

The Downtown Presbyterian Church  
Session Meeting of November 28, 2022 Minutes

A meeting of the Session of The Downtown Presbyterian Church was held on November 28, 2022 beginning at 6:30pm.

In Attendance: Erin Bell (Clerk), Samera Zavaro, Tom Wills, Jake Byl, Tom Byl, Denny Harris, Betty McConnell, Rachel Hayes (treasurer) Larissa Romero (moderator)

The meeting was called to order by Rev. Larissa Romero at 6:36. An opening prayer was offered by Mr. Wills.

Approval of agenda:

**Motion** to approve the agenda from Ms. Zavaro, second by Mr. J. Byl; the motion carried.

Approval of minutes from the previous two meetings:

**Motion** to approve the minutes from the October 17th session meeting from Mr. Harris, second by Ms. McConnell; the motion carried.

Moderator's Report:

Rev. Romero has noticed that an increased number of visitors are expressing an interest in being a part of our congregation in various ways. Session members discussed ways that we can make meaningful connections with repeat visitors.

The pastor shared that her recent training was fulfilling and inspiring. She looks forward to sharing more about this training in the coming months.

Treasurer report: see posted report

Ms. Hayes shared that the pledge drive is in progress. The committee has a plan to follow up with those who have pledged in the past, but haven't yet pledged for 2023. Submissions are requested by December 4th.

We are currently seeking a treasurer for 2024. Ms. Hayes will be transitioning out of this role next year, and would appreciate the opportunity to train the next person for the position.

Clerk's Report:

We have received a request for membership from David Xiao and Shelby Nelson. Motion for Ms. Bell to coordinate an "examination" meeting with Mr. Xiao and Ms. Nelson prior to a Sunday worship service at their convenience. Seconded by Ms. Zavaro, the motion carried. Session noted a preference for meetings of this nature to be held in person - to the degree possible.

Session reviewed the Ministry Information Form, received from the pastor nominating committee. Following discussion, the session received a **motion** from Ms. Bell to approve the form with the following contingencies: add "The" to the ministry title; add Arabic-American to the

“other” line on the Ethnic Composition of the Congregation, and adjust the percentages noted on the Ethnic Composition of the Congregation accordingly. Seconded by Ms. Zavaro, the motion carried. The Clerk of session will relay this information to the Pastor Nominating Committee along with the session’s appreciation of, and gratitude for, their diligent work.

#### Committee Reports:

- Admin. Committee - *see posted report.*
- Business Management - *see posted report.*
- Community Engagement - *see posted report*
- Faith Formation - *see posted report*
  - Mr. T. Byl emphasized the need for additional nursery workers. The pay is \$20/hour, minimum of 3 hours (9:30-12:30) on Sunday mornings. We are averaging 3-6 children in need of nursery care. We require 2 workers at a time to ensure proper safety and they must pass a background check. Interested persons are asked to email [education@dpchurch.com](mailto:education@dpchurch.com).
- Missions - *See posted report.*
  - Next meeting December 7th at the home of Tom Wills to discuss resuming an in-person meal.
  - Session recommended that the business management committee consider a system to notify committee leadership when the church receives designated giving pertaining to their committee. The person receiving the information will then follow up with an expression of gratitude for the gift which was received.
- Nominating:
  - Session members for the class of 2025 have been selected and trained. They will join us in the next meeting for “examination”.
- Project Thrive:
  - The mission subcommittee that is coordinating community partnerships met in early November. A compiling document is in progress to track their information. The various subcommittees have an optimistic timeline to present information to the congregation in the first quarter of 2023.

#### Update to the Education Director Position:

Rev. Romero shared that Rev. White has received a formal call to pastor a church in Kentucky beginning in early 2023. Mr. T. Byl shared her letter of resignation, noting that December 22nd, 2022 will be her final day as DPC’s education director. **Motion** from Ms. McConnell to accept the resignation of Rev. White, second by Ms. Zavaro; the motion carried.

The session extends their warmest congratulations to Rev. White on receiving the call to her new position. The session also expressed a deep gratitude for Rev. White’s work at DPC and an appreciation for the systems she has put in place over the past year. Rev. White has been an asset to The Downtown Presbyterian Church and she will be deeply missed by her congregation, particularly the faith formation committee, members of session, and her fellow staff members.

A reception will be held on December 11th following worship to honor Rev. White's contributions to The Downtown Presbyterian Church. The Admin committee will conduct an exit interview prior to December 22nd.

#### Online Transfer of Information and Organization:

A Google drive has been set up to facilitate the transfer of committee information from year to year as leadership changes. Rev. Romero has sent a link to each committee chair to access the folder for their committees. She has requested that each committee begin using their respective folders to store information that would be beneficial to the committee.

#### Reviewed Transition Process for Leaders:

The pastor has created and shared draft documents for onboarding & offboarding session members. Rev. Romero asked the session to review these documents and make edits as needed before the next meeting.

#### Expectations for the New Class Exams

The ruling elder candidates for the incoming class of 2025 will be examined by the session in next month's meeting. The pastor requested that session members send questions to her so that she can best prepare the incoming session members and to ensure that our conversation is most efficient for the time allotted.

#### Session Transition/Onboarding of new Ruling Elders:

The pastor will schedule a Saturday in January, prior to the regular meeting, to welcome and train the new session (classes 2023-2025). During this time the session will determine committee leadership for the coming year, review & complete the onboarding checklist, and have a moment of genuine fellowship with one another. The hope is this time together will have elements of a retreat along with meaningful action.

The pastor is coordinating a mini-workshop on topics related to session care and well-being (burn out, consensus-building, team work, etc).

#### Congregational Care & Life Issues:

Review of congregational care concerns and how best to care for our members.

#### Next meeting & Reminders:

- Next meeting: December 12, 2022
- Session Training (Classes 2023-2025): January 14, 2023
- *Anticipatory* Congregational Meeting: January 8, 2023
- *Anticipatory* Membership Meeting: as soon as can be arranged for 10:30 on a Sunday morning
- Reminder: Please give Dena the dates and times of upcoming committee meetings.

Volunteers for Promoting Trust & Connection:

- Lead the next opening prayer: Mr. J. Byl (12/12)
- Mr. Wills will update the congregation on issues addressed by the session. The primary need is to communicate the progress on the church's Ministry Information Form.

**Motion** to adjourn from Mr. Harris, seconded by Ms. Zavaro; the motion carried.

Closing Prayer by Rev. Romero

Meeting adjourned at 8:37

Rev. Larissa Romero  
Moderator  
The Downtown Presbyterian Church

Erin Bell  
Clerk of Session  
The Downtown Presbyterian Church