

**Covenant Presbyterian Church
Meeting of Session
Monday, March 20, 2017
7:00pm
CONSENT AGENDA**

ACTION ITEMS

1. Approval of February 13, 2016 Session Meeting Minutes (pgs.2-5). Randy Ripple, Clerk of Session, moves that the minutes of this meeting be approved as written.
2. Approval of Called Session Meetings Minutes from February to receive new members (pg.6). Randy Ripple, Clerk of Session, moves that the minutes of these meetings be approved as written.
3. Approval of request for changes to active roll (pg.7).
4. Approval of baptisms (pg.8).

INFORMATION ITEMS

1. Presbytery Report (pg. 9).
2. Clerk's Communications (pg.10).

FUTURE EVENTS

- April 10 Next Session Meeting
- XXXXX
- XXXXX

**Minutes of the Meeting of Session
Monday, February 13, 2017
7:00 P.M.**

Call to Order and Opening Prayer – Moderator, Bob Henderson

The meeting was called to order at 7 pm and opened with a Session Meditation led by Rev. Henderson and including a Call to Worship, Hymn of Praise, Scripture Reading and Meditation on waiting and patience in daily life and as we wait for God's coming. Rev. Henderson spoke of Covenant's role being to "irrigate the community with hope as we wait for the Kingdom", noting that it is important to work toward God's kingdom while we wait.

Determination of Quorum

Rev. Henderson declared a quorum. He then noted the following two changes to the agenda: adding a Worship Ministry Report, and moving the Order of the Day to 8 pm. A motion to adopt the agenda, as amended, was made and approved.

Adoption of Consent Agenda

A report from the Baptism Committee recommending approval of baptisms at Covenant in February and March 2017 was added to the consent agenda, and the consent agenda, as amended, was approved unanimously.

Administration – Hank Stallings

Treasurer's Report

Mr. Stallings reviewed the January financials and reported that for the first month of 2017 pledge receipts and net income are each slightly ahead of plan. The balance sheet continues to be healthy.

Recommended Use of General Fund Overage

Mr. Stallings reported that the Finance Committee reviewed 2016 results, the 2017 budget, the general fund needs, and the current balance in the general fund to determine funds available for distribution. Based on the review, the Finance Committee recommends and moves to transfer \$28,574 from the general fund to the P&E Reserve to support strategic and/or capital campaign expenses. The motion was approved unanimously.

Planning and Evaluation – Nancy Falls

Update on Potential Capital Campaign

Ms. Falls updated Session regarding the ongoing work of the teams that were formed by P&E last month to further investigate missional work related to Affordable Housing, Full Day Child Care, Public Education Support, and The Epiphany School, and internally focused teams tasked with work related to Building Plans/Architecture/Construction, Finance/Administration, and Communication and Publicity.

Personnel Report – Philip James

Open Positions

- Mr. James reported that the personnel committee is creating a search committee and preparing to launch a search to replace high school youth director Perry Dixon. The committee is also working on an interim plan for the youth program until a new hire is in place.
- In relation to the Director of Mission & Outreach transition, Mr. James reported that listening sessions have begun, and once they are completed a search committee will be formed
- Leslie Ford has been hired to replace Debbie Tyson as our morning receptionist.
- Jessica Patchett is eligible for a sabbatical and will take one this summer.

Ministry Reports:

Education – Mike Ferone

Charlotte's Wakeup Call

Mr. Ferone reported on the five-part series titled "Charlotte's Wake-up Call: A Community Dialogue" which Covenant hosted in partnership with CN Jenkins and the Women's Intercultural Exchange. The series was developed in response to the civil unrest following the shooting of Keith Lamont Scott on Sept. 20, 2017. Attendance was impressive with around 350 people attending on average across all five sessions. The series met its goal to provide the space, framework and leadership to bring diverse citizens together to

- better understand each other
- better understand the societal forces at work now and throughout our country's and city's history, PARTICULARLY RELATED TO RACE AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY
- understand individual implicit biases
- push the attendees out of their comfort zones
- challenge attendees to make a difference going forward

Mr. Ferone reported he is proud of Covenant for stepping up and providing space for this conversation. Noting that it takes a conscious effort to make progress toward change. The series wrapped up with Hugh McColl and others challenging attendees to use their individual power and influence within their networks of relationships to help others hear and see the perspectives and experiences of those often underrepresented in decision-making.

Rev. Henderson noted that WFAE is applying for a grant to replicate similar conversations in other communities and Covenant has agreed to co-sponsor the grant request.

Engagement – Rusty Williams

2016 Year End Report

Mr. Williams reported that Covenant's membership growth is strong. Covenant purged its rolls in 2008 and since then has grown its membership by 23% with 2016 membership at 2221. Members 26-45 years old represented the largest growth segment by age during these years. Impressively, 87% of new members who joined in 2016 are actively involved at Covenant in addition to attending worship. Mr. Williams also reviewed figures relating to 2016 new member worship attendance by service and 2016 first time visitors in worship by service, noting that over the last month there has been a rise in first time visitors to the chapel service.

A question was asked relating to how Covenant's growth compares to other area churches. Rev. Henderson responded that several churches in our area are doing well, but Covenant's growth is

against the general trend in our area and nationally. It is estimated only 10% of the churches in our Presbytery are growing.

Mission and Outreach – Will Summerville

Five Year Plan

Mr. Summerville reviewed the ministry's newly developed 5-year planning spreadsheet which was created last year to help the ministry effectively plan and track total available mission funds (restricted funds and operating income) and use of funds for a rolling 5-year period. Covenant spent over \$600,000 in support of our mission partners in 2016. The spreadsheet provides a framework to help evaluate mission spending over a period of time. While mission funds and spending is estimated out for the next five years, it is important to note that this spreadsheet is a dynamic planning tool, not a firm 5-year plan.

Rev Henderson commented on the many people involved in developing this excellent and agile planning tool which improves transparency.

Order of the Day – David Watson

Update on post seminary and plans for ministry

Mr. Watson joined us via skype from New Orleans and shared the following information. After graduating from seminary in 2015, he did a chaplain residency in Austin for a year while his wife completed her masters in social work. Currently Mr. Watson is one of four chaplains for the New Orleans police department. In this role, he provides spiritual and emotional care for police officers, and, also, as a first responder to crime scenes, he provides care for officers and family members at the crime scene. This is an intense job and unique opportunity for which he is grateful. Additionally, Mr. Watson is doing "pulpit supply" in the New Orleans area. Many area churches are unable to afford a full-time pastor, so he has been able to preach about 50% of his Sundays.

Mr. Watson will go before Presbytery this May and plans to be ordained at Covenant in the fall. He hopes to become a pastor in New Orleans at one of the churches where he has preached that is growing.

Rev. Henderson offered Mr. Watson our help and advocacy as needed as he moves toward ordination, and expressed that we are looking forward to celebrating his ordination with him at Covenant.

Congregational Life – No Report

Worship – Jean King

2016 Ministry Plans

Ms. King reported that this year the Worship Ministry team will address logistical, practical and aesthetic issues to improve and enhance the worship experience across all services. To achieve this goal, the ministry will do the following:

- Gather suggestions from clergy and from music directors
- Address member suggestions in the Capital Feasibility Study
- Consider our own committee's opinions
- Prioritize the resulting issues based on need, impact and expense

Clerk's Report – No Report

Old Business/New Business - None

Staff Announcements/Pastoral Concerns

There were no staff announcements. Pastoral concerns were shared.

Closing

Following a prayer led by Rev. Joan Watson, the meeting was adjourned at 8:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Randy Ripple, Clerk



Robert W. Henderson, Moderator

**Covenant Presbyterian Church
Called Session Meetings
Sundays, February 5, 12, 19 and 26, 2017**

Covenant held four Called Session Meetings each on a Sunday morning for the purpose of receiving new members. Lora Borrelli introduced the following new members and information:

February 5, 2017

David Callaway	Reaffirmation
Jennifer Callaway	Reaffirmation
Katie Moore	Transfer Letter-Myers Park Methodist, Charlotte
Art Howson	Transfer Letter-Westminster Presbyterian Church, Greenville
Andrew Aguilera	Reaffirmation
Elizabeth Aguilera	Reaffirmation

February 12, 2017

Rob Mills	Transfer Letter--First Presbyterian Church, New Canaan CT
Martha Venter	Reaffirmation

February 19, 2017

Jack Hunter	Reaffirmation
Rye Barcott	Reaffirmation
Tracy Barcott	Reaffirmation
Mike Anderson	Transfer Letter--Christ Lutheran, Charlotte, NC

February 26, 2017

Cristina Wilson	Reaffirmation
Marisa Wilson	Reaffirmation
Brooke Szitas	Reaffirmation
Steven Szitas	Reaffirmation

Active (confirmed) members as of 2/28/17: 2231

2017 new members as of 2/28/17: 23

New members since last report: 16

2017 transfers as of 2/28/17: 9

2017 deaths as of 2/28/17: 4

Motions of acceptance were made, seconded and approved. Each meeting adjourned with prayer.
Respectfully submitted,



Randy Ripple, Clerk



Robert W. Henderson, Moderator

**Covenant Presbyterian Church
Session Meeting
Request for Changes in the Active Roll**

Removed from Active Roll Per Request

<u>Name</u>	<u>Transferred to:</u>
Richard Balentine	Transfer Letter--St Andrews Presbyterian, Taylors, SC
Barbara Balentine	Transfer Letter--St Andrews Presbyterian, Taylors, SC
Peter Banks	Remove from the roll--per request
Mary "Susie" Banks	Remove from the roll--per request

**Covenant Presbyterian Church
Session Action Item
Summary**

SUBJECT: March 2017 Baptisms

DATE: March 13, 2017

Report From: Baptism Committee

Mary Clare Bracey, Chairperson

Background: Baptism must be approved by the Session.

Process to Date: Parents requested that their children be baptized.

Budget Impact: None

Actions Taken or Recommendation: The Baptism Committee recommends approval of the following baptisms at Covenant in March 2017:

March 26, 2017 at the 11:00 am service in the Covenant Sanctuary
Hallas Elizabeth Crockford
Parents-Mike and Natalie Crockford

Motion: Motion to approve the baptisms of Hallas Elizabeth Crockford.

**Covenant Presbyterian Church
Session Information Item
Summary**

SUBJECT: Presbytery Meeting Notes

DATE: March 13, 2017

Presbytery of Charlotte
Meeting, February 11, 2017
First Presbyterian Church, Concord

The day began with a few business items followed by a worship service in the lovely historic First Presbyterian Church in Concord. Following the service, there was a presentation by Jim Kitchens from PneuMatrix titled Emmaus Road. PneuMatrix brings Adaptive Change Leadership skills for congregational transformation with 'roll-up-you-sleeves' consulting and capacity building according to their Facebook page. This presentation was geared toward churches that are struggling with financial/budget and membership concerns. It was gratifying to realize that our congregation does not have those particular concerns at this time.

The next notable event was the dismissal of Walkersville Church to the Evangelical Presbyterian Church.

After lunch, there was a "Dismantling Racism" panel discussion moderated by Reverend Katie Harrington and Reverend Albert Moses. Each of the participants had participated in an intensive course titled "Dismantling Racism". The moderators asked each panelist questions about how they had been impacted by the course, how it had changed their thinking and what they had learned. The most impactful parts of this discussion were the personal stories told by some of the participants. One man (who was black) told the story of picking up his sister to drive her to say a final good bye to their dying mother when they were stopped by a white police officer. Everyone in the room could feel the tension he felt during that encounter. The panel discussion and audience participation was frank, painful and clearly illustrated that white privilege exists. The session ended with a black man saying that when he left that day, he could walk down the street into the white section of town and if he was seen by a police officer, would be asked what he was doing there while a white man leaving the meeting could walk in the opposite direction into the black part of town and, if he was seen by a police officer, would be asked if he needed any help.

Respectfully submitted by Will Summerville, Chair of Ministry of Mission and Outreach, not in attendance but compiled based on notes of participants: Anne Gildea, Anne McQuiston, Hank Stallings, Susan Lawson, and Jane H. Taylor.

**Covenant Presbyterian Church
Session Information Item
Summary**

Subject: Clerk Communications

From: Randy Ripple, Clerk

Communication has been received from the following organizations in acknowledgement of donations:

- Big Meadows Church
- Charlotte Family Housing
- Crisis Assistance Ministry
- Loaves and Fishes
- Princeton Theological Seminary