

Covenant Presbyterian Church, Athens, GA
Stated Session Meeting
February 23, 2021

A stated session meeting, called according to the Book of Order, was held by Zoom on February 23, 2021. Moderator Mark Harper welcomed everyone, declared a quorum present and called the meeting to order at 6:38 p.m. Paige Campbell opened her devotional with a moment of remembrance for Ginger Davis-Beck noting her generosity, humor and grace. Paige then told of the documentary, *The Black Church: This is Our Story. This is Our Song.* by Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr., which details the comfort and inspiration the enslaved African Americans derived from Christianity, even though they were oppressed by Christians. She read the poem “Wade in the Water” by Tracy K. Smith and closed with a prayer by Debbie McDaniel.

Elders present: Clayton Adams, Kathy Boardman, Don Bower, Paige Campbell, Jennifer Frey, Linda Koehler, Steve Rathbun, Rich Reaves, Sarah Shannon, Brian Striggow, and Chris Wilson

Elders absent: Kay Brooks

Others present: Mark Harper, Rindy Trouteaud, Bob Trouteaud, and Luanne Rigsby

Minutes and Financial Report

The minutes from the January 6, 2021, meeting were reviewed. Clayton Adams moved and Jennifer Frey seconded that the minutes be accepted as revised. The motion was passed unanimously.

The Financial Summary and a detailed report for January, 2021, prepared by church treasurer, Pam Knox, were reviewed. Steve Rathbun moved and Paige Campbell seconded to accept the financial reports as presented. The motion was passed unanimously.

Finance Ministry – Policy on Restricted Accounts

Bob Trouteaud, Chair of the Finance Ministry Team, reported that the team has a goal of reducing the number of restricted accounts in order to comply with standard church accounting principles and to reduce office staff workload. A Restricted Account is for money that is not part of the operating budget and is designated to be spent only on something that is not a line item in the budget. On behalf of the Finance Ministry Team, Bob presented a proposed change on Covenant Policy on Restricted Accounts. After discussion of this document, Don Bower asked that this be considered the first reading of the policy change and that the session be given time to study the plan and to consult with their ministry teams. The Moderator asked each ministry team to look at the Temporary Restricted Accounts listed under their team and to assess which ones could be folded into the operating budget and which ones need to stay as “pass through”

Temporary Restricted Accounts. The second reading and further discussion will be held at the March Session meeting.

Proposal for Unexpended Funds

At the January meeting, Mark Harper asked the Session to prepare concrete proposals for ways to spend approximately \$150,000.00 in unexpended funds.

There were eight proposals presented at the meeting. They are as follows:

Proposal	Presented By	Cost
1. Remote Control Front Door/ Main Door Access	Building & Grounds MT	\$ 1,671. 00
2. Worship Center Indoor Painting	Building & Grounds MT	\$12,280.00
3. Carpeting of Worship Center	Building & Grounds MT	\$17,595.00
4. Matching Fund for Solar Panels	Building & Grounds MT	\$25,000.00
5. Front Yard Bus Stop Shelter	Building & Grounds MT	\$ 7,500.00
6. Raised Bed Garden Fence	Building & Grounds MT	\$ 3,010.00
7. Worship Center Video Recording System Proposal	Worship MT+ Tech Team	\$11,928.63
8. Eliminating Medical Debt	Clayton Adams	\$50,000.00

Rich Reaves presented proposals 1-6 from Building and Grounds Ministry Team. Chris Wilson moved and Paige Campbell seconded that we fund projects 1-3 for a total of approximately \$31,546.00. After discussion, the motion was approved unanimously. Building and Grounds will engage a committee from the congregation for the selection of paint and carpet colors.

Kathy Boardman, Worship Ministry, and Bob Trouteaud, Technology Team, presented proposal #7. Rich Reaves moved and Paige Campbell seconded that we purchase the Worship Center video recording system in order to live-stream in-person worship services (once they begin) and record them for later viewing on YouTube. The total cost will amount to \$11,928.63 plus the cost of a laptop computer for controlling the cameras and installation of cable. Installation of the system will be done by Asher Hill. After discussion, the motion was approved unanimously.

Clayton Adams presented the proposal on Eliminating Medical Debt for pennies on the dollar via the national nonprofit organization RIP Medical Debt (RIP). During discussion, several questions were raised which Clayton Adams will clarify with RIP. A vote will be held at the March Session meeting concerning this proposal and others that may be presented.

Matthew 25 Network

Rindy gave a summary of the Matthew 25 Network, a denominational ministry effort begun in 2016. She said it was a “hands and feet on the ground” effort to live out Matthew 25 concretely and that congregations who commit to becoming Mathew 25 churches agree to share stories which may be published.

There are 3 important foci:

1. Congregational vitality – helping congregations understand how to concretely live out Matthew 25.
2. Concrete ways to eradicate systemic racism
3. Concrete ways to eradicate systemic poverty

Don Bower Moved and Chris Wilson seconded that we become a part of Matthew 25 Network Mission. After discussion, the motion was unanimously approved.

There being no other business, a motion to adjourn was made by Steve Rathbun and seconded by Clayton Adams. After unanimous approval, the meeting was adjourned with prayer at 9:06 p.m.

NEXT MEETING: March 23, 2021, 6:30 p.m.

Mark Harper, Moderator

Luanne Rigsby, Clerk