

First United Methodist Church Little Rock

Leadership Council

February 17, 2026

Present: Kelly Jackson, Jim Wohlleb, Stark Ligon, Laine Harber, Elaine Bultena, Juanita Woodard, Jessica Keith, Colin Gorman, Debbie Boyd, David Freeman, Haley Jones Wells, Harold Wesley, Sonja Taylor-Larkowski

Kelly Jackson opened the meeting and asked Rev. Freeman to pray.

Sonja Taylor-Larkowski started the financial report with the explanation that a check to the church for \$10,000 had been returned. This caused a negative balance for the month of January. Sonja explained the balance sheet and financial statement she passed to each member.

Kelly asked for a vote to accept the January financial report and all responded yes.

Harold Wesley, director of buildings, grounds and security, said there was a burst pipe under the sanctuary (popped sprinkler head.) He is requesting a quotation from a crawl space company. They will insulate pipes in the crawl space. The boiler pump seal was replaced due to a leak in a different part of the building. The damage to the front rose window was not as severe as previously thought. The project of replacing the 8<sup>th</sup> Street windows is complete. The project of repairing a leak in the chapel stairwell is complete and paid for.

The two charging stations donated to the church remain in storage. Sonja has been researching electricians and paving companies. The quotation for the electrical work was \$57,000. The Methodist Foundation has offered \$10,000 towards installation. The location of the charging stations will be in the middle row of the church parking lot. A consideration in the decision to install the charging stations is the deplorable condition of the adjacent parking lot and alley. Sonja said repairing and repaving all these areas as the main parking lot is torn up for the charging stations should be done simultaneously. The cost of the work on the other parking lot and alley will be \$47,000. The church trustees voted last year to approve obtaining the charging stations but did not approve their installation. Drivers, including members of the public, using the stations would pay the cost of parking using their credit cards.

The repairs reported by Wesley and the expenses to be incurred by the installation of the charging stations will be paid from the perpetual endowment fund. The council also approved to pay \$3250 from the perpetual endowment fund for the releathering of the organ.

Laine Harber asked if this body has the authority to rescind the offer of the charging stations. After further discussion, the members decided they didn't have enough information to make a decision about parking lot repaving and installation of the charging stations and chose not to vote now.

Rev. Haley Jones Wells presented Lenten projects titled "From Fast to Feast." A donor approached Haley and asked that the church help build a house in the new Providence Park. The donor will give \$25,000 to be matched by members of the church for a total of \$50,000. Another donor will give \$1000 to be matched by church members to purchase equipment and to make infrastructure repairs for Canvas Community. A third project Haley explained is a \$10,000 pilot job training program with our church's building services. Two people will be hired as apprentices each for six months to learn security, housekeeping and grounds management. Haley would help each person write a resume and learn job skills.

The total goal for "From Fast to Feast" is \$50,000. Haley will present these projects to the congregation throughout Lent. Kelly asked council members to give Haley permission to move forward on "Fast to Feast" and the vote was unanimous.

Rev. Freeman said there were no SPRC issues to discuss. An item he wants to discuss in future meetings is raises for the church staff.

David asked the group and listed responses on a white board to the question "who are we?" (FUMCLR)

- Inclusive, care for others, generous, servants, good neighbors, resilient

David continued: "what things have we done over a decade to fulfill God's call?"

- The community café, connectional, use of facilities beyond typical church, pray for one another

"How do we want our church to be described?"

- Open to all
- Caring
- Refuge for LBGT people
- Where people experience a God of love not of judgement
- Open to brokenness

David said we must put our mission in front of us.

David closed the meeting with a prayer.

Debbie Boyd

Secretary