

October 2022 Eliot Chapel Board of Trustees Meeting via zoom

Board members present: Claire Wyneken (2023), Toni Saunders (2023), Chuck Schuder (2024), Sara Fleming (2024), Kalen Ponche (2024) Steve Swift (2024) Carole Glauser (2025)

Not Present: Rev. Doug Wadkins

Ministers, Volunteers & Guests: Susan Bell, Carl Serbell, Madelyn Harris, Peter Wilson.

Gather

- Claire offered a chalice lighting and reading, and welcomed everyone

Board members and guests shared highs and lows via a check-in.

Visitor Comments: Peter Wilson said he is interested in the process of choosing the next minister, how the board and the church will interact around that. He said he's optimistic, very impressed with Doug and thinks Eliot has potentially a great couple of years now.

Madelyn Harris said she has some questions about the search process.

Carl Serbell thanked the board for having a board meeting via zoom.

Meeting Preparation

- Finalize agenda
- Transparency Ombudsperson's Report
- Confirm meeting assignments:
 - Timekeeper - Carole
 - Process & Transparency Observer - Chuck

Consent Agenda

- Approve September 2022 Meeting Minutes
- Affirmation of New Eliot members (Bylaws, Article III, Part A): Rachel Brandt, Bradley Johnson, Renae Quinn, Lisa Traubitz
- Accept Policy Monitoring Reports: ([See Policy Compliance Record](#))
 - 4.6 Financial Condition and Operations (Rev. Doug)
 - 4.4 Emergency Lead Minister Succession policy DRAFT (Rev. Doug)
- **Toni moved and Steve seconded to approve the consent agenda which was unanimously approved.**
- *2.8 Complaint and Inquires Regarding Board Policies (Kalen & Carole) This item was approved but should be reconsidered next month because it wasn't completely filled out.*

Treasurer's Report

Sue mentioned that income was higher than budgeted and expenses were lower than

budgeted for August. One thing that we noticed from Sunday attendance is that it was much higher in person for 2022 compared to 2021 or 2020.

Trends related to financials and management

Claire mentioned she has met with Mary Meihaus to discuss a fall ask to the congregation, perhaps in early November. She also mentioned meeting with Krista to coordinate the FUN committee and Fundraising committee.

New Business:

- **Review of [Board Calendar](#)**

Claire created a Board Calendar for the year which breaks down the tasks the board should accomplish each month throughout the year. Claire highlighted that the church has many moving parts going on this year so we will keep the typical timeline for creating the budget. She also pointed out that the board will move the annual congregational survey to the spring rather than the fall.

In his listening to the congregation, Doug shared that people are interested in learning more about how the board works and what is his decision vs what is our decision. During the next few months, the board will dig into Policy governance and read through a book on this topic. We will come together in the winter workshop to discuss whether we should consider making minor changes to our governance model or look at a major change. Claire and Doug will decide how to include the congregation in a discussion of these changes.

Search Committee Formation Process

Claire said the board would take nominations for people to serve on the search committee and then a subgroup of the board would look through those nominations and reach out to the people who have been most nominated to see if they would agree to serve.

Board Development

- The board's plan for leadership development will discuss leadership as a spiritual practice this year. As we think about ourselves as spiritual leaders in the congregation and the board we can spend some time thinking about the following questions:
 - What's Your Why? for being engaged in the congregation? What is it that you get out of the experience? (November)
 - What's Your How? (December)
 - What's Your What's Next? (January)

Unfinished Business (5 Min)

- Board Communication Task Force Update (Carole, Sara, and Kalen)
- Sara said that the primary focus in meeting has been discussing the board page of the website. We narrowed down the items we thought were most helpful and then included suggestions for adding a blog as well as links to meeting minutes, financial reports, etc. Our goal is to simplify and clean up old links that are no

longer relevant.

Minister Incidental Report

People are having questions about parking. Are there plans to keep the handicap parking? Doug said we had a huge influx of people who needed handicapped parking. How can we assess whether it is being used? Sue suggested that the greeters might be able to step out and take a peek.

Rev. Doug offered a recap of the congregational meetings held in early fall. He said people raised concerns about the governance model used at Eliot and said it really has undermined participation, volunteerism and connection. He said people were very passionate about it and had strong feelings.

The other thing that came out of these meetings is that both former ministers have some baggage that the congregation is sorting through in different ways.

The Rev. Daniel baggage is understood by people who had young families at the time and who people who were younger in the congregation. Given that that split lives on to this day to the RE families and those in the rest of the congregation. That seems to be important.

People were grateful for the calmness and sanity of the ministry of Barbara. But it was really complex to know what to do with the last few years. They were supportive and caring for Barbara and her health, but it was hard to know for people what to do with that complex set of emotions. There was a real feeling like in the last few years that the congregation really faded in that time period. It would be very difficult with someone with such an overarching health issue to bring their best ministry. It would be very hard for Barbara.

Next time, you pointed out finances, communication and rebuilding community. All three of those things are things that I will participate in. We need to be very proactive about finances. Maybe do a task force to think about what to do about finances.

Toni asked Doug, is it a grieving process we need to address? Doug said, yes, there were multiple losses that happened. There is some grief in terms of people's relationships with one another. Krista is very aware of these issues in terms of thinking about her future here. It's one of the trickier parts of dealing with change and transition.

The big picture is there are lots of things going on in the building that are financial stresses. It is only now possible for us to use three of the bathrooms that are closest to the staff. There could be an issue with the air conditioner. The downside to having an old building is that there are lots of little burbling things happening.

The board will be polling people in to see who would be interested in being on settled minister search committee. Be on the look out for that next steps.

- Establish the search committee in early march

- February – reach out to folks and confirm their interest in joining the search committee.
- January - Discerning the feedback from the congregation and outreach to individuals who have been nominated.
- November - Board will send out a form

Meeting Summary:

Process & Transparency Report

Decisions/Actions Taken/Follow Up

- Adopted Consent Agenda
- Claire will become fundraising Czar and will work with Mary and Doug and Krista on coordinating activities on membership, fundraising and stewardship. She will report back at the November meeting on that plan.
- Claire will add discussion of our communication strategy to the budget.
- Claire will create a timeline in 2 weeks on the policy discernment process.
- Claire will get the board reading material.
- The board will work to think about our reason for serving.

Assignments for November 15, 2022 Meeting

Policy Monitoring Scheduled for November Meeting

(See [Policy Compliance Rec](#))

8:35 Adjourn (Virtual Social for those who can remain online)

Reminder Dates

Next Board Meeting: November 15, 2023 at Adams Hall

Policy Reviews:

[.5 Policy Non-Compliance](#): Toni and Kalen

Prepare: What's My Why?

Read: Chapter from Governance and Ministry