

CHURCH OF THE COVENANT
MINUTES OF THE SESSION MEETING: MONDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2014

CURRENT RULING ELDERS PRESENT; April Betzner, Joel Braun, Donna Carlisle, Jerry Davison, Sue Denmead, Terri Grantz, Elsie Hall, Jessica Hickman, Steve Johnson, Jackie Koman, Crystal Miles, Dennis Myers, Gary Recktenwald and Brian Teagarden

CURRENT RULING ELDERS EXCUSED: Sue Key, Linda Grimm, and David Taylor

STAFF PRESENT: Rev. Dr. Stuart Broberg, Rev. Emily Miller, 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 6, 2014 at 7:15 p.m. in the Dining Room. Dr. Broberg opened the meeting with devotions and a prayer.

APPROVAL OF THE DOCKET

The docket for this meeting was reviewed next. After a motion was made by Crystal Miles and seconded by Jerry Davison, the October 2014 Session docket was unanimously approved.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

After a motion was made by Terri Grantz and seconded by Joel Braun, the minutes from the regular September Session meeting were unanimously approved by the Session.

APPROVAL OF DATE FOR CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

After a motion was made by Elsie Hall, seconded by Terri Grantz, and unanimously approved by the Session, the annual Congregational Meeting to elect officers was set for Sunday, October 19, 2014, following the conclusion of the 11:00 a.m. worship service.

APPROVAL OF A CALLED SESSION MEETING TO RECEIVE NEW MEMBERS

After a motion was made by Sue Denmead, seconded by Jessica Hickman, and unanimously approved by the Session, the date and time were set for a Called Session Meeting for New Members. This meeting will be held on Monday, November 3, 2014 in the small Dining Room at 5:30 p.m. prior to regular November Session meeting. Dr. Broberg noted that the regular Session meeting will be shorter than usual.

APPROVAL TO HOLD THE WASHINGTON PRESBYTERY MEETING

Dr. Broberg noted that the practice in the Washington Presbytery is to hold the November Presbytery meeting each year in the moderator's church. Dr. Broberg will be the moderator of the Presbytery in 2015. After a motion was made by Jackie Koman, seconded by Jerry Davison, and unanimously approved by the Session, the regular November 2015 meeting of the Washington Presbytery will be held at The Church of the Covenant.

APPROVAL OF WEDDINGS

Brittany Crawford (granddaughter of **Cloteel Friesner**) and Joshua Burkart request to be married in the sanctuary on October 10, 2015 with Rev. Emily Miller officiating. **Michael Spiegel** and

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Lauren Tomsic request to be married in the sanctuary on October 17, 2015 with Dr. Stuart D. Broberg as officiating. Emily Harper and Mike Hamel have requested that Dr. Broberg officiate their wedding (off-site, non-member) on Saturday, November 7, 2015 at First Presbyterian Church in downtown Pittsburgh. The first two weddings comply with The Church's Wedding Policy and did not need Session approval.

The third wedding involved non-members requesting that Dr. Broberg perform their ceremony at the First Presbyterian Church in downtown Pittsburgh. Dr. Broberg knows these folks. A motion was made by Steve Johnson, and seconded by Jessica Hickman. The Session then unanimously approved this motion to allow Dr. Broberg performing this wedding at the First Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh.

APPROVAL OF BAPTISMS

Ryan and Crystal Hagrigh Hopkins requested to have their infant son, Tyler Easton Hopkins, born December April 27, 2014, baptized on Sunday, October 12, 2014 at the 11:00 am worship service. **Brooke Kearns** requested to have her daughter, Madison Olivia Chipps, born May 26, 2009, and her son, Elijah Thomas Chipps, born July 8, 2006, baptized on Sunday, November 23, 2014 at the 11:00 am worship service. Both requests complied with the church's wedding policy. The Session was notified of these requests, which did not need the Session's separate approvals.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE CLERK

Baptisms

On Sunday, September 21, 2014, Giana Rose Barletta, infant daughter of **Brant and Jennifer Finelli Barletta**, born July 3, 2014, and Christian Lucas, infant son of **Chris and Clarissa Mirkovich Lucas**, born December 27, 2014, were baptized with Dr. Stuart Broberg officiating.

Weddings

Jaime-Lynn Widows (granddaughter of **Ron and Kepy Cochran**) and Andrew Verannin were married in the sanctuary on September 27, 2014 with The Reverend Emily I. Miller officiating.

Funerals

Leona Margaret Day Miller died on Saturday, September 13, 2014. Her funeral service was held on Wednesday, September 17, 2014 at the William G. Neal Funeral home with The Rev. Dr. Stuart Broberg officiating.

Remove a Member from the Active Roll

Bob King and Barbara Weber requested to be removed from the active roll. A motion was made by Steve Johnson, and seconded by Crystal Miles. The Session then unanimously approved this motion to remove these folks from our active roll.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATION CALENDAR

Budget Process to Start

Brian Teagarden noted that Committee budget requests for 2015 need to be provided to him on December 2, 2014. Budget forms were placed in Committee chairpersons' or second elders' folders, except for the Mission Committee which does its budget after the overall budget is approved since that Committee get 10% of the overall operating budget, per Church policy.

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COMMITTEE REPORTS

Finance Committee – Brian Teagarden, Chairperson – Brian referred the Session to the Committee's written report. He noted that income has exceeded expenses year to date by about \$15,000. But he also said that we continue to be close to our budget projections. We need to watch to see if giving tails off towards the end of the year starting in October like it did in 2013.

Brian also mentioned that the Committee had approved (and so moved) to provide the congregation with the ability to designate their giving so none would go to the General Assembly. Several people had requested that this mechanism be established in a manner similar to how our per capita is handled, along with reporting same back to the donor. Dr. Broberg noted that this approach complies with our current concept of donor-focused giving. It was important that the Committee and the Session honor such designations. The Finance Committee will set up a restricted account to handle this type of giving. This motion came from Committee so no second was needed. A discussion followed which included pros and cons of this approach as well as a discussion about impacts on our Unified Mission giving. Dr. Broberg, after the discussion ended, asked the Session to approve the motion and to inform the congregation about the effects on mission giving. The Session then voted on the motion, which carried by a count of 12 Yes 2 No.

Next, Pastor Emily asked for clarification about how the Finance Committee had withheld Mission disbursements until mid-October. Brian explained that the Finance Committee, remembering October 2013's financial difficulties, was waiting until the end of October 2014 to release the 3rd Quarter Mission payments. Brian also noted that the Finance Committee was guaranteeing that all 2014 Mission commitments will be disbursed by December 31, 2014. The Committee wanted to see how October ended up financially so that funds were reserved for the operating budget if another financial crisis occurred.

Personnel Committee – Gary Recktenwald, Chairperson – Gary said the Committee met in September, and that the issues discussed will be reviewed in full at the November 2014 Session meeting. He mentioned an issue related to advertising the Administrative Assistant position that was filled by Dona Hamilton, and that he would personally talk to the concerned person.

OAR Committee – Donna Carlisle, Chairperson – Donna reported that the 1st "Communita" women's group was held in September, with approximately 35 women in attendance. She said

that the Celebrate Mission weekend was moderately successful. A New Member class will start soon.

Stewardship Committee – Terri Grantz, Chairperson – Terri said the Committee has been meeting to finalize plans for the fall stewardship campaign. 64 of the hoped-for 75 Visiting Stewards have agreed to help deliver the packets on Sunday October 19 from 2-4 p.m.

Mission Committee – Steve Johnson, Chairperson – Steve referred the Session to his Committee's written report, and thanked everyone who participated in the Celebrate Mission weekend and dinner (especially Pastor Emily).

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Worship and Music Committee – Jackie Koman, Chairperson – Jackie referred the Session to her Committee’s minutes. She passed out another revised version of the Church’s Wedding Policy and asked the Session to review the document and be prepared to vote on it at the November 2014 Session meeting. She reviewed both the latest changes and the things that stayed the same in the policy. There was considerable discussion about the revisions and the language left intact. Dr. Broberg stated that when this version is brought up for vote at the November 2014 Session, anyone wanting to revise the version proposed this month should offer an amendment with their proposed changes. If the amendment gets approved, then the Committee’s October 2014 document will get changed with the changed version gets voted upon. If the amendment gets turned down, then the Committee’s October document gets voted on “as is”.

Christian Education Committee – Jessica Hickman, Chairperson – Jessica referred all to her Committee’s minutes, and reviewed items in those minutes with the Session. Jessica said that Club 56 now has 11 children and is growing. The 943 Sunday school has been extended one more week to see where this program is heading. The Pumpkin Patch will be held on October 25th. The Christian Parenting class will start on October 12th.

Nominating Committee – Elsie Hall, Chairperson – Elsie reported that the Committee has filled the slate of nominees for the Class of 2017. The Session acknowledged receiving the slate. Elsie also noted that Chuck Neff and Jonathan Pachter had agreed to stay on as Corporate President and Secretary, respectively. She also suggested that current ruling elders be designated as Presbytery commissioners so that full reports about the Presbytery meeting could be given at each Session meeting.

A motion as made to thank the Clerk for his service and diligence. Elsie Hall made the motion, Jackie Koman seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Building and Grounds Committee – Jerry Davison, Chairperson – Jerry recommended that the Session check out the Sanctuary main doors as that work has made great progress. The Beau Street doors will be completed in 2015. Bell Tower repair work is ongoing. Much work has been done at the 418 Chestnut Street property, and the matter has been turned over to our

insurance carrier;. We hope to rent the property in November 2014. There was discussion about the new No Smoking areas at the Church campus, with the issue getting referred back to this Committee for finalization. Finally, a request to spread people’s ashes in the Memorial Garden was referred to the Building and Grounds Committee for further evaluation and to bring a recommendation back to the Session at the November 2014 meeting.

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

Ministry Team/Pastoral Care – Pastor Emily noted that In-Home Communion will be held the first Sunday in November.

DATES OF NOTE

The next Communion will be held on Sunday, November 2, 2014. The next regular Session meeting will be held on Monday, November 3, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. There will be a called Session Meeting at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, November 3, 2014, in the Dining Room to receive new

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members). The next Presbytery Meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 11, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. at the Canonsburg United Presbyterian Church -- Charles Bowers and Crystal Miles are scheduled to attend.

ADJOURNING AND CLOSING PRAYER

After a motion by April Betzner and a second from Jerry Davison, Session unanimously approved a motion to adjourn. The meeting was closed with a prayer by Pastor Emily at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan M. Pachter

Jonathan M. Pachter, Clerk of Session