



Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church
Session Agenda
July 28th, 2020
6:00 pm, ZOOM

6:00 Opening Prayer, Quorum, Welcome Visitors, Approve Minutes and Consent Agenda

6:05 Engaging Scripture and Spiritual Practice

6:25 Welcoming New Members

6:40 Moderator's Report

6:45 Staff Reports

6:55 Baptism Requests

Winifred "Wendy" Meacham Legerton (GCPC Member) and David Clifford Love have requested that their children EmmyLou Legerton Love (born May 3, 2015 in Baltimore, MD) and Marie Legerton Love (born October 26, 2017 in Asheville, NC) be baptized.

Hannah Meacham Legerton (GCPC Member) and William Thomas High (GCPC Member) have requested that their children Josephine Legerton High (born December 5, 2017 in Boston, MA) and Penelope Legerton High (born January 2, 2020 in Asheville, NC) be baptized.

7:00 Building Requests: Voting, YTL

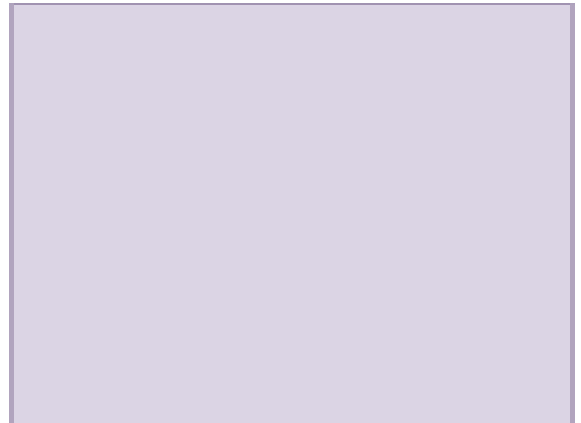
7:15 Council, Committee, Team Reports

- Finance
- Personnel
- Property
- Serve
- Worship
- Other Committees, Teams

7:45 Adjourn

Session Council/Committee/Assignments 2020

Ken Fisher	Finance
Laurie Stradley	Finance, Chair; Stewardship
Anna Hamel	Finance; Guatemala
Paul Rogers	Personnel
Jessica Graham	Personnel; Nominating
Sheryl Aikman	Personnel, Chair
Melissa Hicks	Serve, Chair
Christi Mobley	Serve
John Clark	Property, Co-Chair
John Legerton	Property; Long-Range Bldg. Vision
Roger Meade	Property, Co-Chair; Mem. Garden
Keith Prince	Worship; Stewardship
Debby Vance	Guatemala; Nominating
Carley Stein	Worship; Youth/Children
Margaret Tierney	Worship, Chair; Nominating, Chair
Annie Cole	Youth Elder; Youth Committee



Consent Agenda – July 28th

For approval -

Births:

Baptisms:

Marriages: 7/16/2020 Chloe McCleary-Small & Elizabeth Cerrina

Admissions to the Active Roll on:

To Inactive:

Transfers:

Restored from Inactive to Active Roll:

Deaths: 6/26/20 Betty Smith

Removed:

Session Approval by Email:

On 24 June, Marcia asked the Session to vote on a new draft of our mission statement, in which the sentence in green (“With God’s help . . .”) is substituted for “We are a work in progress.” The complete draft is as follows:

At GCPC our faith calls us to practice...

Theological CURIOSITY

Moral COURAGE

Abundant COMPASSION

Beloved COMMUNITY

With God’s help, we are seeking our transformation and the healing of the world.

A More Light congregation of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

and a Supporting Sanctuary Church in Western North Carolina

As of the evening of 6/24, there were 11 yeses and no nos. The motion carried.

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Date of Session: 07/28/20

As of 06/23/20

As of 07/28/20

Members on the roll of Active Members:

731

730

Members on the roll of Inactive Members:

179

179

slm

GRACE COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
MINUTES, STATED SESSION MEETING
23 JUNE 2020
DRAFT

PRESENT: Ken Fisher, Laurie Stradley, Anna Hamel, Paul Rogers, Sheryl Aikman, Melissa Hicks, Christi Mobley, John Clark, John Legerton, Roger Meade, Keith Prince, Carley Stein, Annie Cole.

EXCUSED: Jessica Graham, Debby Vance, and Margaret Tierney

CLERK: Kelley Griffith

STAFF: Marcia Mount Shoop (Moderator), Jeff Jones, Heather Ferguson, Samantha Gonzalez-Block

GUESTS: Kate Shem, Mary Berg, Liz Huesemann, Jay Hill

The meeting began at 6:03 pm via Zoom, an on-line meeting platform that Session is using during the COVID19 global pandemic. Kelley Griffith, Clerk, declared a quorum. Marcia opened the meeting with prayer.

Kelley reported on a letter he received from Cindy Yates of the Presbyterian Foundation. The letter indicated that our church is the beneficiary of the remainder left in a fund that has been discontinued because of the termination of the Presbyterian Foundation's charitable gift annuity obligations under an agreement with Horace Adams, Jr. in 1994. The amount of the gift is \$1,132.89. Its use is to be determined by the Session.

***Sheryl moved and John Legerton seconded that the minutes for the 26 May stated Session meeting be approved. Passed.**

***The motion to approve the consent agenda passed.**

ENGAGING SCRIPTURE AND SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

Marcia said that one of our purposes in this meeting will be to explore ways we, the Session, can "go deeper" in our anti-racist work. We will address this issue later in the meeting. Kate Shem had requested that the Session view Marcia's online devotional from 6/16/20 in order to inform Session's discussion of Kate's invitation to the Session. So, the Session viewed the video and then Marcia divided those present into small groups and asked them to answer three questions: How does your body feel listening to the video? Where do you feel open? Where do you feel resistance?

MODERATOR'S REPORT

Marcia said that she is inspired by how our church community has gotten stronger during the Covid19 pandemic. She said that she has been involved in many meetings, such as with Just Funding, Long Range Building Visioning, Serve Council, pastoral care, Bible Study, etc. She feels that many things are coming together so that we can move to another level of engagement in order to do God's work. It is exciting to be part of this time in history. Because of the increasing strength of the virus, she guesses that committees and the congregation will not be meeting face-to-face until at least the end of August or September. But it could be longer. She urged us to continue wearing masks, maintaining social distance, and washing hands. Doing so shows our Christian love. She said that her husband, John, is successfully recovering from his surgery but they will not know until later if the surgery removed all of his cancer.

STAFF REPORTS

Heather

Heather expressed her gratitude for her time at GCPC as this was her last Session meeting. Heather reported that the Vacation Bible School in a Box is going great. We are "having a blast." The kids are sending pictures and videos and have been outside exploring. The success of this program prompts us to ponder the good results of not being together.

She said furthermore that as she has gotten ready to move to another job at the end of this month the people here have been "so kind and generous to me." She respects "so much the work Grace Covenant is doing" and added that "you all have shaped me."

Samantha

Samantha expressed gratitude for the youth and advisors. They have planned for at-home Massanneta and Montreat gatherings. Registration for these will go out soon. She praised Erin Tolar, one of our young adult volunteers, for her work.

Jeff

Jeff said he was grateful for involvement of the staff and congregation in working for justice. The recent Zoom Cabaret (talent show) was fun and successful. The Wednesday choir chats continue to be a way for members to connect and share. These will continue through the summer. The handbell choir will begin meeting this Friday outside the church building, six people at a time, to rehearse pieces written for the pandemic to be videotaped for worship.

Marcia reminded the Session that Richard was absent on parental leave because of the birth of his daughter Auden on June 13.

PROPOSAL BY KATE SHEM

Kate Shem, member of Grace Covenant, raised the question, "Where is God Calling Grace Covenant?" She and the other guests yearn for "greater accountability" and propose that members of the congregation, meeting in small groups, engage in a study of white supremacy. The means of doing this would be to follow the program outlined in Layla F. Saad's book, *Me and White Supremacy: Combat Racism, Change the World, and Become a Good Ancestor* (published in 2020).

Kate asked the Session two questions:

- 1. Is the Session willing to collectively commit to participate in this study?**
- 2. Is the Session willing to be the entity that invites the congregation into this study?**

After much discussion, John Cark moved that the Session say "yes" to both of these questions. Roger seconded the motion.

Ken called for the question. Melissa seconded Ken's motion. With 5 yeses and 6 nos the question was not called.

John Legerton suggested that we build some flexibility into when and how long the studies might take place. With the understanding that the Session will agree on language to that effect, the motion passed unanimously.

MISSION STATEMENT

Marcia said that the Session should, if possible, complete our mission statement at our July meeting.

FINANCE COUNCIL REPORT

Laurie, on behalf of the Finance Council, presented the March financial statements for the Session's approval. No second was needed. Passed unanimously.

The Finance Council moves that the \$1,132.89 the church received from the Presbyterian Foundation (mentioned at the beginning of these minutes) be given to the Serve Council. Passed unanimously.

Serve Council

No action proposed.

Property Council

No action proposed.

Personnel Council

No action proposed.

Worship Council

No action proposed.

Laurie moved and Annie seconded that the meeting adjourn. Passed

At 8 pm Marcia closed the meeting with prayer.

Respectively submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kelley Griffith". The script is cursive and fluid.

Kelley Griffith
Clerk of Session

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marcia Mount Shoop". The script is cursive and elegant.

Marcia Mount Shoop
Moderator

Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church
PART Notes
July 9, 2020

Attendees: Mary Berg, Kathy Meacham, John Legerton, John Huie, Liz Huesemann, Larry Stein, Amy Weisner, Margie Groves, Marcia Mount Shoop, John Mount Shoop, Carol Hovis, Tamara Puffer, Alexandra Lusak, Betsy Richards Smith, Lynn Meacham

Mary Berg opened the meeting with a poem, written by one of her clients.

Liz and Marcia gave an overview of the upcoming congregation-wide reading and reflection of the book, *Me and White Supremacy*.

The group picked the white supremacy norm “either/or thinking” from Tema Okun’s work to go deeper.

Brainstorm as to what keeps us using this norm:

- It is efficient to go to right/wrong thinking
- The perception that emotions slow us down
- Connected to sense of urgency
- Simplifies complex issues
- Places importance on being right
- It takes time to get input
- Socialized into the either/or thinking
- Leaps to conclusion
- Power is at stake
- Eliminates possibilities
- Do not get a rich dialogue
- Creativity is stifled
- Trivializes relationships
- Fear of going deeper

Where do we see this either/or thinking?

- Our country is infected with this thinking
- The way people treat transgendered people: Insensitive people want them to make a decision.
- Christianity and monotheism
- Parenting was discussed.

What does it mean to eliminate either/or thinking? What will it look like?

- Listen more to views
- We will get to the why of the issue
- A range of outcomes will be generated
- Slow down for people to do a deeper analysis
- Hear from everyone (mutual invitation)
- Take time. With time creativity comes
- Relationships go deeper, we get to know each other
- Allows for reflection
- Allows being real with self
- Avoids making decisions under pressure
- Breathe and take breaks

Marcia asked the group to take some concrete steps:

Research the origins of policing in this country. Research what it means to defund the police.

Participate in the “Me and White Supremacy” initiative.

Go to www.rjcavl.org for some concrete actions.

Carol Hovis closed the meeting with a quote from George Washington Carver to reflect on.

Next meeting August 13th at 6:00 pm

**GRACE COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
FINANCE COUNCIL MEETING
MINUTES, JULY 21, 2020**

In attendance: Natalie Weaver, Finance Administrator, and committee members: Joe Brumit, Leonard Hollifield, Grace Hall, Tara Theodossis, Ken Fisher, Sarah Van Gunten

Chairperson Laurie Stradley called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM and opened with prayer.

Natalie reviewed the financial statements for June, 2020. After discussion, a motion was made by Ken Fisher and seconded by Grace Hall to recommend acceptance of the financial report to Session. The motion passed unanimously.

Discussion proceeded on whether or not to continue with a restatement of the 2020 budget, in light of the changes brought about by the shutdown caused by the pandemic. Consensus was that a restatement is not necessary at this time. Ken Fisher commented that we should keep a close eye on the income stream and also continue to look at ways to increase our reserve funds.

Ken Fisher closed the meeting with prayer at 6:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Van Gunten

GCPC Deacon Meeting
Sunday, June 28, 2020
Minutes

Attendance:

Mary Berg, Ann Brown, John Curry, Jeff Curtis, Earl Fowler, Martha Ensign Johnson, nancy kramer,
Mike McCauley, Lynn Meacham, Lynn Milner, Marcy Onieal, Beth Robrecht, Louise Root, Peter Rosal

Absent: Nancy Gaskin, Gordon Gaiser, Betsy Rhodes, Amber White

1. Opening Prayer

Nancy Kramer opened the meeting with prayer. She welcomed guests, Liz Huesemann and Kate Shem.

2. Kate Shem and Liz Huesemann presented the new initiative being worked on with members from the PART and Padrino groups. The Session has endorsed the study of Me and White Supremacy, a 28 day journal study into white supremacy.

This invitational experience for the congregation is designed to explore three tenets:

- A. We all have a race story.
- B. We can and will become accountable through deeper relationships with each other.
- C. A framework for safely talking about white supremacy is essential.

After presentation and discussion, the Deacon Board voted unanimously to endorse this initiative.

3. Deacon Check In

Nancy asked the group to ponder two questions:

- With all that is happening in the news and our world, what can you not let go of?
- What could you do that could ease the weight of the burden?

4. Pastoral Concerns

Pastoral concerns were shared by deacons.

5. Quilt of Grace

The Worship Committee is planning to mail quilt squares and directions for completion to those who cannot pick up their own. Heather Hudson will be contacting the deacon of each homebound member to determine if sending a quilt square would be appropriate. Margaret Tierney is the point person for anyone who wants a square delivered. Deacons were asked to encourage their members to participate in the creation of the Quilt of Grace.

6. Calendar - The next Zoom Board Meeting will be on July 19 at 3:00.

7. Closing Prayer

Nancy closed in prayer.

Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church
Garden Steering Team Minutes
June 28, 2020

Attendance: Pam Baker, Jan Brunk, Liz Huesemann, Judy Major, Wade Macfie, Terri March, Paul Stroebel, Barbara Toth, and Betsy Wilson

Staff: Marcia Mount Shoop, Samantha Gonzalez-Block, Heather Ferguson, and Cliff Schlegelmilch

Marcia led us in gathering and grounding by inviting us to share words about signs of vitality in the garden.

- Break out groups report back:
 - o Communication/Recruitment Group:
Invitations will be extended to young people and families to join us in working in the garden.
 - o Distribution Group:
The sub-team is working with Serve and Samantha to connect with YTL families. Gardeners might be asked to help families by providing food, such as rice or chicken, in addition to garden produce.
 - o Planting/Planning etc. Group:
The group will work with Anthony to grow enough curly kale and collard starts to have one full bed of each for the fall garden. A plan for use of our drip irrigation system has been reviewed and approved by the PPHW group and Anthony and will be added to the Garden Steering Committee main folder.
 - o Pesticide Group:
Tomorrow is spray day. Plans for a new water hydrant to be placed near the garden sign are being discussed. We have new spraying equipment.
- Important next step for garden steering team
The steering committee was asked to consider whether the church should hire a part-time garden coordinator.
- Invitation from one of our partners
Chef Hannan from Southside Kitchen has offered to cook greens and cornbread for everybody who works in the garden. Judy will respond and see if lunch shifts on Saturday July 11 will work. Gardeners will help with plates.

Next scheduled meeting time is July 12, at 1:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Betsy Wilson

**Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church
Garden Steering Team Minutes
July 12, 2020**

Attendance: Mary Boynton, Jan Brunk, Liz Huesemann, Judy Major, Wade Macfie, Terri March, Rick Philipsen, Paul Stroebel, Barbara Toth, and Betsy Wilson

Staff: Marcia Mount Shoop, Samantha Gonzalez-Block, and Cliff Schlegelmilch

Marcia began the meeting by reading Mary Oliver's poem The Gardener.

- Those who were able to enjoy the fried chicken, collards, and cornbread prepared by Chef Hanan Shabazz described it as a great event attended by 24 gardeners.
- Liz shared an invitation from GCPC session to read Me and White Supremacy by Layla Saad. Individuals would reflect on their reading and reaction in a group of 5 or 6 people.
- Break out groups report back:
 - Communication/Recruitment Group:
Updates to garden information on the GCPC website need to be completed. Placements of new gardeners who responded to our recent invitation on garden work teams were discussed. We decided to issue the invitation again and include the invitation with George emails that go out to families with young children.
 - Partnership/Distribution Group:
The sub-team encouraged Communications to talk about our garden as joining the work of our distribution partners. Southside Kitchen is grateful; no changes need in what we do. Samantha will ask our partners if there are other needs. We have a new contact for YWCA; we will take our produce to them. It was suggested that we invite partners to future potlucks. Marcia encouraged use of asset-based language and will send a document out to us.
 - Planting/Planning etc. Group:
Collards and curly kale seeds will be started. Spinach or garlic will replace swiss chard. Collards have soft rot caused by *Erwinia* sp. bacteria. Wade suggested growing garlic under fabric. Our garlic harvest is ready for gardeners to take. Remaining garlic will be distributed to partners.
 - Pesticide Group:
A new sprayer will be ordered. Rick and Judy will spray tomorrow.
- Brainstorming about paid garden manager
This is a great opportunity to go out to other gardens including Shiloh Community Center, Bounty and Soul, Root Cause Farm (formerly Lord's Acre), ASAP, Organic Gardening School. We might send a job description to these organizations. Our prospective manager should have primary responsibility to our garden but be well-connected with other gardens. Marcia reported that Anthony suggested sharing our land with the community. We think we need Anthony to help with job description and wage. Having a paid gardener on staff connects staff with the garden.

Next scheduled meeting time is July 26, at 1:00 pm. Samantha will facilitate this meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Betsy Wilson

Earth Team Minutes
July 15, 2020, 5:30 – 6:30 PM

Attendance: Betsy Smith-Richards, Laura Ross, Sharon Sasse, Tamara Puffer, John Huie, John Curry, Susan Presson. Vann Vogel called into the meeting.

1. Introduction. Betsy opened the meeting with a brief prayer.
2. Butterfly Garden. Special shout-out to Laura for spearheading this effort. No monarchs yet for this season. Betsy could use help watering, but we have had so much rain so that so far this has not been necessary.
3. David Orr Event – many thanks to John Huie and John Curry for bringing David Orr to speak via the GCPC YouTube: “Pandemics and Prejudice: How Can Democracy Survive in a Hotter Time?” It was “attended” by 60 people when it was presented on Friday evening 7/10, but then it was reported that approximately 200 people later watched it on our YouTube channel.
4. Earth Care Congregation Certification. Tamara reported that we have been recertified as an Earth Care Congregation! Thank you, Tamara for organizing and applying for this for the GCPC EARTH TEAM!
5. REALM. Betsy suggested that we all complete are profiles on GCPC Realm, and she offered to help people set up their REALM account.
6. Hikes and Birds. During the Covid-19, no hikes or bird-watching expeditions for a bit!
7. GCPC Lawn. John C. wants to work with Property to propose a long-range plan to replace our grass since its care uses fossil fuel and produces much pollution. Betsy mentioned that Sherrie’s husband has some expertise about replacing lawns with more earth-friendly landscaping. John will consult with him and will also send out links re. lawncare. Vann agreed that that is a targeted, achievable goal. Bryant S. brought this idea to the group last summer.
8. Electricity savings with solar panels - Have we saved money on our electric bill? Susan acknowledged that Grace Covenant is also closed because of COVID so the comparison might be misleading. John C. will ask Cliff and Natalie about this.
9. Earth Team Template. Laurie asked if our EARTH Team should set out a template for the things that we are doing to assist other churches. Susan said that Creation Care Alliance, which has an extensive mailing list, is doing this in general.
10. Church Group Communications. Sharon wondered if there is enough communication between the various committees at Grace Covenant. John C. thinks that we are a subcommittee under the Property Council; whereas Susan believes that we are under SERVE. Betsy will investigate and report back.
11. Draw Down. Susan said that before COVID, she and Richard had planned that the EARTH Team (probably Susan and John C.) would teach a SS class on the study: DRAWDOWN: the Most Comprehensive Plan Ever Proposed to Reverse Global Warming in the fall. Since Richard is out on paternity leave, Susan will check with Marcia and Samantha about SS plans for the fall.
12. List Partners. Betsy asked others to help list area groups and agencies, with contact information, to whom we can send announcements when we have special events.
13. Refocusing Earth Team Mission? Betsy asked the Team to reflect on the idea of Refocusing our Mission in light of David Orr’s lecture. Have Earth Team focus more on integrating with the other church teams, as we are all connected, and the fate of the Earth and global warming are very connected the issues of Homelessness, Food Sourcing, Economics, White Supremacy, and the other issues our church works on.
14. Next meeting – Wednesday August 12, 5:30 pm via ZOOM.