

## May 2023 Session in Review

Session of Grace Commons Church, Boulder, Colorado, met May 11, 2023. Rev Randy Bare was the moderator.

Emily Crider led a devotion on the call to steward for the next generation. She used the prophet, Daniel, as an example of one who kept his convictions with courage while in Babylon. She reminded the elders that they will at times need to act with courage. She closed by sharing a short video of her aunt who talked about worship being about Jesus.

Session approved the minutes and ministry reports from Session, Deacons, Trustees, Governance, MESH, Finance, and the Pastor Support Team. Session received 7 new covenant partners who will be introduced on May 21 in worship. In addition, Session received the April Covenant Partnership report which records 820 covenant partners.

### **Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) Update:**

Debbie Carosella, a PNC member, shared that there is a high level of interest in our position. Rob Lauer our consultant from the Agora Group, is helping to keep the PNC on track and not jump ahead in the process or skip a step. The PNC recently acted unanimously in eliminating 2 strong candidates and moving ahead with 3 candidates. Now Rob will provide in depth questionnaires to those 3 candidates. They also have one additional candidate who has entered the process who looks very good. The PNC is working well together.

### **Stewardship and Budget update:**

Randy shared that he considers the budget to be one of the remaining challenges of the transition. He used the analogy of the “bridge to nowhere” — a structurally significant bridge that although it withstood the forces of a category 5 hurricane, the river it was built to cross was rerouted by the same hurricane, making the bridge obsolete.

Randy listed 3 current challenges for Session:

- Stewardship
- Unity (congregational unity)
- Successful launch of a new pastor

Larry shared some of the pledge statistics: 59% of the pledges needed to meet our proposed budget have been received which equals 215 pledging units. There are \$236K in outstanding pledges to complete this Ministry Year. Pledges are down over the last 4-5 months with approximately 30% less per month than earlier in the year. We do not know if those who have not honored their pledge will still do so by the end of the year.

Regarding Ministry Year 24 pledging, Kathy shared that there are about 50 pledging units from MY23 who have not pledged to MY24. The average pledge is \$6400 which is up per pledge from last year.

Randy concluded by saying that the Session/Grace Commons is at a fork in the road:

1. Stop the work of the PNC and get a new transitional pastor.
2. Approve the Annex project to begin to realize a financial benefit from that project.

Randy recommended that Session approve the budget. Larry shared that the church has \$1.85mil in cash available to bridge the budget shortfall.

Session passed the following motion which was brought by the Trustees: to approve, upon second reading, the budget as presented for the amount of \$2.972mil for Ministry Year 2024.

### **TED update:**

Session approved the following slate of officers presented by the T.E.D. moderator, Shirley Berg.

Slate of Officers for Election June 2023	Class of 2024	Class of 2025	Class of 2026
<b>Elders</b>			
to fill 3 year term			Topher Fox Lynnie Parr Lisa Schone
<b>Deacons</b>			
to fill 3 year term			Laurel Andrews Julie Callicoatt Nanci Gagliardi Lynne Harlow Laura Hurbace Steve Pasma Janelle Stover Gay Van Dorn
<b>Trustees</b>			
to fill empty positions	JP Clark	Kent Thompson	
to fill 3 year term			Carol Born Charlotte Bowlds Steve Fries
<b>Members at large: T.E.D.</b>			
1 year term	Clark Oldroyd		
2 year term		Fred Westover	

Following this approval, Session voted to call a congregational meeting on June 11 to hold a vote on the proposed officers.

#### **MESH:**

Jonathon Anderson reported on behalf of MESH that they do not have a motion ready for Session regarding the future direction of our mercy ministries. MESH feels more research needs to be done and hopes to have a person in place to lead the research before the June meeting.

#### **Boulder Vision Project update:**

Session spent time reviewing and sharing the concerns raised at the most recent congregational forum. 2 main remaining issues: concerns regarding debt and our past leadership. The elders took time at this meeting to each share their point of view on the project. All elders expressed their individual support for this project.

Session voted to hold a vote at the June 11 Congregational Meeting to encumber the property at 1603 Walnut St.

#### **Communion update:**

Beginning June 4, communion will be served using matzah and juice at round tables stationed throughout the Sanctuary. Randy will attend the next Deacons meeting to share some of the significance of the process of serving communion as no currently serving Deacons have served communion in any way other than with the prepackaged elements.

Willie Knierim closed the meeting with reflections on the service of Don King who recently passed away. He shared some of the many ways that Don served First Pres/Grace Commons. One recollection was Don's tenure as our church's representative during the construction of the Children's Wing and Atrium.

Randy adjourned the meeting at 9:10pm with the singing of the Doxology.