



Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church
Session Agenda
September 22nd, 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 Moderator's Report

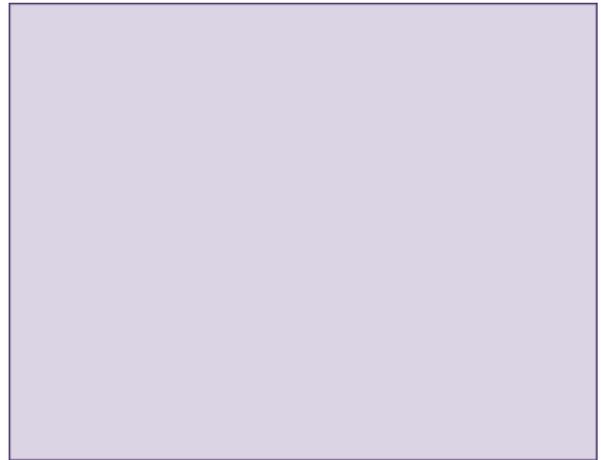
6:35 Staff Reports

6:45 Council, Committee, Team Reports

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

7:15 Additional Business

7:30 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 – September 22nd

For approval -

Births:

Baptisms:

Marriages:

Admissions to the Active Roll:

To Inactive:

Transfers:

Restored from Inactive to Active Roll:

Deaths:

Removed:

Session Approval by Email:

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| Date of Session: 09/22/20 | As of 08/25/20 | As of 09/22/20 |
|--|----------------|----------------|
| Members on the roll of Active Members: | 731 | 739 |
| Members on the roll of Inactive Members: | 179 | 179 |

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**GRACE COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
MINUTES, STATED SESSION MEETING
25 AUGUST 2020**

PRESENT: Ken Fisher, Anna Hamel, Paul Rogers, Jessica Graham, Sheryl Aikman, Melissa Hicks, Christi Mobley, John Clark, John Legerton, Roger Meade, Margaret Tierney, Debby Vance, Annie Cole, Carley Stein, Laurie Stradley

EXCUSED: Keith Prince

CLERK: Kelley Griffith

STAFF: Marcia Mount Shoop (Moderator), Jeff Jones, Samantha Gonzalez-Block, Richard Coble

GUESTS: Janice Kominski

The meeting began at 6:01 pm via Zoom, an on-line meeting platform that Session is using during the COVID-19 global pandemic. Kelley Griffith, Clerk, declared a quorum. Marcia opened the meeting with prayer.

***Roger moved and Ken seconded that the minutes for the 28 July stated Session meeting be approved. Passed.**

***Laurie moved and Roger seconded that the consent agenda be approved. Passed.**

ENGAGING SCRIPTURE AND SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

Marcia shared some videos about the PCUSA Matthew 25 initiative, and the Session discerned how GCPC is doing the work indicated in the goals of this initiative.

***After the discussion, Debby moved and Margaret seconded that our church become a Matthew 25 congregation. Passed.**

MODERATOR'S REPORT

--Marcia said that as the Covid-19 pandemic continues our goal is to "creatively and faithfully adapt." So, for one thing, we will continue online worship for the foreseeable future.

--As a way to bring the congregation together we will celebrate "Pandemic Palooza" that "we hope will energize us." The theme this Fall is "As the World Turns." For Palooza Saturday on September 12, we will invite people to decorate their cars, drive through, and, while staying in their cars, drop off things our ministry partners need. We'll have music and balloons and an ice cream truck. That night we'll have a fun, community-building, "Saturday Night Live" event on Zoom.

--On Sunday, 13 September, we will have Communion.

--During the week following Palooza, the deacons will drop off bags of gifts for the congregation. The children ages 4-8 will receive boxes that they will use for formation this Fall.

--Ongoing, she said, are discussions about hiring a Children and Family minister, a garden manager, and there will be some retooling of the Support Staff involving Luke Johnson, whose skills and gifts will be important for the church in the long term.

--She asked the Session to think about the "temperature" of the church, how the church is doing. As seen in "metrics" like the following, the church is doing well

--Attendance for our on-line church service is strong, about 400-600 views by the end of most Sundays.

--Many people have signed up for the *Me and White Supremacy* reflection groups.

--We continue to grow, with new members in spite of the pandemic.

--Giving is on par with past years.

--Our garden is "going great guns," with much community involvement and produce going to community partners.

--The YTL learning program, which will begin after Labor Day, has generated excitement and strong participation.

STAFF REPORTS

Richard

He is excited about the Deacons' participation in Palooza and their plans to meet socially distanced and face-to-face with people in their care groups by bringing things to their door step. He asked for prayers as Lindsay (his wife, a nurse) returns to work next week.

Samantha

This summer has featured great events for the youth. They are now having welcome-back gatherings Zoom parties. The youth program has wonderful advisors, parents, and youth. This fall the youth will meet Sunday evenings 5-6:30.

Jeff

He is working on music programs for the choir and congregation to do this fall and hopes to put together an on-line, live recital of Christmas Music. Next summer he will teach in the Worship and Music program.

JANICE KOMINSKI

Margaret presented Janice Kominski's request to move from Inquirer to Candidate for Ministry of Word and Sacrament. GCPC sponsors her in this journey. This year, Margaret said, Janice has been an outstanding student at Union Presbyterian Seminary in Richmond, Virginia. She has been actively involved in our church. And she is, along with her husband, a parent of three children. After Janice reflected on her goals and answered questions from the Session,

***Margaret moved and Sheryl seconded that the Session approve her request to become a Candidate for the ministry. Passed unanimously and enthusiastically.**

COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Council

Laurie said that the church is "financially healthy." Our revenue is seeing the same seasonal fluctuation that we have seen in non-Covid years.

***The Council moved that the Session approve this month's financials statements. Passed.**

Serve Council

Melissa said that Serve is pleased that it will now be distributing the rest of its funds to our ministry partners.

Property Council

No action proposed.

Personnel Council

Sheryl said the council will begin assessing benefit packages for the staff. She thanked the staff for its creative and energetic handling of the pandemic.

Worship Council

***The Council moved that communion take place on the following dates: 9/13, 10/4, 11/1, and 12/25. Passed.**

***At 7:46 Roger moved and Anna seconded that the meeting be adjourned. Passed.**

Marcia ended the meeting with a prayer.

Respectively submitted,

Kelley Griffith Marcia Mount Shoop

Kelley Griffith
Clerk of Session

Marcia Mount Shoop
Moderator

Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church
Worship Council Minutes
Worship council, Sept 1, 2020

Present: Margaret Tierney, Mary Lou Nash, Mary Berg, Keith Prince, Paul Rogers, Carley Stein

Staff: Jeff Jones

Keith opened us in prayer

What do we enjoy/appreciate about services now? We love the music, the images, the sense of connection/community, the professionalism, sense of normalcy and routine in a time when those things are hard to come by.

Mary Lou - Sacrament of Baptism, Baptism birthdays - age appropriate cards created by Flori Pate with our font on them; Mary Lou would write children a note on their baptism birthday and sign it from the church. 50-60 notes a year went out, until children were confirmed. Children also got candles at the time of their baptism to light at home with their families on their "birthday baptism," reminding them that baptism isn't a one-time event. The candle had a book with it.

Do we know how to gather the data about children who move here? Is this a question when families join the church?

The last time this process took place was in 2017.

Q. Would Worship Council like to take up the job of overseeing Baptism Birthday cards and sending them to children at GCPC?

Worship Council likes this idea. Should we send out a notice in the church bulletin of people who would like to participate? Maybe one person should be in charge of the effort to make the process more seamless. That person could become an "Adjunct" member of Worship Committee for this purpose.

Signature: From Your Church Family

Mary Lou would be the volunteer. A church staff member/volunteer would need to order/pick-up cards to keep in stock.

Bring to Session: Worship Council recommends continuing the Baptism Birthday card tradition.

World Communion -

World Communion Sunday is the first Sunday in October. Staff suggests that we get little portable communion packets to distribute for this purpose.

The Worship Council thinks this is a good idea. We discussed logistics, how we would distribute these packets to church members and how long the packets would take to get here.

When could pick-up happen? Maybe the week before?

We would need to disburse these packets the week of September 28.

Quilt Square Deadline

Margaret will send a message about quilt squares, and ask to wrap it up and get them to the church by end of September.

Margaret will write a blurb about upcoming communion dates. She will write both blurbs by Sept. 8th for that newsletter.

Advent in a Box

We talked about this idea, ways to stay connected. Staff will hopefully talk these ideas over.

Jeff closed in prayer.

Next scheduled meeting time: October 6th at 5:30

Respectfully Submitted,

Name of Person Who Took Minutes: Carley Stein

Council Chair: Margaret Tierney

Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church
Serve Council Minutes
September, 15th, 2020

Attendance: Melissa Hicks, John Huie, Tammy Bradley, Christi Mobley, Rick Noble, Lynne Meacham

Staff: Samantha Gonzalez-Block

1. Opening prayer: Melissa Hicks
2. Reflections:
Caring for oneself without “White Apathy” - Lynne M.
Reflecting about the gathering at Vance Monument today - John H.
3. Palooza discussion:
 - Fun experience that seemed to bring people together. The drop-off time was short, but well attended. Numerous items were collected for the 4 agencies (YTL, YWCA, Bountiful Cities and La Milpa).
 - The other experiences of Palooza were also expounded upon, including the worship service (that was very enjoyable), the Saturday night program, and also the “Me and White Supremacy” reflection group on Sunday night. All made for a very busy but good weekend.
4. Sharing Cycle Working Group (Christi, Keaton, Rick):
 - Asking about ongoing members and recruiting members for both the committees and the Council.
 - Folks to be recruited who are involved in different areas of the church
(See Charter: ***Membership description From the Serve Charter: three Session members, and six to eight additional members. Members on the Serve Council should serve a three year term, with the option to renew membership for one additional term. Members should commit to attending monthly meetings and participating in at least one working group. ***)
 - What do we need: what strengths/areas of our work are we missing?
 - May need to reflect on recruitment at the next meeting (for 15-20 minutes)
 - Nail down some names: newer members, folks with valuable experiences/skills
 - Lynne M will write a recruitment article for the Weekly Newsletter.
 - Melissa will check with Staff about persons who might have interest and talent for Serve, or the committees of Serve
 - Mary Elizabeth Shoop will be joining the Council in October.
 - Request to have information about next year’s GCPC budget
 - No info yet. Church Budget has not yet been finalized. Stewardship coming up soon.
 - How much will the Serve budget be in 2021?
5. Events and engagement Working Group
(Amy W, Tammy and John):
 - Relationship building: John H asked about how that is going.
Connects are being made: several teams have made contact with their assigned Covenant Partners (Serve buddies).
Some information has been in the Newsletter already, as well.
 - Weekly Newsletter articles: Serve members were assigned dates to write articles.

| WEEK TO WRITE | Covenant Partner | Serve Member Buddy Writing for Weekly News |
|---------------|----------------------|--|
| 8-16-20 | Hood Huggers | Lynne |
| 8-23-20 | YTL | Rick and Tammy |
| 8-30-20 | La Milpa | Keaton |
| 9-6-20 | Faith for Justice | Lynne |
| 9-13-20 | Recruiting for Serve | Lynne |
| 9-27-20 | Resident's Council | Melissa/Amy |
| 10-12-20 | Bountiful Cities | Christi/Amy W |
| 10-26-20 | SOS | Tammy |
| 11-8-20 | CoThinkk | John |

- Since Amy Fowler has stepped down from Serve, other Serve members have taken over her Covenant Partner “buddy” assignments (in bold):

*Beloved – John H and **Christi***

*CoThinkk -Rick and **John***

*Center for Participatory Change- **Melissa** and Christi*

6. Other Business:

- The Second Round of Checks to Covenant Partners is going out next week: *Samantha and Melissa will be in touch with Natalie and Keaton.*
- Serve was given an extra \$1000 earlier this summer: **Motion made by Rick Noble and seconded by Tammy Bradley “To use that extra \$1000 for the emergency fund for the Serve Council”. Motion was approved unanimously.**
- We will revisit how to spend the remaining funds in the budget at a later date.

Having no other business, Samantha closed the Serve Council in prayer.

Respectfully submitted:

Melissa Hicks

Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church
PART Notes
September 10, 2020

Present: Margie Groves, Lynn Meacham, Liz Huesemann, Tamara Puffer, Alexandra Lusak, Carol Hovis. Mary Berg, Winn Legerton, Anne Callison Stokely,

Staff: Marcia Mount Shoop

Thank you to Alexandra Lusak for opening our meeting with meditation.

Paternalism:

Because Marcia was not at the meeting where we discussed paternalism, the Team asked who to add her perspective to our work from last month. Marcia explained polity as policies and procedures that bring order to the work of the church. Presbyterian polity facilitates the hearing of different viewpoints, but it centers the dynamic of debate and binary perspectives.

She had an example from the most recent General Assembly for how polity at times can be weaponized to squelch hearing voices of those pushed to the margins in white dominant institutions. Because the GA was online this year due to COVID, the docket did not include attention to some of the work that would have gone to the assembly floor if it had been face to face. One of those items of business was a report on the state of Black women and girls.

Toward the end of the assembly a request was made that, given all that is happening in our country right now, the assembly make time on the docket to hear and receive this report. After debate in which many white identified people shared reasons for not receiving the report that included being tired, the assembly voted no to hearing the report. This outcome was hurtful and harmful, and that hurt and harm was expressed by many people, including BIPOC, who were at the GA. Polity did prioritize order but, in this case, damaged relationships and the seeking of justice and healing.

It is a historic moment in our denomination with Black leaderships in the major decision-making bodies where GCPC resides in the Presbyterian structure. Our new General Presbytery, our Synod Executive, the Stated Clerk of the denomination, and the President of the denomination's mission agency (PMA) are all Black. How do we seek transformation of our norms, structures, and practices that go beyond representation?

At GCPC we have some practices that disrupt the binaries of for/against debate. For instance, GCPC's Session uses mutual invitation to discern and do not position the discussion on decisions as for or against. If necessary additional meetings are scheduled and discussions are slowed down in order for the body to discern God's call. Consensus is mentioned in the PCUSA Book of Order now as an accepted way of making decisions.

A recommendation was made to do a class at GCPC looking at Presbyterian governance through an equity lens.

Transactional Relationships:

The Team decided to go deeper into the white supremacy characteristic of transactional relationships. Deep personal sharing occurred about how destructive these relationships can be. These relationships: Trivialize us, are about winning and what you get, are about getting the most you can in exchange for as little as possible, make you feel empty and unimportant, prioritize results not relationships, create distance, are about making a deal (I will do this if you do that.)

Marcia read from the book, Your Resonant Self. Emotional warm is the experience being me with and meeting others with affection and welcome. It comes with relaxation and comfort. It brings us a sense of belonging. The book invites us to have that kind of relationship with ourselves.

The resonant relationship is: welcoming, has emotional warmth, compassionate, says "I see you," is about being yourself, loving, thoughtful and genuine, built on the "we" not the "I."

- Note GCPC has become a Mathew 25 church.

Margie Groves closed the meeting with meditation. Thank you.

**Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church
Finance Council Minutes
Sept 15, 2020**

Attendance: Laurie Stradley (Chair), Anna Hamel, Ken Fisher, John Kramer, Leonard Hollifield (Assistant Treasurer), Joe Brumit (Treasurer)

Staff: Marcia Mount Shoop, Natalie Weaver

The meeting opened in Prayer (Marcia Mount Shoop)

Review of August Finances

Income: Giving was higher in August than July. Unpledged giving was also higher. There were several Memorial gifts received in honor of Harry Summerlin. Rent income was off slightly because some outside groups are not using the building.

Expenses: Expenses were lower than budgeted. The biggest expenses were upgrades to the WIFI to support YTL's usage and planned new computers for staff.

Anna Hamel made a motion to accept the financial statements as presented. Ken Fisher seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Stewardship Update

Marcia said she has begun recruiting the stewardship committee for the fall campaign. She is asking individuals who have served in the last four years. The goal for the 2021 campaign is the same as 2020

Reserves we discussed the need to build reserves for major building repairs with excess funds at end of 2020. We discussed the need for a new roof for the children's center. Ken recommended authorizing the Property committee to get quotes for replacing the roof to bring to session.

Planned Giving

Discussed forming a committee to develop a strategy to foster and promote planned giving

2019 Budget Review

Natalie asked that we accept the review of the 2019 budget as presented

Ken Fisher motioned to accept

John Kramer seconded

Ken Fisher closed the meeting in prayer

Respectfully Submitted,

Anna Hamel, Council Member

Laurie Stradley, Council Chair

**Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church
Garden Steering Team Minutes
August 23, 2020**

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

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

Marcia opened the meeting with a poem by Orin Craig, Prayer: Slow me Down Lord.

- The group talked about how the community garden relates to the governing structure of GCPC. GCPC is governed by the Session, 16 elected ruling elders with Marcia as moderator. The garden steering team interacts with several councils of the Session, including Serve and Property. These councils are arms of the Session, each chaired by a member of Session. Samantha, who serves on the garden steering committee, is a resource for Serve.
- Break out groups report back:
 - Pesticide group:

There was a discussion about how to alert potential harvesters about pesticide spraying. The group decided to order permanent signs for each corner of the garden and to use temporary signs in the corners until the permanent signs arrive. Temporary signs will be made in the office. Marcia and Cliff will arrange for permanent signs. Signs should alert harvesters to avoid Mondays as that is the usual spray day but perhaps have a way to be modified when spraying occurs on other days. Blueberries should not be sprayed.
 - Distribution Group:

Liz let us know that items for some of our community partners will be collected as part of GCPC Palooza.
 - Planning, Planting, and Harvesting:

Collards need to go in the ground. Current plants need to be removed. Spinach will go in bed 6 where beans are now.
 - Membership/Communication:

Communications subgroup also talked about signs to alert harvesters to pesticides. Paul and Ben could help Rick Noble with mowing. Paul will check in with Rick.
- The meeting closed with a reminder from Marcia for us to slow down and to be thinking about how to celebrate the end of the garden season.

Next scheduled meeting time is September 6, at 1:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Betsy Wilson

**Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church
Garden Steering Team Minutes
September 6, 2020**

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

Staff: Marcia Mount Shoop, and Cliff Schlegelmilch

Marcia opened the meeting with the poem “Invitation” by Mary Oliver

- Marcia provided an update on the garden manager position. A position description is being prepared.
- The group discussed signs to be used to prevent harvesting. Cliff will prepare temporary signs for individual rows that read “Please do not harvest this row.” Marcia and Cliff will work on permanent signs. Barbara Toth recommended an email to team leaders.
- GCPC Palooza Saturday event is a drive through drop off of pandemic supplies for YTL, YWCA, La Milpa, and Bountiful Cities. Jan and Liz will be part of the team receiving the donations.
- Ideas for a fall garden celebration were discussed. Judy, Betsy, and Barbara were asked to determine interest among gardeners.
- Break out groups report back:
 - Pesticide group:
Spraying will diminish now but continue to first hard frost.
 - Distribution Group:
Team leaders will manage distribution of large harvests.
 - Planning, Planting, and Harvesting:
Team leaders should alert gardeners to potato harvests at Anthony’s farm.
 - Membership/Communication:
Website content about the garden was discussed. Betsy will revise current content and Marcia will edit the revision.
- The meeting closed with a report from Marcia of a suggestion from Pat Durham that we memorialize Harry Summerlin in the garden. A spot in the garden to memorialize gardeners was suggested.

Next scheduled meeting time is September 20, at 1:00 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Betsy Wilson