

**CHURCH OF THE COVENANT**  
**MINUTES OF THE SESSION MEETING: MONDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2013**

**ATTENDING:**

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

**CURRENT RULING ELDERS EXCUSED:** Chris Bury, Linda Grimm, Gary Recktenwald, and David Taylor

**STAFF PRESENT:** Rev. Dr. Stuart Broberg, Rev. Emily Miller, Debi Nicolella, Janet Nevin and Don Nixon

**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, October 7, 2013 at 7:06 p.m. in the Dining Room. Dr. Broberg opened the meeting with a devotional reading from Jeremiah 29:11 in which God tells Jeremiah - and us - that He has plans to bless us with a future filled with hope.

**APPROVAL OF THE DOCKET**

The docket for this meeting was reviewed next. After a motion was made by Mark Murphy and seconded by Shirley Desmond, the October 2013 Session docket was unanimously approved (with a minor revision).

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 2013 SESSION MEETING**

After a motion was made by Mark Murphy and seconded by Sue Denmead, the minutes from the September 2013 Session meeting were unanimously approved.

**NOTES FROM DR. BROBERG**

Dr. Broberg reminded the Session that a special congregational meeting has been called for Sunday, October 20, 2013, for the sole purpose of electing a new slate of officers.

**Nina Burchett** requested to have her sons Nathan Ronald and Maxwell Robert baptized during the 11:00 a.m. worship service on Sunday, November 24, 2013. Dr. Broberg said that he has reviewed this baptism, noting that it complied with the Church's Baptism and Wedding policies; therefore, separate Session approval is not needed for this event.

Dr. Broberg advised the Session that the next regular Session meeting would be held on Monday, November 4, 2013, starting at 7:00 p.m. The meeting will be preceded by a New Members Dinner starting at 5:30 p.m., immediately after which there will be a called Session meeting to receive these new members.

Dr. Broberg reminded the Session that Rev. Emily Miller's installation will be held in the sanctuary starting at 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, October 27, 2013.

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## **COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CLERK**

### Baptisms

**Gabriel Steven Antoinette** was baptized on Sunday, September 15, 2013. He was born on May 22, 2012, and is the son of **Steven and Kara Brigich Antoinette**. The Rev. Dr. Stuart D. Broberg officiated.

**Vera Beth Culpepper** was baptized on Sunday, September 22, 2013. She was born March 8, 2013, and is the infant daughter of **Adam and Emily Robinson Culpepper**. The Rev. Dr. Stuart D. Broberg officiated.

### Weddings

Robert Koman and Tiffany Sprouts were married in the sanctuary of The Church of the Covenant on Saturday, September 28, 2013, with Rev. Emily I. Miller officiating. Robert is the son of **William and Norma Koman**.

### Funerals

**Ellen Grace Prigg** died on Wednesday, September 18, 2013. At her request there was no visitation and there was no funeral information in the obituary.

## **SPECIAL CONSIDERATION CALENDAR**

### *Mid-Term Discussion about "Mission IS Possible"*

Dr. Broberg, Rev. Miller and Janet Nevin led a discussion about the ongoing "Mission IS Possible" mission education and reachout program. Janet said that there were 9 small groups with about 120 adults involved in working with the selected curriculum. Dr. Broberg noted that 120 exceeds the 10% participation goal for small group programs. Rev. Miller mentioned that the evening discussion groups have been attended by around 50 people.

### *Endowment Fund By-Laws Revisions and the PILP Investment and Warne Trust*

Sue Key advised the Session that Endowment Committee has considered the request made by the Finance Committee to establish a new maintenance endowment fund that would consist of three separate investment alternatives. Fund A would be used for income only. Fund B would allow the corpus to be used for an emergency repair in excess of \$100,000 and Fund C would allow the corpus to be used at the discretion of Session for a major maintenance need.

Sue noted that a similar fund already exists in the current endowment structure under B(1). The existing B(1) fund will be renamed the Maintenance Endowment Fund and the corpus could be used for a repair greater than \$100,000 or at the discretion of the Session. Planned gifts by members either during lifetime or through a bequest would fall within our C(1) fund if the donor

designates that it be applied to a specific use. Also, we would clarify the language in B(1) to define "it is only used" to mean principal.

Sue will prepare an Amendment to the Committee's existing Bylaws to include the new language to reflect the above changes. The Amendment will be circulated to Committee members electronically for approval.

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Regarding the PILP, Sue said that the Committee will investigate the possibility of withdrawing all of the funds (approximately \$121,000) with or without penalty and investing the funds with PNC Bank. At the request of the Finance Committee, it was agreed that these funds would be used to initially fund the Maintenance Endowment Fund upon approval by Session.

Finally, Sue said that PNC Bank has filed a Petition to terminate the Warne Charitable Trust. Sue reported that the Committee approves, and when the proceeds are received at the Church (\$62,000) we will recommend to the Session that they be invested as part of Fund B, Session Restricted, with 50% in the Maintenance Repair Fund, 25% to Ministry and 25% to Mission. Sue has reviewed the donor's original intent and felt that this approach will honor that intent.

#### *Update on Sustainability Efforts, Web and Facebook*

Debi Nicolella provided a 1-year progress report on the church's office's efforts to reduce paper usage. She pointed out that the e-blast subscriptions have increased from about 70 in 2009 to over 320 today, reducing paper usage. The Messenger e-mail-only rate has increased and can increase more, eliminating more paper use. She also said that the reduction in size of the Summer Messenger has reduced paper usage, and that the new copier used less electricity. Debi asked the Session to consider ways that all the copying done at the Church for Session meetings could be decreased to save paper.

Debi advised the Session that she has taken a Facebook webinar, and feels she could administer a Facebook page for the Church. This generated much discussion among members.

Dr. Broberg noted that we have not made any progress on two parts of our sustainability program: 1) an internal study to examine the Church's power and water usage; and, 2) development of a plan for our exterior campus property. He asked the Session to refer these items to the Building and Grounds Committee for consideration, and the Session agreed.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

*Finance Committee* –Brian Teagarden, chairperson - Brian reported that we are down about \$14,700 year-to-date when income and expenses are compared to budget. He is not concerned because this follows normal giving patterns, and the upcoming 4th quarter is always our peak giving period.

Brian advised the Session one of the Light the Fire targeted missions, the Arise 2.0 campaign, no longer exists. This matter was referred to the Mission Committee to track and handle once the Washington Presbytery decides what will be done with this effort, then report back to Session. It was decided that the allocated funds can sit in the Light the Fire fund until the issue is resolved.

Brian reminded everyone that it is time to prepare the Committee estimates for the 2014 Operating Budget. He said that there will be an approx. \$20,000 increase related to mandatory Board of Pensions increases for full-time staff as well as costs related to Pastor Emily becoming full-time. He recommended that there be no increases in the Operating Budget compared to the 2013 Operating Budget, and that each Committee propose no increases. Dr. Broberg reminded all that there are Endowment and Trust Fund interest funds available for use if needed.

*Personnel Committee* – Gary Recktenwald, Chairperson – Sue Key spoke for Gary, who was excused. Sue noted that the part-time janitor position has been filled, and the individual will start in November 2013, pending receipt of his state clearances. Sue also said that the Committee has recommended changes to the current Comprehensive Staffing Plan and to the current Job Classifications. Several staff changes have been proposed, including moving the church administrator to full-time, hiring of the half-time Weekend Janitor (described above in this paragraph) and considering whether to advertise and hire a part-time Information Coordinator.

Several individuals asked questions related to funding for the staff changes. The funding discussions centered on whether we can afford these right now, considering about \$20,000 in increases mandated by the Board of Pensions for full-time staff. It was made clear that the staffing plan is NOT a funding or budgeting plan, and consideration of allocating funds for these positions will be made only after giving for 2014 becomes clearer. Mark Murphy moved and April Betzner seconded a motion to approve the 2014 Comprehensive Staffing Plan (rev. 10/2013) as discussed. The motion passed unanimously.

*OAR Committee* – Donna Carlisle, Chairperson – Donna asked the Session to review her Committee's minutes. She said that the New Members Class for the fall will start next week. The OAR Committee has started reviewing the membership roll, focusing on getting inactive members to return to active participation. Donna asked the Session to support the upcoming spaghetti dinner fundraiser for the Church's mission trip to Haiti. Don Nixon said that training is being scheduled for people who want to host or lead meetings related to Billy Graham's final television special.

*Stewardship Committee* – Debbie Evans, Chairperson – Debbie said the fall fundraiser mailer will be sent out soon.

*Mission Committee* – Steve Johnson, Chairperson – Steve said about 25 people participated in the Outreach Weekend, helping several people and working with different agencies.

*Worship and Music Committee* – Joyce Camlin, Chairperson – Joyce asked the Session to review her Committee's minutes. She did point out that some schedule changes are being considered for the Christmas Eve services. Steve Johnson asked if the ushers could help clean up after the 11:00 a.m. service on Sunday morning.

*Christian Education Committee* – Shirley Desmond, Chairperson – Shirley asked the Session to review the Committee's minutes. The Pumpkin Patch will be held on October 26th. Don Nixon said that over 150 teens and 3 bands (and lots of adult helpers) participated in the Battle of the Bands held at the Church recently, raising lots of money for the Salvation Army.

*Nominating Committee* – Elsie Hall, Chairperson – Elsie provided the Session with the slate of officers to be presented to the congregation at the October 20th congregational meeting. She thanked her Committee for their hard work. Dr. Broberg thanked Elsie and the Committee, and advised the Session that it was a courtesy from the Nominating Committee to the Session to provide them with this information, since the congregation votes on the slate.

*Building and Grounds Committee* – Mark Murphy, Chairperson – no report other than the information contained in the Committee's minutes.

*Endowment Committee* - Sue Key, Chairperson - No information beyond that reviewed earlier in this meeting.

*Administration Committee and Memorial Committee* – no reports.

*Ministry Team*

Pastor Emily asked for more volunteers for the next in-home communion, to be held on November 3, 2013. This program is greatly appreciated by our home-bound members.

**DATES OF NOTE**

The next scheduled Communion will be held on Sunday, November 3, 2013. The next regular Session meeting will be on Monday, November 4, 2013, starting at 7:00 p.m. The next Stated Presbytery Meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 12, 2013 at the Thomas Presbyterian Church in Eighty Four, PA, with Linda Grimm and Donna Carlisle scheduled to attend.

**ADJOURNING AND CLOSING PRAYER**

After a motion by Debbie Evans with a second from April Betzner, Session unanimously approved a motion to adjourn. Dr. Broberg then closed the meeting with a prayer at 8:52 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

**Jonathan M.Pachter**

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Clerk of Session