

## **2021 Spring Congregational Meeting Board Reports – April 25, 2021**

### **Senior Pastor Report** submitted by Rev. Keith Mozingo

Dear Saints,

Since our last Congregational Meeting, we have continued to meet online only. Now that more and more people are getting their vaccinations, we will not have long to wait until we can gather again. We have been faithful to "love our neighbor" by staying away from one another for over a year now. We ask for your patience as we delve into the county protocols for gathering once again.

Some may wonder why we haven't already started gathering. The answer is that we are following the guidelines of the Los Angeles County Department of Health and Safety. Currently, even groups that are meeting are required to wear masks, stay six feet apart, sanitize bathrooms each hour, and have excellent ventilation. In addition, we would NOT be allowed to sing, have "call and response" (such as Call to Worship), go up for Communion, or lay hands on one another. So far, that has felt like a lot to ask for, especially as close as many of us are to one another. We believe the protocols will change with more and more vaccinations, and the Board of Directors and the Creative Worship Team are working behind the scenes to make sure that when we open, we are doing so safely.

I do want to compliment our Board and Worship Teams for their work on our last Congregational Meeting, as well as their continued commitment to meet online to make sure both worship and the business of the church have moved forward.

There are a few important things I want to highlight that we've been working on:

- expanded our worship experience by having people that could not attend church in person videotape either the readings or the celebration of Communion.
- expanded our music program so that people all over the world have been able to contribute to our worship via videotape.
- hired Camille Araullo as an Assistant Project Manager to assist our Treasurer Oyie Esguerra in getting our new App up and running. We hope this will be available by the time we are able to gather again.
- trained new volunteers in assisting the Treasurer.
- trained new volunteers on the new camera operation.
- held a "Blue Christmas" service to honor those who have passed away in the last year.
- had a professional-quality taped Christmas Eve service.

- had local, out of town, out of state, and out of country people join us in our online Ash Wednesday and Good Friday worship services.
- processed with the cross through our community on Good Friday.
- had our church signs out front re-painted (thanks, Miss Erica!).
- held a Membership Inquirer's Class.
- participated in multiple workshops, webinars, and online meetings with our denominational leaders as well as our community leaders.
- continued our Tuesday Evening Vespers, Wednesday Bibles Studies, Thursday Pastor Pop-ups and bilingual Rosaries; Friday Evening Vespers, Saturday Food Bank, and Saturday Evening Spiritual Interfaith services.
- witnessed Rev. Alejandro Escoto be elected as an Elder in our denomination.
- conducted annual staff evaluations
- stayed visible in the community with our light display out front (Thanks, Bayahihan!) as well as having both a Marimba band and a Mariachi band for outdoor concerts (Thanks, Spanish-speaking ministries!).

We are currently looking to replace our sound system. I hope that we can have a visioning session soon, as well. I look forward to the future, though none of us knows exactly what that looks like. We know the pandemic is not over, and we will certainly have to do things differently than in the past. I mentioned having a "hybrid model" of worship when we can re-gather. That means that we will want to create a meaningful worship and ministry experience for those in the building and those attending online.

God bless you and God bless FMCC as we journey together into ALL that God has for us!

Pastor Keith

### **Associate Pastor Report** submitted by Rev. Alejandro Escoto

Dear family,

As of our last Congregational Meeting in November of 2020, our capacity to provide social networked on-line services improved significantly as we continued to provide quality virtual worship services. And we did so as we kept our vision positioned towards tomorrow, while not forgetting the lessons of yesterday.

With this said, as the Associate Pastor of Founders Metropolitan Community Church and the Pastor of Iglesia Fundadora de la Comunidad Metropolitana, I continue to assist the Creative Worship Team with technical assistance by reviewing Sunday's PowerPoint services the Friday

before and assisting with the re-opening so that both services can abide by the guidelines of the County Health Department of Los Angeles.

**In respect to worship services, here are some highlights:**

**The Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe - December 12, 2020:**

ICM Fundadora was able to sponsor a Mass Honoring Our Lady of Guadalupe through a generous donor. The Mariachi ArcoIris (Spanish for rainbow) played “in the sanctuary” for the religious mass as well as “on the front steps of the church” as they blessed the neighborhood with their music. The altar for Our Lady was placed on the front steps and attracted attention from both cruisers and neighbors. It was a blessing to see people from the neighborhood drive by and watch from a distance.

**Christmas Eve - December 24, 2020:**

Christmas was a pre-recorded service that was created by Peter Kirkpatrick, who assisted in recording the music and myself, Rev. Alejandro, who created the movie with no special software, simply what windows 10 offered. It was a blessed experience that we prefer not to live again, however, when a time comes where it must be done again, one this if for sure, we will be ready!

**The Feast of the Black Christ of Esquipulas, January 17, 2021:**

ICM Fundadora sponsored the service honoring the Black Christ of Esquipulas as live marimba was provided by Inmigrantes Mayas Los Angeles during the Spanish Mass as well as after the Mass, as they played on the front steps. The altar honoring the Black Christ was set up on the front steps and once again, cruisers and neighbors would drive by, take pictures, and watch from a distance.

**Ash Wednesday, Lent, and Holy Week 2021:**

An inspirational and bilingual Zoom service was offered for Ash Wednesday and the Lenten sermon series as well as the weekly Lenten Study on Spiritual Resilience was a spiritual awakening for many. Holy Thursday invited congregants to be of service; Holy Friday was a solemn expression of our faith as Rev, Keith and I carried the Cross around our community. Much gratitude to Gef Aviles and Adrian Aviles who assisted with the filming via FaceBook Live . The evening of Good Friday, Rev. Keith and I offered a bilingual evening service through Zoom and without a doubt, those who attended were inspired and emotional .

**Passion/Palm Sunday and Easter 2021:**

ICM Fundadora sponsored an adapted version of the Passion Play by reading the extended Scripture of the Passion of Christ as Voces de Alabanza (Voices of Praise), coordinated by Peter

Kirkpatrick, provided music during key moments of the scripture reading. This was followed by a blessed Easter Sunday service,

**Important Acknowledgments:**

Gratitude to Peter Kirkpatrick for his faithfulness in maintaining the unity and high morale within the Spanish choir, **Voces de Alabanza**, as he coordinated members of the choir to sing on a rotating basis for the Sunday Mass.

Gratitude to Erika Partida whose love for our church learned how to operate the new camera and broadcasting system and trained by Camille Araullo. Erika then began training others to operate the system. With this said, we still need volunteers for both the English and Spanish service.

And my gratitude to the core group of volunteers who showed up faithfully every Sunday so that the 1:30 PM Mass could be broadcast with minimal interruptions. They are: Corena Montoya, Enrique Hernandez, Cesar Maldonado, and Alvaro Reyes.

Thank you to everyone who continues to support us. Peace and blessings as we journey forward in faith, hope, and love.

Rev. Alejandro

**Clerk's Report** submitted by Jenni Nichols

At our Fall 2020 Congregational Meeting, our reported membership was 151. A membership review was done by the Board of Directors from the date of our last membership roll review in November 2019 through the end of February 2021, which was the last full month of in person worship prior to the pandemic. During that time there were 7 members who did not meet the criteria of membership based on our bylaws, and we have moved them to an inactive status. There were also two members who passed away.

This reduces our active membership to 142.

As of the writing of this report, we do not have the number of new members who will be joining the church after April 11, 2021 membership class. This report will be verbally updated with the accurate number of members during our congregational meeting on April 25.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jenni Nichols

Clerk, Founders MCC

## **Governance Report** submitted by Dean Coffey

Our Fall Congregational Meeting in 2020 was our only congregational meeting of the year. The Board of Directors made the decision to permanently postpone the 2020 Spring Congregational Meeting due to pandemic gathering restrictions and not having a by-law that would clearly allow for conducting our business meetings virtually. At the 2020 Fall Congregational Meeting, our members adopted a by-law amendment allowing for all church committee, board, and congregational meetings to be conducted virtually. It was also our first virtual meeting to successfully affirm by electing our Board Members, Antonio Martinez and Dave Crocker, who were earlier appointed to the Board of Directors; and electing two Lay Delegates, Corena Montoya and Pamela Fairbanks, using virtual voting.

In January 2021, the board considered the suggestion by Roger Owens to establish a Community Service Award to honor the legacy of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The Board was supportive of this suggestion and requested that Roger and the Social Justice Committee of the church further refine the description of the award and the process for considering and approving nominations to receive the award.

The Board conducted the 30-month performance evaluation for Rev. Mzingo, recognizing his exceptional performance as our Senior Pastor during a year of rapid change and economic hardship and collaboratively agreed upon the following goals:

1. Provide leadership and promotion for the implementation of the PushPay app to use it to its fullest potential with the collaboration of the Board of Directors, church staff and church ministry groups.
2. Provide leadership for the selection, purchase, and implementation of a new sanctuary sound system to optimize the online ministry of the church.
3. Collaborate with the Board of Directors in creation of a new employment contract prior to the 2021 Spring Congregational meeting.
4. With the Board of Directors, provide leadership for the development of a plan to return to worship in person when it can be done safely and in concert with best practices recommended by the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health.
5. Along with the Board of Directors, review the financial outlook of the church to determine if hiring additional administrative staff is feasible.

## **Stewardship Report** submitted by Tony Martinez

For our 2021 Stewardship Campaign, We Will Build, the numbers are as follows: In tithes we had a total of 31 pledges totaling \$153,992. For the building fund, we had 17 pledges at \$13,264 forecasted for the year.

In tithes for the first quarter we have received \$35,373. That leaves a balance of \$109,943 for the year. That puts us at 20% of our goal for the year.

For the building fund for the first quarter we have received \$2,712, that leaves a balance of \$9,888 for the year. That puts us at 23% of our goal for the year.

I would like to give a heartfelt thanks to all that participate in the stewardship campaign. We understand this continues to be a challenging year, and we thank you for your contributions and for making our ministry possible.

## **Property/Facilities Report** submitted by Bob Stayton & Dean Coffey

**Nonprofit Security Grant Program 2018-2021 (\$101,200).** We are in process to receive a one-year extension until August 2022 for our original grant to replace doors, windows, entry access control systems, camera security and lighting systems. Since the church is over 50 years old, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) treats our building as an historic building even though the building is not registered as a California Historical Landmark. This is done to assure that any changes completed on the building preserve the architectural character of the neighborhood.

We are working with KB Construction to organize bids to present to FEMA for approval of our plans and issue a Clearance Letter to proceed with project funding requests. The grant is administered by the California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES). For each project in the grant, we request 50% of funding from Cal OES to start the project. When the project is completed, the church will pay the other 50% and then submit proof of completion to Cal OES, which will reimburse the church for the amounts paid on completion of the project. Authorized Agents for the grant are Rev. Mozingo, Sr. Pastor; Oyie Esguerra, Treasurer; and Dean Coffey, Vice Moderator. In addition to Authorized Agents, the following church members participated in the grant proposal were Chief of Police Don Mueller who completed the Threat and Vulnerability Assessments; Engineering Consultant David Sorlie; Construction Bid Analyst Robert Stayton; and Program Lead Dean Coffey.

**Rental Revenues** continue to be reduced due to meeting restrictions associated with the pandemic. Since the fall congregational meeting, our facilities have been rented on two occasions by film production companies which maintained strict COVID testing and safety protocols.

### **Building Repairs and Maintenance**

- Plumbing repair of clogged sink in Rosa Parks restroom
- Reglazing of bathtub in apartment above preschool
- Replacement of filters for HVAC system
- Repainting of church signs in front of church (Thank you, Miss Erica Cambra!)