and greet after the 11:00 service. The Personnel Committee recommends the Board approve designation of a clergy housing allowance for tax purposes. The Board unanimously approved a motion to approve the Personnel Committee's recommendation.

Open and Affirming Resolution

Ms. Austenfeld introduced the resolution (Attachment 1), first reviewing the history of the Board's engagement with this project for more than a year. A subcommittee of the Board began work in late 2021, with a presentation made to the Board in April 2022 following consultation with Melissa Guthrie, Executive Director of the Disciples LGBTQ+ Alliance. In June, the Board approved a statement of support to move toward becoming an Open and

Affirming Congregation and a welcoming statement, which is one of tenets of the Open and Affirming program through the Christian Church, Disciples of Christ. Through Fall 2022, the elders, deacons and congregation conducted an engagement process to receive feedback and provide education on the program and welcoming statement. In November, the Board approved publishing in the weekly newsletter the welcoming statement and projected final action on the question of becoming an Open and Affirming congregation at today's meeting. Ms. Austenfeld, Rev. Carla Aday and Tulley Beard each stated they had not received any negative feedback about formally becoming an Open and Affirming Congregation.

Ms. Austenfeld reviewed the resolution. Dana Flora said she supported the resolution and recognized more work lies ahead to affirm and respect all people, to provide a lesson of God's unconditional love. The Board unanimously approved a motion to approve the resolution as proposed, including the welcoming statement. Ms. Austenfeld said that on behalf of the board, she will send documentation including the resolution to the Disciples LGBTQ+ Alliance with a request to be confirmed as an Open and Affirming ministry and listed on the Alliance website.

Senior Minister Report

Rev. Aday reported on key dashboard data. Christmas Eve worship attendance increased from 759 in 2021 to 1039. December brought 2022 over 2021 worship attendance in the aggregate. First-time visitors continue at a high level. Giving was down in November and up in December. The Christmas Offering came in at \$43,000 compared to \$33,000 in 2021. J.J. Jones suggested and Rev. Aday agreed it would be informative to measure engagement among visitors and those who transition to new members.

The Next 5 Strategic Priorities

Rev. Aday provided an update on activity related to the Next 5 Strategic Priorities. There will be a new small group series during Lent on questions Christians ask—emphasizing we are a questions church not an answers church. Congregational/community activities include an International Women's Day yoga program open to the public, more opportunities for community concerts, a new adult Sunday School class for those 50s-60s, a new directory and joint worship with Swope Parkway United Christian Church.

As in November, the Board spent time discussing opportunities for progress on Goal 4 of the Next 5 Strategic Plan, which is focused on strengthening the church's external and internal identity as an inclusive congregation.

Closing Prayer

Mrs. Austenfeld called the meeting to a close at 8:36 p.m. and Rev. Aday gave the closing prayer.

RESOLUTION OF THE CONGREGATIONAL BOARD OF COUNTRY CLUB CHRISTIAN CHURCH APPROVING OPEN AND AFFIRMING DESIGNATION

WHEREAS, Country Club Christian Church (the “Church”) is an inclusive congregation that is welcoming to all,

WHEREAS, to manifest that commitment, the Church has discerned through discussion, education, and study about formally designating itself as an Open and Affirming church,

WHEREAS, an Open and Affirming church is one that welcomes persons of all gender expressions and sexual orientations and all others to the table of Christ’s communion and to the full life of the church.

WHEREAS, in order to be formally designated as an Open and Affirming church, the Church is committed to the following:

- Supporting an Open and Affirming Ministry;
- Having in place a non-discrimination employment policy;
- Supporting the Disciples LGBTQ+ Alliance Ministry;
- Learning from the LGBTQ+ and other marginalized communities; and
- Sharing our Open and Affirming status on our website.

WHEREAS, the Church has adopted the following Open and Affirming Welcoming Statement:

Country Club Christian Church is an open and affirming community of faith. As represented by the open communion table at our heart, we receive and are called to share the unconditional love of God as revealed by Jesus Christ. We love, welcome, and affirm all people to worship, serve, and lead in our congregation regardless of race, age, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, nationality, ethnicity, marital status, physical or mental ability, family configuration, economic circumstances, or theological perspective, as God has welcomed us.

WHEREAS, the Church has formed a consensus among the ministry, lay leadership, and congregants to seek formal designation as an Open and Affirming church;

WHEREAS, all decision-making authority to govern the formal affairs of the Church is vested in the Congregational Board;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CONGREGATIONAL BOARD OF COUNTRY CLUB CHRISTIAN CHURCH, that it hereby approves proceeding with application to the Disciples LGBTQ+ Alliance to receive the formal designation of Open and Affirming.

ADOPTED BY THE CONGREGATIONAL BOARD OF COUNTRY CLUB CHRISTIAN CHURCH ON JANUARY 10, 2023.

Jennifer Austenfeld, Chair of the Congregational Board