

## January 2023 Session in Review

Session of Grace Commons Church, Boulder, Colorado, met January 12, 2023. Rev Randy Bare was the moderator.

Lindsay led a time of prayer and personal reflection using *Simple Discipleship*. She asked elders if they have a discipleship plan. Are we close enough to Jesus to know what he wants from us? She challenged the elders to identify one discipleship area where they want to work and to consider what they need to flourish.

Session approved the minutes and ministry reports from Session, Deacons, Trustees, Governance, MESH, Pastor Support Team and the Racial Justice Ministry. In addition, Session approved the serving of communion for the 2023 calendar year for worship, for shut ins and at ministry programs with an approved celebrant. Session approved Ruth McKee to be a delegate to the Presbytery of the West meeting at the ECO National Gathering. Housing allowances for 2023 were approved for our 4 pastors. Session received the November and December Covenant Partner reports which records 838 covenant partners.

### **Boulder Vision Project (BVP) update:**

Gene Koch led a review and discussion on the status of the Boulder Vision Project. The trustees has met on Jan 9 for a deep review and recommendation. Trustees have determined that the best project moving forward includes many of the original elements: 2 stories of affordable housing, a work training center and an event space. Funding is multifaceted and comes from CHFA (Colorado Housing and Finance Authority), the city of Boulder, grants, gifts and debt. The Trustees are projecting a positive cash flow beginning in the first year. The application to CHFA is due the first of February. A presentation will be made to the congregation in March. In preparation for the March forum, elders asked significant questions about the terms and conditions associated with the funding sources as well as the ownership structure related to risks to the church, the job training program, and the construction management.

### **Grace Commons Foundation:**

Steve Rice, the elder representative to the Foundation, reported that the Grace Commons representation on the Foundation board will include 2 trustees and 1 elder.

### **Governance:**

Dean Stull led a discussion regarding the need for leadership in the work of stewardship. Dean proposed a permanent year-round stewardship team with the first year committee being responsible for the stewardship campaign and creating a process for the ongoing work of a stewardship committee. Session voted to form an Ad Hoc committee for one year to conduct the MY24 stewardship campaign and provide a recommendation for a formal stewardship committee. Kathy Baker and Willie Knierim volunteered to serve on this committee along with reserve elder Greg Parr.

### **Clerk Report:**

Dean Stull, Clerk of Session, along with the Governance Committee is reviewing the current elder assignments to committees as well as looking at the number of board positions for Session, Trustees and Deacons. Session for example can range from 9-15 elders. All committees and boards are being encouraged to finish the drafting of their charters which will help to define the work and the number of individuals needed to support the work.

**Pastor Support Team:**

Jonathon Anderson led a presentation and discussion on the work of the Pastor Support Team (PST) as they view their work as a way to support and not merely provide oversight and evaluation. The team is working on a plan that includes mentoring, process review and relationship building. There was discussion as to whether the PST should be focused on supporting the Pastor/Head of Staff exclusively or be sized with the intent to support all staff pastors. In addition to the support from the PST, Randy reminded the elders that every pastor should be part of a covenant group which is a requirement of ECO. The PST will be submitting a draft of its charter at a future meeting.

**Pastor Report:**

Randy provided an update on some key matters. Rob Lauer will be meeting with the staff, Session and the PNC on Jan 14 and 15. The ECO National Gathering at the end of January will be a place that Randy expects interactions with potential candidates.

The millennial staff members are currently talking about how to reach Gen Z with a potential Sunday evening service. This is in the early planning stages.

Randy also reported on the potential for several more staff who are considering entering the assistant pastor ordination process. Assistant pastors have opportunities for covenant groups, additional training and support from our denomination. Craig reminded Session of the development resources available for director level staff as well.

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