

Dear FPC,

Over the past year, your Session has been thoughtfully evaluating our programs, outreach, structure, and financial responsibilities as our church continues to grow. As part of this process, and after much prayer and discernment, Session has made the difficult decision to conclude our formal partnership with Art Discovery, effective June 1. The program will finish out its current semester and May show. This is the most difficult and draining decision your Session has made in recent years.

Art Discovery has brought both literal and spiritual beauty into our building and our lives. It has been a deeply meaningful ministry, and we continue to hold it—and its director, Lucy Andrus—in the highest regard. Lucy's work is a gift, and we remain grateful for the creativity, compassion, and care this program has offered to so many in our community.

Ultimately, this decision was made out of a need for financial clarity and organizational integrity. As we have grown, we have been working with outside financial advisors and responding to updated presbytery requirements around governance and accountability. In reviewing our structure, it became clear that continuing this partnership would require a level of oversight we simply cannot sustain right now.

**For example:** Lucy currently receives grants to run the program and was self-sustaining. However, through those grants Lucy received a stipend for her time, wisdom, hours and hours, and expertise. We learned that this alone would require us to potentially add Lucy as staff or work out other tax arrangements, which we are not in a position to do. To remain in compliance, the church would need to take on full financial reporting and tax responsibility for the program—including issuing tax documents, tracking every expense through our books, etc. It would also require forming a governing committee to oversee Art Discovery's programming, budget, and decision-making, which would significantly change how the program currently operates.

Taken together, these changes would not only stretch our capacity beyond what we can responsibly manage, but would also fundamentally alter the independence and spirit of Art Discovery itself.

We know this probably feels blindsiding to Lucy, to the program participants, and to our congregation. However, we have been looking at structure deeply for about a year now, and we have had a few conversations with AD about needing more structure and reporting responsibilities. For instance, we gave Art Discovery a Session Liaison and Art Discovery was notified we were reviewing this program (and all programs). We had hoped we could simply work on reshaping responsibilities, but the Session too was a bit blindsided by findings. In February/March, after receiving guidance from our lawyer and outside financial

counsel, it became clear that significant concerns remained. At that point, Session recognized that we needed to act in order to protect the church's non-profit status and address potential legal liabilities.

**To be clear though, Lucy nor Art Discovery have done anything untoward. This is not a reflection of Art Discovery or Lucy's running of the program. We should have been more prudent in the first place. We love Lucy—she is a sibling in Christ, but we love her too because she lights up our community with creativity and deeply thoughtful wisdom. She has brought a program we have been so proud of and her displays have made us think, been informative, and Session was devastated about this loss. Though, Lucy is still a beloved member of our community regardless of the program.**

With deep appreciation for all that Art Discovery has been—and with hope for its continued flourishing in a new space—we have made the decision to end our formal relationship.

We know this may bring questions. This summary is a simplified version of a complex decision, and we are happy to share more should you want. If you would like additional details, please reach out to Janine to schedule a conversation.

With gratitude for the beauty that has been shared among us,

Your Session