

**Dear Faith Community Church,**

Your Board of Elders desires to inform you of our monthly activities and to ask you to pray for us as we collectively pursue our Spirit-led mission of making more and better disciples of Jesus Christ. Below please find a concise summary of discussions we have had in the past month. (We meet twice per month for two-and-half hour sessions.) If you desire to learn more about a given subject, please don't hesitate to contact a pastor or elder. Thank you for your interest and desire as we seek to help thousands more experience a gospel inspired life. We deeply appreciate your prayers!

**April 12, 2022**

**Membership Updates:** The elders shared and discussed a variety of membership-related news and observations.

**Letters to the Board of Elders:** Three elders held a meeting with two members interested in a constitutionally-narrower definition of FCC's immersion baptism practices (see Feb. Elder Report). It was ultimately agreed that our current baptismal practices are acceptable to them. It was also agreed that the elders would review, for clarity, a couple of the sentences in the 2016 elder policy statement concerning immersion baptism. It was additionally agreed that we would review our new member curriculum in the same regard. The board was updated on the matter and the letter is now considered closed. The agreed to actions will be followed up upon.

The letter from a non-attending non-member concerning the theological nature of counseling that was provided in a specific case (see March Elder Report) has been further pursued. The sender has acknowledged e-mails elders have sent but has chosen not to follow-up. The board was updated on the matter and the letter is now considered closed. It will be re-opened should the situation change.

**Next Generation Ministry Leader Proposal:** Two members brought forward to three elders a thoughtful and well-described proposal contemplating how FCC's current job opening concerning our next generation ministry leader could potentially be fulfilled. The envisioned approach, while well-reasoned and clear, was substantially different than the approach that the elders had previously agreed upon. Background information that led to the elders' approach and decision was shared and potential alternatives were also considered with the two members. Subsequently, the conceptual framework of the proposal was brought to the elders' attention and further discussed. In the spirit of Acts 15, our previous decision to pursue the next generation ministry leader position as described continues to seem good to us.

**Future Non-Vocational Elder Candidate Update:** As has been described since February, an update was provided concerning the contacting and searching for potential non-vocational elder candidates. The presence or absence of mutual interest was discussed.

**Next Generation Theological Convictions:** The elders continued their discussion of a written draft describing FCC's convictions concerning the balance between the role of the church and the role of parents in the discipling of FCC's children (see March Elder report). Additional input from the FCC staff follows next. Final approval in May is likely.

**Discipleship Framework Approval:** As noted in the February Elder report, a task team has been developing a discipleship framework to help us more effectively equip and communicate to our body, our intentions to enable discipleship at FCC. The general framework comprising the key elements of helping people explore, experience, and empower their personal discipleship path in a gospel inspired life was reviewed and subsequently approved. "Phase 2" efforts to further build out the specific content of the discipleship framework and how to best implement it will follow.

**Project Charters for FCC Task Teams:** At the request of the elders, a number of important task teams are presently doing much work that is greatly appreciated. In order to ensure clarity and effective communication for both the task teams and the elders, a project charter template was proposed and approved. Additionally, three separate task team project charters (Deaconate Development, Shepherd Eldering, and Timing and Implementation of Discovery Land Curriculum) were presented, discussed, and approved.

**Mercy Ministry Team Update:** The elders were provided an update from a member who is leading a group from FCC interested in building a broader externally-focused Mercy Ministry at FCC. The group has been pursuing a book study to help enable clarity of mission and purpose. They have also surveyed leaders in the Hudson community for observed needs. Their insights into the nature and structure of a deaconate ministry were also provided and will be communicated to the Deaconate Development Task Team. The Elders expressed their sincere thanks and appreciation for the foundational work that has been done.

**771 Transitional Housing Proposal:** As discussed in the March Elder report, the elders have affirmed efforts to further define the opportunity to utilize 771 Carmichael (the yellow house adjacent to FCC that we own) for transitional housing needs. A budget to begin needed maintenance and renovation was specifically requested. At this meeting, a budget proposal was provided, discussed, and subsequently approved. Still pending is elder unity and approval upon the exact nature of who will be allowed to utilize the transitional housing upon the completed repairs. A variety of other matters, listed in the March elder report, also remain pending. This matter will be further discussed in May.

## **April 26, 2022**

**International Missions:** Pastor Larry Szyman will be leaving for Uganda on May 8<sup>th</sup>. He will be joined by two other pastors (not from FCC). This will likely be the final trip and training for the churches in Uganda that we have been helping since 2019. Larry is also planning to visit South

Sudan to explore potential opportunities for international mission work there. The elders are thankful for Larry's faithful service to these international churches and pray for his safety and Spirit-led ministry success.

**First Quarter Finance and Attendance Update:** A quarterly report was presented to the elders. FCC has continued to be blessed with significant attendance growth. While not in the first quarter, we note here that more than 1100 adults joined us in-person for Easter services and approximately 300 more joined us via our on-line ministry. Tithes and offerings increased during the quarter, largely aligned with our plan, and spending is slightly under plan. The elders continue to be extremely thankful for God's faithful provision and His work in drawing many to join with us!

**First Quarter Staff Goals:** The elders reviewed the staff's first quarter goals. The goals are largely proceeding according to plan. The elders thanked the staff for their continued hard work and diligence that shows up in so many ways.

**Future Non-Vocational Elder Candidate Update:** As has been described since February, an update was provided concerning the contacting and searching for potential non-vocational elder candidates. The presence or absence of mutual interest of candidates continues to be discussed.

**Non-Vocational Elder Apprentice On-Boarding Process:** Our current process was reviewed. A sense of the elders concerning ideas for possible modifications was discussed. The topic will be further considered at a future meeting.

**Next Generation Leader Hiring Process:** An initial set of resumes for FCC to consider are expected in late April and early May. A plan and process for initial interviews (May) was discussed, slightly modified, and affirmed. It is hoped that second round, in-person, interviews will occur in early June.

**Next Generation Curriculum Timing and Implementation Plan:** The plans and needs the recently approved new Sunday morning children's curriculum implementation were reviewed and discussed. The envisioned change is now well documented. It is clearly a substantial effort and will require significant support. The plans will next be discussed in greater detail with the staff and the volunteer task team. The elders continue to be thankful for all of the time and effort being spent on this important initiative by many.

**COVID-19 Policy Termination:** The current COVID-19 policy was reviewed. Based upon staff input, the elders agreed upon aspects of the policy that will continue without being policy (e.g. on-line broadcasting of service) and aspects that will be discontinued (e.g. signage concerning masking and policy). The staff will be informed and execute the agreed to changes. The elders agreed to terminate the on-going COVID-19 policy.

**Teaching Policy at FCC:** A sense of the elders was solicited concerning the nature of membership and attendance concerning those who teach at FCC. The topic will be discussed further at a future meeting.

**How you can pray us:**

- For God's continued grace and blessings upon our church and our leaders.
- For God's guidance and our wisdom in finding a Next Generation leader.
- For God's wisdom and guidance as we seek to define the best approach to Next Generation discipleship and the implementation of curricula that will meet that need.
- For God's guidance and wisdom as the elders continue the process of asking and vetting potential future non-vocational elders. For clarity as to how we can best on-board the men who are likely stepping forward.
- For God's guidance and wisdom as we contemplate how to best shepherd those who call FCC home. We earnestly desire to do this well while being a church of our size.
- For God's guidance and wisdom as we contemplate how to best set up a deaconate to meet the needs of our body and how we might perform various ministries of mercy outside of it.
- For God's guidance and wisdom as we contemplate how to best use the house next door for potential transitional housing needs.
- For God's guidance and wisdom for our staff as communication plans for our vision frame, vision script, and discipleship framework are prepared.
- For Pastor Larry Szyman's safety and Spirit-led ministry success as he works with church leaders in Uganda and potentially South Sudan.
- In thankfulness to God for his continued and faithful provisions to FCC and his work in drawing many more in joining with us.
- In thankfulness to God as we retire the COVID-19 policy and reflect upon the significant impact some of those changes, most notably our on-line ministry, have further enabled God's kingdom and His glory.
- For God's wisdom, guidance, and unity for the elder board as we continue to contemplate and discern many matters of importance.
- That this Elder communication and prayer request initiative provides a helpful level of communication, increased understanding, and increased unity in our body.
- For blessings and peace for Steve Holsteen while he is away on his sabbatical.
- For wisdom and clarity upon the staff and elders who take up Steve's roles during his absence.

In Love and Peace,

Gregg Bennett – Chairman of the Elders on behalf of your Elder Board:

(Gregg Bennett, John Blum, Jim Duffy, Dan Fosterling, Steve Holsteen, Eric Lent, Tim Porter, Tim Prince, Pat Stream, and Larry Szyman)