

MONTCLAIR PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Session Minutes

October 7, 2025

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

Elders Absent: Rick Heller

Others Present: Myoung-Ho Sin, Art Paull

Staff Present: Rev. Ben Daniel; Katie Kilby; Kim Rankin

Clerks Report: Rev. Ben Daniel called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.; Linda Benson gave the opening prayer.

Session meets again on Tuesday, Nov. 4, 2025. Presbytery meets Sat., Nov. 15 at Alameda PC. Our leadership retreat is coming up Nov. 14-16 at Westminster Woods.

- **MSP** to approve minutes of the September 2, 2025 stated session meeting, as amended.
- **MSP** to approve minutes of the September 2, 2025 closed executive session.
- **MSP** to approve minutes of the October 5, 2025 congregational meeting.

Organist/Accompanist Position: Music Director Kim Rankin presented the attached job description for the church organist/accompanist position and answered questions. The plan is to post the job description with professional associations and social media sites, form a small search committee and interview applicants. Pat Schwinn, liaison to Personnel Committee, noted that Finance Chair Al Peters indicated the position should be hourly instead of salaried. Kim expressed that she has never seen a music staff position that was not salaried.

- **MSP** to approve the job description (\$20,000/year, 6-8 hours a week with seasonal fluctuation) as amended to include "sexual orientation" in the Equal Opportunity Statement.

Berkeley Presbyterian Mission Homes: Art Paull and Myoung-Ho Sin, Executive Director of Berkeley Presbyterian Mission Homes, proposed that MPC back the Mission Homes in applying for a Central Region grant through the SF Presbytery. The grant would be for \$80,000 to create an outdoor commons green at the Mission Homes site. The plan is to enlist other congregations as partners, with MPC as the grant sponsor.

- **MSP** to approve moving forward with the application, with MPC as the sponsor of the grant application.

Buildings and Grounds: Susanne, as liaison to Buildings and Grounds, reported that Mark Smith has agreed to co-chair the committee. Hurrah!!

Apartheid-free Pledge: Eloise Gilland presented the Apartheid-free Pledge to session for discussion and adoption. Session members asked questions and raised concerns.

- **By straw vote**, session decided to put off voting on adoption pending further research and consideration.

Closed Session: Session segued to a closed session to discuss a personnel matter.

Beacons Future: Karen Ray Gibson reported that at last month's Beacons meeting, following a discussion about the future, the Beacons reached the unanimous decision to terminate the program. Karen will write something for Contact thanking the Beacons and communicating the decision to the congregation. Some of the former Beacons might join the Family Life Committee; others might become involved with the Care Team.

- **By consensus** and with gratitude for service rendered, session made the decision to accept the resignation of the Beacons and dissolve the program.

Safety/Emergency Preparedness Task Force: Susanne reported that the task force held its initial meeting and is off and running to pursue a safety audit and related matters. She recommended that session formally establish this task force.

- **MSP** to establish a Safety/Emergency Preparedness Task Force.

Confirmation Class: Ben led the first confirmation class. Two MPC youth are involved in the program.

Personnel Decision-making group: Ben reported that this group has met once and needs to meet again.

Staff reports: Katie has taken two more ordination exams and is looking forward to the Women's Retreat. Ben has received great responses to the posting of the MPC Declaration.

Ben closed with prayer at 9:15.

Respectfully submitted,

Susanne Lea
Clerk of Session