

GRACE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
SESSION MEETING MINUTES  
HOUSTON, TEXAS  
October 17, 2017

**MODERATOR**

The Rev. Dr. Trey Little

**STAFF IN ATTENDANCE**

The Rev. Chris French, Associate Pastor; The Rev. Chad Erb, Associate Pastor; Hardie Morgan, Executive Director of Ministry Support; Susan McElroy, Executive Assistant, Senior Pastor; Traci Baudin, Director, Children's Ministries; Sabrina Hergert, Director, Mission Partners; Denise Phelps, Director, Caring Ministries

The Session of Grace Presbyterian Church, Houston, Texas met in a STATED MEETING on OCTOBER 17, 2017 at 7 p.m.

**Attendance:**

**Elders Present:** Candy Aldridge, Ronnie Braden, Deb Castillo, Vic Condrey, Jenny Gottschalk, Jerry Hanlon, Stephanie Husmann, Kevin Kiniry, Jim Leeland, Terry Looper, Keith McElroy, John Meloy, Greg Morby, John Murphy, John Musgrove, Philip Parker, Tami Plummer, Keeke Russo, Lisa Schwartz, Jo Swank, Ted Teinert, Jim Weatherall

**Excused:** Okey Akwari, Myrna Maldonado, Kerry Moore, Greg Zuanich

**Absent:** The Rev. Dr. Michael Fry, Associate Pastor; Scott Maham

The Rev. Dr. Trey Little called the meeting to order and The Rev. Chad Erb opened in prayer.

**Clerk's Report & Administrative Matters:** Candy Aldridge presented the Consent Agenda, which included minutes from the September 19, 2017 Session meeting, the October 1, 2017 Congregational meeting, the October 15, 2017 CALLED Session meeting minutes and the Clerk's Report for October 17, 2017. Minor non-material changes were suggested. A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes with changes and the Clerk's Report.

**Conversations About Key Strategic Opportunities:**

- **FIT report:** The Facilities Improvement Team met today and made strategic progress with Grace School on facility improvement plans. Discussions will continue and Trey plans to present details at the November Session meeting.
- **Financial report:** Regarding CYTD budgeted/collected contributions, September and October have been strong (nearly +\$17,000) after a bleak August (- \$250,000). The bulk of

the deficit was made up by 5 donors. To date, we have collected about \$200,000 in the Hurricane Harvey Relief fund.

- ECO Texas Presbytery meeting report: The Presbytery meeting was held in San Antonio on September 29-30. Hardie provided notes from the meeting, as well as a summary of the items approved and actions taken that will be recommended to the 2018 ECO Synod meeting in Houston in January. The Houston Mission Affinity Group met for the first time in San Antonio. Grace, First and Memorial Drive clergy, staff and elders dined together to initiate this ongoing relationship to learn from and support each other. Sabrina Hergert was celebrated as having completed examination by Presbytery and being certified for ordination. Both the Presbytery and this Session recognized Sabrina's faithful tenacity in completing this milestone.
- Spiritual Formation Cohort: Various members of the Grace clergy and staff attended a Spiritual Formation retreat last weekend and were profoundly moved by the experience. Another participating church, Covenant Presbyterian began the Formation process with their Elders recently, and recommended that other churches begin their sessions in September instead of January. Grace will delay the start of ours from January 2018 to September 2018. Additional details will be shared in the next 90 days.

#### **New Business:**

- Sunday morning schedule: The Planning Team will meet soon to discuss the Sunday morning worship schedule for 2018. The team will prayerfully review the current schedule of multiple services before and after a Sunday School hour, as well as consolidating worship services and altering the timing of worship and Sunday School. The team hopes to come to the November Session meeting with a recommendation for Session approval.
- Christmas Eve schedule: Grace will hold the following services on Sunday, December 24, 2017. There are no morning services.

3 pm Traditional service in the Founders' Chapel, Communion

3 pm Children and Family service in the Sanctuary

5 pm Contemporary service in the Sanctuary, Communion

6 pm Grace en Español service in the Founders' Chapel, Communion

7 pm Traditional service in the Sanctuary, Communion

#### **Dates:**

- The November Session meeting will be held a week earlier than usual because of Thanksgiving. It will occur on Tuesday, **November 14**. Attendance is strongly encouraged because the new elders and deacons will provide their faith statements to the Session.
- National ECO Meeting: January 23-25, 2018, Houston; Tuesday, January 24 is Grace's day to staff the volunteers; commissioners to the Synod were approved in the Consent Agenda.

- Church Officers' Retreat will occur on Saturday, February 17, 2018 from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Grace.

**Other:**

- On November 14, 2017, the Gather Team will train all new, former and current elders and deacons to be the leaders in enhancing the Grace experience. All are invited to training and dinner at 6 pm.
- Trustees were nominated and approved at the October 1 Congregational Meeting. The Session was required to approve the nominees, but inadvertently did not. There were no objections to the nominees or their election at this Session meeting.
- Additional discussions: reminder about Trunk or Treat on October 27; Hardie requested nominations for ECO Presbytery of Texas Leadership roles; The Stewardship Campaign will begin in January 2018, with Super Bowl Sunday as Commitment Sunday; Trey asked the Session to pray boldly and vigorously and earnestly for God's will to be done at Grace.

Closing Prayer was offered by Jo Swank.

The next Session Meeting will be held Tuesday, November 14, 2017, 7 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Candy Clarke Aldridge  
Clerk of Session