

Covenant Presbyterian Church, Athens, GA

Stated Session Meeting

June 22, 2021

A stated session meeting, called according to the Book of Order, was held by Zoom on June 22, 2021. Moderator Mark Harper welcomed everyone, declared a quorum present and called the meeting to order at 6:37p.m. Mark read from the second chapter of the Gospel of Mark about the paraplegic who was lowered through the roof by his friends so that he could be near Jesus. It is a story about community and how sometimes we need help from one another to bring us into the presence of Jesus. We are part of a community bigger than ourselves. Mark concluded with prayer.

Elders present: Clayton Adams, Kathy Boardman, Don Bower, Kay Brooks, Paige Campbell, Jennifer Frey, Linda Koehler, Steve Rathbun, Brian Striggow and Chris Wilson.

Elders absent: Rich Reaves and Sarah Shannon.

Others present: Mark Harper, Rindy Trouteaud, Pam Knox, David Boardman, and Luanne Rigsby.

Minutes and Financial Report

The minutes from the May 25, 2021, stated session meeting and the June 5, 2021, called session meeting were reviewed. Chris Wilson moved and Jennifer Frey seconded that the minutes be accepted as presented. The motion was passed unanimously.

Church Treasurer, Pam Knox, reviewed the Financial Summary for May, 2021, and a detailed report for the month of May. We have received more money than anticipated in pledges, and it looks like there will be a surplus of about \$50,000.00 at the end of the fiscal year. Some special restricted accounts will probably have surpluses too. Pam asked ministry team chairs to make sure all expenses are turned in by the end of June. Paige Campbell moved and Kathy Boardman seconded to accept the financial report as presented. After discussion, the motion was passed unanimously.

The new budget for July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022, will not be ready before July 1st. Paige Campbell moved that for the month of July, we move forward with the proposed budget, as far as personnel matters, with the exception of Rindy Trouteaud at her request. For all other operating expenses, that we continue for the month of July with the present budget levels. Don Bower seconded the motion. After discussion, the motion was unanimously passed.

Stewardship Campaign

Pam gave an update that the Finance Ministry Team anticipates \$440,000.00 in pledges, which when combined with unpledged income and rental income, still falls

short of the \$572,000.00 proposed budget. On June 11, 2021, Pam sent an email to the Session on behalf of the Finance Ministry Team suggesting ways to balance the budget.

Personnel Committee Recommendations:

Mark Harper presented two recommendations for the Personnel Committee:

1. The Personnel Committee recommends the Session conclude the contract with Rindy Trouteaud, Coordinator of Education and Congregational Life, at the end of the day on July 31, 2021. After discussion, the motion was unanimously approved. A celebration of Rindy and Bob Trouteaud's service at Covenant is being planned.

2. The Personnel Committee recommends the Session not fill the position of Coordinator of Education and Congregational Life immediately but hire a part time consultant to guide our discernment of the spiritual needs of the congregation. After extensive discussion, the motion was unanimously approved.

Don Bower noted that we need to be mindful that Mark cannot be expected to pick up everything Rindy has been doing.

Nominating Committee Update

Kay Brooks, Chair of the Nominating Committee for the upcoming class of elders, reported that the committee is moving forward and has three good candidates who have agreed to be nominees and is working on the fourth. Kay asked for any suggestions from the Session.

Update on Sanctuary Work

Rich Reaves had emailed a report from the Building and Grounds Ministry Team that the carpet and paint have been ordered and should be arriving very soon. Once it arrives, he will be able to arrange for pew removal and for work to commence. Asher Hill and Karen Wetherington are working on obtaining the needed electronic equipment for streaming the worship services. Mark thanked Rich and the carpet/paint color committee and Asher for their hard work on the renovations.

Update on Security

John Chamblee emailed the Session a document with information on the need to update our security system and upgrade our WiFi network. Since John has many years' experience, he has volunteered to take the lead in gathering information, meeting with vendors and obtaining bids.

Rich Reaves emailed the Session his report on church security inquiries made to our insurance carrier, Brotherhood Mutual Insurance Company. He included a list of links on their website for the Session to explore regarding church security. Rich contacted Missy Basinger Green, ACCPD 911 Call Center Supervisor, who said there should be little need to test cell phone connectivity because all cell phones are defaulted to go to the nearest tower to transmit an emergency call to a 911 call center.

Chris Wilson reported she had spoken with the Athens Clarke County Police Department and requested suggestions on security modifications we should make. The police have looked over the building and will send a written report of their recommendations.

Kay Brooks had spoken with First Presbyterian Church and First Methodist Church about their security measures. Points they made were:

1. To designate only one door in the building for people from the community to come in and out. That door should have a security camera that can be monitored by the office. If there is only one person working in the office, that door may need to be locked.
2. Both churches have a security person on hand at the entrances and in the children's areas on Sundays and for large events.
3. Both churches felt that security cameras have been helpful. In one instance, the cameras helped locate a person in the building who needed aid.

Update on Unexpended Funds

Mark reported that the children's summer camp, one of the projects for using unexpended funds, which had been approved at the March session meeting, did not come to fruition. Others projects approved, such as improvements to the worship center, are underway.

Other Business

Mark read a letter from Sue Goodyear, dated October 11, 2020, requesting to withdraw her membership from the roll of Covenant Presbyterian Church. Don Bower moved and Clayton Adams seconded we accept Sue's request. The motion passed unanimously.

Prayer Concerns

Mark requested prayers for Bert Ballard-Myer, who is undergoing foot surgery, for Jim Bowden and Nancy Omdahl, both undergoing cancer treatment, and for the family and friends of Dot Hanley, long time Covenant volunteer who passed away last week. Funeral services for Dot will be held at Lord and Stephens East on Friday, June 25th.

There being no other business, a motion to adjourn was made by Steve Rathbun, seconded by Jennifer Frey and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned with prayer at 8:55 p.m.

NEXT MEETING: July 27, 2021, 6:30 p.m. hopefully in person

Mark Harper, Moderator

Luanne Rigsby, Clerk