

NOT APPROVED



**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
CHURCH OF AKRON**

**Semi-Annual Meeting Minutes
May 19, 2022, online via Zoom**

1. Call to Order: Jim Gartner, Moderator, at 7:34 p.m.
 - a. Appointment of a Parliamentarian: Larry Becker
 - b. Declaration of Quorum (15% of membership / 65 members attending): 83 members were present. We had a quorum.¹
 - c. Opening Prayer, Bobby Burt

2. Approval of Minutes
 - a. **Pam Bof moved to accept the minutes of the 2021 Semi-Annual Congregational Meeting (held on May 16, 2021) and the 2021 Annual Congregational Meeting (held on September 12, 2021) which were posted on the church website. Ruth Allison seconded. The motion passed (75 for, 0 against, 0 abstain).**

3. Stewardship and Finance Board Report: Kevin Kowalski, Chair
 - a. The church is in a very good place financially. Investments have done well and a side effect of the pandemic is that the church saved on operating expenses over the prior 2 years.
 - b. Now that programs are starting to resume or start new, we have a budget to reflect this.
 - c. First over the last few years we have seen the trend of non-pledge income making gains over pledge income, we expect this trend to continue and likely to increase. Therefore, we are budgeting for more non-pledge income than pledge in the coming year.
 - d. Next, we have changed some things around for more sensible accounting.
 - i. Information Technology is now its own line item.
 - ii. Fellowship has been merged with the Membership Board expenses.
 - iii. In the coming year we are planning to reinvigorate our Christian Education programs, and thus we are budgeting for increased expenses.
 - iv. We have also increased funding for new initiatives, such as Coming Out Christian.
 - v. The Equipment budget includes funds to get the Upper Room set up for streaming of our services that take place in that space.
 - vi. The Unrestricted Operating Fund has been flagged for the overdue repair and replacement of our boiler systems. Also, the special projects for World Central Kitchen and the Sojourner Truth project would be funded from these funds.
 - e. **The Stewardship & Finance Board presented a committee motion to adopt the June 1,**

¹ Moderator Jim Gartner noted at the outset of the meeting that there had been confusion about quorum and absentee ballots prior to the meeting. He clarified that absentee ballots cannot count toward a quorum and are only entered into record if a motion remains unamended and if the live votes are too close to call. Similarly, he clarified that the quorum of members attending must be maintained throughout the meeting in order for decisions to be made in that meeting.

2022 – May 31, 2023 budget which was posted on the church website, which required no second. The motion passed (76 for, 0 against, 0 abstain).

4. Sponsorship of the Sojourner Truth Project in Akron
 - a. The Governing Board requested that the congregation vote to approve First Church sponsoring the Sojourner Truth Project in Akron. Discussion followed.
 - b. **Tim Kenepp moved to offer a \$25,000 sponsorship for the historic Sojourner Truth Project enabling the installation of a permanent statue in downtown Akron with permanent recognition of First Church’s support onsite. Julie Brandy seconded.**
 - i. Discussion followed with support and comments from Tim Kenepp, Margaret Mauer, Elizabeth Wilson, Kellie Ramirez, and Sarah Vradenburg.
 - ii. **The motion passed (69 for, 6 against, 3 abstain).**

5. Nominating Board Report, Larry Becker (stepping in for Chair Nancy Jenkins who had technical difficulties)
 - a. The Nominating Board requested to add Cheri Xeros to the slate to serve a term as an at-large member of the Endowment Board from 2022-2026. Cheri is currently serving on the Board and is, in fact, its chairperson. The Nominating Board did not realize that she was doing so as a representative from the Stewardship & Finance Board and so her seat on the Endowment Board has been inadvertently lost because she has rotated off of the Stewardship and Finance Board.

Additionally, Larry shared that there is an opening on the Stewardship & Finance Board and two openings for delegates to the United Church of Christ. The Chair of this meeting invited nominations from the floor to fill these positions. Steven Savides nominated himself as a UCC delegate

Larry Becker offered a committee motion to accept the slate of Officers and Board Members for the 2022-2023 program year, which required no second. Larry Becker moved to amend to add Cheri Xeros as an at-large member of the Endowment Board and Steven Savides as UCC Delegate to the slate. Julie Brandy seconded the amendment. The motion to amend the slate passed. The amended motion passed (76 for, 1 against, 0 abstain).
 - b. Rev. Nanette Pitt offered a blessing of incoming and outgoing board members. Sue Yoder recognized as Moderator and offered appreciation for chairs, officers, and outgoing Moderator Jim Gartner.

6. Rev. Nanette Pitt offered the closing blessing.

7. Adjourn: Sue Yoder at 8:27 P.M.

Respectfully submitted by Jennifer Kowalski