

**Covenant Presbyterian Church
Meeting of Session
Monday, November 14, 2016
7:00pm
CONSENT AGENDA**

ACTION ITEMS

1. Approval of October 10, 2016 Session Meeting Minutes (pgs.2-5). Alan Atwell, Clerk of Session, moves that the minutes of this meeting be approved as written.
2. Approval of Called Session Meetings Minutes from October to receive new members (pg.6). Alan Atwell, 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. 8-9)
5. Approval of two motions from Worship Ministry regarding weddings (pgs.10-11).
6. Approval of motion from Worship Ministry regarding extended communion (pg. 12).
7. Approval of motion from Worship Ministry regarding Advent services (pg. 13)

INFORMATION ITEMS

1. Clerk's Communications (pg.17)
2. Minutes from July and October Presbytery Meetings (pgs.14-16).

FUTURE EVENTS

- November 27 Advent Begins
- December 4 Alternative Gift Market, 8:30am – 1:30pm
- December 10 Called Session Meeting, 8:30am
- December 12 Session Meeting and Elder Examination, 6:30pm
- December 18 Lessons and Carols, 11:00am and 5:00pm
- January 6-7, 2017 Save the Date for Elder Retreat
- January 8 Elder Ordination and Installation

**Minutes of the Meeting of Session
Monday, October 10, 2016
7:00 P.M.**

Call to Order – Moderator, Bob Henderson

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm

Opening Worship – Bob Henderson

Rev. Henderson used Psalm 91 as the basis for his meditation, which asked the question: What image of God do we want to reflect in our ministry?

Determination of Quorum and Adoption of Agenda

Rev. Henderson declared a quorum, and a motion was offered and accepted to adopt the agenda as provided in advance of the meeting, with the following exception: The motion regarding the 2016 Christmas Eve offering was removed from the Consent Agenda, and transferred to the main agenda, to be discussed in the wider context of a Special Offerings policy.

Adoption of the Consent Agenda

The consent agenda was adopted with the following modifications:

- 1) Under the Personnel Report, correct the spelling of Chris Lam's last name
- 2) Transfer of the motion regarding the Christmas Eve Special offering to the main agenda, as above

Personnel Report – Chris Lam

Though the details were almost lost in the humor of his presentation, Chris Lam reported that offers of employment have been extended to candidates for both currently vacant positions (Director of Middle School Youth Ministries, and Coordinator of Care Teams and Support Groups). Official announcements regarding the hiring of these new staff members are expected soon.

Administration

1) Treasurer's Report – Tom Coley

Year to date, net income was \$51,014 less than expenses. This is \$102,037 favorable to budget year to date. The balance sheet continues to be healthy.

2) Safety Task Force – Gene Wood

Having recommended at the September Session meeting the enactment of a "No Weapons" policy on the campus of Covenant Presbyterian Church, Mr. Wood offered the following motion:

A "No Weapons" policy shall be established on the campus of Covenant Presbyterian Church. As part of this policy, and of the broader signage project to enhance safety & security, signs to that effect shall be posted in various locations across the church campus.

Mr. Wood anticipated, and answered, the following questions:

- a) Q: Would the implementation of this policy have any impact on Covenant's insurance coverage?
A: No – neither positive nor negative.

- b) Q: Would the implementation of this policy prohibit an off-duty police officer from carrying a weapon while on our campus?
A: No

Mr. Wood commented that it is the presence of so many children on our campus that prompts the interest in implementing this policy. He acknowledged that this policy alone is not likely to prevent the actions of someone intending to cause harm. But the Task Force believes that accidental harm is the greater risk, and that this policy can be an effective deterrent to such situations.

Comments from the floor included the following:

- a) Information and/or training should be offered to the staff and congregation at large, equipping them to respond to a weapons-related situation
- b) Notice of the new “no weapons” policy should be added to information shared with outside groups who reserve/rent space on our campus
- c) Particular attention should be paid to publicizing this policy in the Rec. Wing entry area, since that’s the place where non-members are most likely to interact with our campus
- d) A reference to pertinent statutes should be placed in very small print at the bottom of the new signs

The motion to establish a “No Weapons” policy was then put to a vote, and unanimously approved.

3) **Special Offerings Policy**

Bob Henderson took a few minutes to note that at present, there is no guiding policy regarding the taking of special offerings across the congregation. He noted that specificity is needed for a number of questions, such as:

- a) How many special offerings can be collected in a year?
- b) Who shall be the beneficiaries of these offerings?
- c) When an offering is approved, is it one-time or ongoing?
- d) Who decides?

Rev. Henderson suggested the collection of offerings is a major function of the church, and as such should be governed by the Session. He suggested that the creation of such a policy be lodged with church treasurer and the Finance Committee for their consideration, with the expectation of input from other ministries. Church Treasurer Tom Coley agreed to take on this question, and bring a suggestion for a new policy to the Session in a timely fashion.

4) **Christmas Eve Offering**

While on the subject of special offerings, the discussion turned to this year’s Christmas Eve offering. Tricia Smith, on behalf of the Division of Mission & Outreach, offered the following three agencies as recipients of this year’s offering:

- a) A 5th-grade field trip to Charleston, SC for Highland Renaissance Academy students (approx 80 students);
- b) A Christmas excursion for students in the after school program at Crossnore Elementary School in Avery County, NC (approx 50 students);
- c) A swimming excursion and swim attire for children at Tomorrow’s Youth Organization in the city of Nablus in the Holy Lands (approx 450 students).

Some questions were posed from the floor:

- a) Q: Why is the Renguti School in Kenya no longer a beneficiary of this offering?
A: It now receives support through our operating budget
- b) Q: What if the Christmas Eve offering does not raise enough money to cover these three projects?
A: The Division of Mission & Outreach will consider the use of discretionary funds

A motion to approve these three recipients was made and unanimously approved.

Clerk's Report – Alan Atwell

Mr. Atwell briefly shared his thoughts about Covenant's continuing response to the recent police shooting in our community. He proposed that "a good start" would be for the Session to add its signature to the Statement of Commitment written and publicized by the Charlotte Opportunity Task Force, and endorsed by the Community Building Initiative (www.opportunitycharmec.org) He noted that Rev. Henderson has signed this statement individually, but the value of a signature by the Session would be the recognition that this is a broad community issue, and not just a clergy issue. Rev. Henderson clarified that by signing this statement, we would not be aligning ourselves with any particular organization, but would be indicating that we wish to be "counted in" as part of the solution. Mr. Atwell noted that it will also be important that the signature not be just a symbolic gesture, but that we also consider ongoing plans and actions.

A motion was made that the Session of Covenant Presbyterian Church should sign this Statement of Commitment; the motion was unanimously approved.

Ministry Reports

1) Education – Emily Blair

Following on the discussion of Covenant's desire and intent to play an active role in community healing and social justice, Ms. Blair presented a lengthy list of resources regarding social justice gathered by the Education Ministry. Presented as a handout, these resources fell into the following categories: implicit bias; criminal justice; education and economic opportunity; reparative justice; engaging with Charlotte; and making a difference. The list was presented as a "starting place," and is intended to raise awareness of what might happen at Covenant.

2) Congregational Life – Nancy Sutton

Ms. Sutton presented a Return on Ministry interim report for the Division of Congregational Life, clarifying that the division's work falls into three focus areas:

- a) Support Groups: The division is working toward creating a predictable support group schedule; the hiring of a Coordinator of Care Teams and Support Groups will speed up this process. For the remainder of 2016, one support group is scheduled – a 4-week group on Grief, beginning on November 16.
- b) Care Teams: Care teams currently fall into three categories (acute; long term/chronic; dementia), and needs are determined by the Parish Nurse. The Division intends to develop an improved process for providing these types of care
- c) Open Table: The Division hopes to improve the process for program scheduling, and to emphasize the importance of communication regarding Open Table events across all program areas.

3) Engagement – Kate Carter

Mrs. Carter reported that the hospitality portion of this ministry's work is going well, with its most recent effort being the distribution of 800 welcome brochures to apartment residents in SouthEnd. This brochure is also included in the welcome packages offered to visitors on Sunday mornings. The Division is thinking about how to make the gathering of time & talent information more efficient and effective. She noted that among Covenant's 107 most recent new members, 77% are involved in activities in addition to Sunday morning worship.

Old Business/New Business

There was no old business or new business.

Staff Announcements/Pastoral Concerns

Rev. Joan Watson shared with the Session that she is scheduled to undergo a significant surgical procedure on Friday, October 21. Following that, she expects to be on medical leave for at least 4 weeks, returning to work on a graduated schedule following her at-home recovery.

Additional pastoral concerns were mentioned, and following a prayer led by Jen Christianson, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Alan Atwell, Clerk



Robert W. Henderson, Moderator

**Covenant Presbyterian Church
Called Session Meetings
Sundays, October 2, 9, 16, 23 and 30, 2016**

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

October 2, 2016

Carrie Allen Transfer Letter--Dilworth United Methodist, Charlotte, NC
Chris Allen Reaffirmation

October 9, 2016

Amy Petticrew Reaffirmation

October 16, 2016

Elizabeth Quinn Affiliate membership
Jeffrey Sawyers Reaffirmation
John Downs Transfer Letter--Highland Presbyterian, Winston-Salem, NC

October 23, 2016

Locke Beatty Reaffirmation
Michelle Beatty Transfer Letter--Englewood UMC, Rocky Mount, NC
Jordan Hart Reaffirmation

October 30, 2016

Kurt Schoenhoff Reaffirmation
Jeff Hallen Reaffirmation

Active (confirmed) members as of 10/31/16: 2224

2016 new members as of 10/31/16: 115

New members since last report: 11

2016 transfers YTD: 12

2016 deaths YTD: 20

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

Respectfully submitted,



Alan Atwell, 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>
Chaz Snider	Remove from the roll per request
Michaleh Snider	Remove from the roll per request
Pat Griseth	Remove from the roll per request
Mary "Bekah" Diehl Bussell	Covenant-Community Presbyterian, Pittsburgh, PA

**Covenant Presbyterian Church
Session Action Item
Summary**

SUBJECT: November and December 2016 Baptisms

DATE: October 10, 2016

Report From: Baptism Committee

Chair: Mary Clare Bracey

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 November and December 2016:

November 20, 2016 at the 9:30 am service in the Covenant Sanctuary
Tracey Scarlett

November 27, 2016 at the 11:00 am service in the Covenant Sanctuary
Andrew Wolf McQuiston
Parents- Peter and Corey McQuiston
James Woodrow McQuiston
Parents-Warren and Michelle McQuiston

December 4, 2016 at the 11:00 am service in the Covenant Sanctuary
George Friend Beatty
Parents-Locke and Michelle Beatty
Henry McNeill Fitch
Parents-Hollis and Abby Fitch

December 11, 2016 at the 11:00 am service in the Covenant Sanctuary
Josephine Clare Dellinger
Parents-Brad and Audra Dellinger

The Baptism Committee retroactively recommends approval of the following baptisms at Covenant in October 2016:

October 30, 2016 at the 11:00 am service in the Covenant Sanctuary
Sullivan Nohl Shjarback
Parents-Jeff and Stacy Shjarback

Motion: Motion to approve the baptisms of Tracey Scarlett, Andrew Wolf McQuiston, James Woodrow McQuinston, Henry McNeill Fitch, George Friend Beatty, Josephine Dellinger, and retroactively approve the baptism of Sullivan Nohl Shjarback.

**Covenant Presbyterian Church
Session Action Item
Summary**

SUBJECT: 2016 Wedding

DATE: November 14, 2016

Report From: Worship Ministry/Wedding Committee

Chair: Barbara Ann Zizzi

Background: According to The Book of Order, Session must approve the participation of an outside minister at a Covenant wedding.

Process to Date: The December 31, 2016 wedding of Cynthia English and Tucker Knox will include the participation of a non-Covenant minister. Therefore, in accordance with the Book of Order, the Wedding Committee would like to bring the following motion to the Worship Ministry for approval and transmittal to the November session meeting.

Budget Impact: None

Actions Taken or Recommendation: The Wedding Committee recommends the approval of a non-Covenant minister to participate at the wedding of Cynthia English and Tucker Knox on December 31, 2016.

Motion: The Wedding Committee moves that Reverend Robert E. Bergland, Senior Pastor at First United Methodist Church of Wilson, Wilson, North Carolina, be approved to co-officiate, along with the Reverend Jen Christianson, in the wedding ceremony of Cynthia English and Tucker Knox on December 31, 2016 at Covenant Presbyterian Church.

**Covenant Presbyterian Church
Session Action Item
Summary**

SUBJECT: 2017 Wedding

DATE: November 14, 2016

Report From: Worship Ministry/Wedding Committee

Chair: Barbara Ann Zizzi

Background: According to The Book of Order, Session must approve the participation of an outside minister at a Covenant wedding.

Process to Date: The January 21, 2017 wedding of Ashley Owens and Davis Shaefer will include the participation of a non-Covenant minister. Therefore, in accordance with the Book of Order, the Wedding Committee would like to bring the following motion to the Worship Ministry for approval and transmittal to the November session meeting.

Budget Impact: None

Actions Taken or Recommendation: The Wedding Committee recommends the approval of a non-Covenant minister to participate at the wedding of Ashley Owens and Davis Shaefer on January 21, 2017.

Motion: The Wedding Committee moves that Reverend Jamie Broome, Senior Minister at Immanuel Baptist Church, Paducah, Kentucky, be approved to co-officiate, along with the Reverend Robert Henderson, in the wedding ceremony of Ashley Owens and Davis Shaefer on January 21, 2017 at Covenant Presbyterian Church.

**Covenant Presbyterian Church
Session Action Item
Summary**

SUBJECT: Wednesday Worship Services, Advent, 2016

DATE: November 14, 2016

Report From: Worship Ministry

Chair: Sally Graves

Background: The Worship Ministry shares with the Session the scheduled dates and times for all non/Sunday morning worship services.

Budget Impact: None

Motion: The Worship Ministry moves that the following changes be made to the Wednesday worship schedule for the remainder of 2016 (Advent):

- 1) The Taizé service scheduled for 12:00 noon on Wednesday, November 30 shall be cancelled
- 2) A service referred to as “Blue Christmas” shall be added to the schedule for Wednesday evening, November 30, to be held in the Chapel beginning at 6:30 pm. This service will be led by Jen Christianson.
- 3) An Advent-focused Taizé service shall be added to the schedule for Wednesday evening, December 7, to be held in the Chapel beginning at 6:30 pm. This service will be led by Evan Amo.

Attachment(s): None

**Covenant Presbyterian Church
Session Information Item
Summary**

SUBJECT: Extended Communion

DATE: November 14, 2016

Report From: Extended Communion Committee **Co-chairs:** Betty Graybeal and Marilyn Mickle

Background:

Covenant provides the opportunity to receive the sacrament of communion to homebound members on a quarterly basis throughout the year.

Information

Extended communion will be served on the following dates in 2017:

February 5

May 7

August 6

November 5

Minutes: July 16, 2016 Presbytery of Charlotte Meeting

Ruling Elders in attendance: Suzanne Harmon, Ashlee Anderson, Kate Mackenzie

Teaching Elders in attendance: Bob Henderson, Jessica Patchett

On July 16, 2016, the Presbytery of Charlotte met at Mallard Creek Presbyterian Church to share worship, ideas, and fellowship. After a reading of Malachi 3:1-12, Rev. Peter Bynum gave a sermon titled "Singing in the Rain". He told the story of Peter Marshall, a Scottish immigrant, Army engineer and future minister who lived by the code "All I have to do is obey and God will take care of the rest." When He closes a door, He opens a window. God understood the world as it was in 1 A.D. Palestine just as well as he understands major metropolitan cities in 2016. The group read the Belhar Confession for the first time at a Presbytery of Charlotte meeting. The Belhar Confession is the first in the Book of Order from the Southern hemisphere and first from the 20th century.

The program for the day was to join two of ten breakout sessions to learn about various ministries that embody the Presbytery's new vision statement: Joining Jesus, the risen Christ, in building, celebrating, and anticipating the Kingdom of God in our seven counties and beyond. The Grove Church presented "Coming Alive in Christ! The Transformation of a Church through the Grace of God" on how a formerly all white middle class neighborhood church dwindled to very few members. The faith of a few members made it possible for The Grove to find new life in reviving the idea of a neighborhood church in a very diverse community by meeting people where they are in northeast Charlotte. Caldwell Presbyterian Church went through a similar transformation; chartered in 1912 in the historic Elizabeth neighborhood and expanding to over 1000 members in 1960, but dwindling down to 12 in 2006. Caldwell practiced radical hospitality by finding meaningful purposes for a previously under-used building sharing space with the Charlotte Islamic School, transitional living for women in partnership with the Salvation Army and a dynamic prayer room that is open 24/7. The most recent opportunity is called "The Third Place," not yours or mine, but a third place. This is a coffee shop open Monday through Friday from 8AM-1PM that teaches entrepreneurial skills to youth, sells baked goods from Friendship Trays and accepts donations for the coffee. Most importantly, the Third Place provides a place to build community.

The day wrapped up with presentations on the recent General Assembly meeting. The representatives from the Presbytery of Charlotte carefully discerned important policies and directives for the benefit of all, and even had fun doing it!

Respectfully submitted,

Kate Mackenzie, Elder

Minutes

Presbytery of Charlotte Meeting, 132nd State Meeting Providence Presbyterian Church, Charlotte October 25, 2016, 9:30am

Ruling Elders in attendance: Ann Ayers, John Baxter, Tricia Smith

Teaching Elders in attendance: Bob Henderson, Jessica Patchett

The meeting opened with a call to order, an opening prayer, and declaration of a quorum by moderator Rev. Katie Harrington.

Rev. Walt McCanless of Providence PC welcomed meeting attendants, the docket was approved and tellers appointed.

We all participated in a worship service and communion led by Rev. Albert Moses of Matthews-Murkland Church. The sermon addressed God's hope for justice, love, and reconciliation in our world, a topic that is presently pertinent to the Charlotte community after community demonstrations in Fall 2016.

There was a special recognition of the Elder Price Gwynn, III, who is a member of Steel Creek Presbyterian and was the moderator of the 202nd General Assembly. He has been a dedicated disciple of Christ and contributed enormously to the Presbyterian Church. He was in attendance with his wife and many friends and family.

The meeting was recessed and moved to the Fellowship Hall.

We heard a report from the Committee on Ministry. Reverend Edward Newberry was conferred with Honorable Retirement. There were comments and by both the Rev. Larry Hill of Memorial Church and from Rev. Newberry himself.

The Committee on Representation is seeking interested parties to serve on the committee. There are several vacancies at this point in time.

The Strategic Planning Task Force reported that they have been tasked with creating a direction for structuring the Presbytery and have been meeting regularly for lengthy conversations. The committee is looking to build community and strengthen the vitality of congregations. They will propose a vision for Presbytery during changing times and discerning where the Holy Spirit is leading us. There will be another report in February.

The "Racism – Way Forward" Task Force reported. The task force is created to find opportunities for dialogue and for challenging the status quo. At this point ideas and direction are still very fluid and they are still meeting to discern.

An "Overture 10-03" is proposed by the 222nd General Assembly to address in action the worsening plight of the African American male. This includes a recommendation for congregations to participate in a one-time

special offering for this initiative amongst other specific actions and funding routes. A more specific document is attached to these minutes.

All attendees participated in a Roundtable Discussion of the Belhar Confession, led by the Presbytery Racism Task Force and comments were solicited from the discussion groups. A video was also shown, and it challenged us to be a living witness for the rest of the world against racism and poverty. It also asks that we take a stand for unity, justice, and reconciliation.

We recessed for a delicious lunch hosted by the members of PCC.

Further reports included:

- Church Development Committee Report, moderated by Jessica Patchett
- Council Report, regarding proposed changes to the Administrative Manual
- Dismissal of Waxhaw Church to EPC
- Report from the 238th Meeting of the Mid-Atlantic Synod
- Committee on Preparation for Ministry Report, proposing progression of Inquirer Gwen Pearson (Matthews-Murkland PC) to Candidate.
- Committee on Ministry Report, Part 2, with request for minister transfers.
- Charge, Benediction and Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,

Tricia Smith, Elder

**Covenant Presbyterian Church
Session Information Item
November 14, 2016**

Subject: Clerk Communications

From: Alan Atwell, Clerk

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

- Charlotte Family Housing
- Charlotte Rescue Mission
- Faith Ministry
- Friends of Accion
- Loaves and Fishes Pantry at Holy Comforter

Also received was a thank you letter from Warner Hall scholarship recipient, Erin Burt.