

MONTCLAIR PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Session Minutes

March 3, 2026

Elders Present: Linda Benson; Margaretha Derasary; Rob Elia; Karen Ray Gibson; Eloise Gilland; Rick Heller; Sari Kulberg; Allen Spore; Jerry White

Elders Absent: Tara Flanagan; Pat Schwinn

Session-members Elect Present: Deborah Brooks; Cynthia Cudaback; Shelley Kelly and Martha Smith.

Staff Present: Rev. Ben Daniel; Katie Kilby

Others Present: Cynthia Blumgart; Kim Rankin

Clerks Report: Rev. Ben Daniel called the meeting to order at 7:09 p.m. Karen Ray Gibson offered the opening reflection.

Session meets again on Tuesday, March 7, 2026. Presbytery meets again on Tuesday, May 12 at LOPC.

Session-members elect Deborah Brooks, Cynthia Cudaback, Shelley Kelly and Martha Smith were welcomed and introduced. Outgoing members Linda Benson, Margaretha Derasary and Sari Kulberg were acknowledged and thanked.

- **MSP** to approve minutes of the Feb. 3, 2026 stated session meeting.
- **MSP** to approve minutes of the March 1, 2026 congregational meeting.
- **MSP** to elect Rob Elia as chair of Nominating Committee.

Update on Organist Search: Music Director Kim Rankin reported that the organist/accompanist search team interviewed three applicants and received two demonstrations. The team's choice is Marcus Schneider. (See attached report and resume).

- **MSP** to approve hiring Marcus Schneider as organist per the attached session approved job description.

Stewardship Report: Stewardship Chair Cynthia Blumgart informed session that we have recently lost four major donors due to a job loss, death and leaving the church. The loss amounts to \$24,000, or 4% of our budget. Our stewardship letter will be sent out between April 9th and 16th. We are also highlighting our legacy program, with Adult Ed offerings on spiritual and financial legacies.

Annual Evaluations

- **Family Life:** Liaison Eloise Gilland presented the attached annual evaluation for the Family Life Committee. Family Life has three branches: major events, small groups and hospitality. Claire Kelly stepped in last year to chair the committee following a period of "dormancy." Thank you Claire!
- **Celebration Committee:** Liaison Karen Ray Gibson delivered the Celebration Committee Report. Several recommendations from the Celebration Innovation Task Force have been implemented, including the hymn survey (name your favorite hymns) and incorporating "Prayers of the People" into the service.
- **Membership & Outreach:** Liaison Jerry White presented the attached Membership & Outreach annual evaluation. He emphasized that MPC does not have a social media manager - someone whose job it is to curate our presence on social media.

Finance Committee: The 2023 and 2024 financial statements for the David P. Russell Endowment Trust Fund were accepted into the minutes.

Mission/Staffing Working Group: Session segued into Executive Session to hear the report of the Mission/Staffing Working Group. Returning from Executive Session

- **MSP** to post a letter in Contact to the Congregation informing them of the current situation concerning Katie Kilby: she has completed all the requirements to seek a call to ordained ministry and is currently searching for a call. MPC cannot afford to hire her or anyone else under the new minimum salary schedule established by San Francisco Presbytery for called pastors.

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Children and Youth: Katie reported that MPC will host a joint service with St. John's Episcopal Church on Sunday, May 17 at which time the youth in the Confirm not Conform program will each give a reflection on a Bible passage.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Susanne Lea
Clerk of Session