

**Dear Faith Community Church,**

Your Board of Elders desires to inform you of our recent activities and request your prayer for us as we collectively pursue our Spirit-led mission of making more and better disciples of Jesus Christ. Below is a summary of our November activities. 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 Jesus in a gospel inspired life.

**November 14, 2023 Regular Elder Meeting:**

**Updates**

- The executive pastor candidate to whom we formally extended an offer has accepted. The elders are very thankful! Plans to inform the body will be drafted.
- An initial slate of candidates for our Campus and Community Pastor position will be presented to us in early December via our commissioned search firm.
- Our 11/12 9AM service attendance was 573. More than 87% of all the available seats were filled! This number substantially exceeded any of our Easter services and represents a 'recent memory record attendance'. The elders expressed their deep thanks.
- The elders are still meeting many new people, and many examples were cited.
- At least 16 people have signed up for baptisms in November. This brings baptisms for the year to more than double last year's. The elders expressed their deep thanks for these figures.
- 29 "kids" said yes to Jesus at the recently held 'Great Sleepover'. Follow-up is underway. The elders were again deeply grateful for all that we see God doing.
- The marriage ministry team recently completed a pilot of a new course. It was reported to have gone very well.

**Topics:**

**Prayer:** The elders discussed various needs and situations and spent time in prayer for our church.

**Quarterly Financial and Key Ministry Metrics Update:** The elders reviewed the quarterly finances of the church. This past quarter represented the first quarter of our new fiscal year. Quarterly (and Fiscal Year To Date = FYTD) income exceeded expenses and expenses were well under planned levels. However, some significant overages related to health insurance costs are being foreseen and will be covered at our next elder meeting. The balance sheet was also reviewed, and the changes were found to be aligned with our plans.

Regarding key ministry metrics, in-person attendance (calendar year to date = YTD) continues to grow at a strong double-digit pace, albeit lower than last year's nearly 30% increase. Our weekly

on-line audience has declined. The elders are comfortable with this trend given the substantial increase in in-person attendance. The figures mentioned in the update section above were also noted as were other macro-level metrics reviewed for the first time. All seemed intuitively healthy. Of particular interest, 79 people have enrolled in our membership classes this year. That number represents >7% of our average weekly attendance. The elders were encouraged and grateful.

**Design and Build (D&B) Team Update:** The D&B team leader provided an update to the elders. The team has yet to arrive at an architectural design that meets the objectives that have been provided by the elders regarding auditorium seating expansion, youth ministry enhancements, kids ministry enhancements, and lobby/commons space enhancements within the targeted budget. Despite this result, the team leader remains cautiously optimistic that the goals can be attained – but doing so within the requested timeframe is becoming less likely. A fourth meeting with the architect will be held on 11/16/2023. Additionally, the D&B team leader noted that the elders’ target of “doing Discovery Land (DL) curriculum with excellence” (where excellence means uniquely dedicated spaces having a substantial attractive, welcoming and fun factor - a wow factor) is becoming a concern. Various concerns were expressed to the elders. After a significant discussion, the elders agreed that the objective for our Sunday AM ministry will focus on ‘doing DL well’ – where ‘well’ entails being done in a dedicated kids wing but not necessarily with all the initially envisioned DL-focused hard walls and the substantial ‘wow factor’. This change will enable our kids’ ministry team to become more comfortable with the DL curriculum and to implement various ideas to further develop and enhance it.

### **November 28, 2023 Regular Elder Meeting:**

#### **Updates**

- It is estimated that 20 new member applications will be received via the current cohort.
- Our open part-time administrative position has been filled.
- A "Together For Good" Informational meeting was recently held at FCC. About 60 attendees, from three churches, participated.
- The marriage ministry team plans to launch another marriage course in May after having recently completed a pilot.

#### **Topics:**

##### ***Operating Plan Matters:***

The elders were informed of two matters that will impact the current fiscal year (FY) operating budget.

1) The first topic dealt with health insurance costs. Our health insurance costs will be higher than planned given changes within our risk pool. FCC has accumulated a ‘rainy day fund’ for such matters and it will be tapped to address these increased costs. The elders were informed

that these changes will also impact the current FY budget and next year's budget too. The elders understood the matter and were deeply grateful for the diligent work that went into contemplating our options. The elders are comfortable with the situation and expressed support toward the proposed approach.

2) Secondly, the elders were approached with a job reclassification proposal. The intention of the proposal was to better align a current job and its pay with the work that is being done. The elders reviewed and subsequently approved the change.

**Next Generation Organizational Structure Proposal:** The elders reviewed a proposal to restructure our Next Generation organization. These changes are aligned with various best practices, address an upcoming retirement within the group and the replacement of a Next Gen staffer who has taken another position at FCC. The proposed organizational structure intends to ensure that excellent 'hand offs' occur as FCC's children advance through Faith Littles, to Faith Kids, and into our Youth Ministry (Refuge) while continuing support to AWANA. Specifically, the proposed roles provide overlap during these transitions and also create a new effort to uniquely focus on Grades 4 and 5 – the so-called 'tweenagers' of this generation. The plan is aligned with our budget and headcount objectives. The elders made various comments and suggestions. The proposed plan was supported and approved. The elders also took time to sincerely thank our Next Generation Executive Director for all of his effort, care, and progress he has demonstrated during his time with us.

**Design and Build (D&B) Team Update:** The D&B team leader updated the elders on the meeting #4 that was held with our architect (please refer to notes from the previous meeting for more detail). While progress was made toward the stated objectives and cost targets, a final design is not yet in hand. The team leader showed how the ideas from the architect were providing important insights that are being utilized to suggest design changes for the architect's next round of design. A meeting #5 with the architect is planned before Christmas. The D&B team remains hopeful that the objectives and cost targets can be obtained. However, given the D&B progress to date, the elders were informed that the initial plan to conduct a capital campaign in the first half of '24 was no longer prudent. It was suggested that the plan for the capital campaign be postponed to the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of next year. The primary ramification of this change in plan is that significant groundbreaking is probably delayed until Spring of 2025. (Please note – that before construction occurs, members will have the opportunity to vote on the project). Fortunately, the D&B team feels that our most pressing needs of increased seating in the auditorium and additional parking can be addressed in the first half of '24. Specifically, the architect has shown us how to use an innovative 'flip chair' design that can largely address our auditorium seating needs while parking additions can likely be completed after the winter. Both items could be funded from our balance sheet. The elders approved an initial purchase of 50 'flip chairs' based upon a previously member-approved capital budget authorization.

**Prayer:** The elders discussed various needs and situations related to our church and spent time in prayer.

**How you can pray us:**

- For God's grace, healing, and presence for the Prince family.
- For Dan Clancy and his health as he continues to lead our next generation ministry.
- For God's guidance and wisdom as the elders and staff fill important positions at in response to forthcoming retirements and planned additions.
- For God's wisdom and guidance as we begin implementing plans to accommodate and enhance the growth FCC is experiencing – specifically our efforts to design a facility that will meet our needs and budget target.
- For God's guidance and wisdom as we contemplate how to best shepherd, via a diaconate structure, 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 develop a leadership and discipleship initiative to meet the needs of FCC.
- In thankfulness to God for his continued and faithful provisions to FCC and his work in drawing many more to join with us.
- For God's wisdom and leading as we look to broaden our marriage ministry.
- For the unity of our body amidst the changes that our present growth is creating.
- For God's wisdom, guidance, and unity for the elder board as we contemplate and discern many matters of importance, including our continued discussions concerning roles, responsibilities, and authority within the local church and specifically how it applies to our context at FCC.
- For God's wisdom and guidance as FCC contemplates what church planting via a campus planting model means in practice.
- For God's grace and blessings upon our church and wisdom for our leaders.
- For our staff and volunteers as they diligently and faithfully serve the increasing number of people who call FCC home.

In Love and Peace,

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

(Gregg Bennett, John Blum, Bill Brinkman, Jim Duffy, Dan Fosterling, Jon Gross, Steve Holsteen, Eric Lent, Tim Porter, Tim Prince, Pat Stream, Tim Studt, Larry Szyman and Chris Willike)