

**Covenant Presbyterian Church, Athens, GA**  
**Stated Session Meeting**  
**April 23, 2024**

A stated Session meeting, called according to the Book of Order, was held at Covenant Presbyterian Church on April 23, 2024. Moderator Dana Waters welcomed everyone, declared a quorum present and called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

Elders present: Bert Ballard-Myer, Bob Brewster, Dennis Calbos, Kathryn Fowler, Rebecca Silver, Valerie Stone, and Dick Zimdars

Elders absent: Katy Arora, Carolyn Hatfield, Brian Herndon, Abby Horvath, Ansley Tweedell Land

Others present: Luanne Rigsby, Eli Stone, Phil Hale, and Dana Waters

### **Devotional**

Dick Zimdars presented a reading from the book, *Markings*, by Dag Hammarskjöld on fellowship. Without warm intimate relationships with a few, one would not be able to accomplish big things in life because of a lack of love and empathy. Dick opened the meeting with this prayer, “Lord, keep binding us together in mutual love. Amen.”

### **Review of Minutes**

The minutes from the March 26, 2024, Stated Session meeting and the April 7, 2024, Called Session meeting were reviewed. Valerie Stone moved and Kathryn Fowler seconded that the minutes be accepted as presented. **Motion carried.**

### **Approval of the Agenda**

Several items were added to the agenda. A motion was made by Rebecca Silver and seconded by Bert Ballard-Myer to approve the agenda as amended. **Motion carried.**

### **Clerk’s Report**

Luanne Rigsby, Clerk, read a thank you note from the Presbyterian Student Center for Covenant’s support. The clerk’s report was received into the minutes.

### **Financial Report and Stewardship Drive Update**

Kathryn Fowler, Finance Ministry Team chair, reviewed the Financial Summary for March, 2024, as well as the detailed financial report for the month. Kathryn reported that pledges and non-pledged income are coming in better than anticipated and that Finance Ministry Team expects a small surplus at the end of the fiscal year. We still have some of the surplus funds from last year. If it is not spent by the end of the fiscal year, last year’s surplus funds will be rolled into reserves. Kathryn asked Ministry Teams to check

the bottom lines of their budgets and to also check on the restricted funds which are under their Ministry Teams. In 2021, a committee drew up a policy for spending of restricted funds, but it was never enacted. Finance Ministry Team will review that policy, make any changes needed and present it to the Session at a future meeting.

### **Stewardship Drive Update**

Due to slow mail delivery of the pledge letters, the deadline for turning in pledges for the new fiscal year was extended. Kathryn reported that pledges have been coming in slowly but steadily. The proposed “dream” budget is \$510,168 which is a \$60,000 increase over this year’s budget of \$450,507. Once all expected pledges are received, Finance Ministry Team will finalize the budget. Their goal is to have the final budget ready to present to Session at the May Stated meeting for approval. The Financial Report was accepted into the minutes.

### **Receiving Eli Stone as a Member**

Dana welcomed confirmand Eli Stone and his Covenant Partner, Phil Hale. Eli has met with Dana this year for confirmation class. Eli read his Faith Statement, a copy of which had previously sent out the Session. Eli and Phil plan to work together to provide a “**Hale** Fire and Brim **Stone**” BBQ luncheon in the fall to honor Covenant’s volunteers. Phil commented that Eli is a dedicated and committed young man who has already contributed so much to Covenant. **Valerie Stone moved and Bob Brewster seconded we receive Eli Stone as a member of Covenant Presbyterian Church.** Following discussion, **the motion carried unanimously.** This brings our membership total to 215. Eli will be recognized at a reception in the near future.

### **Nominating Committee for Next Class of Elders.**

Dennis Calbos nominated Dick Zimdars to serve as chair of the Nominating Committee for the next class of elders. Bert Ballard-Myer seconded the nomination. Following discussion, Dick was elected. Dick will get a list of inactive elders, and with the help of Session members, will come up with a nomination of an inactive elder to also serve on the committee in time for that person to be elected at the May Stated Session meeting. Those two committee members will solicit nominations from the congregation for a third person, who is not an elder, to represent the congregation on the committee. That person will be elected at a Congregational meeting.

### **Commissioners for May 21<sup>st</sup> NEGA Presbytery Meeting**

Bert Ballard-Myer and Dennis Calbos, as well as inactive elders, Rich Reaves and Gijs Schimmell, will serve as Covenant Presbyterian Church’s four commissioners to the NEGA Presbytery Meeting to be held at Oconee Presbyterian Church on May 21, 2024.

### **Motion from Worship Ministry Team**

Dick Zimdars, on behalf of the Worship Ministry Team, **moved that worship time be changed to 10 a.m. beginning on June 2, 2024, and resuming at 11:00 a.m. on Rally Day.** Coming from a committee, the motion needed no second. Following discussion, the **motion carried.**

### **Next Meeting Date**

Our new Interim Pastor, Rev. Teresa Franklin, will be commuting to Athens from Clarksville, GA. In order to accommodate Rev. Franklin, the May Stated Session meeting will be held on Sunday, May 19, 2024, at 1:00 p.m. Future meeting dates and times will be determined at the May meeting

### **Motion from Fellowship Ministry Team**

Rebecca Silver, on behalf of the Fellowship Ministry Team, **moved that we collect a special offering to be contributed to the building fund for restoration of our sister church in Olomouc in The Czech Republic to a more usable condition. The offering will be collected for a 6-week period from May 26 - June 30, 2024.** Coming from a committee, the motion needed no second. Following discussion, the **motion carried.**

### **Announcements – Ministry Teams**

Mission and Outreach Ministry Team – Bert asked Session to read through the Mission and Outreach Ministry Team minutes to see all the outreach activities the church is engaged in. Bert pointed out additional Mission/Outreach projects being considered such as a support group in partnership with Athens Anti-Discrimination Movement. Presbyterian Women will be hosting an Antipoverty Workshop on Saturday, June 8, 2024 from 9:15 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Dana expressed his gratitude for his time at Covenant, and the Session expressed its sincere appreciation for the wonderful job Dana has done as our Transitional Pastor.

### **Motion to Adjourn**

There being no further business, Dennis Calbos moved and Bert Ballard-Myer seconded that the meeting be adjourned. **Motion carried.** Dana closed with prayer at 8:09 p.m.

***Next Stated Meeting: Sunday, May 19, 2024, at 1:00 p.m. Ansley Land will present the devotional.***

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Dana Waters, Moderator

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Luanne Rigsby, Clerk