

## **Covenant Presbyterian Church, Athens, GA**

### **Stated Session Meeting**

**March 22, 2022**

A Stated Session meeting, called according to the *Book of Order*, was held at Covenant Presbyterian Church and via Zoom on March 22, 2022. Moderator Dana Waters welcomed all, declared a quorum present and called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

Elders Present: Clayton Adams, Bert Ballard-Myer, Don Bower, Kay Brooks, Jennifer Frey, Abby Horvath, Linda Koehler, Brian Striggow, and Chris Wilson.

Elders Present on Zoom: Kathy Boardman,

Elders Absent: Katy Arora and Valerie Stone

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

### **Devotional**

As her devotional, Abby Horvath continued the Old Testament reading from Sunday worship with Isaiah 55:9-13. Those verses remind us of God's promises that we can claim for Covenant and the Session. Abby closed with prayer.

### **Review of Minutes**

Minutes from the Stated Session Meeting held February 22, 2022, and minutes from the email vote on March 3, 2022, were reviewed. Jennifer Frey moved and Clayton Adams seconded the minutes be approved as written. After discussion, the motion carried.

### **Approval of the Agenda**

The following items were added to the agenda: Discussion on the updated directory, Covid-19 communications, B & G camera system purchase, Homeless Task Force update, and Ministry Team Announcements. Clayton Adams moved and Jennifer Frey seconded that the agenda be approved as revised. After discussion, the motion carried.

### **Financial Report**

Pam Knox, church treasurer presented the financial summary for February, 2022, as well as the detailed financial report for the month. Pam reported that pledges are coming in as anticipated and that we are ahead of our expenses by about \$41,218.00 for the year. Pam also presented the proposed budget for July 1, 2022 - June 30 2023 which totals \$471,605. Stewardship pledge drive letters are scheduled to be mailed in about a week. The proposed budget will be modified according to the amount of money pledged. The Moderator noted that the Financial Report was received into the minutes.

### **Special Order – Continuing Education for Elders**

The Moderator reviewed Chapters 6-8, from the book, *Presbyterian Polity for Church Leaders* by Joan S. Gray and Joyce C. Tucker. He summarized each chapter and emphasized the importance of communication and collaboration between staff, pastor, the Session and the congregation. As part of this, the clerk will be writing up a short summary of the Session meetings to be published in the *Covenanter*. He then asked everyone to read chapters 9-11 before the April meeting.

### **Brainstorming Part II**

Following up on the first brainstorming session held February 20, 2022, the Session discussed Item #5 “Renewing Our Mission and Outreach”. Dana pointed out that many of the questions about our future mission and outreach emphases will be clarified by the congregational survey, a part of the mission study document created in preparation for our pastor search. It is important the Session see the “big picture” and be aware of what the other Ministry Teams are thinking about as far as prioritizing staffing needs. Updated “Personal Information Forms” (PIFs) will be sent out with the stewardship letter requesting members to express areas of mission in which they are interested in being involved. We will follow the survey with “asset mapping” or “Who’s going to own it?” activities, as well as matching gifts to needs (“speed dating”) for volunteer opportunities. In discussing #6 “Reconciling Past Decisions, Dana pointed out that there are several approaches to healing hurts. Time provides healing. We should concentrate on positive changes we’ve made to make things run smoother. We can’t undo the past, but we can do better in the future. Conflicts need to be addressed in a timely way.

### **Elder Nominating Committee**

In accordance with the *Book of Order* and as specified by the *Session Manual*, the nominating committee for the next class of elders shall be composed of three members: an active elder (usually 3<sup>rd</sup> year), and inactive elder, and a 3<sup>rd</sup> person (either an inactive elder or a non-elder) to be selected by the congregation. **Bert Ballard-Myer moved and Jennifer Frey seconded that Kay Brooks serve as the Session’s representative on the nominating committee and that a Congregational meeting be called on April 24, 2022, for the purpose of electing the nominating committee for the next class of elders.** Kay and Dana will work together to select a second member to be voted on by email, and to recommend a third nominee to be elected by the congregation at the meeting. Following discussion, the motion passed.

### **Updated Directory – Next Steps**

Karen Wetherington and others have reviewed the directory and placed a green check mark next to members with whom we are in contact. They have also noted members who have moved, joined other churches, expressed a desire to be taken off the active membership list, or passed away. The Session reviewed the update of the directory, and members volunteered to contact the people who haven’t been heard from in a while and report back to Karen Wetherington as to their status. The Session will also send those members a letter reaching out to them.

## **Covid-19 Policy Communications**

As suggested by Kathy Boardman and Abby Horvath's emails, the Session agreed that Covenant's Covid-19 policy written in the *Covenanter* should be modified with more positive wording such as, "Welcome, we look forward to worshipping with you. We continue to strive to protect our loved ones and believe in transparency. Based on the current Covid-10 policies, we are encouraging people to wear masks if you so choose and asking anyone showing signs and symptoms to worship with us virtually". The policy will be displayed prominently only if there is a color change.

## **Building and Grounds – Camera purchase**

**Brian Striggow presented a motion from B & G that Covenant purchase an abbreviated camera security system consisting of 4 cameras for the entrances and main hallway for the cost of around \$1500.00.** The money to purchase the system will come from B&G account #006103. Following discussion, the motion passed.

## **Homeless Task force Update**

Bert Ballard-Myer reported that new permanent signs with Covenant's policy for the homeless have been ordered and will be put up next week. The signs include information on phone numbers to call for assistance and will clarify that guests are welcome for overnight stays only and will not be allowed to store their belongings on the church campus. The task force will be meeting soon with Travis Williams.

## **Ministry Team Announcements**

Jennifer Frey, Worship Ministry Team, announced that there will be a breakfast of coffee, juice, sweet rolls and fruit following the Easter morning worship service.

The Fellowship Ministry Team sent a written report to the Session enumerating the team activities and plans for the spring and early summer. These include a survey of Covenant attendees on what fellowship events they would like to see happening, monthly game nights, an Easter egg hunt for children on Saturday April 16<sup>th</sup>, possibly bringing back the Strawberry Festival in May, and a cake after Pentecost on June 5<sup>th</sup>.

The Christian Education Ministry Team has scheduled a meeting for Sunday, April 3<sup>rd</sup> at 2 p.m. for the purpose of discussing CE as we move out of Covid. All interested persons are invited to attend. There will be child care for the meeting.

## **Motion to Adjourn:**

There being no further business, Brian Striggow moved and Kay Brooks seconded that the meeting be adjourned. With no discussion, the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned with prayer at 10:06 p.m.

NEXT MEETING: April 26, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. Kay Brooks will present the devotional.

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Dana Waters, Moderator

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Luanne Rigsby, Clerk