

FIRST PRESS

The Newsletter of First Presbyterian Church of Concord, California

May 2022



Why have a Leadership Retreat?

It is time for a Retreat when your team is at a crossroads. Things have changed and it is necessary to focus on what makes us good and what obstacles we might face.

Look at our people. They work hard and do their best - but maybe something else might be possible, something all can reach for together.

So the question becomes: How to re-invigorate our vision and commitment to fulfill our full potential?

What is needed is time to step back . . . together . . . to reconnect with core values. Imagine working with a highly productive team, driven by a shared vision and a deep sense of cohesion. Envision a congregation that brings out the best in people, while enhancing our commitment to Christ.

Imagine the power of highly motivated people making their contributions energized, leaving each church member satisfied that they are all on the right track and we are the best we can be.

That's why a Retreat is important. So let's take a look ours . . .

2022 FPCC LEADERSHIP RETREAT MAY 13-14

The Leadership Retreat included the Elders, Deacons, and permanent staff of the church. Church members were also invited to attend the Saturday morning portion and join for lunch.

The Friday Session

Communications Game

The Friday evening program began with a communications game called “Telestrations”, a game that demonstrated how communications can be interpreted in different ways by people as they are passed around in a group. The exercise was followed by a lesson in active listening.

Clarity and Understanding of the Letter to Congregation Regarding Interim Leadership

The letter sent to the congregation regarding the church was carefully examined and tested for its clarity and understanding, and questions were answered.

All in the Same Boat

Judith read from the book, “All in the Same Boat”, where a dog, cat, pig, and goat get into a rowboat together and began to row. They are faced with several scenarios that could spell disaster. For instance, If they can’t agree on a direction to go, they can’t move at all. Splashing each other would get them uncomfortably wet. Rocking the boat might make some of them sick. Only by operating as a team can they fix a leak, share an umbrella, ride the waves safely, and rescue colleagues who fall in the water. When faced with danger of any kind, they must work together and vow never to give up because they are “all in the same boat”.

Feedback from the Teams: Crises that result from not working together include:

- Fear and concern
- Confusion, misinformation, and gossip
- Competing agendas
- Loss of frustrated people
- Heading the wrong direction
- Inability to save the boat (church)
- Disappointment and frustration
- Lack of direction
- Ineffective communication
- Wasted energy
- Unclear roles and responsibilities
- Overload
- Disruption
- Ineffective leadership and leadership processes
- Inability to deal with external change
- Inability to address loss of membership (aging)
- Inability to deal with crises (Covid, etc.)

Teams Formed to Identify and Solve Problems

Teams were formed based on each person's self-identified management tendencies in approaching problems, whether they are 1) risk takers or 2) cautious and whether they are 3) technical or 4) people persons.

The groups were then challenged to determine how potential crises in the church are similar to the possible crises in the boat story, and how the issues can be dealt with in the church.

Examples of "Boat Problems" comparable to Church problems

Not moving because can't agree on where to go – the result of not working together

Splashing or rocking the boat – creates discord that makes people uncomfortable or sick

Falling into the water or abandoning the boat – people don't contribute to the effort, give up, don't contribute support, don't participate, or leave the church

Leak in the boat (fix it before the boat sinks) – Decrease in membership, including loss of leaders (people leave the church or pass away)

Going over a waterfall or getting lost – people working at cross purposes, disagreement with the direction church is heading, which results in wasted resources, failure to succeed, confusion, and possibly the eventual closure of the church.

The Saturday Session

Identification of highest priority problems that FPCC needs to focus on:

Communications (Rebecca, Marilyn, Judith, Andrew)

- Internal
- External
- Website improvement
- Communications to/from correct people (Roles)
- Timely feedback

Organizational Focus (David D, Nancy, Frank, Ann, Terry)

- God's will
- Vision Steadfastness
- Degree of Effort/Intensity
- Consistency
- On the needs of others and not just ourselves

Accountability/Checks and Balances (DeVonn, Darryl, Harold)

Leadership Development (Members to be determined)

Evaluation of the Retreat

The Retreat was deemed an enormous success and a valuable learning experience. The teams will be asked to continue deliberating on the issues identified and report back their findings.

*David Dowell
Communications
Team Leader*

"The important thing to remember is that I'm probably going to forget." - Unknown



Music and Worship Update

With summer around the corner, First Press is adapting beautifully to all the changes we are experiencing after Pastor Johanna moved back East. We are now rotating four preachers in worship: Darryl McCollum, Lisa Justice, DeVonn Powers, and Rebecca Chase. Each leader brings their own unique interpretation to the scripture, keeping things fresh every week!

We welcome Jason Stanczak to the sound booth, mixing audio in the house and stream once or twice a month! He's doing an excellent job. We also welcome Amit to the team, who will be volunteering to monitor video and run Proclaim slides as we move forward! Thanks so much to both of them for their wonderful talents and dedication to FPCC!

Let's also take a moment to thank David Stearns for his countless volunteer hours to run the video cameras and worship slides for several years.

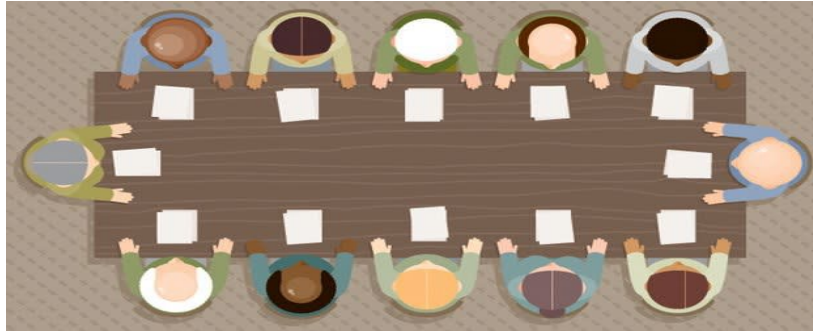
The choir will be closing off their spring season with one more joyous anthem this coming Sunday! My goal in the upcoming months is to focus on recruiting new voices to glorify God. As always, if you are interested in singing in the choir come and talk to me! There will be a more informal summer choir beginning in July, which is a wonderful way to get involved. Commitment is minimal (Sundays only) and music is simple but effective and fun!

Grateful Heart is continuing to shine in worship, keeping things lively, fresh, and modern every week! Please also contact me if you are interested in playing or singing in our praise band!

Pentecost is approaching soon, on June 5! Don't forget to wear your flame-colored outfits as we celebrate the Holy Spirit!

In Christ,
Andrew

News from the FPCC Session . . .



Moderator's Report – Darryl McCollum

Leadership Retreat Darryl led a review of the Leadership Retreat. The theme was “Communications.” It was Session’s overall opinion that the Retreat went very well. It was attended by about 30 people and was held at the church. David Dowell is submitting a separate article for the First Press detailing the retreat. It will be published before the end of May.

U.S Flag Placement The timing and placement of the US Flag in the Sanctuary was reviewed. A formal policy will be written up and presented at the next Session meeting.

Organizational Structure The interim organizational structure, as described in the recent letter to the congregation, was discussed. It was decided to have a congregational gathering in the Sanctuary following the Sunday Service on June 12 to provide more details and to allow members to ask questions. A microphone will be used so everyone can hear the questions and responses. In addition, a special-purpose email address has been established as leadership@fpccconcord.org, which will allow questions, concerns, and suggestions to be directed to all members of the pastoral staff.

Deacon Report – Rebecca Chase reminded everyone that the parish luncheon will be held on Sunday, May 22. A signup sheet has been available during the Sunday coffee time.

Connections Report – Jim Whitfield reported

- The current focus of his team is to get more volunteers to serve as greeters and helpers. The pastoral staff volunteered to assist with greeting.
- The coffee-serving teams have been assigned for the Sunday coffee servings.
- The church barbecue has been scheduled for August 14 in Courtyard. (CDRJ also invited).
- Volunteers from groups using kitchen are needed for kitchen cleanup on 4th Monday of each month.
- Camp Agape (vacation bible school) is scheduled for June 28-30.

Finance Committee – David Stearns reported the following:

- The “LiveStream Consultant” that we had planned to contract will not be utilized after all. This would have cost \$6,000.
- The marketing consultant that was contracted will continue to be utilized.
- It was noted that no one has been designated to chair Leadership Development, which means that the person responsible for signing expense approvals for the Leadership Retreat is an issue. It was agreed that Ron Potts will be asked to be the designated person for the purposes of approving such expenses at this time.
- The financial reports show that revenue is down and expenses such as utilities are going up and other major expenses are going up.
- The Carillon system, which plays music at certain times of the day, has not worked for about 6 months. The speaker drivers need to be replaced at an estimated cost of about \$3,000. The decision of what to do is being referred back to the Worship and Music committee.
- A motion was made and passed to revise the 2022 budget and present the proposed revision at the June Session meeting.

Solar Report – Jim Whitfield reported that the solar system is nearing completion and is awaiting inspections by City and PG&E, which may take 2 or 3 months

Personnel – Jon Myers, working with Finance, is revising the 2022 personnel budget in connection with the budget revision mentioned above.

Communications and Outreach – David Dowell reported that recent meetings of the Communications Team have focused on issues relating to the Sunday Service improvements, the upcoming Leadership Retreat, and ways to reach out to the public through various media tools. He mentioned that Pastor Johanna has been the contact person for the recently hired marketing consultant, and that a new contact person needs to be identified. He also raised the issue of when we might resume passing the offering plate at the Sunday service. He thinks that this would improve receiving contact cards from visitors and others. Consideration is being given to having handouts and/or gifts for visitors. Rebecca is managing most of the visitor follow-up currently.

Missions (Great Commission) Team – (From the Minutes)

FPCC will participate in the final “Winter Nights” program on June 4 and 5 at St. Andrews Church in Pleasant Hill.

- A drive is underway at FPCC to collect small gifts for the Royal Family Camp in Occidental, CA from 6/12 to 6/17. This camp is for foster children. Volunteers are also being sought to spend time at the camp working with the youth.

Long Range Planning Report – Jim Whitfield reported that he, Jon Myers, David Stearns and Wayne Matzen have been serving on a team to help develop a long-range plan for the church and the church facilities. A study was done and a report from a consulting firm has been received was summarized by Jim. Some additional issues were raised by Session and will be passed along to the firm to be considered. Jim will address the issues with the consultants and report back later.

Programs Committee – (From the Minutes) Andrew is reviewing the order of worship with his team and will be implementing changes in the near future.

- An effort is being made to reach out to the community to enlist more choir members.
- A generous donation has been received for Worship and Music and will be used to buy newer hymnals for the pews.
- Jason Stanczak had agreed to run the sound system as a backup person. A new attendee, Amit Poudel, has volunteered to back up David Stearns in running the slides when David is not available.

Nominating Committee – Darryl McCollum reported that the Committee will resume its effort to find and nominate individuals for the 2 vacant Session positions and the vacant Deacon positions.



Solar Project Update

As many of you know, FPCC initiated a project to add solar panels to the roofs of the Fellowship Hall and preschool. Your team of David Stearns, Jon Myers, Frank Fribley and Jim Whitfield have been meeting almost weekly with the contractor. The good news is the installation is complete!! Now starts the inspection stage, and we are through the easy part – our last hurdle is PG&E inspection and authorization to operate. We anticipate that the system will pass, and we can begin generating our own power by July 1. Our annual savings should be almost \$20,000 per year. If you have questions, please see one of us.



**Clunkers4Charity.org
& Cars2ndChance.org**

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Donate a Vehicle Running or Not

Visit Online or Call Today!

FPCC has supported the donation process available to us through *Cars2ndChance.org* and *Clunkers4Charity.org*. This is one other way for our congregation to raise funds. If you need additional information, please contact Clayton Worsdell.

Clayton Valley Concord Sunrise Rotary Charitable Fund 501-C3



JUNE

Carol Worsdell	1	Diane Nickerson	5	Beverly McHale	16
Debbie Hansen	23	Susan Curry	25	Ashley McCollum	26

JULY

Jeremy Martin	6	Marilyn Wollenweber	6	Judith Snider	8
Kristin Harvey	9	Lorena Peer	9	Randy Dennis	17
Mary Alice Freeman	18	Clayton Worsdell	21	Anna Belle Horgan	22
Wally Sunga	28				

AUGUST

Jim Morrison	1	Robin Stearns	2	June Gibbon	4
Lily Medina	4	Bertha Roush	6	Ann Johnson	14
Rich Nunely	14	Joey Rosete	14	Rose Marie Hansen	19
Margaret Bachman	25	Bill Gilmore	25	Carolyn Thornton	30

FPCC Staff

Darryl McCollum, CLP	Ministry Partner
Rebecca Chase, CLP	Ministry Partner
DeVonn Powers, CLP	Ministry Partner
Lisa Justice, Student Pastor	Ministry Partner
Andrew Cardiasmenos	Director, Music & Worship
Robin Stearns	Preschool Director
Lisa Gonzalez	Financial and Human Resources Specialist
Harold Lund	Custodian & Night Watchman
Allen Nickerson	Editor, First Press and <i>Express</i>



Editor's Note: First Press is a quarterly publication of the First Presbyterian Church of Concord, California, printing in Spring, Summer, Autumn, and Winter. Members of the Congregation, and others may submit articles for publication no later than the month prior to a publication date. FPCC reserves the right to review all

articles for content and value prior to publication.