



# Winter Congregational Meeting Minutes

## First Christian Church

### January 21, 2024, following the Church Service

The meeting was called to order by board president, Esther Devall at 11:20.

The number of members attending was 31 (present in the sanctuary and via zoom) – the quorum is met for the meeting.

#### 1. Strategic Plan – Presented by Scott Hays-Strom

- a. Meet the spiritual needs of our members.
  - We have brown bag lunch once a month and have dinner for 6 or 8 for group fellowship.
  - Once a month there is a contemplative service.
- b. Worship service
  - We broadcast services via Zoom and Facebook. The viewers are mostly from the local area, but we also have worldwide attendance, i.e., Uganda, Philippines.
  - We are adding diversity to our worship services by using the Native American scripture translation.
  - We wish to add diversity to the music during our worship service but are limited by the licensing because we broadcast our service. We are looking into getting additional licensing so we can have more diverse music.
  - We change our seating arrangements in the sanctuary for a different setting during the service.
- c. Visitor follow-up retention

The Elders follow-up with the visitors in the sanctuary and those who watch via Zoom and Facebook
- d. Updates to make worship easier.
  - We looked into adding amplification for the hearing aids to better pick up the sound, but it was cost prohibitive. We will get better microphones and a headset for the pastor. This should allow better sound pick-up for both those in the sanctuary and watching on-line.
  - We are adding TV monitors to the front of the sanctuary for better viewing during the service.
  - We keep growing our finances, which is helpful in helping us adapt and change to our aging building.

#### 2. Congregational Meeting Committee Reports

- a. Pastor Search Committee – Ralph Holmes, Chair

See the report at the end of the minutes.

The committee gathered information from the church membership to create our church profile. It was sent to the denominations (DoC and UCC) in December. We haven't received much yet, only 2 from DoC. We will review the profiles as we receive them and hope to have a viable candidate this year.



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- b. Faith Action - Ralph Holmes, Chair  
See the report at the end of the minutes.
- There are outreach opportunities for all to support locally and nationally. If you are currently active with an outreach organization, inform the Faith Action Committee at one of their meetings that occur on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of the month.
  - They will have speakers on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month to provide information about missions near and far.
- c. Property Maintenance and Use - Karen Holmes, Property Liaison  
See report at the end of the minutes with the building maintenance and the Ministry Partners that use our facility.
- d. Safety and Security – Esther Devall
- The police gave a safety talk during one of the board meetings.
  - The Safety and Security team created a safety plan for our site. It will be reviewed by the police and fire department.
  - Created a listing of community resources with contact information for the staff.
  - Created a to-do list for calling 911 in an emergency.
  - Created an exit plan for people to leave the sanctuary in case of an emergency. The sanctuary had new door handles installed to facilitate the evacuation. Had a fire drill to evaluate the plan during a worship service.
  - Six members of the church have mental health training.
  - Request the Fire Chief discuss fire safety at the March board meeting.
- e. Technology Committee – Eric Hays-Strom
- Install TV monitors to replace screen.
  - An updated version of the web site is in progress.
3. Budget – Presented by Bruce Weber  
The proposed budget is at the end of the minutes.  
Question by Sue Stefford-Grey is there enough reserves for a full time pastor for the next few years? Bruce replied yes that there are reserves saved for the coming years.  
Eric added we received additional pledges today for \$6500.  
Sue Stefford-Grey moved to approve the projected budget, Zante Garcia seconded, approved.



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### 4. Elections – Led by Esther Devall

#### Board Slate:

Position	Nominees	Continuing Term
Past President	Esther Devall	
President	Scott Hays-Strom	
President Elect	Zante Garcia	
Treasurer	Donald Wilson	
Asst. Treasurer	Bruce Weber	
Secretary	Karen Holmes	
Finance Secretary	Eric Hays-Strom	
Director	Kamy McKenzy-Shaw (2 years)	
Director	Ric Brightman (2 years)	
Director		Phil Brooks (1 yr. remaining)

No nominations from the floor.

Rev. Patrick Crocker moved to accept the nominations, Hilda McKee seconded, Approved.

#### Elders:

Nominees	Continuing Term (1 yr. remaining)
Deb Cook	Scott Hays-Strom
Paul Cook	Kamy McKenzy-Shaw
Esther Devall	Melissa McKenzy-Shaw
Zante Garcia	Patrick Crocker (Paused)
Debby Johnson	

No nominations from the floor.

Eric Hays-Strom moved to accept the nominations, Jeanne Knotts seconded, Approved.

#### Deacons:

Nominees (1-yr term)	Continuing Term (1 yr. remaining)
Steve Blink (1 year)	Melissa McKenzy-Shaw
Dave Wofford (1 year)	Virginia Rice
Lyn Wofford (1 year)	Julie Wojtko
Bethany McKenzy-Shaw (1 year)	
Aiden Wojtko (1 year)	

No nominations from the floor.

Debby Johnson moved to accept the nominations, Sandy Weber seconded, Approved.



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## Pastoral Support Committee:

Nominee (3-yr term)	Continuing Term
Debby Johnson	Deb Cook (2 yrs. Remaining)
	Donald Wilson (1 yr. remaining)

Eric Hays-Strom moved to accept the nomination, Sue Stefford-Grey seconded, Approved.

## Building and Grounds:

Dave Wofford agreed to continue as Director of Building and Grounds, which is an appointed position.

Rev. Patrick Crocker ended the meeting with a closing prayer.  
The meeting was adjourned at 12:03.

Submitted by Karen Holmes,  
Secretary



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2024 Proposed Operating Budget - 01/21/24	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget
<b>OPERATING INCOME</b>			
Offerings, Members, Pledged	\$95,804.00	100,290.88	\$94,660.00
Offerings, Members, Non-pledged	9,600.00	7,053.30	6,000.00
Offerings, Cash	1,200.00	1,737.00	1,200.00
Building Fund Pledges <sup>1</sup>	10,496.00	13,276.00	10,000.00
Special Day Offerings <sup>1</sup>	2,400.00	880.00	2,400.00
Building Use: Contract & Non-Contract	19,980.00	20,330.00	19,380.00
Other/Miscellaneous	0.00	1,272.79	0.00
<b>Income Subtotal</b>	<b>\$139,480.00</b>	<b>\$144,839.97</b>	<b>\$133,640.00</b>
<b>OPERATING EXPENSES</b>			
<b>Administration &amp; Property</b>			
Building Fund - Major Maintenance Projects <sup>1</sup>	10,496.00	13,276.00	10,000.00
Administration: Copier; Office Supplies; Postage	2,510.92	2,520.70	2,634.13
Property: Utilities (Electric, Water, Gas, Internet, etc.)	17,278.87	16,154.74	16,881.70
Property: Minor Maintenance	4,982.84	6,095.12	6,369.40
Property: Insurance	8,418.76	7,864.00	8,217.88
<b>Administration &amp; Property Subtotal</b>	<b>\$43,687.39</b>	<b>\$45,910.56</b>	<b>\$44,103.12</b>
<b>Personnel</b>			
Minister: Salary + Housing + FICA Offset + Benefits	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$38,000.00
Extended Term Supply Pastor	42,000.00	29,800.00	15,600.00
Office Admin / Video Technologist	16,511.04	16,452.98	17,193.36
Sexton	10,222.33	10,505.04	10,977.77
Worker's Comp Insurance	1,050.00	980.96	1,025.10
Payroll Taxes on Hourly Employees	2,045.10	2,062.29	2,155.09
<b>Personnel Subtotal</b>	<b>\$71,828.46</b>	<b>\$59,801.26</b>	<b>\$84,951.32</b>
<b>Committee/Activities</b>			
Evangelism: Advertising & Promotion	595.44	315.00	329.18
Membership Subscriptions (Servant Keepr; Zoom; Textedly ...)	2065.04	1,903.31	1,988.96
Worship Supplies & Guest Speakers (Pulpit Supply)	600.56	1,346.45	1,563.79
Regional Meetings/Conferences	350.00	861.45	900.22
<b>Committee/Activities Subtotal</b>	<b>\$3,611.04</b>	<b>\$4,426.21</b>	<b>\$4,782.14</b>
<b>Outreach</b>			
Special Day Offerings <sup>1</sup>	\$2,400.00	\$880.00	\$2,400.00
Tres Rios (DoC) <sup>2</sup>	1,781.00	1,776.00	1,702.00
SW Conference UCC <sup>2</sup>	1,781.00	1,714.00	1,702.00
Christ Action & Com Service: El Calvario <sup>2</sup>	1,781.00	1,776.00	1,702.00
Green Chamber, Other	275.00	385.00	429.00
<b>Outreach Subtotal</b>	<b>\$8,018.00</b>	<b>\$6,531.00</b>	<b>\$7,935.00</b>
<b>EXPENSE SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>\$127,144.89</b>	<b>\$116,669.03</b>	<b>\$141,771.57</b>
<b>ADJUSTMENTS: Reserve for Search Comm / New Pastor Support</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>-\$4,831.73</b>	<b>\$8,500.00</b>
<b>OPERATING INCOME - EXPENSE (Suprlus/Deficit)</b>	<b>\$12,335.11</b>	<b>\$23,339.21</b>	<b>\$368.43</b>

**Notes:** <sup>1</sup>In and out (Pass-through)

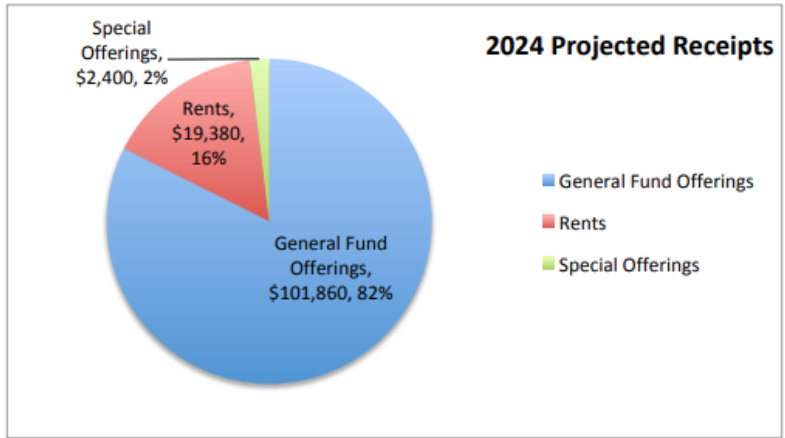
<sup>2</sup>A percentage of Pledges + Cash Offerings spread among these outreach categories



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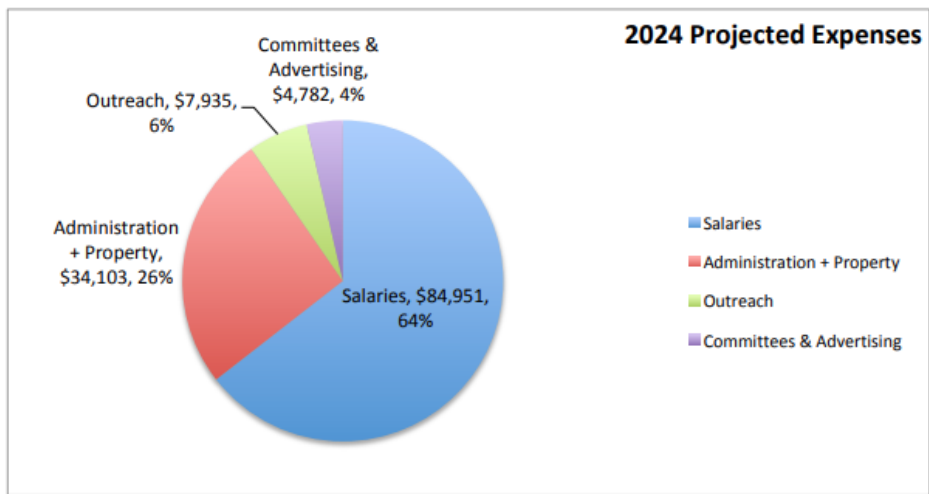
### 2024 Budgeted Receipts

General Fund Offerings	\$101,860	<i>Plus</i>
Rents	\$19,380	<i>\$10,000.00</i>
Special Offerings	\$2,400	<i>Maintenance</i>
	-----	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$123,640.00</b>	



### 2024 Budgeted Expenses

Salaries	\$84,951 Pastor, Office Mgr/Video, Sexton
Administration + Property	\$34,103 Copier, Utilities, Insurance, Maint
Outreach	\$7,935 UCC, DoC, El Calvario, other outreach
Committees & Advertising	\$4,782 Advertising, Guest Speakers, Misc.
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<b>Total</b>	<b>\$131,772</b>



*Plus  
\$10,000.00  
Maintenance*



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### **Faith Action – Presented by Ralph Holmes Chair**

Faith Action Committee is made up of First Christian Church members who want to provide information on outreach opportunities to our membership and Executive Board. During 2023 Faith Action Committee provided several opportunities for members to help at local shelters and to support local and national organizations.

We provided newsletter articles and speakers with topics on how you can help our environment, new legislation, proposed and/or passed that could or will help people.

Our church has also helped local organizations by providing space in our building and with monetary support within the budget and in addition to it.

Each year we provide you with information on our denominations special giving events. For 2024 we have chosen two from each to promote.

The Board has agreed to provide the Faith Action Committee with one Sunday a month to provide information during the service which will start the second Sunday in February. We will also use the newsletter to communicate with you so make sure you are reading it each month.

If you have information on ways our church and its members can help the community near and far with social or environmental justice issues, please attend one of our monthly meetings the second Thursday of each month via the zoom link on our website at 7 PM. We have our own green Faith Action Meeting button on the meetings page under the Community tab. I hope to see you there.



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### **Settled Pastor Search Committee – Presented by Ralph Holmes Chair**

The Search Committee spent most of 2023 gathering information about our church and its members desires in a new Pastor so we could update our Church Profile. The profile was submitted to the DOC and UCC regional denomination offices in December and have started to receive Candidate Profiles. We will be spending the next few months gathering more profiles and determining who God is calling to First Christian Church of Las Cruces. Please keep us in your prayers as we make this important decision.





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## **Property Maintenance and Use – Presented by Karen Holmes, Property Liaison**

### **Maintenance:**

Here is a highlight of the building and property maintenance for 2023.

- Electrical re-wiring on lighting (safety issue):  
Normal lawn and yard maintenance plus the removal of cactus front yard garden and repair of a water leak in the front yard
- Painted lines in the parking lot
- Bee Removal – for the third time in 2 years
- Painted roof over the parlor to fix the water leak.
- Remodel the bridal room into the meditation room.
- Security enhancements after Weaving for Justice was broken into.
  - Window repair
  - Additional locks and re-keying of door locks
  - Addition of Window grill
  - Additional security lighting and cameras
  - New safety door openers for Sanctuary exit doors.
- Replace the 1 broken refrigerator and the other refrigerator that didn't seal well with a new refrigerator.
- Column repair near the chapel

Thanks to Dave Wofford, Director of Building and Grounds and Jerry Romero, Sexton. Both ensure our building and property are safe and secure.

Our thanks to the additional volunteers who gave their time and talents in the past year for their help.

### **Planned enhancements for 2024 include:**

- The automation of the front atrium door to make it more accessible for all people.

### **Ministry Partners that Use our Building:**

There are three non-profit organizations that rent rooms from FCCLC.

- St. John's Catholic Church of Antioch
- Weaving for Justice
- Backyard Farms

Additional non-profit organizations that rent our facilities on a weekly or monthly basis include:

- Celestial Sounds
- New World Drummers
- Mesilla Valley Jazz & Blues Society and Mesilla Valley Swing Band
- Toad Hall Productions
- Al-Anon

HIV/Aids Food Pantry is considered a mission project and do not pay rent to use their room.