



# FIRST PRESS EXPRESS

The newsletter of First Presbyterian Church of Concord, California

July 2022

## Q&A with your Ministry Partners



### **Q. Who's in charge of our church?**

**A.** We all know that Jesus is the head of the Church, but pastors represent Jesus. They provide spiritual guidance and also moderate the Session, implement the church's vision, provide pastoral care, administer the Sacraments of the Church, and faithfully preach the Word of God.

Under our current arrangement, the ministry team at FPCC is jointly meeting those responsibilities while having accountability to one another and to the Session. The Session, in turn, is accountable to the congregation. Its members (Elders) are elected to their positions by the congregation for three-year

terms. The three ministry partners who are Commissioned Lay Pastors (CLPs) are ordained to moderate the Session and administer the Sacraments of Communion and Baptism.

### **Q. Who do I talk to about my spiritual and personal needs?**

**A.** You may choose to speak to any ministry partner you choose. Feel free to speak to whomever you are most comfortable with. If that person is unavailable, you can either wait for them or bring your matter to another ministry partner.

### **Q. Why don't we have an interim pastor instead of a ministry team?**

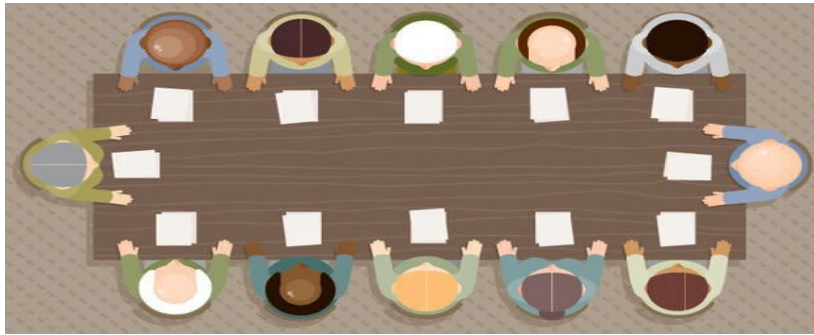
**A.** Our leadership model was a purposeful choice to make the most of the strengths and talents that we already have and with people that you already know. In addition, it avoids the delays that would be associated with finding an interim pastor. An executor of Presbytery suggested at our April Session meeting utilizing co-equal leaders as an alternative model to an interim pastor. The Session agreed and adopted the model with the intent to evaluate its pros and cons as we go along, and both Session and the ministry team welcomes your feedback.

**Q. How is the model working out?**

**A.** The diversity of strengths among the team members provides significant advantages to the church. Like Esther, God has prepared the church and each ministry partner a time such as this. A few years ago, we didn't have Commissioned Lay Pastors, so this would not have been possible. Our model offers the convenience of always having someone available to serve church members. It also offers the advantage of personality matching and ease of communications. Questions or problems communicated through our joint email address ([leadership@fpccconcord.org](mailto:leadership@fpccconcord.org)) ensures a timely response by one of the four minister partners.

***Darryl McCollum CLP***

**Summary of the July Session Meeting**



**Training Session**

This month's meeting began with a joint meeting of the Elders and Deacons. Ministry Partner, Rebecca Chase conducted a short training session utilizing a training module provided by PCUSA. It focused on the call to leadership, the elements of the Church, and the responsibilities of Church membership and leadership. It concluded with the message of how serving the Church is a way of expressing one's faith in God by serving Him in a special way. It results in spiritual growth, stronger bonds amongst the members, and strengthening of the church community.

**Clerk's Report – DeVonn Powers**

Lisa Gonzalez, who now lives in Nevada, has requested termination of her membership. Her termination was accepted with an expression of gratefulness for her many years of service as our Financial Specialist, valued member, and friend to everyone.

**Approval of Budget Revision**

David Stearns presented the revised budget discussed last month. Following discussion, the revision was approved. The purpose of the revision was to adjust revenues to bring the budget in line with the lower level of income being experienced, and to reduce expenses accordingly. The estimated revenue adjustment reflects a reduction of \$17,606 from the original budget, and expense reductions of \$26,821. A deficit for the year is still projected, but another review will be conducted at the end of the 3rd calendar quarter and further adjustments made as needed.

## **Moderator's Report - CLP Rebecca Chase**

**Mission Study** – Darryl reported that the Sunday School sessions offering input on the Mission Study are going well, and the last such Sunday School session will be on Sunday, July 31.

**Flag Dates & Placement** – At the last meeting of Session the issue of which days the US flag will be displayed in the Sanctuary was referred to the Program Committee. The recommendation was approved to display the flag on the following Sundays. A motion to that effect passed unanimously:

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (Jan)	Independence day (July)
Presidents' Day (February)	Labor Day (September)
Memorial Day (May)	Veterans' Day (November)
Flag Day / Juneteenth (June)	

**COVID Policy** - It was decided that the COVID policy, including making masks optional, will be continued until local and statewide rules change.

**Architecture Report** – Jim Whitfield reported that addressing the issues in architecture report presented last month and presenting different options for the best use of our facilities, be postponed until after a new pastor comes on board. The suggestion was accepted, and Session voted to delay action.

**Trustee Report** - Allen Nickerson has resigned his Trustee position. It was determined to leave his position vacant for the time being. Regarding the composition of the Trustees, the suggestion was made to have certain of the Elders serve as Trustees instead of having a separate Trustee board. This is the way it is done in smaller churches. The issue will be discussed in the Fall before nominations are held.

**Connections** – Jim Whitfield reported that his teams are gearing up by increasing the number of Sunday greeters as we continue to focus on "Welcoming" at our Sunday Services. Upcoming activities are August 14: Multi-church Barbecue in the Courtyard; and October 29: Oktoberfest (details to be forthcoming).

**Property Management** – Jim Whitfield reported that the solar system inspection identified some issues that needed to be dealt with, and that this will result in a slight delay in getting final approval. The needed corrections will be dealt with as quickly as possible.

**Communications** – David Dowell reported the Allen Nickerson asked to be relieved as editor of First Press. David will assume the responsibilities in his place for the time being.

### **Programs (From Minutes)**

- Game Night is planned for July 30
- New hymnals have been placed in the Sanctuary
- Choir will return in late August

**Adjournment** Note that the Session will be on vacation in August. The next meeting will be in September, where the budget of year 2023 will be addressed.

## King of the Road – The Motorcycle Travels of Jim King

On May 27, our dear friend and churchmate, James King, set off on an amazing motorcycle trip. He planned to ride all the way to the East Coast via Canada, down to



Florida to visit his mom, and finally all the way back to Concord. This would end up being 11,085 miles, and it took him from May 27 to July 8. It was not a direct route, either. He went out of his way to visit several friends and relatives along the way and to visit the State of North Dakota, the only state he needed to visit so he could say that he has visited every state in the Union in his lifetime. He traveled through all of the Canadian provinces from British Columbia to Prince Edward Island.

During his trip he traveled through all kinds of weather, including rain, snow, windstorms, and incredible heat.

What's more, he had to stop a few times for motorcycle repairs, and sometimes he had to sleep in the open, regardless of weather.

This is not the first time Jim has taken on such adventures. Several years ago, he rode his motorcycle all the way through Mexico and as far as the country of Panama and back. That, too, was an adventure that is hard to forget. He had his problems on that trip, too, including motorcycle breakdowns, but with Jim that is just part of the adventure. That trip was 14,000 miles and took 74 days.

On yet another trip, he rode his motorcycle to the furthest point in Alaska. That trip took two tries. The first time he made it up to Vancouver, BC and suffered an eye injury. That caused him to have to wait it out and then finally turn around and come back. He made it all the way the second time, however. That one was about 9,000 miles and took 30 days.

One thing Jim always does is to chronicle these trips by posting photos on Facebook. He generally does this on a daily basis, so all his friends at home can follow his trip. Every morning many of us would wake up, hurry to our phones or computers to find out where he was, look at his photos, hear his story of the day, and to meet his new friends that he met along the way. Praise God that He responded to our many, many prayers to get Jim home safely from all of these adventures.

*by David Dowell*

### FPCC Staff

Darryl McCollum, CLP

Rebecca Chase, CLP

DeVonn Powers, CLP

Lisa Justice, Student Pastor

Andrew Cardiasmenos

Robin Stearns

Linde Weber

Harold Lund

Ministry Partner

Ministry Partner

Ministry Partner

Ministry Partner

Director, Music & Worship

Preschool Director

Financial and Human Resources Specialist

Custodian & Night Watchman

David Dowell

Acting Editor, First Press and *Express*

**Editor's Note:** *First Press Express* is a publication of the First Presbyterian Church of Concord, California, printed several times each year.

