

The First Church of Christ “Old North” in Marblehead

Minutes of the Leadership Board – February 12, 2026

Old North Church Vision Statement

Old North Church is an inclusive Christian Community called to bring to life God’s love and grace by sharing the gospel for this time and place; extending the hospitality Christ showed; embodying God’s love and compassion to those in need; and growing together in our understanding and experience of the Holy Spirit at work in our midst.

Leadership Board

The Leadership Board shall set policy and facilitate the execution of congregational priorities for the church. It shepherds the ongoing visioning process and makes decisions and acts within the stated vision and approved budget that are outside the scope of a single ministry. It listens with faith and facilitates communications and coordination within and between ministries, the entire congregation, and the wider community. It conducts ongoing strategic planning for the church. It may task ad hoc teams with specific action in support of its responsibilities. Sub Committees: PPR, Nominating.

The meeting was called to order in the Great Room at Stacey Street by Moderator, Richard von Rueden at 7pm. In attendance were Janet Doyle, Gary Eisenhower, Betsey Halbert, Rev. Lindsay Popperson, Roy Martin, Stephen Ainlay, Rev. Christine Hribar (Zoom), Lisa Nahatis (Zoom).

Rev. Christine Hribar led us in an opening prayer.

Note: The next Leadership Board meeting will be on Thursday, April 9, 2026, led by Betsey Halbert.

The minutes of the January LB meeting were approved. Draft minutes of the Annual Budget Meeting on February 8th will be published on the website.

In Blair Lord’s absence, Rick passed out the financial report as of the end of December 2025 showing a small surplus for the year. 2026 has started out strong in part due to a rather larger than usual portion of the 2026 pledges being received in full. David Cross will be taking Blair’s position as Treasurer sometime during the coming summer.

Church members were very appreciative of the new logo design work done by Jen Tips that was on display in the Parish Hall at the chili lunch and at Stacey Street. Rick reported that the most popular new logo that was viewed for the first time at the Chili lunch will undergo a couple of more iterations by Jen Tips. Ultimately the LB will decide on a new logo to be used on printed materials that is more visible than what we are currently using.

Next was a discussion on the long overdue Personnel Manual on which Betsey, Flory Denhard and Lindsay have been diligently working. There are steps to follow before it will be finished including figuring out how to implement many sections of the manual.

Board updates:

Prudential continues to work with the town to see how our parking lot might serve more than the church’s needs. Prudential will evaluate proposals for painting new stripes in the parking lot. They continue to be on top of all the Capital Campaign projects going into the final stretch of spring and summer. Alan Freeman will come to a future LB meeting to explain the intricacies of our new investment program. Prudential is also continuing discussions surrounding snow removal, the building management function and other day-to-day issues of the running of the church.

Deacons continue to do the “donkey work” of our church which is greatly appreciated by all. The 8 o’clock service continues to do communion via intinction. We used to use (and still have) glass communion cups. There is an insert for the dishwasher that we could get if we were to go back to using the glass cups versus plastic ones. Ongoing discussion here. The Deacons Fund continues to be put to good use.

Outreach. Stephen Ainlay is the new liaison with the Outreach Ministry Board, replacing Diane Thomas who has retired from the Leadership Board. He was very impressed with how responsive this ministry is to suggestions made by the congregation as to where our monies are distributed.

Christian Formation continues to support our Sunday church school as well as quite a few other educational programs. Roy will eventually delve into updating our Safe Church Policy. The idea of letting the middle schoolers experience the workings of Sunday morning church from the inside has been very well received by the young people. It’s busy and Christine is very happy with our progress this year. The North Shore Youth Ministry will do a performance evaluation of Jess Easter as next steps to this program continue to be developed.

Community Life reports another successful Chili Bake Off with Dave Weber as the winner. We also celebrated our first young person (George Watt) participating in the bake off. Starting with the Sunday after Easter we will be having coffee at Stacey Street the second Sunday of the month for new members and new people to Old North to come before the 10 o’clock service with the opportunity to meet with each other and to talk to more seasoned members. Judith Ainlay with input from Christine is spearheading this idea of fostering more inclusion on an informal basis.

The ministers gave their monthly reports. Lindsay reminded us that there will be a pulpit exchange with Temple Emanu-El on Friday March 6 and Sunday March 8.

The end of Rev. Christine’s two-year contract as Designated Term Associate Minister of ONC comes up September 15, 2026. A Discernment Committee comprised of Rick Von Rueden, Roy Martin, Blair Lord and Lindsay Popperson ex officio has been set up to determine what direction we will take next. Their assessment will come to the Leadership Board with a proposal put forth at the June 2026 Annual Meeting for a vote of the congregation.

With no further business to discuss, Rev. Lindsay Popperson led us in a closing prayer. The meeting was adjourned at 8:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet Doyle, Clerk