

## September 2022 Session in Review

Session of Grace Commons Church, Boulder, Colorado, met September 8, 2022. Rev Randy Bare was the moderator.

Lindsay Waymire opened the meeting in prayer and introduced to Session the ECO Flourishing Church curriculum which will be the devotional focus for Session for the next 6+ meetings. Sessions 1-3 will be covered this fall. Sessions 4-6 will be covered from Jan-Mar.

Lindsay also reminded Session of the new philosophical agenda structure with 1/3 of each meeting spent on devotion and creating space for God and one another. 1/3 of the meeting will be spent on visioning and big picture ideas. 1/3 of the meeting will be spent on business.

The elders broke into small groups to discuss the previously assigned Flourishing Church homework and answered the questions:

How would you describe a flourishing church?

Where are we flourishing now?

The book, *Simple Discipleship*, by Dana Allin, was distributed. Randy encouraged elders to complete the reading of this book by December.

Following the devotions, Kathy Baker was ordained and elders prayed over her.

Session approved the minutes and ministry reports from Session, Deacons, Trustees, Governance, MESH, Pastor Support Team, and the Racial Justice Ministry. Session received the August Covenant Partner reports which records 832 covenant partners.

### **Pastor Nominating Committee Process Update:**

Considering the PNC goal of finding the next Pastor/Head of Staff, Randy reminded Session that the past processes have not yielded the hoped for fruit and reintroduced the concept of using an outside search firm, recommending Agora as the search firm. Agora would look at what we want in a pastor and use their networks to find pastors that meet the qualifications identified for our next Pastor/Head of Staff.

A motion was presented to approve the negotiation of a contract for the purpose of retaining the Agora Search Group to assist the church and the PNC in the process of finding, screening, vetting and selecting candidates for Head Pastor of Grace Commons.

There was considerable discussion concerning the process and the expenses. Considering the length of previous processes, the impact on the PNC members when the process extends for years, and the desire to make better network connections, Session approved the motion to negotiate a contract with Agora and gave Trustees the authority for the final approval of the total fees and expenses for this process.

In addition following that previous Session meeting a taskforce of elders and staff met to select a Congregational Nominating Committee (CNC) whose purpose will be to review, interview, and select a slate for the Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) for approval by both Session and the congregation.

The members of the CNC as listed below were approved by Session to begin the work to secure a PNC for a Nov 10 Session meeting with an update at the Oct 13 meeting:

Alan Brockett  
Alan Williams  
Kristin Rahenkamp  
Deb Gregory  
Rob Davis

Looking ahead in the process, we hope to have a PNC slate ready for a Nov Congregational Meeting. The PNC will be made up of 5 Covenant Partners at large, 2 elders, 1 deacon and 1 trustee. The CNC will meet with each body of officers to communicate the traits they are seeking for PNC candidates. Each body (Session, Deacons, and Trustees) will select their representative to the PNC. The current Bylaws have a different PNC make up and will have to be suspended to allow for this proposed combination of elders, deacons, trustees and members at large.

The Covenant of Session was distributed for signature by each elder.

### **University Ministry Update**

Following a brief break, Session heard an update on our University Ministry. Randy provided some background which included a reminder of the budget constraints presented during the budget process in the spring which meant impacts to ministries such as UMin. Therefore, UMin is exploring new ways to do and fund ministry. They are considering the following:

1. Partner with a parachurch organization
2. Form their own non-profit.

The current UMin budget is approximately \$250K + fundraising. The size of the full budget has been a concern for Trustees and Session in recent years. Dave Pommer/UMin has formed a team to investigate the possibilities and is seeking feedback from Session before investing significant time on the options. In addition to the funding structure it is also a desire to have a broader leadership team in place so that UMin is not dependent on a single leader with the desired outcome to provide stability when there are leadership transitions.

### **Trustees Report**

Gene Koch provide an update on business and operations. Larry Drees is continuing to work on reporting routine. The audit is underway. \$4.065mil has been received for the BVP toward a \$7mil pledge. There are 226 pledges and 79 have fully met their pledge. Gary Johnson is reviewing the receipts for the BVP. Regarding the Annex, Pinkard Construction has been selected to do pre construction work. They are providing this service for free on the condition that they serve as the General Contractor for the Annex. Pinkard understands that their free services could be for naught if the congregation does not approve the project or the funding is insufficient for the work. In the future, Gene will be providing an update on the Preschool which is part one of the BVP. The Preschool did turn a profit beginning in May and are ahead of pace for their projected student count and FTE.

### **Governance Update**

Dean Stull on behalf of the Governance Committee presented a realignment of committee structures going forward. The primary changes moves the Finance Committee to Trustees and modifies the Personnel Committee to an advisory role to the Pastor/Head of Staff. The final decision on these changes will take place at the October meeting.

Randy provided a quick report on some other items happening around the church. Randy, Lindsay Waymire and Joe Cutshall met with the Chancel Choir to present the concept of a single blended service this fall. There was a lively discussion that followed.

Dana Allin will be available to meet with Session on Sept 10 following the end of the Symposium.

There will be a joint Session Trustees meeting on Sept 22 at 6pm to bring Session and Trustees up to date on the BVP.

Randy adjourned the meeting at 9:30pm with the singing of the Doxology.