

Country Club Christian Church
Congregational Board Minutes
January 9, 2024

Attending: Jennifer Austenfeld, E.J. Becker, Kathy Buckley, Justin Cottrell, Sara Engber, James Guthrey, J.J. Jones, Phil Klever, Becky McElduff, Glenn Mills, Jennifer Parker, Beckie Rogers

Not Attending: Erin Feitz, Dana Flora

Staff: Rev. Carla Aday, Rev. Bryce Bowers, Tulley Beard

Guest: Nancy Lear

Call to Order

J.J. Jones called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

Welcome and Opening Prayer

Mr. Jones gave the opening meditation and opening prayer.

Consent Agenda

The Board reviewed the dashboards for October-December and asked for the first-time visitors section to have a different format, which Tulley Beard will provide. The Board unanimously approved a motion to approve the consent agenda including the October 10th Congregational Board Minutes.

Personnel Committee Report

Sara Engber gave the report. Celebrations and recognition for Joe Walker are January 14th. Movement on the children and youth ministry vacancies is visible with consultants from the Center for Youth Ministry Training (CYMT) on site January 7 to meet with parents and youth for robust conversations about the needs and wants of these roles. The Personnel Committee met afterwards. Mr. Jones said CYMT has a process for building the profile and structure of the program. He asked the Board to stay engaged because the congregation has a unique opportunity to fill out a full team and program in this transition. Ms. Engber said she heard a theme of the importance of volunteer support for the children and youth ministry because people are asking for a large amount of programming that will require volunteer support. Interim Directors of Youth Ministry are Tepring and Glenn Crocker. There is a search committee forming for a minister of Congregational Care. Rev. Pam Bauer Nolan started as interim last week. Kymba Wiggins started this week as our second part-time Receptionist and Administrative Assistant.

Finance Committee Report

Glenn Mills said the Committee is developing a format for quicker reporting and narrative summaries, so the review of financials is less repetitive and affords more Board time for reaction rather than explanation. He reviewed the fiscal year 2022-23 and first quarter 2023-24 variances to budget. Mr. Mills noted a significant shortfall in actual contributions compared to pledges is emerging. The staff is looking at options for reaching out to people to address this.

Endowment Trustees Report

Nancy Lear said the amounts available in designated and non-designated accounts are dependent on final audit figures from the 2022-23 fiscal year. This affects how much the endowment can contribute toward the upcoming year's budget. She noted the designated amounts may reflect available funds not being fully used because of limitations put in place on expenses payable from the designated gifts/accounts. The Endowment Trustees continue to try to encourage more non-designated gifts and moving designated to non-designated. The endowment balance is increasing notwithstanding outlays for the Capital Campaign. The governing philosophy is the endowment has dual objectives, to increase both support to the congregation's activities and the endowment balance.

Sr. Minister Report

Rev. Carla Aday reported with extra support and recognition from the Board and congregation for the hard work of staff had great outcomes including closing the building and extra time off between Christmas and the new year. Rev. Bowers is coming to his first anniversary on staff and has worn many hats. Rev. Aday said the CYMT consultants and the new day school director both observed the excellent structure and benefits available for staff are a great asset in recruiting.

Rev. Aday went over the dashboards in more detail. They reflect downward trends for in-person worship and general giving, upward for capital campaign. She noted there is no tracking of on-demand worship and podcasts though the impression is that these services are growing. Christmas Eve worship attendance was up by 33% with an extra service added and December was up if we exclude most of the Christmas Eve services. The extra 3:00 pm service was mostly members and 1) primarily adults without kids and with evening plans, or 2) families with kids who wanted to try something different than the traditional 5:30 pm service for families, which was a surprise.

General giving has some explainable variances. The Capital Campaign is progressing and likely to fall short of goal on the extension phase for additional projects. The committee is looking at contingency spend and budgeting for the extension phase. There was a suggestion to verify/update reminders of pledges for annual and capital campaign giving via Church Center.

As a Strategic Plan update, Rev. Aday shared:

- 1) Rev. Bowers and Corey Scott have made big step forward in the new member program goal in the last month. They built out several options for receiving contact info and a defined four-month plan for interested visitors.
- 2) The Christmas Festival was very significant for inviting neighborhood and tracking attendance. Staff has stepped up outreach to immediate neighbors with respect to keeping them informed about the construction.
- 3) Additional small groups are rolling out now for younger career/Millennials and Lenten study.
- 4) Swope Pkwy partnership is strengthening with several activities in planning.
- 5) Open and Affirming implementation team is forming.
- 6) New website was live before Christmas, and there is increased use of Church Center.

In addition, a Worship Review Task Force is forming. There was discussion of angles for this task force to consider and whether the goal is higher numbers or more engagement. The conventional wisdom is that fewer services results in fewer worshippers. Phil Klever said worship should build community and not create separation among services. Rev. Aday said this is a periodic process and the stimulus now is worship attendance leveling off from post-Covid high numbers. The task force will look at how worship is experienced by those in the room and how it affects Sunday morning education and other types of community. For instance, if times change or locations change, what impact would it have. Mr. Jones said the task force could benefit from landscape analysis view of comparable congregations and locations. Mrs. Lear noted there is more variety now in styles of communion. Mr. Jones asked Board members to email Rev. Aday or Ms. Beard with other ideas.

Becoming an Open and Affirming Congregation

The Board will continue to explore what it truly means to be an open and affirming congregation. Our congregation's welcoming statement is expansive and can be applied in many ways. J.J. Jones advised the formation of an advisory committee is underway. It will be advisory to the Board in setting policy.

Closing Prayer

Rev. Aday offered the closing prayer. The meeting adjourned at 8:18 p.m.