

January 2021 Session in Review

Session of Grace Commons Church met January 12 and 26, 2020 with Pastors Erik Hanson and Daniel Susenbach as moderators.

Session continued devotions using *The Cape Town Commitment*. Devotions affirmed our faith in God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

Bob Groneberg presented a report from the Deacons. Deacons are hoping to transition Deacons' Closet back to indoor serving of clients. The budget is in good shape due to a large gift by an individual. Working with Christelle and Kier on communicating the work of the Deacons to the congregation. Daniel prayed for the Deacons Ministry.

Two consent agenda items were approved: that an outside pastor, Brian Hays, Rock Creek Church may perform a wedding at Grace Commons on April 30 and the Celebration of the Lord's Table for all worship services of Grace Commons, as necessary with shut ins, and at any off-site ministry programs, provided they can be properly administered by an approved celebrant.

A need to replace our governance chair, vacant since Chuck Stees moved out of state. A person has been contacted about serving in this role. Session voted to form a search team to help select a candidate to serve as Governance Chair. Erik, Deb DuPont, Dan Ringoen and Braden Mark volunteered to serve on the team. Nominations to the committee are due Feb 1 with the hope to bring a recommendation to Session for their Feb meeting.

Each month, Session hears from a ministry of Grace Commons. This month, Dave Pommer provided an update on University Ministry. Dave shared that there have been many challenges to ministry this year to go along with a trend of young people to move away from engagement. Large attraction events are no longer the keystone for ministry. The Core Groups have been the foundation for ministry. The future is not digital; after being virtually in class all day students do not want another online engagement. Students have pitched in to help at Deacons' Closet. Reaching out by phone and care packages. This semester there will be a 16-week curriculum devoted to practices of our faith. Praying for harvesters to go to campus and share Christ. Chris prayed for the University Ministry.

Doug Smith and Braden Mark gave a status update on the Boulder Vision Project. The renovations to the Children's Wing have been designed and bids solicited from 4 general contractors. PG Arnold has been selected to do the work, and a contract for that work will be submitted to Trustees for approval and award in the amount of \$530k. Work will begin soon. We are awaiting a building permit. Work will be done on the 1st and 2nd floors concurrently and all work will be complete by May 1 at which time the space will be handed over to Learning Care Group to seek licensure for the pre-school. LCG will be recruiting staff and students anticipating a mid-August opening date.

The site review package for both the main campus and the Annex were submitted to the City of Boulder on Dec 30, and we have been advised that they will be in the Jan 25 submittal portal for review by staff. Staff comments are expected 3 weeks after the review is in the portal. We expect at least two site review submittals in this process, and these will extend through the end of March at a minimum. The site review will also identify any flood protection issues. We have taken an approach to separate our buildings into 3 parts to minimize the flood protection improvements that will be required for the existing building (Sanctuary and Children's Wing).

A submittal was made to the Landmarks Board on the Jan 6 for an application to demolish the Geneva Wing and Westminster Hall. We had an initial review with the Landmarks Board on Oct 20, and they have referred this request to the entire board who will meet on the Feb 3. This is a critical board meeting as the Geneva Wing was designed by Hobart Wagener in consultation with Pietro Belluschi, Dean of the MIT School of Architecture. These are big names in Boulder architecture, but the design is considered

unremarkable so the BVP team is asking for their approval to demolish these elements of the church. The Landmarks Board could delay our site review up to 180 days, approve the demolition permit or move to Landmark the Geneva Wing.

The BVP team is working with a couple of contractors to give us updated estimates on the main campus project. The same process will take place for the Annex. This process will take at least a month, and that should coincide with the Landmarks Board decision to take us to a major milestone in the project.

Element Properties was chosen to be our developer partner for the Annex property affordable housing. Trustees approved their contract on the Jan 7 and tax credit financing applications will be submitted when the project is approved by the city of Boulder, which is expected in July 2021. Element and the project team have met with city staff to be considered for grants from Boulder's affordable housing fund. Element is also assisting the project in applying for grants that could pay expenses that are expected before the tax credit financing is closed.

The Capital Campaign was closed at the end of 2020, and the campaign raised commitments of \$8,180,000 for the project. There is a planned 'town hall' meeting with the congregation on Feb 7 and 10 to provide an update on the overall Boulder Vision Project.

Cathy Marquis represented the Regathering Leadership Team in providing an update. A survey was sent to elders, staff and key worship volunteers to provide insight into the current appetite for in-person worship. Using the results of the survey and the current Boulder County health guidelines, the Regathering Leadership Team recommends the following regarding the resumption of in-person worship and in-person ministry programming. They will meet on Jan 20 to review the most recent data before implementation.

1. Authorize resumption of in-person worship starting on January 31, 2021. If the trend data place Boulder County within Level Orange or a less restrictive level, then the Regathering Team recommends resuming in-person worship according to government regulations and guidance from the Regathering Team. This will be done in conjunction with PDH, staff and worship volunteers.
2. Authorize and encourage, resumption of in-person ministry programming beginning Feb 8, 2021. Ministries will be required to re-submit program plans to the regathering team for review and approval prior to having any indoor, in-person activities.

Session approved these recommendations.

During both Session meetings, elders spent time in executive session to hear reports from the Personnel Committee.