Summer Congregational Meeting Minutes First Congregational United Church of Christ Grand Marais, MN June 28, 2020 Zoom Meeting due to Covid 19 pandemic

Jenny Delfs, moderator, welcomed everyone, and went over procedures according to our Bylaws and Constitution regarding congregational meetings; membership, quorum, voting, who would be assisting during the meeting, and how we would operate on this zoom call. She read our communication agreement, asked for questions, and then called the meeting to order at 10:41. 36 People in attendance.

Anne Swallow Gillis, Transitional Pastor, gave an opening prayer.

Jenny read our church's Mission Statement and Open and Affirming Statement.

Motion by Sandy Stover to approve the agenda, second by Gwen Mattice. Motion passed.

We were not able to approve the Winter Congregational Meeting Minutes, since these were not in the newsletter or emailed for prior review.

Moderator's report: Jenny briefly reviewed the last year, pointing out that the current Board of Directors (BOD) was elected at the summer meeting last year and were all new to this role, new to working together, elected in a time of turmoil and transition. It has been a busy year for the Board and congregation even before the added challenges of the Covid 19 pandemic.

She reflected on the role of the BOD as the governing body of the congregation – wholly dependent on support and input from the congregation, and responsible for oversight of the ministry and resources of the church.

The 2019-2020 BOD, collaborating with our transitional pastor, Anne Swallow Gillis, and this congregation, strived to work on several fronts:

- 1) To make our BOD business transparent
- 2) To make communication consistent and predictable
- 3) To grow together as a team
- 4) To continue the process of rebuilding, reconciling, and healing after a time of conflict
- 5) To encourage full congregational participation in the life of the church work groups, committees, discussion groups...
- 6) To clarify, draft, find and update policies and procedures
- 7) To manage the church finances, contracts, properties
- 8) To supervise and support our transitional pastor
- 9) To reconnect to the larger UCC church
- 10) To find new ways to be the church amid the Covid 19 pandemic

Jenny will report details about specific actions taken in each of these areas in the July church newsletter. While the Board has been more successful in some of these areas than others, she feels things are moving in a good direction. She expressed appreciation for support and feedback from the congregation, and reminded all that they are welcome to attend meetings, propose agenda items and join in the conversation.

Upcoming Board actions will include:

- 1. Orientation of new Board members
- 2. Setting new priorities for the coming year
- 3. Hiring a designated term pastor by the end of 2020 and, sadly, letting Pastor Anne return to retirement
- 4. Work on church directory (which will help welcome our new pastor and help him/her get to know us)
- 5. Ongoing work on all the previously identified fronts

Thanks were given to outgoing Board members Tom Yuhusey and Tom Kushner and the perspectives they brought to Board conversations. Jenny expressed gratitude for the support and hard work of Pastor Anne Swallow Gillis, whose experience and guidance, grounding us in mission and scripture, has been so important. Jenny also expressed thanks for the work of our office managers – Melissa Wickwire and now Carol Morgan.

Treasurer's Report: Kevin LeVoir gave a January-May financial report. General fund income \$53,072.59, General expenses \$58,384.76, net loss of \$5312.17. Even during the Covid 19 pandemic, we have had consistent giving, and thanks were expressed to all.

Transitional Pastor's Report: Pastor Anne highlighted the work of the Discovery Team, governance changes now accessible on the church website. She sees us becoming more accountable and compassionate, supporting the greater UCC, stretching ourselves. With the pandemic, we needed to make changes to keep everyone safe: church work moved on to zoom, and after only missing one Sunday we began posting Wednesday and Sunday services online. A Care Team was formed, we held an outdoor service of Prayer and Lament in response to the killing of George Floyd and systemic racism in our country. The Discovery Team is now thinking of new ways that we might meet to explore expectations we have of our next pastor, and the expectations they might have of us. Pastor Anne feels we are resilient and becoming increasingly nimble, and she has been glad to be here serving as our Pastor.

Constitutional Amendment:

Jenny introduced the rationale for the amendment change and the process used to write the new Grievance Policy.

 Proposed: Replace Constitution Section IV Membership, #4 with:

"All conflict and grievance in this congregation will be managed in accordance with the Board of Director's Grievance Policy."

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Election of members to the Board of Directors: The nominating committee of Jenny Delfs, Chris Silence, Pastor Ann Swallow Gillis, and John Bottger put forth a slate of Kristen Deruda Wharton, Mitch Travis, Ann Russ and Lesaann Foris.

Jenny asked if there were any other nominations. Hearing none, Nancy Strayer motioned to elect the entire slate as presented by the nominating committee. Sandy Stover seconded. The motion passed with a show of hands.

Maple Hill Cemetery Board (MHCB): Pastor Anne shared some of the known history of our church's connection with the Maple Hill Cemetery. Howard Hedstrom then joined the zoom meeting and shared additional history and the wish of the MHCB to form a stand alone non-profit. (The Maple Hill Church is a separate nonprofit.) Phil Kruse is acting treasurer. Howard and Heidi DooKirk are in the process of pulling records together and putting them online. Tyson Smith, attorney, is willing to do pro bono work to set up the nonprofit. Before this occurs, the MHCB would like to know that our church approves and wishes to turn over property (which can only be used as a cemetery) and responsibility for overseeing the cemetery. The cemetery now serves people of all faiths, and members of our church would still be welcome to help or serve on the MHCB. This was an informational session, and no action was taken. Congregational approval would be required to transfer land ownership. Pastor Anne will write a summary of this discussion for the July church newsletter.

Pastor Anne offered a closing prayer.

Kevin LeVoir motioned to adjourn the meeting. Lesaann Foris seconded. Meeting adjourned at 11:54.