

MONTCLAIR PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Session Minutes

July 30, 2024

Elders Present: Linda Benson, Margaretha Derasary, Rob Elia, Gretchen Garlinghouse, Karen Ray Gibson, Sari Kulberg, Leslie Louie, Jean Rogenkamp, Linda Spencer, Jerry White

Elders Abent: Rick Heller, May Tong

Staff Present: Rev. Ben Daniel, Katie Kilby

Others Present: Al Peters, Allen Spore

Clerks Report: Rev. Ben Daniel called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. This was a hybrid ZOOM meeting. Rob Elia offered the opening reflection.

The next Presbytery meeting takes place in person on Tuesday, August 24. Session meets again on September 3. As Ben is out of town on that date, Clerk of Session Susanne Lea will ask Rev. Keith Geckeler to moderate the September meeting.

Susanne reported for the minutes that on June 13-15, 3035, by email vote, session voted to approve and accept the two Presbytery documents associated with the Central Region's \$50,000 grant to Mission for the Homeless: (1) Framework for Decision-Making and Fund Distribution; and (2) MOU for Grantees.

- **MSP** to approve minutes of the June 11, 2024 stated session meeting.
- **MSP** to convene a congregational meeting on Sunday, August 25 immediately following Celebration for the purposes of (1) approving Rev. Ben Daniel's terms of call; and (2) receiving the 2024-2025 budget.

Mission for the Homeless: Allen Spore delivered the attached report on the Mission for the Homeless grant. He requested session approval to accept donations from individuals (MPC members and non-members) and other granting agents as fiscal agent for Mission for the Homeless (MFTH)

- **MSP** to approve MPC to act as fiscal agent for MFTH, accepting donations from individuals and other grantors.

Personnel Committee: Liaison Leslie Louie, for the Personnel Committee, recommends increasing all staff salaries by 3.5% for FY 24-25. As well, she noted that the Board of Pensions has instituted changes to their health insurance compensation package for clergy which has resulted in reduced health insurance coverage for spouse and dependents. The committee recommends that MPC pay the additional costs to continue health coverage for Pastor Ben and his family. The cost of living increases for staff and the additional health insurance coverage for Ben have been included in the proposed budget.

- **MSP** to approve 3.5% increase for staff salaries for FY 24/25, plus the additional costs of pastor Ben's family healthcare package.

Additionally, Leslie reported that the search for a new Nursery Coordinator is underway.

Draft 24/25 Budget: Al Peters presented the attached proposed draft budget. Al reported that we ended the fiscal year with a surplus of over \$15,000, and recommended moving \$15,000 to the B & G fund which currently has a deficit of approximately \$26,000.

- **MSP** to move \$15,000 in surplus funds from FY 2023/2024 to the 2024/2025 B & G fund, thus reducing the B & G Fund deficit to approximately \$11,000.

Al noted that the proposed budget also reflects a \$15,000 gift to the general fund from a deceased donor. Further, the proposed budget assumes contributions will be the same as last year.

The proposed budget reflected a deficit of \$6,600. Susanne reported that the current tenant of the middle manse will not be renewing her lease. This means MPC will probably lose approximately two months rent (\$7,700) and will incur additional property management fees of \$2,000. This brings the projected deficit to \$16,300. Eliminating \$2,000 from the youth group mission trip account, and adding in \$6,000 in projected fundraising revenue, brings the proposed deficit to \$8,200.

- **MSP** to approve the proposed budget as adjusted.

Rick Heller inquired if any of our funds are invested in stocks/ They are invested in CD's (per Al). The Finance Committee will come back to session with a recommendation concerning investment options. Al also remarked that session should revisit the Sustainability Report and update the projections.

Electrification Project Update: Jean Roggenkamp recapped that MPC entered a 20-year power purchase agreement with ReVolve, pursuant to which ReVolve installed solar arrays on the manse, and will install arrays on the rental and the office. Revolve pays for, owns, installs and maintains the solar arrays; MPC in turn pays Revolve for power.

B & G Update: Susanne reported that we are in the process of getting bids for the two options for repairing the Ed Building.

It is time to re-evaluate the rental rate structure for renting our facilities to outside organizations. Linda Benson and Sari Kulberg volunteered to work with Noel on this project.

Kick-off Sunday: Susanne noted that Kick-off Sunday is slated for Sunday, August 25. Dates in September were not available. Moreover, we just had several weeks of August barbecues, following our Democracy Sunday event. Query: Do we really need a Kick-off Sunday. It has not lately proven to be very effective in garnering new committee membership or support. It might be more effective to sign up for 3-minute Work of the People slot during Sunday Celebration; this is a time to share the mission of a given committee/group and invite folks to join in. The consensus from session was that we do not need Kick-off Sunday. The event has outlived its usefulness. Susanne and Karen Ray Gibson will notify committee chairs/leaders, and will offer to set up tables if anyone so requests.

Pastoral Care Update: Katie Kilby reported that the Pastoral Care Task Force has focussed on how folks share (or don't) their concerns regarding pastoral care needs, and how to get this information to staff. The team is working on a pastoral care communication plan. The second phase of this endeavor will delve into identifying the systems we have and need to meet identified pastoral care needs.

Youth Group Update: Katie is in conversation with St. John's Episcopal Church about forming a collaborative middle school group. The goal would be to pull in a third church, begin meeting once a month on Sunday from noon - 1:30, and offer collaborative local service opportunities. Yeah!!!

Ben closed with prayer at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susanne Lea, Clerk of Session