

**Casas Adobes Congregational Church, UCC, ONA**

**Council Minutes: February 18, 2025**

**Recorded by:** Pat Brown, Clerk

**Called to Order:** 4:00 pm by Moderator Owen Clymer

**Attendance:** Quorum present via online Zoom format

**Attendees:** Dave Brown, Pat Brown, Pastor Michael Bush, Owen Clymer, Fran Crisman, Amy Lincoln, Jane Spande, Dennis Thomas, Wes Ward and Mike Wilson.

**Pre-meeting Reports:** MAL/MCC, MJAM, MoS, MoW, MPR, Reflection, Treasurer/Finance/Legacy

At 4:00 pm, Owen welcomed members of the Council and opened with prayer.

**Reflection:** Amy read Luke 14-21. The questions, including the letter from Martin Luther King, Jr., were asked. Fran said that from the first passage, he realized that he would have to expand the group of people he associates with to make it more diverse. Wes added that it asks not just what our personal purpose and/or goal is, but what are the purposes and goals of our organizations. Jane added to Fran's comment saying that it is important to expand circles without judgement. Mike used AI to generate more ideas, including the phrase: "proclaim the year of the favored." He added that he realized that it is important to not be silent, though it may be easier to be silent. He said that he sees hope over hopelessness, adding from Romans 12 that God is still at work in the chaos. Owen said that he needs to be open to others "not like me," which may make him feel uncomfortable or fearful. He found that mainline denominations are not really mainline anymore, but that the churches attracting people are where people can feel comfortable, not challenged, which is different from our church which seeks to put ourselves out in the community. Dennis is concerned that fringes look down on others who are different, "demonizing of the lessers."

**Consent Agenda:** Reports from Ministries were submitted for reading prior to the meeting (except for MCD). The January Minutes were approved without objection.

**Moderator Report:**

Owen felt that the Annual Congregational Budget meeting went well, especially with the unanimous approval of the budget. He shared that the work the Council has put in during the last year in communicating with the Congregation was received positively.

Regarding the Sabbatical Team, Owen said that the Send-off Event is scheduled for May 18, and the Return from Sabbatical Event is scheduled for September 7, 2025. Potlucks after services are being considered, and Leona Lansing is aware of the need for planning. Owen will be the MC for the events. With Owen's question as to who would coordinate a potluck, Amy said that the Ministry of Community and Care would most likely be working on that. Owen said that Anne has the dates on her calendar. Brigid will do Learning @ 11:00 a couple of times. Pastor John Cheek will be Interim Coordinator of Pastoral Care. Pastor John Angiulo has been asked about pulpit needs, and he is comfortable with the arrangements for Michael's absence. The Sabbatical Team agreed to have David LaMotte ([www.davidlamotte.com](http://www.davidlamotte.com)) present a concert on Saturday, November 15<sup>th</sup> and will give a talk on *Mission at the Border* on Sunday, November 16<sup>th</sup> under the umbrella and funding of the Lilly Grant. There may also be an Intergenerational event on Friday, November 14<sup>th</sup>. MCC may host a reception on Saturday. Mike W. asked about the grant theme: *Awe: Transformation at the Borders*. Fran asked about increasing compensation for Pastor John, and Michael said that Pastor John's job description will not change for the summer and that he is happy to have Pastor John Cheek's help.

**Treasurer's Report:** (Report previously emailed to Council members) Dennis reported being pleased with the Annual Congregational Budget meeting. The process for 2026 will be the same as that of 2025. The Legacy fund grew again by \$72,000 in January, which is a trend not necessarily expected in the future.

## Items for Council Discussion:

- **Nominating Committee:** Amy reported that the slate of candidates includes:
  - MaL – Lori Powers
  - MCC – Laura and Hank Dimlich
  - MCD – Bobby Sutherland
  - MoW – Amy Lincoln and Linda Crisman.

**A motion to select the slate of candidates to present to the Congregation was made by Dennis Thomas and seconded by Jane Spande.**

Owen presented the conflict of Dave and Pat Brown being on the Leadership Team, a conflict with the By-Laws, which says that no two members from the same household be on the team. Dennis mentioned that it is important to let the Congregation know how this situation developed, i.e. with the reduced size of the congregation, there has been a reduced number of people willing to volunteer to be candidates. Wes asked what the contingency plan is, with Owen responding that a change in the By-Laws may need to be considered. Michael added that the precipitating events were the departure of the Moderator and Vice-Moderator within a 12-month period, which resulted in the appointments. Mike added that we may want to maintain the By-Laws as they are since circumstances created the situation. Owen will be transparent with the Congregation and present the slate of candidates as is for a vote.

The motion to select the slate of candidates was voted on and was **passed unanimously**.

- **Coffee Hour – March 23<sup>rd</sup>:** The Council is in charge of coffee hour after worship. Amy volunteered to take the lead in organizing it. Several people will be needed to set up at 8:30 and then to leave worship a little early to serve and clean up. All are encouraged to bring food: crackers, cheese, fruit, nuts, cookies, etc.
- **Congregational Meeting – March 16<sup>th</sup>:** Anne needs annual reports from Ministries. The meeting will be held after worship.

**Other Business:** Pastor Michael shared that the switchboard for Federal Representatives and Senators has been overwhelmed. He wrote a letter to Sen. Mark Kelly and he received a signed response specific to Michael's issues. He has a call into Rep. Ciscomani and received a reply that a representative for Ciscomani or a staff person will set up a meeting with Pastor Michael for discussion of issues. Pastor Michael encourages others to reach out to members of Congress.

Owen reported that there is a team (Jean-Marie Huisjen, Jack Dean, Wes Ward) working on the Legacy Fund. As there is no current plan for disbursement, the team will work on a procedure and provide a proposal to F.A.R.M. and the Council in July.

Owen commended MJAM for its great work.

**Closing Prayer and Adjournment:** Pastor Michael offered a closing prayer. Dennis moved and Jane seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting, with unanimous approval.

Meeting adjourned at 4:53 pm.

**Next Council Meeting via Zoom: Tuesday, March 18<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 pm**