

CHURCH OF THE COVENANT
MINUTES OF THE SESSION MEETING: MONDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2013

ATTENDING:

CURRENT RULING ELDERS PRESENT: April Betzner, Joyce Camlin, Donna Carlisle, Sue Denmead, Shirley Desmond, Debbie Evans, Terri Grantz, Linda Grimm, Elsie Hall, Steve Johnson, Jackie Koman, Mark Murphy, Stacy Phillips, Gary Recktenwald, David Taylor, and Brian Teagarden

CURRENT RULING ELDERS EXCUSED: Chris Bury and Sue Key

STAFF PRESENT: Camille Braun, Rev. Dr. Stuart Broberg, Janet Nevin and Don Nixon

GUEST PRESENT: Charlie Bowers

OPENING PRAYER AND DEVOTIONS

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Session of The Church of the Covenant was convened by the Rev. Dr. Stuart Broberg, on Monday, February 11, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. in the Parlor. Dr. Broberg opened the meeting with a devotional reading about making sure our focus was on Christ, and then led Session in prayer.

APPROVAL OF THE DOCKET

The docket for this meeting was reviewed next. After a motion was made by Mark Murphy and seconded by Sue Denmead, the February 2013 Session docket was unanimously approved.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 2013 SESSION MEETING

After a motion was made by Mark Murphy and seconded by Brian Teagarden, the minutes from the January 2013 Session meeting were unanimously approved with minor revisions.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

After a motion was made by Sue Denmead and seconded by Mark Murphy, the minutes from the annual congregational meeting held in January 2013 were unanimously approved.

APPROVAL OF A WEDDING

The Worship and Music Committee requested that the Session consider a request to hold a wedding at our church from Brittany Dobbin, who is the niece of John and Cara Dobbin, members at our church. This wedding falls outside of the standards established in our Wedding Policy, therefore it requires the Session's discussion and approval. After a motion was made by Mark Murphy and seconded by Jackie Koman, the Session unanimously approved the wedding of Brittany Dobbin and Michael Digon, to be held in the sanctuary on June 14, 2014.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CLERK

After a motion was made by Elsie Hall and seconded by Sue Denmead, the Session unanimously approved a request by Stan and Kathy Kengor to remove them and their children, Matthew and Amber Kengor, from the church's roll.

There were no baptisms, funerals or weddings reported to Session for January 2013.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATION CALENDAR

ORDER OF THE DAY – Discussion of Visioning Day

Dr. Broberg and Don Nixon led the Session in a review of the recent Visioning Day held in the Covenant Center as part of the Associate Pastor Nominating Committee (APNC) search process. There were three main areas highlighted by the discussions of that day: 1) Youth; 2) Outreach-focused facilities expansion; and, 3) Outreach combined with consultations with other local community groups. Don Nixon pointed out that the Youth item really related more to the Strategic Plan effort than the APNC search process. He was pleased to see the high interest in youth.

Dr. Broberg noted that Item 3, Outreach-related facilities expansion, calls for establishing a General Maintenance Endowment Fund. This fund would specifically be used for expensive repair and expansion projects such as fixing the slate roof, replacing the Lexan covers on the stained glass windows in the sanctuary, and a general much-needed rehabilitation of the high-use areas in the Covenant Center. This Fund is critical to our future financial stability.

Regarding the outreach focus with other community groups as presented in Item 3, it was agreed that we can more effectively devote our resources if we ask those community groups where they need help. Groups like this include but are not limited to the Salvation Army, local school districts, Christian Outreach, and Habitat for Humanity. Our goals should be to address both physical and spiritual needs. This task would also provide a good place to engage and identify more congregation members for helping with mission-type projects.

Charlie Bowers pointed out that this is all good information, very useful for the APNC's efforts to develop the required Church Information Form (CIF). Regarding the APNC process, Dr. Broberg and Mr. Bowers said that Wil White, the Washington Presbytery's liaison for the APNC process, advised that the Presbytery has approved our Self Study and that we are approved to start preparing the CIF.

As a next step, after some discussion, the Administration Committee was assigned to consider the three Items presented above, to create a process for advancing these Items into a Strategic Plan, and to schedule and hold an Intreat for the Session to examine these matters and approve the Strategic Plan process. Debbie Evans moved to approve this assignment with its tasks, Joyce Camlin seconded the motion, and the Session unanimously approved the motion after discussion.

Item A – Our Committees List

This item will be picked up again at the March Session meeting. There were several inaccuracies noted in the document provided to the Session for its review that need to be corrected.

Item B – Approval of the 2013 Mission Budget

Steve Johnson presented the final 2013 Mission budget for approval by the Session. This budget included 4 line items: Local Missions - \$13,800; Foreign Missions - \$8,250; PCUSA/Mission Support/Developing Opportunities - \$24,500; and, 4) Endowment Gift Distribution - \$22,000. Dr. Broberg noted that churches that are committed to mission tithing seem to thrive – they are

honoring biblical commitments. He said that these churches always seem to have enough to handle all their commitments if they tithe for missions. The motion to approve this budget came from committee, therefore no second was needed. The Session unanimously approved the motion.

Item C – Discussion of New Safety Procedures

Camille Braun reviewed the new safety procedures that she is working on, with emphasis on the pre-school. These procedures are being developed in the aftermath of the recent terrible incident at the elementary school in Sandy Hook, Connecticut. A security expert has volunteered to help out with this task, and he will provide a report soon that will help answer any questions that may arise. Camille described some of the very good security measures and evacuation plans that are already in place, but staff felt that the additional expert review was needed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee – Brian Teagarden, Chairperson – Brian said that the Session needs to approve a letter to be sent to the congregation for this year's Per Capita payment. The letter will provide alternatives for directing this payment. Last year, we paid 64% of our Per Capita solely to the Washington Presbytery, and 36% that was split evenly between the Presbytery, the Synod and the General Assembly. These dollar amounts are the payments for our church - \$26,235, or \$33 per person. There was discussion about why Per Capita payments must be made (it is required by the Book of Order), and how the amount was determined (the Presbytery tells us how much). The letter was reviewed and referred back to committee for a rewrite.

Brian reminded the elders that they are responsible for taking the offering to the safe in the office after each worship service, and to place the offering in the safe. Brian Teagarden volunteered to work to train the ushers again in this matter.

Personnel Committee – Gary Recktenwald, Chairperson – Gary noted that the Committee will conduct staff reviews in May and June 2013. The Committee will begin developing a Comprehensive Staffing Plan later in the year.

OAR Committee – Donna Carlisle, Chairperson – Donna referred the Session to her written report, and noted several of the important dates in that report.

Stewardship Committee – Debbie Evans, Chairperson – Debbie said that this Committee has started on the fall campaign.

Mission Committee – Steve Johnson, Chairperson – no additional report.

Worship and Music Committee – Joyce Camlin, Chairperson – no additional report.

Christian Education Committee – Shirley Desmond, Chairperson – Shirley referred the Session to her written report, and noted the dates set for God's Garden and Vacation Bible School. Don Nixon advised the Session that there were 50 adults and youth from several churches at the church in the 1st weekend in February for the Winter Blast. Four of the youth were led to Christ. He feels the youth program has turned an important corner.

Nominating Committee – Elsie Hall, Chairperson –no report but will start soon on this year’s nominating effort.

Building and Grounds Committee – Mark Murphy, Chairperson – Mark referred the Session to his written report. He also advised the Session that Girl Scout Troop 51945 has asked if they can use three of our rooms for their Thursday meetings from January 2014 through May 2014. They cannot pay our user fee. Mark asked for staff help in resolving this request.

Administration Committee – Jonathan Pachter, Chairperson – no report.

OTHER

Endowment Committee, Memorial Committee, and APNC – no reports.

Dr. Broberg noted that the APNC is making progress, and will be going full steam ahead now that the Presbytery has approved the Self Study. The APNC can now develop the CIF, which will be sent to the Session for approval. He hopes that the Session will be able to review a draft at the March 2013 regular Session meeting.

The Ministry Team provided communion in February to 17 of our homebound members, with 7 2-person teams providing that service. Pastor Emily Miller leads this effort.

For his Pastoral Report, Dr. Broberg expressed condolences to Pat Boyer, the Sharpnack family and to Donna Carlisle.

By consensus vote, Jackie Koman was appointed the new Session liaison for Jim Agnew, replacing Curt Koman whose term on the Session expired.

DATES OF NOTE

The next scheduled Communion will be on Sunday, March 3, 2013. The next Stated Session meeting will be on Monday, March 4, 2013, starting at 7:00 p.m. The next Stated Presbytery Meeting will be held on March 12, 2013 location and time to be determined. Charles Bowers and Debbie Evans are scheduled to attend.

ADJOURNING AND CLOSING PRAYER

After a motion by Debbie Evans with a second from everyone attending, Session unanimously approved a motion to adjourn. Dr. Broberg then closed the meeting with a prayer at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan

Jonathan M. Pachter
Clerk of Session