

Covenant Presbyterian Church, Athens, GA

Stated Session Meeting

February 22, 2022

A Stated Session meeting, called according to the Book of Order, was held at Covenant Presbyterian Church and via Zoom on February 22, 2022. Moderator Dana Waters welcomed all, declared a quorum present and called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Elders Present: Bert Ballard-Myer, Kay Brooks, Jennifer Frey, Linda Koehler, Valerie Stone and Chris Wilson.

Elders Present on Zoom: Clayton Adams, Katy Arora, Don Bower, Abby Horvath and Brian Striggow

Elders Absent: Kathy Boardman

Others present: Pam Knox, Luanne Rigsby, Asher Hill and Dana Waters.

Devotional

As her devotional, Bert Ballard-Myer read Deuteronomy 15:7- 8 and Matthew 25:35. Bert then shared a thank you letter written to Covenant by Cherokee, a homeless person who often stays on our church property.

Approval of the Agenda

The original Item G, motion to hire Cliff Brock, was replaced with Report from Presbytery Meeting Commissioners. Katy Arora moved and Jennifer Frey seconded that the agenda be approved as revised. After discussion, the motion carried.

Special Order – Session Training

The Moderator reviewed the assigned reading, Introduction and Chapters 1-4, from the book, *Presbyterian Polity for Church Leaders* by Joan S. Gray and Joyce C. Tucker, He presented several questions from the book to ensure a clear understanding of the subjects covered in those chapters. He then asked everyone to read chapters 6 - 8 before the March Session meeting.

Minutes and Financial Report

The minutes from the Stated Session Meeting held January 29, 2022, were reviewed. Chris Wilson moved and Jennifer Frey seconded the minutes be approved as written. After discussion, the motion carried.

Pam Knox, church treasurer presented the financial summary for January, 2022, as well as the detailed financial report for the month. Pam reported that pledges are coming in and that because our expenses have been lower than usual due to unfilled positions, we are ahead of anticipated income by \$41,556.00 for the year. Pam urged all Ministry Teams to turn in their budgets for the next fiscal year by February 28, 2022.

Financial Update on Spending of \$150,000.00 Special Funds – Pam Knox

Pam reviewed the document she had sent to the Session in which she updated information on the projects the Session voted to fund in 2021 using the \$150,000.00 Finance Ministry Team indicated was available from surpluses. Additional money was added to that amount (\$6,000.00 by Finance MT for WIFI and \$12,022.00 from the Central/Covenant Fund) for a total of \$168,022.00 in available funds. Because of the pandemic, some of the original proposals approved, such as a summer camp, were not funded, and some money was reallocated to new projects such as the HVAC system. Of the \$168,022.00, \$116,871.30 has been spent or reserved for future use, leaving a balance of \$51,150.70.

The Session expressed its sincere appreciation to Pam for her hard work on preparing the report, as well as the exceptional job she does every month as church treasurer. The Moderator noted that the Financial Report and update on the spending of the \$150,000.00 were received in the minutes.

Report from Presbytery Meeting Commissioners

Linda Koehler, Bert Ballard-Myer, Kathy Boardman and Brian Striggow attended the February 22, 2022, Presbytery meeting by Zoom. Linda presented a report on the meeting highlighting the installation of Sylvia McDonald as new moderator of the Presbytery, approval of Rev. Dana Waters' transfer from Greater Atlanta Presbytery to Northeast Georgia Presbytery, Rev. Hilary Shuford's upcoming sabbatical, and a report on Congregational Connections, suggesting a possible partnership between Oconee, Friendship, and Covenant Presbyterian Churches for outreach and social gatherings.

Ministry Team Reports:

Jennifer Frey, co-chair of worship Ministry Team, presented the following motions from the Worship Ministry Team:

- 1. Worship Ministry Team moves that the Covenant Communion schedule continue the first Sunday of each month, plus the special services of Maundy Thursday and Christmas Eve. No second being needed, after discussion, the motion carried.**
- 2. Worship Ministry Team moves that Care and Nurture of Young Children Ministry Team be combined with Worship Ministry Team, effective immediately. No second being needed, after discussion, the motion carried.**

Homeless Task Force Update

Bert Ballard-Myer reported that she, Brian Striggow and Chris Wilson have met several times and talked with some of the homeless persons living on Covenant's property. They have met with Charles Hardy, President of Athens Alliance Coalition, Inc., which is

heading creation of the Athens/Clarke government-sanctioned homeless encampment at Barber Street, scheduled to open in March. Because of security concerns and better access to food and services, in the spring, homeless persons on our campus will be encouraged to move to the city homeless encampment for long-term stays. The Task Force is working on permanent signage which posts the church's rules for persons staying overnight on our grounds, emphasizing that we offer a place for short term stays only. The Task Force has also met with Dan Osborne of Bigger Vision. Bert encouraged the Session to go to the website for Firm Foundation Community Housing at ffhousing.org and read about a tiny house community started by Jake Medcalf, pastor at First Presbyterian Church in Hayward, CA.

Approval of 2022 Annual Church Statistical Report

Bert Ballard-Myer moved we approve the 2022 Annual Church Statistical Report as prepared by administrative assistant Karen Wetherington. Valerie Stone seconded the motion. After discussion, the motion was approved.

Discussion on Church COVID-19 Policy

Kay Brooks moved that food and drink be allowed at outside activities. Chris Wilson seconded the motion. After discussion, the motion passed.

Brian Striggow moved and Bert Ballard-Myer seconded that we put our basketball goals in the pavilion back up. After discussion, the motion carried.

We will continue to monitor the local COVID-19 case numbers and change the church policy. as needed.

Asher Hill recommended that now that the front door security system is in place, we replace all outdoor locks and redistribute keys. Building and Grounds Ministry Team will consider that subject at their next meeting.

There being no further business, Katy Arora moved and Jennifer Frey seconded that the meeting be adjourned. With no discussion, the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned with prayer at 8:32 p.m.

NEXT MEETING: March 22, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. Kathy Boardman will present the devotional.

Dana Waters, Moderator

Luanne Rigsby, Clerk