

MONTCLAIR PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
STATED SESSION MEETING
February 7, 2023 MINUTES

Elders Present: Debbie Dille, Mike Forbes, Gretchen Garlinghouse, Mike Griffith, Cindy Gullikson, Helen Hutchison, Claire Kelly, Jean Roggenkamp, Linda Spencer, Allen Spore, May Tong, Bob Zdnok

Staff Present: Rev. Ben Daniel, Katie Kilby, Noel Moritz

Others Present: Suzanne Jones, Carrie McKiernan, Bet Muth, Al Peters

Clerk's Report: Rev. Ben Daniel called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and Gretchen Garlinghouse opened with prayer. This was a hybrid ZOOM meeting. There will be a congregational meeting on Sunday, Feb. 19 for the purpose of electing new session members. The next Presbytery meeting takes place Tuesday, Feb. 21, 2023; this will be an online, evening meeting. The third San Antonio Retreat is coming up Feb. 24-26. Session meets again on Tuesday, March 7.

- **MSP** to approve minutes of the January 3, 2023 session meeting.
- **MSP** to approve the 2022 statistical report.
- **MSP** to approve opening a five-month Certificate of Deposit at First Republic Bank, 2110 Mountain Blvd., Oakland, CA.\

Earth Care Proposal: Suzanne Jones and Bet Muth presented the attached draft policy for MPC-sponsored events serving food. They will take session's comments and, along with session members Gretchen Garlinghouse and Claire Kelly, will review the policy and bring it back to session with proposed changes.

Finance Committee Report: Finance Com. Chair Al Peters presented the attached quarterly financial report. Contributions are tracking the current budget. We did not engage in fundraising but received Covid funds from the federal government which roughly made up the difference.

- **MSP** to receive the quarterly financials.

Personnel:

A. *Director of Youth, Family and community Life (YFCL) Position*

Personnel Chair Carrie McKiernan presented the committee's proposal to continue with the hiring process for the director of YFCL, under the budget approved in December, 2022 which includes the manse as a benefit to the person hired. (See attached proposal.) Due to significant recent Buildings and Grounds (B &G) expenses, Finance Committee recommended that Personnel proceed with the cash compensation portion of the offer up to \$52K (plus benefits), thus freeing the manse to be rented to offset our systemic budget deficit. Concerned that the cash only offer will not attract a qualified candidate, Personnel invited further discussion with Session to find an appropriate solution.

Finance Committee detailed the recent history of influx of federal COVID funds and legacy gifts, increasing B & G expenses due to our aging campus and infrastructure, and the

impact of the death of significant elderly pledgers. All this is to say that we have a structural deficit of \$25,00 to \$30,000 that could be addressed by hiring a property manager to rent the manse. Other options include fundraising, conducting a capital campaign, and a targeted ask to top tier donors. Following a straw vote to proceed:

- **MSP** to proceed with hiring Director of YFCL with manse included in the hiring package, and commitment from session to work with Finance Committee to address the structural deficit.

B. *Pastor Sabbatical:* Carrie indicated Personnel Committee is requesting that session approve a 6.5 week sabbatical for Ben, roughly from Monday August 14 through Friday, Oct. 6. The cost is projected at \$10,000. Projected sources of funding:

- \$5,000 from Board of Pensions (BP) grant. Ben will submit application
- \$2,000 from study leave account
- \$1,000 personal contribution
- \$2,000 solicitation from MPC community

Should the BP not approve the grant request, Personnel will work with Ben to cover that cost, and MPC will absorb \$1200, the cost of pulpit supply. (See further details in attached proposal.) Note that the MPC policy provides for a three-month sabbatical, and Ben is using less than two months. Session is to consider and review whether to allow him to take an additional 4 weeks once the director of YFCL is hired and fully on-board.

- **MSP** to approve the attached proposal for a 6.5 week sabbatical for Rev. Ben Daniel.

Church Front: Helen Hutchison offered the attached report on the MPC Church Entry Taskforce. She reported that we are almost ready for the final inspection!

NextEdge: Ben related that NextEdge has approached the church about installing a low emission 5 g cell tower on the Family Room roof, so T Mobile can reserve the space in this area. The company offered a paltry \$1,200. Ben will get back to them and indicate we would like a bit more. Allen Spore will follow through with the negotiations.

- **By consensus**, this approach was approved.

Children & Youth (C&Y) Annual Evaluation: Liaison Claire Kelly delivered the annual evaluation of our C & Y program. (See attached.) The Godly Play program is going great, and we have - finally!- hired a nursery coordinator. Youth Group dwindled during COVID and did not meet in 2022.

Reflection; closing prayer: Bob Zdenek reflected on his time serving as session member, observing that we have so much talent and have accomplished a lot. He expressed concern about the church's demographics.

Ben closed with prayer at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susanne Lea, Clerk of Session

