

GRACE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
SESSION MEETING MINUTES
HOUSTON, TEXAS
NOVEMBER 29, 2023

MODERATOR

The Reverend Doctor Julia Leeth

The Session of Grace Presbyterian Church, Houston, Texas met in a STATED MEETING on Wednesday, November 29, 2023 during a regularly scheduled monthly meeting at 7:00 p.m. in Massey-Tucker Hall.

Attendance:

Pastors Present: Rev. Dr. Julia Leeth, Rev. Chris French, Rev. Denise Phelps, Rev. Aaron Hanz

Elders Present: Earl Baudin, Deb Castillo, Bert Crump, Ron Collins, Vic Condrey, Lisa Descant, Cathy Finck, Andy Frazelle, Tory Gunsolley, Dorothy Hobbs, Jamie Horton, Martha Hunt, Tom Lee, and Lisa Schwartz

Excused: Russ Chase, Jim Tomforde

Absent: Abby Meade

Others in attendance: Hardie Morgan, Sharon High, Ivy Castle, Stella Sekyere and Candy Clarke Aldridge and the new Church Officer candidates: Karen Rhoden, Terrelyn Teinert, Karen Welton, Rick Sell, Serge Mefan, Cindy Thomas, Tricia Jackson, Sarah Easterling, Maggie Gardiner, Mallie Prejean, Daniel Malaguilla, Morris Harper, Nnenna Akwari, Candy Jones, Georgene Quirke, Annie Golden, John Scott, Melinda Smith, and Daniela Villanueva

Call Meeting to Order - The Rev. Dr. Julia Leeth

Open with Prayer - The meeting began by praying the scripture 2 Timothy 4:1-5.

Moderator's Report - Julia asked that the Elders be mindful of the contributions of the staff, pray for their health, and thank them for their service.

Examination of Class of 2026 Church Officer Candidates - in accordance with ECO procedures for selecting and examining church officers, the Elders conducted examinations of the incoming officers. Leadership Development Chair Deb Castillo created 4 groups of Elders to hear the faith statements that incoming officers had prepared. Each group's leader reported on the discussion and recommended that each of the officers-elect examined be accepted as church officers. There was a motion to accept the recommendation of the Leadership Development Team to elect these church officers. The Session approved the motion. A make-up session will be scheduled for those not able to attend the examination.

Consent agenda and Clerk's Report - Candy Aldridge presented the Consent Agenda, which included the minutes of the October 25 Session meeting. After review of the Clerk's Report, an item on the Consent Agenda, Clerk's Report of November 29, 2024 was removed for further discussion. Removed was a report containing the names of Covenant Partners who would be removed from the rolls, per Grace's established policy. The names were the result of a two-year effort to contact them by phone, mail, email, and text, with no response. Deacons used the approved process established ten years ago. A motion was made to remove the list of names for additional review. Lisa Schartz, Earl Baudin, Janet Roberts and Hardie Morgan agreed to review the policy for updating. A motion was made to accept the rest of the Consent Agenda and the motion was seconded and approved.

New Business

Recommendations for Next Steps of Financial Health Think Tank Recommendations - Dorothy Hobbs led the discussion, referring to pages 55-65 in the Session packet. Strategy Team chairs reported their progress on the recommendations.

ECO National Gathering - a motion was made to authorize the Senior Pastor to appoint four commissioners to attend the Gathering in Greenville, SC at the end of January. It was seconded and approved.

Team Updates:

Ministry Support

The stewardship campaign yielded a 9% increase in financial pledges over 2022, to \$1.1 million, and the number of pledges increased to 115.

Grace School

There is a detailed team report in the Session Package.

Leadership Development:

Chair Deb Castillo reported that Dorothy Hobbs has agreed to fill the vacancy for Elder Class of 2025. Additional information is found in detailed team report in the Session Package.

Worship Team:

Update included in the Session package.

Equip Strategy Team:

There is a detailed team report in the Session Package.

Serve Strategy Team:

Tom Lee reported that the golf tournament raised \$20,000. There is additional information in the team report in the Session Package.

There will be a Congregational Meeting in January to elect one Elder and three Deacons.

There was a motion to adjourn. It was seconded and approved.

Rev. Julia Leeth closed in prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Candy Clarke Aldridge

Candy Aldridge
Clerk of Session