

Congregations Meeting Minutes

November 6, 2022 – 7:00pm

Attridge Location

There were 14 tables of around 7 people at each table

1. Welcome and Instructions – Erica Fraser

Erica welcomed everyone and presented the agenda for the evening.

Motion #1: That the agenda be accepted as presented. **M/S/C**

Erica also presented a summary of the September 18, 2022 Congregations meeting which was made available online prior to the meeting.

Motion #2: That the minutes from the September 18, 2022 Congregations meeting be accepted as presented. **M/S/C**

2. Devotional and Prayer – Maureen Brown

Maureen shared a devotional that included a passage of scripture that was studied at a staff chapel the past week. The passage was John 15:1-8 and specifically the verse John 15:5, “Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing.” She gave some context to this passage. Maureen invited everyone to read the scripture again and pray together as a table group. Reg closed the time in prayer.

3. Advent Giving Project – Brian Heagy

Brian Heagy (chair of the Missions committee) introduced the Advent Giving project for this year. This year’s goal is \$35,000. \$25,000 of that goal is for our partners in Panama and the Juan Diaz center. Security is a concern, so they need a wall around this facility. They have already started this project and are partially finished the wall. \$10,000 will go to MCC Buckets of hope for places of natural disaster or those needing relief. There will be an opportunity to help put the buckets together on Dec 18. Attridge is doing another project with gift bags for The Bridge Saskatoon.

4. Council Updates – Erica Fraser

Erica shared a council update and the things that council has been working on. She shared some themes that came up during the latest Transition Conversation with the church and that was prayer, humility and encouragement.

Prayer – we desire to be a church that prays. She encouraged everyone to be in prayer for council, staff and FGCC.

Humility – laying down of our rights and submitting to lordship of Christ. She referred to a Sunday morning service at Attridge where Jeromey Martini said, “We all need to voluntarily come under the authority and submission of Jesus.”

Encouragement – be people who spur one another on to be more like Jesus. She read from Hebrews 10:23-25.

Erica presented the Council Covenant of Collaboration document. She encouraged everyone to take a copy home and use this as a prayer guide for our church and for council. Council members are committed to this document and read this together and pray this upon one another before each meeting.

Erica referred to an email that was sent from council this week recognizing the gap they are experiencing between the FGCC council and the North Site with the lack of a staff member at that site. They are working to figure this out. This is a separate but related conversation to multisite. Council has met with the North Site lead team and will meet with them again as well as with Nathan this week. Council recognizes this has some urgency to it.

Erica presented the CUCC (Common Understandings and Common Covenant) document. FGCC as a member church is accountable to the SKMB (Saskatchewan Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches). This is a SKMB document developed by the board as part of 5-year plan. Member churches need to take time to discern this document and then it is signed by church leadership. It is a commitment that we will continue to follow the SKMB. Staff and Council have been working on how we can go through this document as a church. The first page is the beliefs we as a MB church share and what we aspire to be. The second and third page are the actual covenant. This explains what it means as a MB church to embrace a fresh sense of belonging to SKMB and the collective impact we are called to make. This includes Participation in community and also formation in community. Council is going to explore how we interact with this document as congregations and is exploring a teaching series on the confession of faith for January at Attridge.

Erica also walked through Council's current one-year strategic plan summary. This will be a focus of the Council retreat happening at the end of November. The main focuses are:

1. Transition work
2. Multisite model review
3. Developing cohesive leadership – including with lay leaders
4. Congregation/community building – how do engage people to serve and how do we disciple one another.

This is work council is doing but we want to be a church that prays and submits to the Holy Spirit's leading in our lives.

5. Transition Team: Multisite Conversation – *Gil Klassen*

Gil Klassen (a member of council and the Transition team) presented some information and the history of FGCC's multisite strategy. He explained that council just wanted to start the conversation tonight and the end goal for the transition team is to have a recommendation on multisite that they can bring to the March Congregations meeting.

Clarity on our multisite strategy is needed so they can have clarity on the job description for the Lead Pastor search.

Gil gave some history on multisite which started back in 2010 when the church was asking questions on how we can reach areas of the city that Attridge cannot reach. That was the original motivation behind Multisite. We have a strong push for Missions at FGCC and its one of our strengths. Out of these initial discussions came The Gathering. In 2016, conversations began about a third site with the building that used to be Living Hope church. At that time, a document was put together regarding the “Process for Developing a New Site/Congregation.” The preamble on this document is that each site will align with the FGCC core purpose, mission and values. The reason for multisite according to this document was “to fulfill our mission beyond our walls... learning to speak other languages in order to reach more people...multiplication, discipleship and risk-taking obedience.” Multisite is not about typical church planting. The main difference is the level of support is never withdrawn in multisite.

Gil went through the key principles as outlined in this document. Sites should not duplicate ministry that is already in another area. All sites will be “open” and will not be a stepping stone to another site. Each site will incorporate the four core ministries but will be expressed differently. Each site will be accountable to a central leadership (the FGCC staff and council) and the entire ministry of FGCC will be accountable to SKMB. Each site will participate in mission.

Gil also shared about the Multisite task force that was formed in the beginning months of 2021 by council. The mandate for the multisite task force was: “In conjunction with the FGCC Lead Team, to understand and assess the current multisite structure of FGCC in order to make recommendations to council on the future state of the multisite structure at FGCC.” During the work of the task force was also when everything happened with the TRC proposal and also Bruce’s resignation in June of 2021. This task force was kind of overlooked. One part of report says, “Multisite is a missional strategy. We are attempting to reach the community of Saskatoon through different styles of congregations and forms of community. Being multisite does not assume that we are being successfully missional in reaching our community.” We need to evaluate if this strategy is working. Based on the report, there is confusion of multisite. There is also confusion within our community.

We are in the middle of the transition process and we need some clarity on what the multisite model is going to look like.

6. Prayer and Table Discussion – *Gil Klassen*

Gil introduced the prayer and table discussion time. The transition team is going to use things written down in their discussions going forward. Gil encouraged everyone to pray first at the tables before going into discussion. The two questions discussed were:

1. In what way(s) has FGCC/your specific congregation benefited from being part of the multi-site church structure?
2. Do we as FGCC still affirm the vision of reaching the community of Saskatoon through different styles of congregations and forms of community.

There will be more time to have discussions around multisite in the coming months. If anyone wanted to give more feedback, they were encouraged to email Gil.

In closing, Gil felt the need to encourage everyone to watch their words when they are in conversations with others about the church, specifically that they don't go towards gossip.

7. Financial Update – Anna Robinson

Anna gave a brief summary of the financial statements as prepared by the auditors. They gave us a clean audit and said it was a fair representation of our finances. There were no irregularities. Cash balance beginning of year fiscal year was \$1,915,776 and end of year was \$1,843,911 which is a decrease of \$71,865.

Motion #3 – That the 2022 Financial Statement and Independent Auditor's report as prepared by Virtus Group Chartered Professional Accountants & Business Advisors LLP be accepted by the congregations of Forest Grove Community Church. **M/S/C**

Motion #4 – That Forest Grove Community Church retain Virtus Group Chartered Professional Accounts & Business Advisors LLP as our auditors for July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023. **M/S/C**

8. Pastoral Update and Transition Team Update – Reg Toews

Reg shared an update on the transition team. Within the transition team they have a group working on mission, vision and values and another group working on structure. They are both working on making recommendations to council which will then go to the congregations. Reg wanted to use his time to focus on the core area of discipleship and hearing how God is working in people's lives. Tyson and Janessa Pearsall shared their testimonies to become members of FGCC.

Kevin Wiens briefly shared what membership means at FGCC and presented Tyson and Janessa with a membership certificate and a bible verse for each of them. They were welcomed into membership.

Reg invited those who wanted to pray for the church after the meeting to meet in the sanctuary.

9. Closing Prayer – Janice Block

Janice closed the meeting in prayer.

Motion #5 – to adjourn the meeting. **M/S/C**

Meeting adjourned at 8:10pm

Minutes Recorded by Anna Erickson