

## September 2021 Session in Review

Session of Grace Commons Church, Boulder, Colorado, met September 14, 2021. Rev Randy Bare was the moderator.

Randy invited Bill Enns to lead the Session devotions. Bill is an ECO pastor and is a mentor for several of the Grace Commons staff. He joined via Zoom. Bill shared that effective leaders are at times misunderstood. It is the elder's responsibility to discern the mind of Christ so they can lead the congregation.

Following devotions, Glenn Bean and Braden Mark presented the Ministry Priorities for review, focusing on the 1-3 year priorities. Priorities are divided into 2 categories: ministry priorities and leadership priorities. Ministry priorities include focusing on local outreach remembering that we are planted here in central Boulder. They asked the question: in 5 yrs will people know who we are and what we stand for? Second ministry priority is to attract young disciples – looking ahead to the next 150 years. Third ministry priority is to equip the congregation as not all ministries must be directed by paid staff. Leadership priorities focused on congregational care, financial stabilization, healthy governance systems, and selecting a new lead pastor. Bill Enns provided an additional charge to consider the great commission and the role of Grace Commons & our geography.

Much discussion followed the presentation. The strategic focus and core values were the work of much time and energy from a previous board of elders. These words though are not a mission statement. Elders felt the need for an agreed upon mission statement. Investing in and experimenting with worship is a priority. As we are not a solely online church, investment in our physical place is also important.

Bill Enns concluded the discussion with a charge to go after young people. They will not come to us. Be out where people are such as the CU Campus. Session also needs to identify the kind of pastor we need and realize that the next pastor will be a millennial in a boomer congregation.

Next steps in the ministry priorities process is to empower the staff and committees of Session to deliver on priorities; confirm a mission statement; and consider hiring a Next Gen pastor in the next year or two.

Session approved the ministry and leadership priorities as presented.

Session approved the minutes and ministry reports from Session, Deacons, Kids, Global Missions, Grace Commons Foundation, Local Missions, and Racial Justice Ministry. Session received the August Covenant Partner report which indicates we have 1090 covenant partners as of August 31, 2021.

Tim Chiles presented 3 additional officers for the upcoming vote on the slate of officers: Gary Abbuhl and Gene Koch for trustees and Dean Stull for elder. Session approved these additional officers. In addition, Tim presented the full slate of officers for the congregational vote on Sept 26. Session approved the entire slate for the classes of 2022, 2023, and 2024. Greg Parr, Braden Mark, Jeannette Kneebone, Warner Andrews, and Doug Scheetz are extending their terms pending approval by the congregation.

Glenn Bean and Jonathon Anderson presented a report following staff interviews that were held over the summer. The MESH (Ministry Evaluation & Spiritual Health) committee interviews the staff annually to talk about what is working and what is not going well. Themes include a desire to feel a stronger connection between staff and session & a desire for a clear understanding of our mission statement. The staff will be meeting with outside counselors in October who will lead them in healing.

Dean Stull reviewed the proposed changes to the Bylaws. Dean, Greg Parr and Craig Rahenkamp reviewed the Bylaws with the intention of bringing our Bylaws in line with the ECO Constitution which was

updated in 2020. Dean highlighted some changes including the maximum terms of service for officers: 6 years, the terms of call for pastors, and the process of loaning money to a pastor. Trustees are now reviewing the policy regarding loans to pastors. The Bylaws will reflect our new church name. Session approved the revised Bylaws.

Craig Rahenkamp provided a brief update from the Personnel Committee considering Daniel's resignation. The Personnel committee is considering adding part time pastoral support as an interim solution. In addition, they are considering outside contract support for some of our open staff positions such as custodian, HR and administrative assistants.

Randy shared the concept of listening sessions as an opportunity to hear the concerns and questions from the congregation. Randy has been meeting with couples and small groups as he is able. These larger listening sessions will include elders and trustees and can reach a larger audience.

The meeting adjourned at 9pm with prayer and singing of the Doxology.