

First Evangelical Free Church

Congregational Meeting Minutes, February 27, 2022

This meeting took place both in person and online. Online sign in and voting were done via an online form in jotform. Ballots were anonymous.

Kevin Krosley, Executive Pastor of Leadership Development and Operation confirmed quorum and opened the meeting in prayer.

Chuck Hembree, Acting Church Chairman, called the meeting to order. Members present (in person and online) exceeded the 25% quorum (150). We have 600 voting members, 27 of which were added in 2021.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the 2021 Congregational Meeting minutes. Minutes were approved in person and online.

Worship Pastor Candidate

Bill Peskorse introduced Andrew Miller as candidate for Worship Pastor. Doug Pogue, Elder chair, opened the floor for questions for Andrew. No questions were raised online or in the room.

Election of Elders, Deacons, and Nominating Committee

Doug Pogue, Elder Chair, thanked the 2021 Nominating Committee members and explained the nomination process. He then introduced the candidates for church leadership and solicited questions:

Elders: Mike Proctor, Ben Thomas (2nd term)

Deacons: Stephen Quick (2nd term)

Nominating Committee: Kim Bowers, Kim Benting, David Ren

No questions were raised online or in the room.

Finance Reports and 2022 Proposed Budget

Budget

Kevin Krosley (Executive Pastor of Leadership Development & Operations) reviewed 2021 income and expenses and 2022 budget. Kevin shared the efree.org/financials web page which has in-depth reports on the budget. The 2022 Tier 1 budget is 8.5% higher than the 2021 approved budget. The Tier 2 budget assumes giving similar to 2021. The congregation is being asked to approve the Tier 2 budget.

¹ Former and founding members Jack and Judy Kerls were present and likely account for the extra vote. They were dropped from membership in 2015 after leaving to join the Quest church plant. They will be contacted about reinstating membership.

Special Considerations

1. We have included an additional Executive Pastor position for the 4th quarter so that we can hire that person should God bring the right candidate. Any candidate would still go through the full candidate process.
2. The Outreach Fund has had a surplus over the last several years due to the pandemic; we plan to spend some of that surplus this year. Thus, there is a 36K overspend planned for the fund compared to anticipated giving for the year.
3. We received \$411K through the Employee Retention Credit in 2021 from the federal government. Of this, \$306K will be reserved for future use; \$105K will be used for security measures for the building, as well as two large A/C units.

The annual audit produced no material changes to our financials.

Kevin called for questions on the budget.

1. There was a suggestion that the additional windfall be used to increase outreach efforts to the community.
2. How much was Take Back Black Friday in 2021? Just over \$100K for our church plant in South America.
3. Will receiving federal funds bring any obligations with it? No
4. Are there any updates on the recent fire in the Bigg House? Our insurance policy carries a \$7,500 deductible. We don't have inspection results yet, and so have not begun plans for repair. The damage was significant, but should be repairable. The Fire Marshal completed a full inspection of the building and made a list of needed changes around the campus, which are underway. We should have a better update in 2-4 weeks.

Voting

In the room, members submitted a single ballot with all candidates and motions. Online, members voted anonymously via an online form.

The vote was called and ballots were collected.

Senior Pastor Report

Adam Bowers shared some of the happenings in 2021. We met all of the Elder goals for the year:

- Launching a vision and values statement for the church,
- Hiring a Groups Pastor and Worship Pastor
- Completing the 1 Timothy sermon series
- Completing a sermon series on social justice from a biblical perspective
- Presenting a position paper on women in leadership
- Creating an Elder Guidebook for the Elder Board

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Adam shared a slideshow of ministry happenings and a number of wins from our staff goals.

Adam also thanked Dr. Doug Pogue for serving and leading the church so well over the last 6 years, especially through the pandemic.

Elder Report

Doug Pogue, Elder Chairman, shared some of the changes to our governance model spearheaded by Jeff Estes (Elder). He also thanked the Deacon Board and Ministry Support Staff for their leadership through a challenging budget year.

He also reported that in 2021, the Elder board also pressed into some areas of conflict that have arisen over the last several years. They brought in Crossroads, a peace-maker ministry, to help reconcile those issues. Initial discussions happened in fall 2021 and will be continuing in spring of 2022. No egregious issues have arisen, but they want to address the challenges First Free Church has faced and restore broken relationships.

Questions:

1. What led to the decrease in members? There has been turnover as a result of the pandemic and having to meet primarily online; there have also been some disagreements about the direction of the church, which is why we're doing the reconciliation work.

Deacon Report

Dean Wimpfheimer, Deacon Chair, presented his report
Grounds and facilities - (JD Long) provided advice and support for the Facilities staff
Finance - (Wei Wu, JD Long, Steve Quick) Giving lagged in the first half of the year and this committee met more than usual to navigate the situation.
Benevolence (Sue Stark, Marilyn Simpson, Dean Wimpfheimer) Dean explained the process of benevolence gifts.

Other Business

Voting results were confirmed by the Deacons. 173 members were reported present (42 online, 131 in person); 174 ballots were cast (42 online, 132 in person¹). All nominees and motions were approved by more than 98% of the members present.

Chuck Hembree made a request for other business. No new business was raised.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn.

Chuck Hembree closed in prayer.

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Respectfully submitted,
Heather Wright, Church Clerk

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