

MONTCLAIR PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Session Minutes

April 1, 2025

Elders Present: Linda Benson; Margaretha Derasary; Rob Elia; Tara Flanagan; Karen Ray Gibson; Eloise Gilland; Rick Heller; Sari Kulberg; Pat Schwinn; Allen Spore; Brenda Steinmetz-Vallenas; Jerry White

Staff Present: Rev. Ben Daniel; Katie Kilby

Clerks Report: Rev. Ben Daniel called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.; Pat Schwinn gave the opening reflection. Clerk of session Susanne Lea welcomed new members and called attention to the committee liaison list and the prayer/reflection assignments. She reported for the minutes that the new session elders were ordained and installed during Celebration on Sunday, March 23.

Session meets again on Tuesday, May 6, 2025. Presbytery meets in person on May 13 at Newark Presbyterian Church.

- **MSP** to approve minutes of the March 4, 2025 stated session meeting.
- **MSP** to ratify the email vote of session to (1) endorse the goals set forth by the Earth Care's Democracy and Politics Team on climate action and policy reform, as well as actions to protect freedom of the press and (2) join the interfaith Movement for Human Integrity (see attached);
- **MSP** to elect Shelley Kelly, Saralinda Jackson, Karen Ray Gibson and Linda Spencer as Presbytery commissioners.
- **MSP** to elect the following corporate officers: Allen Spore, president; Al Peters, treasurer; Susanne Lea, Secretary.
- **MSP** to elect the following trust officers: Allen Spore, president; Al Peters, treasurer; Debra Stastny, secretary.
- **MSP** to elect Susanne Lea as Clerk of Session.

Meeting with Prospective New Member: Session met with prospective new member Tina Kong. Session members shared their roles and responsibilities within the life of MPC, and Tina shared her faith journey to our church. Session wholeheartedly approved Tina Kong for membership.

Pastoral Care Update: Katie reported that we now have a pastoral care team (Karen Ray Gibson, May Tong, Cheryl Geckler, Kit Land, Ben and Katie). The team meets monthly. Going forward, the plan is to let the congregation know about the team and extend an invitation to join. Katie noted that the process of establishing the team brought to light the question of data management: who are friends of the family, who is home-bound, etc. Katie and Noel will work with Membership and Outreach on these data management issues, while M & O reviews the rolls for membership and friends of the family.

Innovation Committee: Karen is the liaison for the Innovation Committee. The committee has been in recess for some time and just started meeting again. HYMNS continue to be a hot topic. Kim Rankin makes an effort to bring the choir up front when Celebration introduces a new

hymn. How hymns are chosen is a group effort, with a focus on the sermon theme. The group is trying to move beyond hymns to other areas we can innovate in terms of our Celebration service.

Finance Committee (FC) Annual Evaluation: Rick Heller shared the FC annual evaluation (attached). He commented that the committee is well functioning. Al Peters and Noel Moritz are a great team. Problem: There is no succession plan. Possibility that our auditor, Kathleen Donnell, could step in, for a fee.

Elder Training: Ben delivered an historical perspective of our Presbyterian polity, and a run down on some of the current splits within the denomination. Susanne will meet April 13 with new session elders to go over session roles and responsibilities and other topics in the session manual.

Ben closed with prayer at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susanne Lea
Clerk of Session