



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF ESCONDIDO

Ministry Leadership Team Meeting Minutes

September 17, 2025

Members in attendance: Deb Pint, Dana Stevens, Sue Leech, Barbara Galyean, Rev. Maureen Gates, Susi Hansen, Claire Dyekman, and Pastor Holgie Choi.

Members absent: Carolyn Hammock **Guest:** Ted Leech (Representative from Pastoral Relations Team)

1. **Call to order:** The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m. by moderator Deb Pint
2. **Devotion:** Rev. Maureen Gates led us in a centering exercise, followed by a prayer written by St. Teresa of Avila.
3. **Approval of the 08/18/2025 MLT minutes:** Motion by Sue Leech to approve, Second by Susi Hansen – Approved unanimously
4. **Pastor's report:** Pastor Holgie attended the conference Board of Directors retreat at UCC Redlands Sept 12-13. 20 pastors were present along with our conference minister Racheal Pryor. There was interest from all in attendance about FCCE's affordable housing project. He reported the closing of San Bernadino UCC. He also attended and offered the opening prayer at the Interfaith Community Services (ICS) meeting which was hosted by FCCE on Wednesday, Sept. 10th. He discussed some security concerns about Sunday services and the team had several suggestions. More to follow on this subject, as our open and affirming stand as a church might be getting more attention in the near future.
5. **Moderator's report:** Deb helped to organize participation at the Escondido Union High School District Board meeting on Sept. 9th. 13 FCCE members were present and several spoke in support of Carol Durney and her position on the board. This could be an opportunity for FCCE to build relationships with the high schools to address LGBTQ+. Deb helped to coordinate the hosting of the ICS General Faith Membership meeting here at FCCE on Wednesday, Sept. 10th. The meeting was led by Mitchell Snow. 35 faith leaders were in attendance which included 7 members from FCCE. Dana Stevens presented an overview of our Affordable Housing project. We provided marketing handouts for our facility rental/lease availability and also promoted the Best on Broadway event.

She will be meeting with a representative from KinderReady Behavior Services to discuss their need for space for their program. She helped to organize Rally Sunday and provided team handouts, sign-up sheets, and church calendar events. She reminded team members to submit their October Echoes articles before September 26th. Deb will be on vacation 9/29-10/17.

6. **Treasurer's report:** Barb Galyean reported that we have a deficit of \$38,533.38. She asked team members to defer expenses if possible. She hopes that our upcoming BOB fundraiser and increased holiday giving will help to decrease this amount.

New Business:

1. **Pastor's Compensation Presentation:** Ted Leech presented the PRT's recommendation of a 5% cash compensation increase for Pastor Holgie Choi which would be effective Oct. 1, 2025. Barb Galyean presented MLT members with a handout which showed the breakdown of Holgie's compensation package. Motion to approve this recommendation was made by Susi Hansen, second by Barb Galyean. Motion passed unanimously.
2. **Grants update and Process** – Dana Stevens presented an update on 3 grant proposals she is working on. **#1- UCC Pensions Board Grant for New and Renewing Churches** – This was submitted 9/14 Total value = \$17,487.12 (medical+dental) x 3 years = \$52,461.36 + \$2000 (retirement match) each of 3 years. **#2 – Rapid Response for Unplanned Physical Plant/Operational or Missional Needs** – Can apply for \$5000. FCCE to use for termite treatment costs. Waiting for resource's budget information. **#3 – Lilly Endowment Clergy Renewal Program** – Funding limitations for this grant are <\$60,000. Can apply in 2026. Could be used for Pastor Holgie's sabbatical. See attached handout for more details on each grant. MLT members discussed a procedure for future grant writing: 1) Dana will research FCCE's eligibility. 2) She will present the grant opportunity to the specific ministry team it would help. This team will then help her with input/support for writing the application.
3. **Advent Season – November 29th**- Hanging of the Greens/ **December 14th** – Special choir presentation/ **December 21st** – Neighborhood caroling /**December 24th** – Christmas eve service 5 p.m./ **December 25th** – Christmas Day service 10 a.m.

Old Business:

1. **Master Calendar/UCC Calendar:** Deb handed out the list of the FCCE upcoming ministry events September 3 – December 31, 2025

2. **Marketing FCCE Facilities:** The marketing materials are finalized and a plan is being developed to connect with a variety of potential schools, churches, and businesses about our rental availabilities.
3. A fire drill will be held during an upcoming Sunday service. Emergency preparedness team will meet and organize this drill.

Ministry Team Updates:

1. **Church Resources:** Fall clean-up day is Saturday November 15th. The church sanctuary will be tented for termites the week of Thanksgiving. FM633 will cease operation on November 21st and vacate Plymouth House by December 31, 2025. Minutes attached
2. **Mission and Social Justice:** No ICS sack lunch preparation in October but will do it twice in November. Susi will co-chair with Sue. Minutes attached
3. **Theological Connections:** The first UCC moment will be Sunday, September 21st with a table talk discussion to follow during fellowship. These will be held on the 3rd Sunday of each month.
4. **Fellowship:** CRMT to host fellowship in October / CLMT to host in November
5. **Worship and Music:** Planning a "hymn sing" Sunday for September 28th
6. **SCNC UCC:** Thank you to Dana for all her time spent researching and writing our grant proposals. Noted that she is including more content from SCNC UCC newsletter and from the UCC website and UCC News.
7. **Congregational Life Ministry Team:** 20 members currently on Care List. Minutes list all team members and their individual responsibilities. Minutes attached.

Support Team Updates:

1. **Marketing and Media:** Plans for enhancing the church's social media. Want to encourage more engagement from the ministry teams for their upcoming events. Looking for community marketing opportunities. Minutes attached.
2. **Master Plan:** Received 2 statements of qualifications from 2 affordable housing developers, The Hamstead Group and Jamboree. Team will be meeting on Sunday, September 21st to review these proposals and then on Sept 24th with our UCC consultants for input and next steps.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, October 22nd @ 10 a.m. in the conference room (note change of date) Devotion by Claire Dyekman

Pastor Holgie closed the meeting with a prayer.

Adjourned @ 11:40 a.m.

Respectfully submitted, Claire Dyekman, Clerk