

Semi – Annual Business Meeting
Sunday, Nov 12, 2023 • 11:20 AM (in the sanctuary)

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Count of voting members present and on Zoom
3. Opening Prayer and Opening Remarks
4. Approval of the March 12, 2023 Business Meeting minutes
5. Approval of the March 26, 2023 Special Meeting minutes
6. Associational Vote
7. Discussion/Approval of the budget for 2024 (Treasurer)
8. Nominating Committee Report and approval
9. Long Range Planning Committee
10. Anything new from the floor?
11. Remarks and Closing Prayer
12. Adjournment

Semi-Annual Business Meeting Minutes
Sunday, March 12, 2023

Call to Order - Moderator Terry Buchmann

Count of voting members present (at FCC and on Zoom) 35 in person, 6 on Zoom

Opening Prayer - Terry and a word from Pastor Kevin Clark

Approval of minutes from the November 13, 2022 Business meeting

Gary Himebauch moved and Dave Beilfuss seconded to approve the minutes. Motion carried.

Approval of Reports:

Pastoral report - Kevin Clark

Dave Beilfuss moved and Cindy Wendlandt seconded to approve. Motion carried.

Moderator report from 2022 - Prakash Mathew

Michael Zvara moved and Chris W. seconded to approve. Motion carried.

Audit committee report- There is not a written Audit report in the packet, Chris Wendlandt March 7, 2023 went over income and expenditures.

Jean Brocker moved and Sue Roberts seconded to approve. Motion carried.

Treasurer report- Jean Brocker

Claire Albrecht moved and Cindy Wendlandt seconded to approve. Motion carried.

Ministry Teams reports.

Rae-Ellen Preuss moved and Dave Beilfuss seconded to approve all reports.
Motion carried.

Old Business:

Send Fair Share donation to NACCC for 2022 association services.

Terry read a message from the Moderator, approved by the Council. Janine Coley moved and Rae-Ellen Preuss seconded to send our Fair Share to the NACCC. Michael Zvara and Tim Taggart moved to amend the motion to send them half of the amount. Diane mentioned that we have a standing obligation to send our entire Fair Share since this amendment doesn't give people enough time to send more. Vote on the amendment. 14 aye. 19 opposed. Motion failed.

Cindy Wendlandt asked if those who voted no could not send theirs. Pastor Kevin Clark recommended a new amendment to only send the money for those members who wished to support the Fair Share. Cindy Wendlandt moved and Larry Litwin seconded to amend the original motion that those who feel strongly do not have to send their money to the NACCC

toward the Fair Share. Pastor Kevin mentioned that we used to give individually and that 4 or 5 years ago, we changed to give the Fair Share out of the operating budget. Janine Coley mentioned that she feels that we are opening a door to withhold any funds we don't agree with, such as missions as an example. Rae-Ellen echoed Janine's sentiments that this opens up a precedent that people can just not support giving to certain ministries.

Cindy Wendlandt said that we should not send money to support a group that supports "Queer Jesus." Joanne Himebauch reminded everyone that although the speaker apparently wrote a book on that topic, she did NOT speak about Queer Jesus at last year's NA meeting. The speakers spoke on the love of God, love of self, and love of nature. Kevin reminded us that we decided in November to discuss this. Jean mentioned that she would like to send all the line item amount. Beth reminded us that we got a grant from the NA to help us improve our equipment in the sanctuary and a new laptop for Good News Club. Prakash mentioned that that equipment was purchased before the June NA meeting. 14 ayes for amendment. 18 nays. Motion failed.

Vote on original motion. Claire Albrecht wanted to know why we voted 5 years ago to change the Fair Share donation to make this a line item budget. Pastor Kevin responded that we felt that we should support the NA, but not everyone always gave their Fair Share individually, so we used the budget to fill in the gap. Chris Wendlandt asked what the Fair Share is. Diane Williams responded that it is \$15 per voting member to help the operating budget of the NA. If we were Methodist or another church, the amount would be higher. (Note - \$15 per voting member is incorrect. We contribute at the \$13 level. However, this was not corrected at the meeting.)

Janine mentioned that the NA is a real resource for our church and that this should not just be about what happened at the Wichita convention in June 2022. The NA supports the mission of Charles Sagay, as well as other things. Moderator Terry Buchmann mentioned that the NA did not control the speakers that spoke at the Wichita NA convention. The NA does not have any creeds or statements of faith. Pastor Kevin responded that the NACCC does have control over the annual meeting. The speakers and agendas of the meeting are approved by the NA.

Cindy Wendlandt asked if there are other organizations or associations that offer resources that our church could use. Kevin responded that this is important info. But Diane Williams called for a point of order. The discussion of other associations should be discussed at another meeting. Prakash Mathew thinks that the NACCC has no standards. He thinks that similar situations will happen with the NA in future years.

Moderator Terry Buchmann mentioned that we will have Town Hall meetings before the November meeting so that this will not happen again. Cindy Luker asked what services we got in 2022. Joanne Himebauch responded that we didn't ask for services in 2022, because we don't always require the NA's services every year. But we will need their services again some day. Rae-Ellen Preuss mentioned that she has a 4-page list of what the NA has done for us.

Again, Joanne Himebauch reiterated that the speakers at the NA did not speak about the controversial topics that some members believe that they did. They spoke on the Love of God, the Love of Nature, and the Love of Self. She mentioned that we should be focusing on what they spoke about at the conference and not what they've written in the past. Joanne added that the Council discussed Karen Mathew's concerns at the April 2022 Council meeting. Pastor Kevin responded to Joanne's comments by saying that he feels that the speakers should be judged by their past works. He gave an example of White Supremacists and said that we wouldn't want them speaking to us, even if they didn't talk about White Supremacy.

Sue Roberts asked if we could "come and go as we wish" within the NA. Stay in the NA some years, but drop out other years. Diane Williams responded that we need to fail to send delegates and Fair Share for 2 years. Chris Wendlandt responded that he knew nothing about the NACCC until he began digging, and he didn't like what he saw. Original Motion called. 15 yay. 20 nay. Motion failed. We will not be sending Fair Share to the NACCC.

Gary Himebauch thanked Moderator Terry Buchmann for the wonderful job she did today leading a very difficult meeting.

Kathy Clark asked if this funding can be decided prospectively rather than retroactively? It seems hard to deny the contribution after it has occurred.

Zach Buchmann hopes that we can research other organizations in the near future.

Point of reference - although this next section isn't part of the minutes of the meeting, I felt that the congregation should understand where and when this whole matter started, so I'm including it in the minutes. (Joanne Himebauch)

Karen Mathew sent a letter to the Council in April 2022. She was upset that one of the speakers wrote a book called *Outside the Lines: How Embracing Queerness will Transform Your Faith*, that another speaker was a Sikh, not a Christian, and the 3rd speaker's most recent book was lacking in sources, and although some reviewers loved it, others were critical of it.

This is how the Council responded (from the April 2022 Council minutes): The Council "felt that boycotting the meeting will not accomplish anything. One would have more impact by attending the meeting and expressing concerns. The theme of the talks is The Greatest of These is Love. These topics are not objectionable. Diane Williams suggested that we need to allow people to walk their own faith walks, and Pastor Randy added that the Congregational church is not a Creedal church, and there are no doctrinal tests. We need to allow members of our congregation to make their own choices whether they will attend or not. Perhaps Karen Mathew should send a letter of concern to the Executive Secretary. Diane will add another article to the newsletter asking for delegates."

New Business:

Select one delegate to attend WCA (May) and NACCC (June) in Milwaukee - Diane mentioned that the Council could send a delegate. Larry asked what would happen if we don't approve a delegate. Kevin responded that anyone could still attend, but that our congregation wouldn't have a voice at the conference. No one immediately volunteered.

Sue asked if not sending funds in 2022 and not sending a delegate in 2023 equals 2 years of inaction in the NA. The response was that no, that does not qualify as 2 years.

The Council will discuss sending delegates at the April meeting.

Questions or concerns from the Congregation?

Rae-Ellen and Chris W. spoke about building concerns.

They listed some major concerns -

- 2 fire code violations - audiovisual desk. We need permanent sockets, not power strips. We need a master electrician to pull the permit.
- Sanctuary door near the choir loft doesn't always latch. When the climate is drier, the door doesn't latch. It is a custom-made door in the shape of a trapezoid. Larry asked if we could put in a dead-bolt. Yes, it might be a possibility. But the shape of the door might prevent it.
- Light fixture problems, toilet downstairs needs attention
- Big leaking problem. Ground level by the back door down the stairs into Fellowship Hall. Foundation leak in TriSkill room on the kitchen side. The roof is the big problem. The narrow hallway between the kitchen and the Koeffler Hall has an open vent around the pipe where water comes in. Perhaps this is where the squirrels are coming in, that nest in the furnace room.
- Several of the windows in the Sanctuary have cracks in them. 5 windows that Pastor Kevin can count. These will all have to be custom-made.

Rae-Ellen has formed a building and grounds team to help with these situations. She requested others should feel free to join the team.

Long-range planning will add these things to their list of things to discuss at their next meeting.

Rae-Ellen Preuss moved and Larry Litwin seconded to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Joanne Himebauch
Council Secretary

Council Minutes Emergency meeting 3-26-23
Master Electrician Proposal to Fix Fire Hazards

Present: Moderator Terry Buchmann, Treasurer Jean Brockers, Secretary Joanne Himebauch, Janine Coley, Gary Himebauch, Rae-Ellen Preuss, Sue Roberts, Reyna Taggart
Absent: Mike Zvara, Pastor Kevin Clark

Terry Buchmann called the meeting at 9:15 am.

On Mar 21, 2023, at 9:10 PM, ANTHONY MANVILLA <RYGAR1313@msn.com> wrote:

Submitted to: First Congregational Church, 231 Roberts Drive, Mukwonago, WI 53149

1. Wire three quad boxes under the counter on two 20-amp circuits. Pipe to subpanel in furnace room - \$1,100.00
2. Pipe one quad box on side of altar base on existing circuit - \$120.00
3. Add wire mold box and two wire mold strip outlets on two new circuits in office - \$750.00
4. Add one outlet for TV. Add extension box for two switches - \$130.00
5. One permit - \$150.00

Total per proposal - \$2,250.00 I would be able to start the work in early April.

Thank you,
Tony Manvilla

Above is the proposal from Tony Manvilla to repair our Fire Hazard violations.

Rae-Ellen made comments about the proposal. We were very surprised with how low the offer was. Tony is basically offering his time for free. Tony missed adding an extra box for the classroom TV, but he is offering that for free.

Terry and Rae-Ellen proposed offering him \$500 as a gift, added on to this proposal since he is doing this for free.

Jean thinks we should take this from Church Maintenance & Repairs. We have about \$7,000 in the budget for it. We do have \$39,000 in Capital Improvement.

Gary asked if he was a master electrician. He is. Tony will pull the permit, too.

Janine moved and Rae-Ellen seconded to approve to go ahead with the electrical work and add a bonus of \$550 for a total cost of from \$2,800 up to \$3,000 in case of overage. Motion carried. Rae-Ellen will get in touch with him right away to get this started.

Respectfully submitted,

Joanne Himebauch

Council Secretary

November 12, 2023 Business Meeting Vote(s)

VOTE #1 The council recommends to hold a vote:

1. To stay in the NACCC (National Association of Congregational Christian Churches) and make personal Fair Share contributions (no longer a budget line item)
2. To Leave the NACCC

VOTE #2 After results are tallied, if the vote is to leave the NACCC, then we would vote to choose between:

1. UCC (United Church of Christ)
2. CCCC (Conservative Congregational Christian Conference)
3. Non-Affiliation

*NOTE: We are not including the WCA (Wisconsin Congregational Association) in the vote as it is only a state association and we are still members of it and can remain members.

VOTE #3 Hold a run-off vote against the top two selections from vote #2.

- 1.
- 2.

	2023 Budget	2024 Budget
Income		
Total projected income from pledges + rents	\$ 165,243.00	\$ 188,698.00
Less 20% Percent for Benevolence and Capital Improvement	\$ 32,222.38	\$ 37,739.60
Available income	\$ 133,020.62	\$ 150,958.40
Expense		
Basic Costs		
Church Maintenance and Repairs	\$ 7,000.00	\$ 7,000.00
Church Utilities	\$ 15,162.00	\$ 15,162.00
Delegate to National Conference	\$ 500.00	\$ -
Delegate to State Conference	\$ 150.00	\$ 150.00
Fair Share to NACCC	\$ 871.00	\$ -
Furnishings	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00
Grounds Maintenance	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00
Insurance, Church & Parsonage	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,350.00
Kitchen Supplies	\$ 300.00	\$ 300.00
Office Expense/Supplies	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00
Parsonage Repairs & Maintenance	\$ 700.00	\$ 700.00
Parsonage Utilities	\$ 3,574.00	\$ 4,000.00
Worship Supplies	\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00
Total Basic Costs	\$ 40,507.00	\$ 39,912.00
Ministry Costs		
A/V	\$ 300.00	\$ 300.00
Adult Education	\$ 600.00	\$ 1,000.00
Crafty Christians (new)		\$ 100.00
Easy Worship	\$ 100.00	\$ 300.00
Evangelism	\$ 900.00	\$ 975.00
Fellowship	\$ 400.00	\$ 200.00
Flowers	\$ 200.00	\$ 150.00
Music	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00
New Ministries	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
Neighborhood Outreach	\$ 320.00	\$ 320.00
Nursery	\$ 50.00	\$ 50.00
Pulpit Fulfillment (remove)	\$ 150.00	\$ -
Senior Worship	\$ 150.00	\$ 100.00
Stewardship	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
Visitation	\$ 150.00	\$ -
Welcome/Hospitality	\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00
Youth Sunday School	\$ 400.00	\$ 400.00
Total Ministry Costs	\$ 6,570.00	\$ 6,745.00

Staff Costs		
Choir Director Wage	\$ 3,508.00	\$ 3,613.24
Organist Wage	\$ 8,716.00	\$ 8,977.48
Custodian Wage	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00
Employee Gifts	\$ 450.00	\$ 450.00
Nursery Staff + Helper	\$ 2,228.00	\$ 2,228.00
Office Manager Wage	\$ 13,573.00	\$ 13,980.19
Payroll Expenses/Medicare/FICA	\$ 2,330.00	\$ 2,430.00
Total Wages	\$ 33,805.00	\$ 34,678.91
Minister's Compensation Package		
Meeting Expenses	\$ 300.00	\$ 300.00
Automobile Expenses	\$ 600.00	\$ 600.00
Medical Expenses	\$ 6,500.00	\$ 6,500.00
Salary/Housing Allowance	\$ 55,812.00	\$ 57,486.36
Ministerial Professional Expense	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00
Ministers Expense - Education/Books	\$ 300.00	\$ 300.00
Ministry Expense	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00
Total Minister's Compensation Package	\$ 66,212.00	\$ 67,886.36
Total Staff Costs	\$ 100,017.00	\$ 102,565.27
Total Operating Expense	\$ 147,094.00	\$ 149,222.27
Surplus/Deficit	\$ (14,073.38)	\$ 1,736.13

Amount deducted for Ben & CI @	20.0%	\$37,739.60
Benevolence	10%	18,869.80
Friends in Need (requested)		1,000.00
Food For Families (requested)		0.00
Missions (gets remainder)		17,869.80
Capital Improvement	10.0%	\$18,869.80
Note:		
Transfers are made monthly based on previous month's income		

Nominating Committee Report 2023

Here is the slate of new FCC officers to elect. The positions are for two years, except Moderator and Moderator-Elect, which are one-year positions. The names in bold are the new ones we are electing. The non-bold names are just for your information. (Report submitted by Joanne Himebauch, Janine Coley, and Linda Garasimowicz)

Moderator: **Terry Buchmann**

Moderator-Elect: **Michael Zvara**

Treasurer: **Jean Brocker**

Secretary: Joanne Himebauch

Directors:

Budget & Finance: Jamie Pennington (filling year 2 of Gary Himebauch's term)

Property & Grounds: Rae-Ellen Preuss

Worship: **Karla Pennington**

Cong. Care: **Janine Coley**

Missions: Reyna Taggart

Christian Ed: **Cindy Luker**

The next group of committees serve for 3 years.

Nominating Committee: Janine Coley (1 year left)

Linda Garasimowicz (2 years left)

Audit Committee: Harlan Petersen (1 year left)

Bob Brandemuehl (2 years left)

Gary Himebauch (3 years left)

Memorial Committee:

Beth Petersen (1 year left)

Ruth Rappold (2 years left)

Janine Coley (3 years left)

The Long-Range Planning (LRP) Team Current members are:

Gary Himebauch	Greg Garasimowicz
Rae Ellen Preuss	Beth Petersen
Jean Brocker	Harlan Petersen
Chris Wendlandt	Terry Buchmann (moderator)

Facility Needs

The LRP's recommended priorities for 2024 are as follows.

- Replace one of the four furnaces in 2024 if a furnace fails at an estimated total cost of \$8,000. Council will need to approve this. These furnaces are a backup to the boilers and are 20 years old. We don't expect to spend significant money on the boilers in 2024, since one of the boilers has relatively little service time. This was a 2023 project that did not have to be done.
- Pave the parsonage driveway with asphalt/concrete in 2024. Council will need to re-approve this. Council had previously approved a concrete replacement, but the original contract and price is no longer valid. Estimate needed – we used \$13,000 for now. This was a 2023 project not completed.
- Replace the door on the southwest corner of the sanctuary in 2024. The door is old and does not latch easily. Estimate needed - we used \$1,000 for now. This was a 2023 project not completed.

2023 Completed Projects

- Church Air Conditioner Replaced – *This was an unplanned project – cost \$6,690*
- Parsonage Air Conditioner Repaired – *This was an unplanned project – cost \$1,794*
- Electrical work in Sanctuary to fix code violations – *This was unplanned – cost \$2,800*
- Furnishings projects for 2023:
 - Painting: Lounge, Koeffler Hall, lower hall – Total cost \$6,000, \$6600 was budgeted
 - New blinds for Koeffler Hall – Total Cost \$1330, \$2,000 was budgeted
 - New refrigerator for the parsonage - \$845.00 unplanned project
 - New lighting for small dining room lower level - \$477.96 from furnishings budget

At the time of this printing the Capital Improvement fund balance was \$39,939.

Percent of Giving Designated for Capital Improvement

- In 2024 10% of giving is designated for capital improvement \$18,869 est. When combined with Maxwell Street days income \$5,000 we project annual additions of \$23,869 to capital improvement. We project annual facility needs for 2025-2033 of \$17,000 (this is the same figure as was used in the 2024-2032 LRP projection) this does not include any funds for an education wing roof replacement, which is likely in the next ten years.

Additional Recommendations

Sabbatical Fund

The FCC sabbatical fund balance is currently \$25,280. Note that this does not include funds in the sabbatical grant account, since any excess in this account must be returned.

If the council approves allowing Pastor to take the Holy Land Trip, we expect to spend up to \$5,000 from the FCC sabbatical account to support that trip. See the separate recommendation from the Sabbatical Squad for details.

LRP recommends investing these funds in a money market account or cd's since rates are up. Funding for the next sabbatical (2027) can be worked out after any changes to the sabbatical terms in the pastor's contract.

Update - \$20,00 was invested in 2 CD's as recommended by the LRP committee.

Respectfully submitted

Greg Garasimowicz, for the Long-Range Planning Team