

UNOFFICIAL

Deacon Meeting Minutes for April 12, 2026

In attendance: Pastor Jane, Debbie Pratt, Mary Ann Charron, Lisa Fenwick, Steve Fredette, John Fenwick (Deacon helper)

The meeting was called to order at 11:35 am

Debbie began the meeting with a prayer.

New Business:

Steve made a motion to accept the minutes of the March meeting. Debbie seconded; the motion passed.

Pastor Jane will be absent on April 26th. Steve will lead the service, John F. will deliver the children's message. PJ asked John to consider leading the service on September 12th.

About 40 meals were served at the Wednesday, March 18th, corned beef and cabbage lunch. This monthly event is going very well. The church will again be open for lunch and fellowship on April 15th. A pork dinner will be served.

A new member class will be held on April 19th. Deacons are encouraged to attend. There are four potential candidates for membership! The class will have several parts: An introduction to the UCC, an opportunity for candidates to talk about their faith backgrounds, a description of the Boards and Committees here at FHUCC, and a reading of Dave Mallory's history of our church. New members will be installed on May 3rd. Debbie suggested we give Bibles to the new members. Everyone agreed.

Fair Haven Spring Fling will be Saturday May 23rd. Deacons will once again set up outside the church to sell cinnamon rolls for \$5. Church members will be asked to consider baking to help the Deacons. Monies collected will be donated to Slate Valley Cares.

Steve has engaged with the Walk to Emmaus national office in Ohio to see if a local Walk would be forthcoming. PJ would like to attend if a Walk becomes available; others may also be interested. If so, perhaps a group could go together. Steve suggested an announcement be put in the bulletin.

Andrew Donahue is no longer a Deacon.

A one-day Christian music festival, Worship in the Pines, will be held at the Saratoga Performing Arts Center on Friday, Sept. 11. No details are yet available, but will be announced soon.. This would be a great event to attend together.

Old Business:

Holy Week services were reviewed. Attendance was light this year, but those who attended found the experiences very moving. Ideas for next year include having an outdoor Communion/Last Supper on Maundy Thursday (weather permitting), and holding the Good Friday service at 3pm, perhaps with a procession through the Park preceding.

A spirited discussion was held regarding the letters to members listed as active but who are no longer participating in the life of the church. The spreadsheet containing the roster of member information that Debbie had prepared was never moved to her computer, making it difficult to have a working list. There are currently two partial lists, each of which has some information, but not all, for each entry. Debbie has been carefully reviewing each name. Some people have moved away and no current address is available. It was suggested that the letters be sent according to our list anyway. If they are returned, we will have at least tried to contact everyone and can safely move individuals from active to inactive, per our bylaws. Lisa will recreate the spreadsheets and include all information on one list.

Regarding the member roster issue, please see the addendum provided by Debbie. These comments were received outside of the meeting in an effort to explain the situation.

Steve made a motion to adjourn at 1:30 pm. Mary Ann seconded; the motion passed.

Our next meeting is scheduled for **Sunday, May 10th** after worship. (That is Mother's Day, so perhaps a change will be necessary.)

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Fenwick, scribe

ADDENDUM

Received from Debbie Pratt via email, 4/13/26

“The excel spreadsheet I prepared on our church membership was never moved to the computer that was set up for me and others to use in the office. An excel program is on the computer, but the document was never put on this computer. Kate would prefer me to use this computer and not the new computer. The hard drive sounds like it is going to die. I worked long and hard on this project and when I discovered the document had not been moved to this computer I refused to put it in all over again on a computer that could crash.

Pastor (Jane) took my laptop home in hopes of repairing it and put on an excel program so I could put the membership information on this computer. It can't be fixed.

When I was assistant treasurer I was able to update information as it came in. I am no longer assistant treasurer. Kate is doing the job of assistant treasurer until someone steps up to take the position.

To be clear, I have not asked Kate for this information. We are all volunteers in this church and Kate is doing the job of Treasurer and assistant treasurer. I have been there and it takes a lot of time. It is also not Eileen's duty to give us this information.

There has been a communication issue for many years since Deacons took over membership between the office and Deacons. I do not blame the people in the office or Deacons.

Before Kate had the counters copying checks in donations, I would have people update their information once in a while using a form I created. I would then go into church membership on church windows and do the updates. It actually was not my job at the time as treasurer, but we had no one else working on it and it had to be done.

So what I am suggesting is that when the Deacon or Deacons in charge of the membership see a new person coming to church if they could give this person a piece of paper or simple form to get their address, phone number, email address, and membership status, and explain why. Or if they know a person has moved or got a new phone number, get their new information. In my opinion, this would be much easier than to go through channels getting information from the office. It is a way to simplify things.”