



August 3, 2022 Special Session Meeting Highlights

The following are the highlights from the special August 3, 2022 Session meeting:

- As of the end of June 2022, the financials show that we have begun to close the gap on actual pledge contributions vs. budget pledges year-to-date which is encouraging. Year-to-date General Fund revenues are about \$79,000 below year-to-date budgeted general fund revenues while year-to-date expenditures are about \$123,000 below year-to-date budgeted expenditures due in large part to unfilled staff positions. This results in a year-to-date surplus of about \$44,000.
- Session members shared their feelings about last Wednesday's Session meeting. A majority of the comments expressed concern about Pastor Taylor and what we could do to better affirm and support who he is and work towards addressing (and educating) the congregation that FPCA accepts and embraces the LGBTQ+ community; however, we need to do better about making FPCA a safe place for our LGBTQ+ members and youth to be who they are.
- There was also a discussion about what we have heard from members since Pastor Jan resigned. Some members are focused on how Pastor Jan has been mistreated and wondered if there was any way to gauge how many members participated in this mistreatment (which is not an OK way to act towards our pastoral staff or anyone else).
- The format for Aug 14, 2022 Town Hall between English services was discussed. Session also decided to provide members with the opportunity to submit questions both on notecards after the August 7, 2022 worship services and via email to session@fpcallentown.org. Session will attempt to answer all questions. The top four questions and responses will be highlighted in the Town Hall.
- The format for the August 28, 2022 good-bye celebration for Pastor Jan was discussed by the group planning this event (Denise Jennings, Anne Ferrera, and Dot Ouellette).
- Updates from Presbytery on pastoral leadership during the remainder of this transitional period.
 - With Jan having done most of the hard transitional work and the Lombard process underway COM is willing to allow us to have a gap or bridge head pastor (might be full-time or part-time):
 - When Pastor Stephen retires at the end of January 2023 one option to cover pastoral care responsibilities is to find a part-time interim pastor (smaller congregation than we used to have) for pastoral care or perhaps share a pastoral care pastor with another church. This allows the new head pastor to have a voice in determining the number of full-time pastors FPCA needs going forward depending on what our membership level is at that point in time.
- Session members will reach out to members who have participated in the Lombard process, but not the healing session to encourage them to participate in the problem-solving sessions.
- In recognition of the way some FPCA members have chosen to treat Pastor Jan, she has asked Session to consider continuing her healthcare to the end of 2022 and a stipend to cover coaching and therapy to help her engage in processing her experience at FPCA. Our Congregation has an obligation to care for all of our pastors, whether at the beginning or end of their ministry. This obligation of care is paramount when a pastor has been the subject of emotional and verbal abuse which has taken a toll on her personally and on her family. Session passed (with the understanding that FPCA may be required to pay the Board of Pensions dues and taxes to provide Pastor Jan with \$4,488 to cover health insurance costs for her during the balance of 2022 and \$2,475 for counseling and coaching.
- On both August 28, 2022 and September 11, 2022, we will hold one service at 10:00 AM. This will allow for a good-bye celebration for Pastor Jan on August 28 and an all-church Homecoming Picnic on September 11, 2022.
- A three Session member search team (Chip Layfield, Trish Brown, and Kathy Matthews) was elected to search for our next gap lead pastor. This could be either a part-time or a full-time gap head pastor.