

Covenant Presbyterian Church, Athens, Ga.

Stated Session Meeting

July 26, 2022

A stated session meeting, called according to the Book of Order, was held at Covenant Presbyterian Church and via Zoom on July 26, 2022. Moderator Dana Waters welcomed everyone, declared a quorum present, and called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

Elders present: Bert Ballard-Myer, Jennifer Frey, Abby Horvath, Linda Koehler, Brian Striggow and Chris Wilson.

Elders on Zoom: Don Bower

Elders absent: Clayton Adams, Katy Arora, Kathy Boardman, Kay Brooks, and Valerie Stone

Others present: Warren Combs (Zoom) Pam Knox, Luanne Rigsby, and Dana Waters

Devotional

Brian Striggow presented a devotional based on Luke 3:11 about sharing what we have with those less fortunate. We are called to it many times in the Bible, and we should learn to take it seriously when we deal with homeless and others in our personal lives and as a Session. Brian opened the meeting with prayer.

Review of Minutes

The minutes from the June 28, 2022, stated meeting were reviewed. Chris Wilson moved, and Abby Horvath seconded that the minutes be accepted. **Motion passed.**

Approval of the Agenda

A motion was made by Jennifer Frey and seconded by Chris Wilson to approve the agenda as amended. **Motion passed.** Warren Combs, a non-member of the Session was given permission to speak by acclamation.

Update from Andrew Ministry

Warren Combs updated the Session on the activities of the Andrew Ministry which is a sub-team under Congregational Care Ministry Team. Warren stated that the Andrew Ministry is working on three projects:

1. Making sure there are visitor cards in the pew racks
2. Updating the visitor brochure with current information such as staff names, worship time, church school activities, etc.
3. The Andrew Ministry Team has about 4 volunteers who will be reaching out to members who haven't returned to church since the COVID-19 quarantine. They

will be encouraging those people to rejoin us and making note of those who need to be removed from the rolls. The Mission Study Task Force will connect with the Andrew Ministry Team since they have been tasked with updating the rolls.

Financial Report

Pam Knox reviewed the financial summary for June 28, 2022, as well as the detailed financial report for the month. Pam will write a note to the congregation to be published in *The Covenanter*, summarizing our financial status as of the end of the fiscal year, June 30, 2022. Because of the faithful giving of our members, we received about \$12,000 more in pledges than anticipated. When that amount is added to non-pledged receipts and rent, the total amount received over what was pledged equals about \$16,000. The amount of money left over at the end of the fiscal year or money budgeted but not spent was \$58,997.49. The total amount of excess money at the end of the year was the \$58,997.49 plus the \$16,000. That money will roll into the general fund. The financial report was accepted into the minutes.

Pam noted that the new budget should be ready for the Session to vote on at the August meeting. There will be a 10% cut for all Ministry Teams.

Motions from Personnel on Staffing Needs

Dana stated that the Personnel Committee has conducted a 3-month study of the current staffing, as well as the future needs, especially as they pertain to the congregation's priorities as identified through the Holy Cow survey and to working within a reduced pledged budget. He commended Abby Horvath, Don Bower, Pam Knox and the rest of the Personnel Committee for their diligent work in dealing with hard decisions.

Abby Horvath presented four motions from the Personnel Committee detailing their rationale in making these four motions:

1. Revise the Technical Director job description from a full-time position (40 hr/wk) to a quarter-time position (10 hr/wk). We recommend a period of up to 3 months for this transition. Propose 27 October 2022 as start date of new hours. To do right by out personnel, it is recommended we sustain healthcare for 3 months. Healthcare will cease once 10 hours/week is implemented. The transition compensation will be covered using the surplus funds from 2021-2022. (About \$10,000 – one time cost). Following extensive discussion, the **motion carried**.
2. Revise the Technical Assistant job description to become a church employee rather than a contractor, and to reduce the time expectation from 6 hrs/wk to 3 hrs/wk, understanding that the employee has been claiming only 3 hrs/wk of work so this change reflects that reality. Following discussion, the **motion carried**.
3. Create a new part-time staff position that includes responsibilities both in Christian Education as well as Neighborhood Outreach. Our proposed salary if \$26,000 + FICA but without healthcare benefits. Pending approval of this motion,

personnel will draft a job description and begin search. Following discussion, the **motion carried**.

4. Hire Judy Capie to assume Robyn' Malone's roles and combine the receipts and bookkeeping roles into one, absorbing Robyn's compensation. This is with the understanding that there will be a second person (church volunteer) present to help count the Sunday offering. Following discussion, the **motion carried**.

Abby emphasized that now is the time for members to step up and volunteer as we try to do the same jobs with less paid staff.

Motion from Worship MT

On behalf of the Worship Ministry Team, Jennifer Frey moved that Worship at Covenant Presbyterian Church begin at 11am starting on August 28, 2022, to coincide with Rally Day. This celebration signals the beginning of Fall at Covenant and will allow for Sunday School classes to take place prior to Worship. Following discussion, **motion passed**

Motion on Start Time for Sunday School

Jennifer Frey moved, and Abby Horvath seconded that beginning August 28, 2022, Sunday School will begin at 9:30 a.m. Following discussion, the **motion passed**.

Discussion item - Clarifying food and drink policy during COVID

In anticipation of two upcoming events in August, Linda Koehler moved, and Chris Wilson seconded that during the high (red) rating of COVID-19, Covenant's COVID-19 policy be modified to allow food and drinks to be served outdoors. Following discussion, the **motion passed**

Discussion item from Building & Grounds – Homelessness issues

Brian Striggow stated that as we continue trying to be hospitable to our homeless neighbors, the signage of Covenant's homeless policies will be updated and posted.

Announcements – Ministry Teams

Missions - Bert Ballard-Myer attended a 1-hour Zoom call on "Thriving Congregations" and emailed her report to the Session for their study.

Fellowship - Prior to the meeting, the Fellowship Ministry Team sent the Session a report on activities held in June and July and those planned (BRAS event and Coffee house).

Worship Prior to the meeting, the Worship Ministry Team sent the Session a report on their July meeting

Mission Study Task Force will share the results of the Holy Cow survey with the congregation August 14th from 4:00 – 6:00 p.m.

Motion to Adjourn

There being no further business, Bert Ballard-Myer moved, and Abby Horvath seconded the meeting be adjourned. **Motion passed.** Dana closed with prayer at 9:02 p.m.

NEXT STATED MEETING: August 23, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. Don Bower presents devotional

Dana Waters, Moderator

Luanne Rigsby, Clerk