



Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church
Session Agenda
November 16, 2021
6:00 pm, ZOOM

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

6:05 Scripture and Spiritual Practice

6:25 Moderator's Report

6:35 Staff Reports

6:50 Council Reports

- Finance
- Personnel
- Property
- Serve
- Worship

7:00 In-person Worship Option Discussion

7:15 Update on GA Overture

7:20 Executive Session

7:45 Adjourn

Session Council/Committee/Assignments 2021

Anna Hamel	Finance Chair; Guatemala
Blake Martin	Finance
Bill Neeriemer	Personnel
Jessica Graham	Personnel Chair; Nominating
Sheryl Aikman	Personnel
Melissa Hicks	Serve
Christi Mobley	Serve, Chair
Martha Seddon	Serve, Guatemala
Anne Raustol	Property
John Legerton	Property Co-Chair; Long-Range Bldg. Vision
Roger Meade	Property, Co-Chair; Mem. Garden
Keith Prince	Worship; Stewardship
Tim Moe	Worship
Margaret Tierney	Worship; Nominating
Mary Elizabeth Shoop	Youth Committee; Serve

SESSION MEETINGS

(all meetings begin at 6:00 pm)

Tuesday, December 14*

OTHER MEETINGS

Thur. November 18 | 7:00pm | Earth Team

Sun. November 21 | 12:30pm | Deacons

Wed. December 1 | 7:00pm | Garden

Tue. December 7 | 5:30pm | Guatemala

Tue. December 7 | 5:30pm | Worship

Thur. December 9 | 6:00pm | PART

Dec. Property TBD

SAVE THE DATES!

Tuesday, January 25 | 6:00pm | SESSION

Sunday, January 30 | 10:45am | Annual Mtg.

Saturday, February 12 | 9:30am-3:30pm |

Session/Diaconate Retreat

(outgoing Elders & Deacons join for lunch)*

**Sunday, February 13 | 10:45am | Ordination
and Installation of Elders & Deacons**

Consent Agenda – November 16th, 2021

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:

	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Date of Session: 11/16/21						As of 10/26/21			As of 11/16/21		
Members on the roll of Active Members:						746			746		
Members on the roll of Inactive Members:						178			178		

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**GRACE COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
MINUTES, STATED SESSION MEETING
26 OCTOBER 2021**

PRESENT: Anna Hamel, Bill Neeriemer, Jessica Graham, Sheryl Aikman, Melissa Hicks, Christi Mobley, Anne Raustol, John Legerton, Roger Meade, Tim Moe, Margaret Tierney, and Mary Elizabeth Shoop

EXCUSED ABSENCES: Blake Martin, Martha Seddon, and Keith Prince

CLERK: Kelley Griffith

STAFF: Marcia Mount Shoop (Moderator), Richard Coble, Amy Kim Kyremes-Parks, and Jeff Jones

GUESTS: Mary Berg, Libby Kyles, Tami Forte Logan, Susan Meade, Carol Hovis

The meeting began at 6:03 pm via Zoom, an on-line meeting platform that the church is using during the COVID-19 global pandemic. Kelley Griffith, clerk, declared a quorum. Marcia opened the meeting with prayer.

***Anna moved and Tim seconded that the minutes for the stated Session meeting of 28 September, the called Session meeting of 10 October to receive new members, and the called Session meeting of 11 October to discuss a confidential personnel matter be approved. Passed unanimously.**

***John moved and Anne seconded that the consent agenda be approved. Passed unanimously.**

ENGAGING SCRIPTURE AND SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

Marcia shared the following passage from Isaiah 55:8-9: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, and your ways are not my ways. This is the very word of the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts." She paired that scripture with one of the new characteristics of White supremacy culture contained in Tema Okun's recent revision of *The Culture of White Supremacy in Organizations*. That characteristic is "Qualified," which Okun defines as the flawed belief of "the middle and owning class of educated White people" that they are qualified to "fix, save, and set straight the world," to "know the right way, the best way with little or no understanding of how limited they really are." This belief is especially prominent in their attitude toward problems faced by people of color. Marcia asked each of those present to answer this question: How do you feel about the limits of your own knowledge and about what you can know and do not know?

MODERATOR'S REPORT

--Marcia said that because of the holidays at the end of November and December, the Session will meet earlier than usual in those months. By necessity so will the Serve and Finance Councils.

--Marcia met with the Personnel Council to discuss staff raises. The Session will vote on Personnel's recommendations for installed pastors at the December meeting and present its decisions to the congregation at its annual meeting in January.

--Marcia thanked Blake and Roger for attending the annual meeting of the Presbytery of Western North Carolina, which met this morning. Roger briefly shared his impressions of the meeting. In general, he said, PWNC's initiatives are "impressive."

--Marcia said that the changes taking place at GCPC are exciting but, for some, hard. "Change hits people in different ways." She urged members to be compassionate toward those people at the same time that we "lean into change." She feels confident that "we're moving in a life-giving direction" and that this direction is "spirit led."

--The staff and the COVID task force are considering low-risk opportunities to hold services in the sanctuary. Advent is a hoped for, possible time in which we might do that. At present, no more than 20 people are allowed to meet together in the sanctuary.

STAFF REPORTS

Jeff

Jeff thanked the staff and the COVID task force for helping to get choir together to practice and to sing in the Sanctuary for Sunday services.

Richard

Richard said he is excited that the deacons are preparing care packages to distribute to congregants beginning in November.

Amy Kim

Amy Kim said, "I've been here a year and my job has changed but I love it!"

COUNCIL REPORTS

Finance Council

***On behalf of the Finance Council, Anna moved acceptance of the September finance reports. Since the motion came from the Council, no second was needed. Passed unanimously.**

Personnel

No actions proposed

Property Council

***On behalf of the Property Council, Roger moved that the Garden Steering Team be allowed to take the following actions: 1) to place flowers in the corners of the garden (to promote pollination), 2) to add more compost to the soil to raise the beds a bit, and 3) to add rows to the north side of the garden, where there is more sunlight than under the large oak trees on the south side. Since the motion came from the Property Council, no second was needed. Passed unanimously.**

Serve

No actions proposed

Worship

No actions proposed.

DISCUSSION OF TAMI FORTE LOGAN'S POTENTIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PRESBYTERY OF WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA AND WITH THE PCUSA

Marcia said that for six years Tami has strongly served our church in its attempts to understand problems of racial injustice and to help us bring about change within ourselves and our communities. She and Tami have been in conversation with PWNC's stated clerk, Cam Murchison, and its General Presbyter, Byron Wade, about the possibility of pursuing ordination as Minister of Word and Sacrament in the PCUSA. The Book of Order, however, states (G-2.0505b) that becoming ordained in the PCUSA means having to give up ordination in "any and all other Christian churches." Marcia proposes that our church present an "Overture" to our presbytery to take to the General Assembly to change this rule in the Book of Order. A draft of the Overture reads as follows: "In order to embody solidarity with historically Black denominations, a presbytery may recognize the ordination of a minister in a historically Black denomination and receive as a member of

presbytery such a minister who furnishes evidence of good standing in that denomination, without requiring the surrender of ordination in the other body.”

***Marcia asked the Session if anyone objected to making this Overture. The Session agreed unanimously to approve this initiative.**

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Marcia said that the purpose of this meeting was to deal with a confidential personnel matter.

***At 7:55, Melissa moved and Bill seconded that the meeting enter executive session. Passed unanimously.**

***At 8:40, Roger moved and Tim seconded that the meeting exit from executive session. Passed unanimously.**

ADJOURNMENT

***Bill moved and Anne seconded that the meeting be adjourned. Passed unanimously.**

At 8:45 pm Jeff closed the meeting with prayer.

Respectfully submitted

Handwritten signatures of Kelley Griffith and Marcia Mount Shoop in cursive script.

Kelley Griffith
Clerk of Session

Marcia Mount Shoop
Moderator

**GRACE COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
MINUTES, CALLED SESSION MEETING
31 OCTOBER 2021**

PRESENT: Anna Hamel, Blake Martin, Bill Neeriemer, Jessica Graham, Christi Mobley, Martha Seddon, Anne Raustol, John Legerton, Tim Moe, Margaret Tierney, Mary Elizabeth Shoop

EXCUSED ABSENCES: Keith Prince, Roger Meade, Sheryl Aikman, Melissa Hicks

CLERK: Kelley Griffith

STAFF: Marcia Mount Shoop (Moderator), Richard Coble, Amy Kim Kyremes-Parks, Jeff Jones

The meeting began at 12:35 pm via Zoom, an on-line meeting platform that the church is using during the COVID-19 global pandemic. Kelley Griffith, clerk, declared a quorum. Marcia opened the meeting with prayer.

Marcia announced that the purpose of the meeting was to deal with a confidential personnel matter. And a motion was made to move the Session into Executive Session for the discussion.

ADJOURNMENT

***At 1:55 pm, Anne moved and Margaret seconded that the meeting be adjourned. Passed unanimously.**

Marcia closed the meeting with prayer.

Respectfully submitted



Kelley Griffith
Clerk of Session



Marcia Mount Shoop
Moderator

**Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church
Worship Council Minutes
November 2, 2021, 5:30pm**

Attendance (via Zoom): Keith Prince, Tim Moe, Marcy Onieal, Heather Hudson, Mary Berg, Margaret Tierney

Staff: Jeff Jones, Marcia Mount Shoop

The meeting opened with prayer.

Discussion centered around making a recommendation to Session regarding when to return to having worship services in the sanctuary and why.

We began by considering that whatever decisions are made, we will trust that each individual congregant must do what they feel is right for them. Although we considered waiting until the first of the year 2022, the favored idea would be starting the first Sunday in Advent, November 28, taking into consideration the declining Covid case rates and the availability of vaccinations for 5-11 year olds soon, as well as the importance of being in and singing in community during the Christmas season. We discussed safety measures such as roping off pews to create social distancing while allowing family units to sit together, use of masks, and having multiple Christmas Eve services with possible sign-ups.

After this discussion, our unanimous recommendation to Session was that we begin having worship services in the sanctuary beginning the first Sunday in Advent, November 28, 2021.

This acknowledges the importance of being in community, and the importance of singing to our worship experience during the Christmas season. Considering the declining Covid case rates and the imminent availability of vaccinations for 5-11 year olds, we believe this can be done safely by using social distancing and masking, and having multiple Christmas Eve services, as well as other safety precautions as noted by the Covid Task Force.

Other business: All Saints Day will be celebrated November 7. Marcy and Heather will assist with paraments and candles to recognize those deceased.

The Meeting Closed with Prayer.

Next scheduled meeting time: 12/07/21.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary Berg

Council Chair: Keith Prince

Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church

Serve Council Minutes

Tuesday, November 9, 2021

Attendance: Marta Alcala Williams, John Huie, Alexandra Lusak, Lynne Meacham, Christi Mobley, Amy Wiesner

Staff: Marcia Mount Shoop

Conversation about **inviting others to join Serve**, especially more male members. Already rotated off - Tammy Bradley, Rick Noble. Rotating off in January - Amy Wiesner, Melissa Hicks.

Referring back to the Serve Charter - need 3-4 more people. The Council discussed possible members and who would reach out to them.

Newsletter Updates:

Lynne is working on WNC Workers'

Marta is working on CoThinkk

Funding through the rest of the year - about \$35,000 remaining, after the approximately

Rob Thomas' father's fund for re-emerging - \$5000.00

Disburse to 13 partners, \$2230 for each of our 13 partners = 28,990, \$1000 for Racial Justice Coalition

Each person will contact their buddies before the check arrives.

Bountiful Cities is not included in the year end disbursement because that was a one-time request from the Garden Steering Team for the year.

Speaking points: We're so grateful for our partnership with you. You'll be receiving a year-end gift from GCPC. Thank you for all you do for our community. We're looking forward to continued partnership with you.

Marta and Alexandra will work on a draft for a letter for Rob Thomas.

We're grateful for the work you, Rob Thomas, are doing around the work of reparations in our city. GCPC is committed to the work around restoring a BeLoved Community.

We should all send our notes by next Wednesday, November 17.

Next steps for Serve - not really seeing us shifting away from these partners, and deepening and shifting the relationships; taking the lead from our partners; never really terminating the relationship but shifting it;

examples: AYM is still a ministry partner but not a covenant partner – they currently make copies at GCPC but other partners don't have access to that. Why? Our 43 ministry partners can use our building for free; Childcare Center at Gracelyn has low rent with the understanding that they serve families with vouchers but we don't really talk about that at Serve.

We, Serve, need to continue asking questions about the relationships we have and if those relationships are matching up with our mission. We can continue relationships AND we can share funds differently than we have historically - remembering the why?

The meeting closes with prayer written by Cole Arthur Riley

**GUATEMALA COMMITTEE MEETING
GRACE COVENANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
TUESDAY, 2 NOVEMBER 2021
MINUTES**

PRESENT: Anna Hammel (chair), Paul Tierney, Bonnie Parker, Martha Seddon, Kelley Griffith, Debby Vance, Richard Coble (staff representative)

The meeting opened via Zoom at 5:30 pm. Anna opened the meeting with prayer.

***Anna said that the committee needs to submit a budget request for 2022 to the Finance Council. The committee voted to stay with last year's budget of \$7,450.**

Kelley reported on the meeting with our sister church, Iglesia Jerusalem, which took place via Zoom on Sunday, 24 October 2021. He said that the meeting was somewhat hastily assembled but that it was very successful. Attending from our committee were Anna, Kelley, and Richard. Lynne Meacham served as interpreter. Attending from IJ were Alby López, Iris Velázquez, and Leslie Ríos. Last week Kelley sent his summary of the meeting to all committee members. And it has been submitted to Anna Louise for inclusion in the session packet for the session's next meeting on 16 November. The committee offered many thanks to Lynne, not just for interpreting but for helping to organize the meeting.

One item of business left over from the meeting with IJ was the question of the \$600 that our committee sent to IJ for families suffering economically from COVID. Iris said that they have not received the money. Anna said that Natalie sent a check for the money to our Presbytery and that the check was cashed. Bonnie agreed to check with PWNC as to why the money has not reached IJ.

We also discussed the Grace Cares money, about \$60,000, that remains in the church's budget and that is dedicated to spending for "international" needs. Because Marie Palazios (the overseer of the PWNC's sister church program) has told us that we can't spend that money for "extra" expensive items, such as helping IJ fund a new church building, the question remains as to what we or GCPC can do with it. Perhaps, someone suggested, the church could establish a committee to administer that money. We agreed that perhaps we could make a suggestion to the session as to what to do.

Kelley passed on two suggestions from Lynne:

- 1) That we invite Spanish speakers in our congregation, perhaps one at a time, to our meetings with IJ, so that they and IJ can get to know one another. Perhaps these people could interpret for one or more of our meetings. Names we came up with were Omar Bolívar, Janice Kominski, and Marta Ocalá Williams. Perhaps there are more that we don't know about. We agreed that that would be a good idea.
- 2) That we participate actively in the FaceBook page "Iglesias Hermanas: Grace Covenant and Iglesia Jersusalem." Lynne said that they read it and appreciate our comments. So, as we were speaking, Martha sent then something from her, including a group picture of all of us attending the meeting.

We agreed to aim for a meeting with IJ twice a year, perhaps in the winter and fall of 2022.

Our next meeting will be 5:30 pm, Tuesday, 7 December.

At 6:30, Kelley closed the meeting with prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Kelley Griffith

REPORT ON THE MEETING BETWEEN GCPC'S GUATEMALA COMMITTEE AND REPRESENTATIVES FROM IGLESIA JERUSALEM, 7 PM, 25 OCTOBER 2021

NOTES ON THE MEETING BY KELLEY GRIFFITH

Members present from our committee were Anna Hamel (chairperson), Kelley Griffith, and Richard Coble. Our interpreter was Lynne Meacham. Members from Iglesia Jerusalem were Alby López, Iris Velázquez, and Leslie Ríos.

Kelley welcomed all attendees, introduced our interpreter, and opened the meeting with prayer. Anna asked the IJ attendees how things were going there. Alby said that because of COVID the church was having services in small groups. Vacation Bible School will take place in November. She asked for our prayers that the children would come to know Jesus Christ. She said that the church continues to help widows of limited means and other needy families. The children who have received our scholarships have written thank you letters, complete with drawings, expressing thanks to us for the scholarships. School classes will end in October. The church has prepared a detailed report to us, as it does every year, of how the scholarship money has been spent. She reported that recently a member from their presbytery had visited with a purpose of seeing how well the church was doing in fulfilling its responsibility to us. The result was a very good report from the visitor. She said that the church is happy with the work they can do and that they thank us for our prayers for them.

Iris reported that they were utilizing the increase in scholarship money we had approved for this year's scholarships. She said that they had not received the \$600 that we had agreed to send them for families suffering economically from Covid. A representative from their presbytery says they have not received it. Anna said that the check was requested from Natalie and has been cashed. Anna said that she would look into why that had not happened. Iris said that in April they did receive a letter from Marcia saying it was ok with Grace Covenant to apply scholarship monies to students' families in need.

Richard told them that at every Sunday service we pray for Iglesia Jerusalem. They had several specific prayer requests:

Julián Zapeta (hoo-lee-AHN sa-PEH-tah), who has Covid and is in serious condition
Otilia Ríos (oh-TEE-lee-ah REE-os), who will have a breast biopsy soon
Vacation Bible School, which will take place 22-26 November.

At about 8 pm, Alby closed the meeting with prayer in which she gave thanks for the collaboration between our churches and asked God's blessings on our two congregations.

Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church
Nominating Committee Minutes
November 2nd, 2021 6:30 pm
November 11th, 2021 5:30 pm

Attendance at both meetings: Jessica Graham, Sarah Bleckley, Jessica Trigg, Russell Kominski, Margaret Tierney, Larry Stern, Dean Presson
Staff: Marcia Mount Shoop

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The Meeting Opened with Prayer Marcia Mount Shoop led the opening prayer

Committee met and discussed proposed slate of officers to be placed in nomination for Session (as either Elder or Deacon) beginning in 2022. Current slate is in discussion.



Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church

Property Council Meeting

November 9, 2021

6:00 pm

Present: Roger Meade, Cliff Schlegelmilch, Leslie Huntley, John Legerton, Brian Cook, Marcia Mount Shoop

Agenda:

- (1) Opening Prayer Roger
- (2) Closet for new paraments is completed
- (3) Discussion of issues for when worship in the Sanctuary is restarted: General discussion of need for a possible TV in atrium for overflow, change TV or camera in balcony so it is more stable.
- (4) Report on Buildings - Cliff indicated several projects we need to budget for next year and will put together a list that we can include in the budget.
- (5) Discussion of Outdoor Spaces for Worship: there was consensus on how well the courtyard worked for outside services and there may be a need for this utilization at times through Christmas.
- (6) Discussion/update of flooring issues at Administration Building. We do not have final numbers but cost is a problem; carpet tiles may be the answer. We are going to get an acoustical consultation before we proceed.
- (7) Review of information from any Property Council Committees:
 - a. Memorial Garden Committee (Roger Meade, Denise Snodgrass) starting to pull ivy, blowing leaves, question about adding a cross and the need for input
 - b. Security/Safety Committee (Roger Meade, Cliff Schlegelmilch) no report
 - c. Long Range Maintenance Planning (John Curry, Allen Johnson) no report
 - d. Kitchen Committee (Cathy Froehlich) no report
 - e. Community Garden Steering Team (Paul Stroebel) Allison was notified of Session approval on her requests for garden flower areas, building soil base, and expanding rows to offset the shade of Oak trees.
 - f. Aesthetics/Interiors Committee (Leslie Huntley) – No report
 - g. Sound & Streaming Technology (Allen Johnson, Luke Johnson, Bill Neeriemer)
 - h. Children's Center Liaisons (Connie Jones, Marcia Mount Shoop, Amy-Kim Kyremes-Parks) no report
 - i. Long Range Facility and Campus Visioning Team(Jaan Ferree, Keaton Hill, Jay Hill, John Legerton, Elizabeth McCorvey, Marcia Mount-Shoop, Susan Meade, John Noor, Kate Shem, Ray Shem). No report
- (10) Closing Prayer. Roger Meade