

Results of the Affordable Housing Survey

How was the survey conducted?

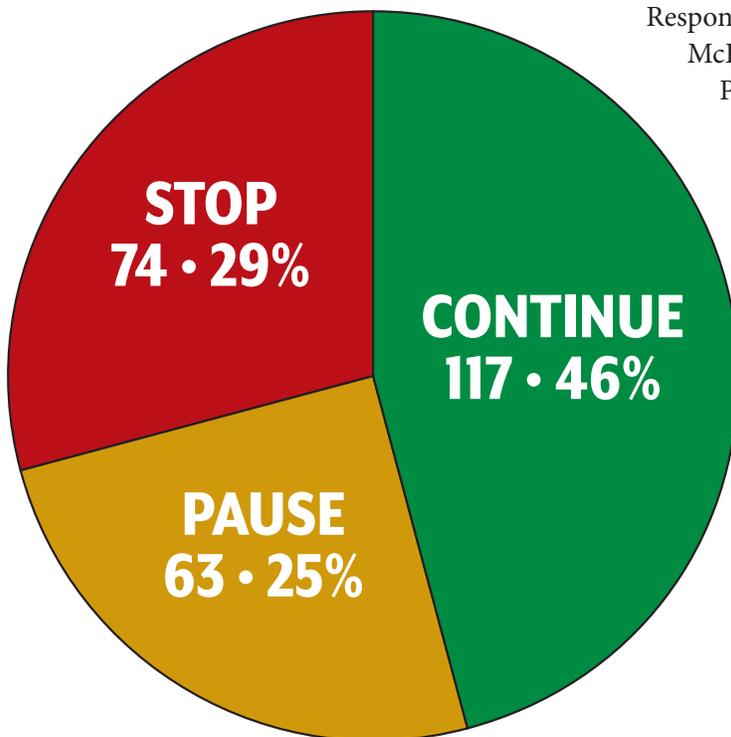
The Affordable Housing Survey was taken over the period of two weeks. The survey was publicized in the eCarillon, the online Carillon and the website both weeks, special announcements were made during worship on two Sundays, an eblast went out to the entire list and individual email reminders were sent out by church leadership.

254 responses were received, mostly electronically (20-25 were done by paper ballot). This is a strong return compared to past surveys. It is also similar to the number of people who might attend a congregational meeting.

This was an informal process, not an official congregational vote. The invitation to take part was stated this way: "Anyone who is currently involved in the congregational life of First Church (church attendance and/or financial support) may take part in the survey, whether or not you have officially joined the church." Because the link to the survey was shared publicly, it would have been possible for someone without a direct current connection to the church to take part.

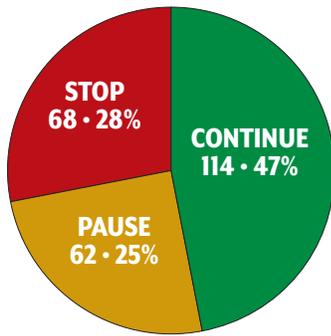
To evaluate whether the results of the survey were representative of the current First Church community, respondents were asked to provide their names on the survey, with the understanding that direct correlation between name and vote would be closely held.

Responses were aggregated by Church Clerk Janet McDonald with some additional work by Phil Porter.

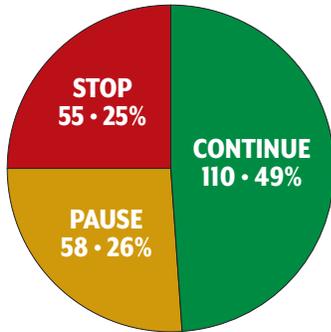


Basic results

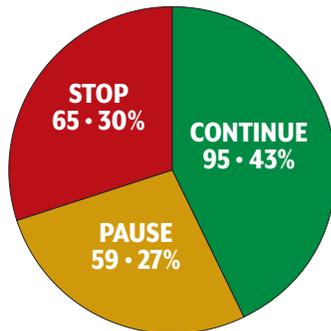
Of the 254 responses, 74 (29%) responded "stop," 63 (25%) responded "pause," and 117 (46%) responded "continue."



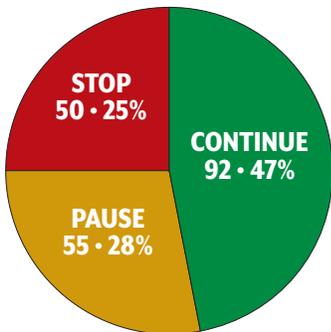
WITHOUT ANONYMOUS VOTES



REGULAR ATTENDERS



MEMBERS



REGULARLY ATTENDING MEMBERS

Evaluating the responses

With the provision of names, we could evaluate whether those responding represented our “current” community. It allowed us to answer a few more specific questions.

1. *Were the number of anonymous votes numerically or statistically significant?*

No. We can’t evaluate whether the anonymous votes were made by those currently involved in First Church life, but removing them doesn’t appreciably alter the results. Only 10 people chose to respond anonymously: 3 “continue,” 1 “pause,” and 6 “stop.”

2. *How many people who are currently involved in the congregation (based on attendance or financial contribution in the last 18 months as reflected in the church database) but are not members took part in the survey?*

25 of those who supplied their names, including 4 “friends” (a joining status that does not include voting privileges in official congregational votes) and 5 youth.

3. *How many people took part in the survey who are members but are not currently attending or contributing?*

23. This could potentially include some who can no longer come to church but “attend” by watching the webcast.

4. *Do the results look different if either non-members or non-attending members are excluded?*

Not appreciably. The graphs of responses of “regular attenders,” “members,” and “regularly attending members” look similar. It is unlikely that using a more exclusive data set would change the interpretation of the results.

It is interesting to note the comparison of the votes of regular attenders who aren’t members and members who aren’t currently attending:

Regularly attending non-members

stop 4 pause 3 continue 19

Members not currently attending

stop 18 pause 4 continue 3

What else did we learn from the survey process?

The responses came in gradually over the two weeks. There wasn’t a “rush to respond.” The pace accelerated closer to the end of the process. Multiple encouragements seemed to be necessary to get responses.

Once the initial group of responses came in, the general proportions of the vote stayed about the same—there weren’t any big fluctuations in the vote. From this, one could presume that if more people had responded it is unlikely that it would have altered the results.

Survey Comments

These are the comments that were included in the survey sorted by the response category. Comments unrelated to affordable housing and identifying information were removed.

Stop

Yes, an important issue. For a number of reasons, I do not believe the Church campus is a good or even viable location for this undertaking. The Church campus would be better utilized to provide local community services. Affordable housing projects facilitated by the Church should be pursued at more viable locations in the neighborhood and greater community.

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Thanks to the committee for the hard work on this important issue.

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After Pilgrim Hall is rebuilt and we are using it (including kitchen, library and thrift shop) maybe we can talk about affordable housing. The thrift shop earned a lot of money for church programs; and it was a nice, small way to meet other thrifty members. Molly, please turn your formidable energies to getting the burned-out parts of our building rebuilt.

.....

This proposal creates a ghetto of low income holding cells without any connection to the neighborhood. Because of the density and utter lack of diversity this project would only exacerbate economic segregation in Berkeley. It is our land and we should use it to create housing in a community with a diversity of housing. The goal would be to create a diverse community we could be proud of rather than simply warehousing people.

The Durant House can easily be lifted to increase parking and the new units can also have some parking underneath. Destroying the Durant House would be an unmitigated environmental and cultural disaster. As market rate housing it could subsidize other development. I believe it is a serious mistake to deal with a low income housing organization whose sole goal is maximizing warehousing of low income folks. We are a church that should have more positive

community goals. The way to do that is to hire an architect who understands a greater vision for the site. I realize that the economics may not work but that is not a reason to do something immediately that is not the best for our community - including future residents and our congregation.

The proposal I have seen is driven by federal policy that for decades has subsidized housing at the expense of community. It was designed to keep low income folks isolated in enclaves rather than interacting with the community around them. We own this land so we do not have to be greedy about the amount of money we earn or the number of units built. We can do something great over time. Imagine a co-housing community that included a dozen low income and market rate rentals.

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Last June I made my views known about the critical need to focus on rebuilding Pilgrim Hall, with the improvements recommended by Roger Bash-to the leaders of the FRC, BST, and Church Council; in public comments at the June 10 forum; and in a subsequent discussion with the Senior Minister-so I won't repeat them here. Based on everything I have learned in the 8 months since then, my opinion has not changed. The Church and its leaders need to embrace a clear mission, vision, plan, and capital funding effort to restore Pilgrim Hall as soon as possible so that it can support the healthy functioning of our congregation and the wider community we serve. My understanding is that with the passage of time, our task has only become more challenging. With strong, clear leadership we can do this, but it will require the full effort of the entire church community. We don't have the luxury of further discussion of alternate plans. Time is of the essence.

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Rebuilding Pilgrim Hall is the crux of our challenge. Let's focus on that instead of on the affordable housing matter or entertaining more new ideas.

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This is a worthwhile endeavor. I think it is best to consider the project as a group effort, together with other churches or non-profits. Adequate- sized individual units with parking and access for tenants, their visitors, and supportive personnel.

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I appreciate all the hard work folks have done but I truly believe we need to stop consideration. I have been to a lot of the sessions, read the information and listened to what folks have said. Why is the response of exploring affordable housing on our campus the only response to the issue that we are giving time and energy to? I think it was well said by some congregants that we are going down a path that not all folks want to go down. The more time and energy and discussion we give to building on our campus, the more I think you will see folks fading away on the issue and from church, especially old-timers, folks who have been here for 15-20+ years. I don't think the church folks have the bandwidth to have more endless discussions on this topic. It is distraction and dividing the church.

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Our FCCB community has a huge heart for serving our local and wider community. For me saying no to development on our property does not negate this intention. My reasons for saying no: One, i do not believe we have the space to build a facility that would be suitable for a developer. Two, a development would super-concentrate the building mass on our land making our area feel more like Wall Street. Three, having been a "parking minister" for many years, i know how vital parking access is for welcoming visitors and new members to our facility. No matter how much we may think cars are going away, they likely are not going away for many families and the elderly. Four, we need to keep our community focused on the re-build of Pilgrim House when we know our options. Pilgrim House serves both FCCB and the wider community. I also want to make sure new designs provide several units of apartments that can serve church staff that take care of our community and facility..

I thank the Blue Sky team for exploring the development project options and presenting them to the congregation. I know that has been a big devotion of time and energy. I remember back around 10 years ago when Lazslo and Henry lead a group to look at develop option for Plymouth House for senior housing. A similar, but shorter investigation was done, and the developer involved concluded that such a development was not economically and physically feasible. Thus, a new option emerged of developing Plymouth into the Boy's School. One investigation leads to another option!

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This was a longshot to begin. As more problems emerge, I think it is unworkable. We need our parking to keep the church strong. Once our building is settled and paid for, we can think about other ways to help the homeless.

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I think that keeping the parking lot for our church is very important.

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I am interested in perusing ways we could support housing by rehabbing buildings. I think that our site would work well as a hub for staging efforts to support social justice work, as well as continuing to be a venue that serves the wider community. I believe we need to preserve the parking and maintain space for EBSB to be outside.

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I think this is a misuse of our energy and space, will not serve our community as anticipated, and will weaken the future of our church.

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Not right time. This is dividing the church. Let's focus on rebuilding Pilgrim Hall first. Focus on that & not scatter energies in 2 directions. Plus, the economics of building 40-50 units in small footprint is challenging. A project that complex needs time to mature.

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FCCB could support work of non-profit groups working on low income housing in other ways that are effective and do not disrupt our church.

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I think there are better ways to support affordable housing than doing it this way. I also don't think it makes sense for the church even to be an "arms length" landlord. Too expensive & not a good use of resources.

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I think the area is already congested enough and I am in favor of looking at other sites for pursuing affordable housing, perhaps with another organization.(s) I think we need to get our construction going without having to figure out the housing issue simultaneously even if there seems to be money we might make off the housing deal.

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This is a terrible idea that has long term implications.

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Affordable housing is financially a very bad idea.

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Development of the church property is only one way to address affordable housing. Many other possibilities would seem to exist, but we have not been presented with other alternatives. The process to date has focused solely on development of the church site, without consideration or presentation of alternatives. There also seems to be a bias in the presentations for development of the church site, to the exclusion of other alternatives. The process that has been followed to date seems to be creating major divisions within the congregation and feels like it is putting our church in jeopardy. We should be focusing our energies on rebuilding Pilgrim Hall. The space available for development is not large enough to cost effectively address the issue. Let's use the right tool for the job.

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I oppose building housing, though I admire the intent. I am concerned about the environmental impact of adding more housing and people to the Bay Area. We have experienced water shortages in recent years, and Gov. Brown says, "Drought is the new normal." Our aquifers are being drained of water. I don't want to end up in the same situation as Capetown, South Africa, with no water. Perhaps we could give The Berkeley Free Clinic a new home. They are located across the street from our church and are desperately looking for a new affordable location in downtown Berkeley. They're doing the Lord's work, for sure. Also, we also have some of the worst traffic in the nation. As we spend more and more time sitting in traffic the air is polluted. These are the hard environmental realities that we must face. Furthermore, I feel claustrophobic. I am advocate for open spaces.

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I was a long-time member (1978-2017) and very involved in many aspects of FCCB life. So I love FCCB and care about what happens. From a distance, this proposal seems to me to be splitting the church, with particular lack of care for the older folks in the congregation (parking) and both older and younger folks in the church who work hard in careers as well as

for many causes and need spiritual renewal on Sunday to keep them going on the work they already do.

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We already have too much "infill" in the Bay Area, negatively impacting traffic, transportation, clean air, water, natural resources, cost of living, and especially folks nerves. Let's not add to this situation.

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It's an important issue, yes, but I don't think it is feasible in the space we have, and the endless conversation is dividing the congregation in a most destructive way. We need to get pilgrim hall rebuilt so we have adequate space for the other activities of the church.

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I would have welcomed affordable housing on top of our existing building by going to four or five stories. Since that's not feasible I am not in favor. With new housing we would have to create more parking. The alternative proposal would reduce the no of parking spots. That would be harmful to the long term survival of the church

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I think this is not a good use of the churches resources. It's also a very divisive idea which seems to be causing a major split in the church. Not a good thing for a new minister to do!

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I think we should investigate teaming with other organizations or other means to build this housing. It's expensive and complicated and we shouldn't do it alone.

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I've listened to both sides of the discussion and from everything I've heard, I don't believe that our parking lot is a good site for this project.

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I believe that affordable housing is a very worthwhile idea, but we do not have enough land to make it workable. I really liked the idea at first.

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Let's take the money from the sale of Amistad House and build affordable housing elsewhere in Berkeley, not on the FCCB campus.

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The proposed affordable housing is not the right use of church property. It creates significant parking issues, with a proposed cut of more than two-thirds of the existing parking with a parking attendant. There is already a parking crunch for the existing uses of the church facility, without accounting for the additional parking that would be needed for housing or the space the housing would take from the parking lot. Many of the church members live far away or have mobility constraints; church attendance will likely drop for those members who are unable to use local public transit options or bike/walk to church. This decreases church accessibility for those with disabilities and provides a strong disincentive to attend church events for those that live outside of Berkeley. Valet parking or other alternatives could be expensive, inconvenient, or cause traffic circulation issues. Vehicle circulation would also be significantly impacted by the diminished size of the proposed parking lot, and the proposed turn-around area would further decrease parking availability. Additionally, the uses and management of the proposed housing have significant potential to conflict with the use of the church by members and other revenue-generating groups that use the space (e.g. concerts, Boys School). The space to be dedicated for housing could be better put to use to serve the needs of the church community, which are not always met by the availability, size, and amenities of existing spaces (even including a functional Pilgrim Hall). Many groups use Durant House, and Pilgrim Hall has historically not had sufficient capacity to accommodate all church uses. The Boys School and other current rental spaces can be used by church members (e.g. for meetings, choir rehearsals) when designated rental activities are not taking place; the congregation would be prohibited from using spaces designated for housing. The rebuilding of Pilgrim Hall should be the church's current priority. There are many other ways to address the problem of affordable housing besides building housing on church property, and a full evaluation of alternatives would be critical in determining the most effective way to address the problem, e.g. funding alternative housing on a different site, conversion of other sites, partnering with affordable housing groups. The church property may not be large enough to effectively contribute to addressing the affordable housing crisis, and it is

important to first and foremost identify the population most in need of affordable housing (e.g. The homeless? Students? The elderly?), assess their main barriers to housing access, and then assess which solutions (from a broad array of alternatives) could best address that. If this is the issue the congregation wishes to focus on. Other issues may be equally pressing, e.g. food insecurity, environment, social justice, gun violence, and resources should not be dedicated to affordable housing at the exclusion of dealing with other important issues. The church's property is its biggest asset, and building housing requires that the church give up control of a large portion of that asset indefinitely. The long-term financial implications of building housing should also be taken very seriously, for the financial health of the church. If federal loans are pursued, the current tenuous political situation at the federal level must be taken into account, including potential cuts related to housing funding. This is a substantial commitment for the church community, including entering a 99-year lease agreement and substantively changing church property and revenues. In a congregational church, it is imperative that the process to consider a major change such as this is respectful and inclusive, and that the congregation reaches a collaborative agreement about the path forward. The church should not risk permanently fragmenting or jeopardizing its congregation over this issue, and should do everything possible to ensure that we maintain a unified, sustainable church community for decades to come.

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I think that the Berkeley Pilgrimage Foundation should use the money they got from Amistad House to get property for this project. Affordable housing is the goal of that Foundation. Let the Foundation go forward with the goal and stop loaning the money to the church for unrelated projects. The Foundation was comprised of FCCB members, but it was not sponsored by FCCB. That was made quite clear in the minutes which have now dissolved in the basement because of the fire.

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Space is not sufficient to accommodate realistically a busy church with a regional reach, the EBSB, and needs for 40 residents: tenant & visitor parking, service personnel, et al. On a different site, perhaps with

collaborators, at a later date, housing sponsorship might be considered.

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back to basics..

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I wonder what other options are available offsite to build/support affordable housing in partnership with other nonprofits or churches.

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I have struggled a lot with whether to vote Pause or Stop. There IS a lot going on, a lot of struggle within the congregation. I'm afraid if we re-visit it in 18 months, it will be more of the same struggles. I'm ready to move on to the exciting re-build of our beloved Pilgrim Hall and give that our full attention until its completion.

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I agree that this is an important issue. In 18-24 months I might feel more inclined to reconsider the proposal but, currently, I lean more toward "Stop" than "Pause." I am very grateful for the hard work members of the insurance, Blue Sky and affordable housing committees have and continue to put in on our behalf. I know you have sometimes faced push back, and also know that each of you is kind-hearted and working from a place of service and love.

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I think for those that want to do a housing project, we should get together with the City of Berkeley and go after the lot that has been vacant for 25 years at the corner of Telegraph and Haste and put up a mixed use commercial/low-income housing project

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Pilgrim Hall must be the main priority! We are NOT in favor of Affordable Housing on the church site as PARKING is ESSENTIAL for many members and for events. We also feel that it would diminish the sanctity of the church on Sunday mornings

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This survey should be for members only.

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Thank you, Blue Sky Committee for such hard work and good report. I read the report and participated in

church meetings. I would love to vote to continue, but there are too many problems I see, and we have not done due diligence in pursuing other options, such as sharing a project with the conference or other local churches. Example: Greater Richmond Interfaith Program built and runs a multi-service shelter together; we could do so with an affordable housing project offsite that is much bigger and less constrained by the site. There are Berkeley Pilgrimage Foundation resources available. The problems I see: —99 year lease for an issue that is an "unprecedented moment" in the city. This may not be a significant need in five or ten or more years. —45 units in that site make apartments too small. Evidence: market rate could not fit that many units. Just because people are low income doesn't mean they don't need or deserve comfortable places to live. Ask ourselves: would we want to live there? Talk to people living on very low incomes about their needs. —Reduction of parking lot would, I think, have detrimental effects on the church. Example: First Congregational Church of San Francisco, a downtown church that without its parking grew smaller and smaller and closed their doors. We also have other users of the church who depend on full parking lot. The land is presently being used almost all the time. — In this set of plans, mixed market rate and affordable units are not possible. A mix is important to maintain long term quality. Look at affordable housing in Berkeley/Oakland that is new versus that which is older, very run down, and in a few cases abandoned. Without managing the project ourselves, we would have no say over maintaining quality, and it's not clear whether the project could be resold further down the line. Mixed rate helps insure ongoing quality. One way we might make immediate inroads to affordable housing would be to become active in working toward real rent control for a population of low income and fixed income persons about to become homeless but who have not previously been so. The number of at risk renters is very large at this moment. Our church could provide moral leadership desperately needed. This urgent participation would not preclude working toward building affordable housing with a partner(s) on a different site.

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This is a terrible idea, bordering on being unethical. It fails to honor the wishes of those who gave their time,

energy, love for our church, and financial resources to build Pilgrim Hall in the first place.

Pause

It seems appropriate to allow time for the congregation to come together and build a consensus about a path forward. Pausing would provide an opportunity for this to take place.

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Although I think this is an important issue and I would like to see affordable housing happen, the congregation seems to be divided on this. Therefore, I think it wise to take more time to listen, to explore more options, and to better understand the situation with Pilgrim Hall.

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I have questions about the project, but I think it deserves the fullest consideration possible. I don't think we necessarily need to wait 18 months, or until Pilgrim in under construction, but I think there are aspects of the Pilgrim rebuild (finances, logistics, time to discuss those plans) that could inform our decision and it would be good to have that information. I also think it would be helpful to regroup a bit and figure out the best way for the conversation to go forward that can be consensus-building and robust. I think it is so important for a faith-community to be able to wrangle with issues and ideas in ways that can lift up all of the best ideas—pro and con—in a spirit of openness. We shouldn't shy away at the first sign of conflict—we should work our way through it.

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There's too many issues to go forward.

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I had been unable to attend the majority of the meetings about this, so really appreciate the information provided. I love the idea of affordable housing...100%, but did not realize that it would come before Pilgrim Hall work was started. So my vote is to "pause".

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I have no objection myself to walking from BART or more distant parking. But the project proposed is not a good one for its own residents. And it can end badly

for them. I know a great deal about this based on walking day by day with my mother down into the valley of the shadow during the last six years of her life. There are compelling details to the story that I'd be happy to share with the congregation, not just put them in a confidential memo here. She lived at low income housing and died in assisted living. I hope to have an opportunity to present the whole story which presages experiences many will have.

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I think we need to hold off longer than 18 months, Pilgrim Hall needs to be finished and then consider this worthy project.

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My only concern about pausing is that we won't know if housing revenue could help fund Pilgrim rebuilding. But then, I don't want to hold up rebuilding for housing to be finalized either -- that could add years to the rebuild. So I'll take the middle ground and say let's focus on Pilgrim Hall first and then revisit the idea of affordable housing later. Thanks.

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Thanks to everyone who are involved.

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The summary was very VERY well done. I'm basing my decision on having gone thru a substantial building project at another church and I don't see the vision of Pilgrim being "rebuilt" while affordable housing is being built. Thank you everyone for all their time, efforts and huge hearts!

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Will our non-profit status be affected by receiving \$ for this project?

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I do think its an exciting idea. I also think that further development of a plan will be a very time consuming project. I would honor a group that undertakes further consideration of the plan, pending reconstruction of Pilgrim Hall, but the continuation option, in calling for Church Council discernment, seems to call for an active involvement of the congregation as a whole at a time when I think our resources are already stretched and our focus should be on the reconstruction process and other immediate concerns.

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We need to start doing the best we can the soonest we can - and that means getting Pilgrim Hall rebuilt so we can move from there toward our next objective.

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Every discussion I have attended regarding the affordable housing concept has felt divisive and difficult, and I think the reason is that we are mired in uncertainty about the Pilgrim Hall project and already feeling stretched to manage it well, so taking on a second project just doesn't feel right, at least not yet. We still don't have definitive information about what we can afford to do with Pilgrim Hall, whether or not we will have a financial shortfall or windfall there, how long and disruptive that project will be, etc. I liken it to having a fire at home that will require a full remodel of our kitchen, and just as we are recovering from that trauma and struggling to understand and cope with that challenge (which may or may not be fully reimbursed by insurance), having somebody suggest building a rental cottage in the backyard. Without a clear understanding of our financial footing or timeline, or the compelling need to take on a second, simultaneous building project that will reduce and require sharing our home, it feels like an unnecessarily stressful additional burden at just the wrong time, stealing focus from the more pressing matter at hand, which is already daunting. I support the concept of considering low income housing as an option. I do not think the time is ripe to drive that agenda and would far rather see us apply the inevitably limited energy and resources we have to the Pilgrim rebuild (which I urge us to complete within our current means, irrespective of the fate of the Durant parcel), then assess our options and the need for an additional building project.

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I am excited about the possibility of low income housing, but It is muddying the water as we discuss rebuilding Pilgrim Hall. I appreciate that PH may not be built as we hope without a source of capital. But the idea of raising capital by building low cost housing is too sophisticated for many of our congregants. And there are different ways to raise, allocate or borrow funds to do PH. Great work, so far!!!! Thank you!!!

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The church's heart is not in continuance at this time. I think it will be more open when Pilgrim Hall is visibly

under construction. Tying the two projects together would be complicated now. We need to recover from the fire, first. Let's hit pause to focus church leadership attention on rebuilding. None of the information gleaned on affordable housing is wasted. This is pause not end.

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I chose Pause, rather than Continue because once we have plans for Pilgrim we will know more about the mission programs we will be able to carry out from that building. It may be that we can do more than before and if that is true do we have the people power to take on yet another project. And further we will know, if we are doing more, how our parking will be impacted by more use of Pilgrim.

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Pause, not only until Pilgrim is constructed, but also until nearby land-use projects are complete, after which FCCB can evaluate those changes to community needs, and make decisions for the best use of FCCB property. (1) Chancellor Christ has made housing a priority for CAL, and the Ellsworth garage is a likely site; (2) Trinity UMC development will further remove parking and disrupt traffic; and (3) planned construction in the area will complicate access to FCCB by members, renters and the community for weekdays, events and worship services. (4) Also, in my career experience ~ serving as interim for quite a few churches, and serving on Association and Conference committees ~ loss of parking availability and sales of church property were additional factors leading to permanent decline in church membership, and eventual closure for some. (5) For FCCB, safe access to nearby parking at all times of day is another consideration, and the use of paid valets (or finding volunteer "Ambassadors") isn't a likely long-term, reliable and practical solution, especially for women and for older members. SO: Given the ongoing disruption from the fire, the upcoming renewal and rebuilding of Pilgrim, and other nearby construction work in progress or planned, along with present and future traffic impediments ~ and possible changes in housing needs ~ it would seem a blessing for current members to (1) be allowed the time and space to adjust to present difficulties, without adding further hurdles to church access, and (2) be given time to assess the

best use of church property after the projects of others (university, church and private) are evaluated.

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Putting housing on our campus is a very divisive issue. I think we should be considering alternative approaches to providing affordable housing without putting it on our campus, as this would be a win-win.

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I am truly grateful to the volunteer leadership team who have put so much thought, energy, and passion into the efforts thus far. I would prefer we pause and resume these discussions once Pilgrim plans are settled and underway. I also am interested to directly observe the impacts of soon-to-be-opened housing developments in our vicinity. At this point, we can only guess how traffic, parking, and neighborhood dynamic will be impacted by these non-FCCB projects.

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Concerned with parking availability and construction noise and dust.

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I sent my comments to the BlueSky committee, but basically I think we should not give up what little parking we have when we are such a busy church, but we should continue to discuss if there is another way we can support affordable housing in Berkeley.

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If construction is not underway in 18 months, I suggest we wait until it is before further consideration. I also would hope that, if we decide not to support the project on church property at that point, there will still be an opportunity to pursue investment in affordable housing on other property.

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I wonder if Pilgrim Hall might be configured so that rental space would be available to non-profits (like Covenant House) that specialize & work with/in affordable housing.

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I think we need a clearer way forward on the question of parking, and I sense a lack of confidence in the congregation about the whole project.

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My understanding from transportation planners (who have some sway in the Berkeley City Council) is that the shift to driverless cars will significantly change the whole transportation picture within 15 years: Less demand for personal cars, less need for parking. With such strong feelings about and difficulties with parking now, I think it would be good to wait until parking is less of an issue. I also know of new residential facilities in the beginning planning/debate stages in my Berkeley neighborhood.

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It seems a decision on whether to build affordable housing needs to follow decisions about Pilgrim Hall and is partly dependent on Pilgrim Hall plans. Specifically, we need first to know 1. how much reconstruction of Pilgrim Hall will cost and 2. how much insurance will pay in settlement of claim. Also, it seems the debates over affordable housing have become a distraction to moving forward on Pilgrim Hall and repairing our church. Lastly, these discussions have become so divisive that they are harmful. If kindness and inclusiveness were in greater supply, then the exploration and conversations would be okay to continue. But, as it is, and given the need to figure out and begin work on Pilgrim Hall, I think we should delay the housing talks until later.

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I am in favor of a pause because I believe our first focus needs to be on Pilgrim Hall and the energy and focus it will take to make the best choices for the new building. I also am opposed to a reduction in the parking spaces in our lot. I do not believe that the alternatives outlined in the Blue Sky recap can be effective. I further believe that the focus on our parking lot ignores other, more effective opportunities to use our resources to address the affordable housing crisis in the Bay Area. I appreciate the work of the Blue Sky committee, but I do not support either their narrow focus on only FCCB or their conclusions.

Continue

Thanks to everyone for your effort in prayerfully considering this topic.

.....

This is the type of information that will allow us to make an informed decision.

.....

Lets discuss our maximum contribution to our community rather than the minimum possible for our site. We need to think in big creative means to achieve the best outcome.

.....

I am proud to be part of a community that is having this conversation. I think affordable housing is THE most important moral issue facing our wider community, and it is incumbent upon us as a large and relatively affluent Christian church to make necessary sacrifices of time, privilege and even money to respond to the physical suffering of our neighbors and holy kin. We have it in our power to save and change many, many lives.

.....

I can't think of an issue more important in our community than affordable housing. FCCB can lead the way.

.....

Glad to hear the drop off issue is being resolved. We will miss having Amare, the Pastor of the Parking Lot. I was going to say "Pause" until I read the report. That now feels to be fear on my part and I want to rise above it. I am very appreciative of the work, hard work done by all committees. Thank you.

.....

Let's keep looking into this. Definitely interested in seeing us dream big and come up with a grand vision for both pilgrim hall and affordable housing.

.....

Thank you for all your hard work

.....

I chose continue, even though I'm not sure this is the best use of the property, because I think to make an informed decision we need more information. We need to know what numbers would be like.

.....

Housing is the number one problem in our community. We have the ability to make a positive impact, and we should. It's exciting that there are such great partner organizations ready to help.

.....

I enthusiastically support continuing to the next step in the process of having affordable housing on the FCCB

campus. As the elderly face rising market-rate rents and long waiting lists to find affordable housing, we can make a large impact with 40 to 45 comfortably-sized units. We can offer an oasis for those seeking a home.

.....

This is a ridiculous argument. We have ample space that could be used for the good of the community. The people opposing the building of affordable housing have their own living space where they LIVE! If they love the church as much as they say, they can walk 4 blocks after parking down the street. Why is this even a discussion?!?

.....

Thank you for your respect of all viewpoints

.....

I think Jesus would vote this way :-)

.....

I'm in favor of continuing to explore the idea and continuing the conversations, with a deep grounding in our covenant of respect, love & care for each other.

.....

I fully support moving forward with this

.....

Affordable Housing = biggest local crisis affecting Bay Area (and intersects with every other system of oppression and justice crisis) If we don't feel called to do something about this issue, then we aren't listening.

.....

so into it; affordable housing in decent neighborhoods, is just never a thing

.....

This is so important! Deep gratitude to everyone who has worked SO HARD on this!

.....

My concern is whether or not Berkeley will allow a completely affordable housing project to be built. As someone in a lower income bracket I understand the need and want to do this. However, I believe it needs to be 100% affordable to be righteous.

.....

I am excited to hear more about the possibilities.

.....

(A lot...) I appreciate the rigorous study and listening and compassion--love--behind the summary document, and dearly wish I had been able to attend the many in-person gatherings offered. Apologies for anything redundant or reflecting misunderstanding here. I also am heartened to see even in the survey the assumption that, however we may vote, all of us voting care about, and may well be touched by, the inescapable and devastating lack of affordable housing. (con'td) --

Pilgrim Hall rebuilding costs not met by insurance, while considerable, should not be ongoing. The relationships, the obligations, the liabilities associated with creating and sustaining housing, even as well-meaning, arm's-length owners, are long-term, if not permanent. So, I am not very comfortable with citing offsetting of PH costs with development of housing as an argument for the development. And, it is not just out of "church-self"-interest that I am concerned about this ownership role, particularly should anything major go wrong with the new building or people on the property. (con'td) --

I don't think of myself as "pro-car," but I do think we risk underestimating the ramifications of drastically reducing onsite parking available to worshipers/members, facility renters, and the larger community. I would be quite open to exploring more efficient use of the current parking lot (plus Durant House) footprint, and other improvements. I am not wedded to the current parking lot configuration, or to Durant House. Some underground? Park/playlot or other outdoor "oasis" on top? (con'td) --

Moving away from anything like Parking As Priority, there could be a larger physical complex and vision that includes the Pilgrim Hall, parking lot, and Durant House sites serving the church and wider communities in, say, one major way, or in multiple complementary ways. A "community center." A complex with a theme--perhaps advocacy and studying solutions relating to the affordable housing crisis and homelessness?--modeled on Berkeley's own, famous themed nonprofit complexes (that I know of): the Ed Roberts campus ("dedicated to disability rights and universal access") and David Brower Center ("Home for the Environmental Movement"). (con'td) --

An aside, of sorts: As a board member of the Berkeley

Pilgrimage Foundation, I would caution against floating the idea of BPF as an alternative source of direct or major investment in any housing development *beyond* the grants it already makes (including, at times, to the current incarnation of the original nonprofit). In part, because of the earlier decision to leave the (senior) affordable housing business, and because of the wider possibilities to support related causes and nonprofits for years to come, made possible by the sale of that entity. Thank you for reading

Very helpful ReCap & pictures!

.....

Matthew 25:40

.....

I think we have a lot of topics to explore in greater detail, and so I say keep going. I would also us to use this opportunity to think big - to consider a larger project to use even more or all of our parking lot area (maybe with parking underneath or underground).

.....

The February Re-Cap info was very useful. I never thought about using the Channing Street Garage, which sounds ample, and if we could develop a validation system that makes it free for members, that would be fabulous! I know First Pres has a validation machine; we could ask them how they do it. Additionally I think people may think WE are paying for the housing, not the developer. I hope this has been made clear!

.....

I consider this one of the top Bay Area concerns. Stewardship of property in light of such a crisis needs to be fully explored.

.....

I fully support offering our community affordable housing. Our community needs us and we need them to gauge our understanding of "What would Jesus do?"

.....

Let's be the lord's arms ~~

.....

I think there are various realistic concerns with the housing plan, but we are in the process of exploring, so

let us complete that, instead of pausing, and the need for affordable housing is something the church needs to consider in the current circumstances.

.....

I think it's very daunting but also very exciting!

.....

I am grateful to all the leaders who have dedicated so much time and energy into the exploration of this possibility, which seems to me so patently urgent, and which has emerged from the core of the congregation's longtime values and mission. I am grateful we are wrestling with this with integrity as a community. While I honestly do not yet know whether building housing on site will prove the best response given all the complicating factors, I think it behooves us to keep the momentum of our exploration going, especially given how long processes like these can take. Thank you!

.....

Affordable housing is a critical need in the Bay Area- and this potential could help address it.

.....

There is a need for affordable housing and if FCCB can share their space and maintain vital programming for members, then let's move ahead.

.....

Question: I like the bigger parking lot...it attracts attendees to services!

.....

I am in favor of getting more specific information before committing. It is an exciting idea and I'm sending a big thank you to all of you for your huge efforts to flesh this out.

.....

I particularly favor an off campus site,if only because our neighborhood has little food shopping for seniors

.....

I think affordable housing is important for the community. Using alternative parking lots nearby, valet parking, and parking ambassadors are very good solutions to resolving parking concerns.

.....

This is an amazing opportunity that seems very much in line with our Church mission. I believe we should

do anything we can to create more affordable housing for our low-income and homeless neighbors in our affluent, increasingly gentrified Bay Area. I hope that the housing would rent for 30% of income so that even people with very low income can afford to live there.

.....

[A member] of committee that initiated action to build Amistad House back in the 1980's (I think). It was a very contentious issue at that time but ultimately it got done and has served a much needed service for the city. I am no longer active in FCCB but continue to receive the Carillon by email and am interested in this new effort. I believe only two of us from the Amistad committee are still living, ..., both in our 80's and not as energetic as we were back then. Nevertheless, I would be willing to share my memories of the prior effort if that would be helpful. I now live in Alameda [shared phone number and name]

.....

Yes!

.....

I trust that the Church Council will not let us become overburdened with too much going on at the same time. It seems like a lot to me! May God guide us and open the way for us, in this discernment process.

.....

I would like the congregation to have more information on inclusivity/ universal design and access. I think information in thia area might help in discerning the needs as well as help the discussion move forward.

.....

We have the capacity to help. We should do it.

.....

I feel like fhis is what a lot of people need right now, at this time, what with all the homelessness and political issues going on.

.....

Berkeley needs more housing of whatever sort, if it's well designed.

.....

Still would to explore other sites to place the AH on

.....

I'm a huge supporter of affordable housing even though it'd drive to church and parking would be a pain I think the overall good of creating affordable housing is far more important than my first world parking problems.

.....

I read the summary. We are a big, half-empty church in the middle of Berkeley. I think that we need to put our money where our mouth is and do everything we can to create a vibrant, diverse in every way including socioeconomic, community in the place where we live. Thank you for doing the hard work of wrestling with this issue.

.....

Housing is the most critical issue facing the Bay Area (apart from global issues like climate change and nuclear weapons). Whether this means we should build housing on our campus, I don't know, but we should address the housing crisis however we can and in a multitude of ways regardless of whether or not we pursue this project. That thousands of our fellow community members around us are homeless is absolutely unacceptable, a horror, and an indication that we have failed as a society to care for all.

.....

I waffled between pause and continue because I do think that before we get much deeper into debate, it would be important for the men in our congregation to go on a retreat together. Sweat lodge, pound drums... or do whatever men do to bond. We had a beautiful women's retreat where we got to know each other more deeply and learned about how to speak and listen with compassion. I think this work would also deeply serve the men in our congregation. It is disturbing to listen to some of the harsh and judgemental language that has come up. Regardless of what decision is made, it feels so important that we grow closer as a congregation and not more distant. So I say, let's keep exploring and in the meantime let the men plan some way to deepen and strengthen their connections.

.....

I am somewhat between "Pause" and "Continue". I feel it is critical to be assured that Pilgrim Hall rebuild continues unabated. If we hold up on that the church's strong image in the neighborhood is diminished.

.....

All in

.....

More information now means a better decision later. Let's learn everything we can.

.....

I don't see any problem with continuing to explore this idea, and I believe it is a moral issue in the Bay Area at this time. While I have not been involved in these discussions, through conversations with other FCCB folk I understand they have become heated at times. My questions are: how are FCCB leaders (members and staff) addressing the impact this discussion is having on the church? What are the pastoral needs of everyone (members and staff) given this long-haul conversation which involves drastic change in our community?

.....

We are in desperate need of affordable housing, it is getting to expensive to live here.

.....

Thanks for all of the hard work & thoughtfulness all are putting into this issue!

.....

I know there is a way to go before we are there but it is exciting and feel it should continue, at least the discussion of.