

Fears, Sadness, Hopes and Prayers

Comments from three listening sessions – Eugene FCC Nov. 2022

What makes you sad, what do you fear?

Session 1

Sad that Jonathan and Jessica are leaving so abruptly

Sad we are losing two pastors at the same time

Sad Jessica is leaving

Sad to see us lose these two wonderful pastors and worry about the road ahead.

It makes me sad that there's been division and unhappiness from people that wasn't well addressed.

Sad that Jessica is leaving. She was the direction I want my church to go.

I am sad that the church never healed and did discernment after Greg left.

I am saddened by the way our Associate's leaving was dropped on us with no preparation like a bomb. We deserve better!

Sad for Jonathan and Jessica

Sad we are losing Jonathan

We are supposed to be accepting of all people and many are not.

Sad to lose Jonathan

I will miss "hello church!" new verve and lively service. I miss some former faces at FCC

I am sad for the loss of wonderful people and "what might have been"

I am saddened by the departures of many of our members over the past three years and I'm not afraid because we have the tools and leadership to prosper.

It makes me sad to hear people angry and fearful without real/true information

I am sad because we are only a progressive word just in name?

I am sad Jessica is leaving

Sad Jessica is leaving

Loss of people that I used to see – so many people haven't returned after the pandemic

Sad that our church is experiencing turmoil and sad that some appear to distrust and foster rumors without facts

Lack of direction and purpose in how we move forward

That the church will not recover from COVID and losing both pastors

FCC population – Before COVID, After COVID, Sept 21, now?

The only thing I fear is that we won't do the hard work we need to do to change and heal.

I'm nervous about finding a "socially activist" minister to replace Jonathan and Jessica

Losing more FCC members. I'm heartbroken to see Jessica leave and our senior pastor's retirement.

That an unhealthy divisiveness will be disruptive and possibly toxic

Fear our church will fall apart.

I'm afraid that the church will splinter as there are multiple groups that have their own agenda.

Fear our church will splinter

Afraid of turmoil

Our church is dying

I'm afraid that we haven't yet recognized the depths of our hurt and grief

Afraid we will have lots of meetings that won't go anywhere.

I'm afraid we won't get a dynamic pastor that will bring our FCC community together

We won't find another voice of justice and progressiveness

Fear our church regresses.

Afraid of division

Will programs go away?

Loss of trust and loss of community

I'm afraid of the people in the church turning against each other over this.

Fear that the work Jessica began in different areas will continue or not – (ie open and affirming process, covenant building “across the aisles”)

Afraid we won't take the interim process seriously

Session 2

Fear that this congregation will slip back into reliance on others to meet our needs. Need for spiritual connection.

I have no fears

That the church perishes

Concerned that we get pulled into the latest fads for churches rather than anchor ourselves in our strong roots and deep hopes.

That we will have difficulty attracting wonderfully creative and inspiring pastors to compete for our minister opening.

What are we doing to bring families and other young people back to church?

That there will not be transparency

That we will not have enough members and money to keep the congregation going

Need to bring back more families, folks who did not return after COVID and/or bring in new families.

My fear is that the brick and mortar church will eventually go away and I will lose my community.

Instead of seeing this as an opportunity, some may get cranky or leave the fold.

That the board is non-transparent; That the church- as a body-does not feel empowered to make decisions or enact change; That there are too many ideas of what church is/can be w/out a centerpiece of who FCC is; That the church will continue to lose members; That the church is not willing to name and address hard problems but prefers positivity; That individuals and families under the age of 60 are not involved in the true voice, goals and action of this congregation.

Session 3

My fear is that we will have another overpaid empty suit.

Transphobia

Lack of transparency

Women's group needs reform

That we'll expect so many things from new pastor that it can't be done.

What are your hopes for FCC? What are your prayers?

Session 1

That we take the interim process seriously. We need healing and positive energy

I hope for community to pull together. I hope for strength of love to win

I hope we can learn from this. I pray we survive

We keep our focus on being an Open and Affirming church

To be more open with each other. If someone is abusive to another, it is stopped and not allowed to continue.

Hope for dynamic minority clergy. Hope/pray we'll hold together

I hope the church gets an interim pastor that helps heal the congregation as well as assists in the mourning process.

That we will land on "our feet". That we'll continue to be a strong congregation

Hope church will come out of all this stronger. Prayer – the same

Hope is that in this Easter season – first with death and despair, we will experience the rebirth and rejuvenation.

Hopes: For peace, understanding and good will toward all as time and process move forward; for openness to the new realities facing the church post 2020 (\$ and other) and an honest willingness to adapt organizationally, accordingly; for clarity on the kind of leadership needed going forward and the process that will allow the church to find a new leader who will be successful in this situation.

Hopes: unity as we move forward. Prayers: a great future for Jonathan & Lisa and Jessica & Deshna.

My hopes are that we will become more transparent about any issues permissible by law and that we will come together to fulfill our mission at FCC

The people, the congregation, stays in remembrance that WE ARE THE CHURCH

People remember the powerful work this church did 25 years ago to become an open and affirming church and that this continues to this day.

We need to address paternalism and the concept of senior ministers & hierarchy

My hope is that our congregation uses this gift and time to highlight our joys and talents.

The spirit guides us toward the future.

Hope new pastor is good.

The congregation will pull together and not split or leave

Leadership that gets members and minds the budget

Hope for positive energy moving forward

Could Jessica stay?

I hope and pray that members who may have drifted or are on the fringes will return to help us create the future we want.

That an intentional interim can help us heal and do some needed and important self-discovery as a congregation

I hope that FCC can be a phoenix rising from this

Jonathan and Lisa feel we have treated them as well as they treated us!

I hope we get a good interim pastor and a great permanent one. 1 shepherd at a time

We can weather this change and be stronger for it. I pray for love and joy in our church community and growth.

Hope: to regrow a wealth of families and all kinds of people who are willing to take risks and share the love and abundance available here.

Pray for kindness and generosity

This is our opportunity to learn who we are as a congregation, how we want to manifest the Gospel in the world and invite a new minister to meet us there.

I hope we find a pastor who really understands our mission and is willing to compromise and work with people toward a common goal

Let us pray for healing – for Jessica and Jonathan’s well being – and for us. We’re all injured.

That we can stabilize our finances

I hope that our members will remain supportive of our church and our whole beloved community. I trust that we will be strong and connected.

Wisdom, Love, Joy

Hopes: renewed vision and renewed sense of purpose. I pray for cohesion and honor for differing perspectives. I pray for our LGBTQ

That we can cooperate and reach reasonable ways to proceed

Our pastors find peace in their lives after being with our church

I hope the folks of FCC see this moment as “opportunity”, not “crisis”

Hope and a prayer: A turning point and a new beginning

Prayers for unity, support and God’s guidance in moving forward

And we all need each other.

To have open communication with Q’s

Session 2

I hope we have a good way to dig deeper into who we are to find pastoral leadership.

That the church grows and thrives

That the church will emerge strong with a clear and common focus about its future direction = a clear sense of who we are as a church

I hope the leadership leads with candor toward new options and the members are engaged through the major transition.

Hope and pray that Jonathan and Jessica and their families will thrive in their new lives and that FCC will do the same.

That this will be an opportunity to bring congregations together and help us realize this community is about what we all contribute and share together.

That we will make decisions together that look at and address the facts and problems and issues that have been ignored previously such as Jon's administrative style, Greg's continuing involvement, personal & professional aggressions against Jessica: That the entire survey from earlier in 2022 will be shared with the entire church; that the moderators & board members receive real training for this difficult time and demanding roles; that the conference or even synod will be involved in helping discern next steps.

That this congregation adopt a radical ethic of service and hospitality for the poor among us.

I hope we will be guided, wise and prayerful in calling our next Sr. Pastor.

I hope we can be very creative and bold at this opportune moment where change is uniquely possible.

Session 3

I hope a new pastor will be a part of the larger community and actively see and support Justice and Witness group

Please do future listening sessions during the day (I gave two seniors rides because they don't drive after dark)

Hope for capital improvements: \$5k livestream equipment and new circular seating for sanctuary

Find a pastor as personable, flexible and easy to work with as Jonathan Morgan

Consider mid-day opportunities for seniors or others who do not drive at night.