

MONTCLAIR PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Session Minutes

October 1, 2024

Elders Present: Linda Benson, Margaretha Derasary, Rob Elia, Gretchen Garlinghouse, Karen Ray Gibson, Rick Heller, Sari Kulberg, Jean Roggenkamp, Linda Spencer, May Tong

Elders Absent: Leslie Louie, Jerry White

Others Present: Kate Bell

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

The next Presbytery meeting takes place on Tuesday, Nov. 12. Session meets again on Nov. 19.

- **MSP** to hold the next session meeting on Tuesday, Nov. 19.
- **MSP** to approve minutes of the September 3, 2024 stated session meeting.
- **MSP** to convene a congregational meeting on Sunday, Nov. 24 for the purposes of electing members to the Church Nominating committee and receiving the letter of financial review and audit from the church auditor.

Prospective New Member: Session met with prospective new member Kate Bell. Kate reflected on her faith journey to MPC and session members shared their roles and responsibilities in the life of the church.

- **MSP** to receive Kate Bell as a member of Montclair Presbyterian Church.

Women's Retreat: Jean Roggenkamp reported that 27 women attended the Women's Retreat at Vallombrosa Retreat Center. The theme of "Living Well in Spite of It All" was well received! Deborah Brooks, Katie Kilby, Debbie Fallehy, Cindy Gullikson and Eloise Gilland made it happen. Jean will chair the event next year. Retreat center prices keep rising and could be a barrier to future participation.

Nominating Committee: Nominating Committee chair Sari Kulberg alerted session that MPC now has two chair positions to fill: Carrie McKiernan will step down as chair of Personnel but will continue as a member, and Steve McKiernan will step down as chair of Membership and Outreach. In addition to experience, the personnel slot requires certain skills. Cindy Gullikson also wants to step down as chair of Children and Youth. Kate Bell previously expressed interest in serving on the committee and may be a candidate.

Pastoral Care Task Force: Linda Spencer presented the MPC Pastoral Care FAQs (attached). Communication is a "sticking point" at MPC as regards pastoral care. Direct communication with Ben works best - call or email him. We now have a web-based emergency number. Linda also pointed out that Ben and Katie are not therapists or social workers. More folks are seeking pastoral care at MPC. This is in keeping with the reality that our members are getting older at the same time the congregation is getting a bit smaller.

The Pastoral Care Task Force first addressed the issue of communication. Next it will work on forming a pastoral care team.

Youth Group: Katie Kilby reported that the newly formed collaborative youth group with partnering churches St. John's Episcopal and Lake Merritt Methodist held its first meeting last month. Fourteen youth participated - 10 middle schoolers and four high school students. For now the group is meeting once a month. The goal is to have one on-site meeting a month, and one off-site gathering - either a service or social event.

Katie's Ordination Status: Katie recently met with the Committee on Preparation for Ministry (CPM). It has been nearly a year since we voted to endorse Katie as an Inquirer, yet this was the first meeting with CPM since attaining that status. CPM has accepted almost all of her coursework. The next step for Katie is to move from Inquirer to Candidate.

Beacons Brainstorm: Karen Ray Gibson, co-chair of Beacons, reported that it is difficult finding folks to serve as Beacons, and many who do sign on do little in that role. Some are creative, others not so much. Kudos to Beacon Claire Kelly who planned a food pantry event and organized Trivia Night. There is a need to highlight what constitutes emergency services. Session postponed making any decision regarding the Beacons program.

Staff Report: Ben will be reading ordination exams next week. He has been elected Co-Moderator of SF Presbytery and will be going to Louisville for training in November.

Ben closed with prayer at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susanne Lea, Clerk of Session