

MONTCLAIR PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Session Minutes

April 7, 2026

Elders Present: Deborah Brooks; Cynthia Cudaback; Rob Elia; Tara Flanagan; Karen Ray Gibson; Eloise Gilland; Shelley Kelly; Pat Schwinn; Martha Smith; Allen Spore; Jerry White

Elders Absent: Rick Heller

Staff Present: Rev. Ben Daniel; Katie Kilby

Others Present: Anna Capuchino; Suzanne Jones; Kellor Lukens; Katherine Palmer-Collins; Jamie Peake-McQueen

Clerks Report: Rev. Ben Daniel called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. Pat Schwinn offered the opening reflection. Deborah Brooks, Cynthia Cudaback, Shelley Kelly and Martha Smith - the Newly elected, ordained and installed session members - were welcomed. Committee and prayer/reflection assignments were noted.

Session meets again on Tuesday, May 5, 2026. Presbytery meets again on Tuesday, May 12 at LOPC. The San Antonio retreat will take place April 10-12.

Buildings and Grounds update: We received the permit to proceed with work on the external wall of the Ed. Bldg. (Grisborne side). The Oak Tree overlooking the creek has been removed. First Alarm has installed key pads, motion detector sensors and panic buttons (sanctuary, office and Smiles); cameras will be installed shortly.

- **MSP** to approve minutes of the Mar. 3, 2026 stated and executive session meetings.
- **MSP** to elect Linda Spencer, Saralinda Jackson, Deborah Brooks and Martha Smith 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; Pat Schwinn, Secretary.
- **MSP** to elect Susanne Lea as Clerk of Session.

Confirm Not Conform: Middle school students Anna Capuchino and Mira Thompson (MPC) and Keller Lukens and Jamie Peake-McQueen (St. John's Episcopal) have just finished the Confirm Nor Conform confirmation class. As part of the confirmation curriculum, youth are required to develop and implement a service project. Anna, Keller and Jamie presented their project – “Reducing Violence in Our School” – to session, proposing to raise funds to support “Teens on Target” (TNT). (See attached.) TNT is a violence prevention program under the Youth Alive umbrella that trains high school students to be violence prevention educators in their schools; conducts violence prevention workshops for middle school students; and addresses media and city leaders about school violence issues. So far the youth have raised \$2,000 from various sources. As well, they request that MPC allocate \$500 to TNT from the general fund, and donate the loose offerings from the special Confirm Not Conform Celebration service on May 17. Additionally, the youth have committed to meeting with school leaders at their respective middle schools about the TNT program.

- **MSP** to (1) allocate \$500 from the MPC general fund and (2) donate the loose offerings from the May 17, 2026 Celebration service to TNT.

Update on Website Redesign Project; Social Media Role Proposal: Steve McKiernan, co-chair of Membership & Outreach, informed session that the website redesign project has not gone as well as anticipated. The contractor has been paid. We do have a partially built website

that needs completion. The new website will be pivot to a visitor/community focus. Steve will return to session about finishing the project.

Steve also proposed hiring Martha Smith as MPC's Social Media Coordinator/contributor, with a stipend of \$200/month for approximately six months, at which time the arrangement would be evaluated. Concerns were raised about deliverables, pay, conflicts. Steve will come back next month with a revised proposal.

Fundraising Report: Suzanne Jones reported that the committee's 2024-2026 plan yielded \$106,500, of which \$56,000 are allocated for MPC operations, \$10,700 are tithed to community organizations, \$31,500 go towards electrification of aging equipment and \$8,300 are directed to elect. safety upgrades. **THANK YOU FUNDRAISING TEAM FOR YOUR INCREDIBLE WORK!!** (Report attached.) Looking ahead, we need to replace 12 furnaces - a huge ticket item - and one which may impact insurance renewal.

- **MSP** to approve funding allocation from the spring auction and concert as follows: \$4,400 to outside organizations; \$26,00 to the general fund; and \$10,100 to further electrification upgrades of aging natural-gas equipment.
- **MSP** to allocate the \$10,200 raised from sterling/gold/furniture sales to electrification upgrades.

Personnel Committee Request: Personnel Committee requests that session approve the co-chairs and other appropriate committee members as signatories to documents concerning benefits, contractors, and hiring matters.

- **MSP** to so approve signatories for these personnel matters.

Annual Evaluations: See attached reports.

- **Peace & Justice:** Liaison Allen Spore presented the evaluation for the Peace & Justice Committee, noting the many projects and events promoted by the committee, from Taize services to Faith in Action Friday night walks, and the many community partnerships it sustains.
- **Earth Care Committee:** Liaison Allen Spore delivered the Earth Care evaluation, highlighting its campus electrification work and the democracy study groups, attended by more than 50 folks each session.
- **Personnel Committee:** Pat Schwinn, liaison to Personnel, noted that the challenges faced by the committee this past year (e.g., the Pacific Boy Choir catastrophe) were consistently met with professionalism and personal care/concern,
- **Adult Ed:** Liaison Taa Flanagan commented that the committee functions with collegiality, offers a diversity of classes and lives up to its impressive mission statement.

Ben closed with prayer at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susanne Lea
Clerk of Session